

dit, that in a declaration of independence, signed Robert Nelson, which was promulgated in Canada last year, the 3rd article was to the effect, that Indians should no longer be under any civil disqualifications, but shall enjoy the same right as all other citizens. It has even been asserted in print in Upper Canada, that pending the late proceedings as to their removal, bodies of the Indians were prohibited coming to the seat of government, to lay their remonstrances before the Lieut.-Governor, Sir F. B. Head.

By imparting civil and political rights to the Indians, we shall give them a lasting hold upon civilized life, as by now doing them a signal act of justice in regard to their lands, we shall give civilized society a strong hold upon their confidence and affections; whilst by furnishing them through various institutions with the means of improvement, we shall rapidly qualify them for every station.

The Indian trade. XXII. In regard to the Indian trade, we propose to confine ourselves, in this report, to a few general remarks. The case of the Hudson's Bay Company is the most important on this branch of the subject; and we reserve it for future consideration. There is, however, a considerable trade carrying on with the Aborigines within the limits of Canada, and in the British North American possessions.

Almost the earliest communications of Europeans with the Indians were commercial; and it was soon seen that their ignorance exposed them to fraud and oppression on the part of traders. Various devices have been resorted to in order to check fraud and improve such dealing, and although no sufficiently good method of reforming past errors on this head has been suggested; various expedients have been attended with a certain degree of success; and it seems probable that with due care the Indian trade might be put on a satisfactory footing.

Old evils are, 1st, the supply of spirituous liquors as barter to the Indians.

2ndly. The low price given them for their goods.

3rdly. Direct frauds, by which in particular cases, Indians are oppressed.

Whatever may be done by positive laws to prevent the first of these evils, the other two will give way, it is feared, only to advancement in civilization.

It has been attempted in various ways to protect the Indians from direct oppression. The proclamation of 1763, above quoted, directs a licence system for that purpose.

In Nova Scotia the government once established a system of barter at houses and with goods of its own, for the same purpose; and prohibited private trade, even with licences.

Both courses have failed.

Monopolies of trade in any form seem to be in all respects injurious to the Aborigines; and they have proved especially injurious in the colder countries, where freedom alone, commercial as well