

REPORT
ON THE
INDIANS OF UPPER CANADA.

The Sub-committee appointed to make a comprehensive inquiry into the state of the Aborigines of British North America, present thereupon the FIRST PART of their general report.

Countries in question. I. The countries which fall within the reference, appear to be as follows: the Canadas; New Brunswick; Nova Scotia; Cape Breton; Newfoundland; Prince Edward's Island; Anticosti; Labrador; the Hudson's Bay, and North West Companies' territories, including certain posts and settlements on the Northern Pacific; and Honduras.

Tribes. II. The tribes and classes of coloured men in question, are, Indians; Esquimaux; and descendants of Africans; with a considerable number of individuals of mixed blood.

Decay of population. III. The absence or defect of census of aborigines, is one of the evils requiring an immediate remedy in British North America in order that particular systems may be put to the test by its being seen, whether the native people increase, or diminish under their influence. But enough is known of their population in the most important places, both for times past, and at present to justify the conclusion, that they have long been declining in numbers, and that of late this diminution has been advancing with great and increasing rapidity.

IV. We propose limiting this first part of our report to Upper Canada.

Amount of population. Without entering upon the interesting story of the natives of Canada under the French domination, it is sufficient for our present object to state that even at the conquest in 1759, powerful tribes of Abenagua, Algonquin, Iroquois, Mississagua, and Huron Indians, occupied the country from below Quebec, to the furthest post then held by the French to protect their traders beyond Lake Erie. In 1721, Charlevoix, a high authority, estimated the population of *some* of Algonquin tribes at 6000 souls, but they were then diminishing daily under the influence of spirituous liquors, diseases, and other causes. (*Charlevoix, History of New France, vol. iii, p. 189.*) Some of the tribes of the Iroquois, with whom the French had many disastrous wars, were then estimated at 60,000 souls. (*Ib. p. 203*); and the Hurons who were settled in parts of Upper Canada, were extensive agriculturists, and a denser population. (*Ib. p. 198.*)

In 1759 the French colonists and traders amounted to about 60,000 souls, of whom a considerable number are believed to have been a mixed race, either illegitimate, or, in not unfrequent cases, sprung from marriages of French with Indians.