

that they regard with unfeigned pleasure your lordship's appointment to that responsible office, and that they entertain a profound respect for that well merited reputation as the friend of freedom and of justice, which have procured for your lordship the confidence of her Majesty, and the hopes of the country.

While the Committee earnestly desire that your lordship's talents, energy, and wisdom, may be made the means under Divine providence, of healing the wounds inflicted by war and insurrection, of allaying irritation, remedying grievances, and preventing party strifes, they beg most respectfully to commend to your lordship's attention, the claims and sufferings of the Canadian Indians—a class of the population committed to your lordship's management, whose rights are the most ancient and sacred, and yet whose grievances are the most afflictive and unmerited. It is not a question of privilege and prerogative which forms the ground of expostulation, on behalf of the ill-fated Aborigines of our Canadian provinces. It is their very existence which is at stake. It is threatened annihilation rapidly advancing, and almost consummated, which has raised the voice of the Committee, imploring the interposition of the British government, whose faith has been repeatedly pledged to those sufferers, and who have not even a semblance of a complaint to urge against them.

The Committee beg to submit to your lordship's recollection that the whole of those vast tracts which now constitute our rich and valuable North American possessions, were once the undisputed property of free and independent tribes of Indians. A large portion of that territory has been absolutely taken from them, and the remainder has been acquired by purchase or concession, on terms of more than questionable character.

Many of the calamities of modern colonization have fallen heavily on the red tribes of North America. Resistance to unjust invasion provoked hostilities, and outrages created endless retaliations—the causes of those innumerable wars, perfidious alliances, and designing treaties, which have ultimately dispossessed the Aborigines of their territory. The once numerous and contented tribes of Indians, the rightful owners of the soil of Canada, are quickly disappearing by the sure progress of extermination.

Numerous artifices have been practised to debase the character of the Indian, as well as to alienate the lands, while little has been attempted to reclaim him from the life of the savage, to improve his condition, or educate his mind. Intestine feuds have been fomented, tribe arrayed against tribe, mutual animosities and jealousies engendered, and deadly weapons introduced to make destruction more speedy and sure.

The white man's intercourse has demoralized them, his traffic has defrauded them, his alliances have betrayed them, and his wars have destroyed them. They have thus lost the virtues of the savage without acquiring those of the Christian.

However upright may have been the intention of legislators, the fulfilment of their treaties has too often been left to the direction of men having a direct interest in violating or evading them. In every transaction, pacific or warlike, the poor Indian has ever been the sufferer and his remonstrance is as vain as his resistance is hopeless. The overwhelming tide of white intruders still rolls on. The heroic Indian falls before the pioneer of the wilderness, the avaricious speculator in land. In our commerce with the Indian, we settle the equivalent, and we gain the advantage while he has no redress for direct outrage or fraudulent dealing. His evidence is not received in our courts, and justice is thus denied for wrongs inflicted with impunity.

The Aborigines have diminished wherever they have come in contact with civilization. They have perished by the violence and injustice of men professing the name of Christianity, and not by a law of the human