

defenceless frontiers in 1690, and continued until the 10th day of December, 1697, when the peace of Ryswick was proclaimed at Boston.* The territory claimed by the French on this continent confined the English plantation to a strip of land of unequal width on the sea-coast. Asserting the Kenebec to be their boundary between them and Massachusetts, they held the whole Eastern coast, Nova Scotia, Cape Breton, St. John (now Prince Edward's Island), Newfoundland, Labrador, and Hudson's Bay, while, on the other hand, they maintained that they were entitled to a moiety of Vermont, to more than half of the province of New York, to the whole valley of the Mississippi, and to Texas, as far as Rio Bravo del Norte. Knowing their own weakness, they proposed, at the commencement of hostilities, to prolong the peace then subsisting in America ; an offer which William promptly rejected. But nothing seemed to be severer in the fortune of the British colonies, than that after they had purchased or conquered their territory, unaided

* The treaty was signed on the 1st of September.

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