

between these peoples, and initiating the long series of conflicts detailed in the early history of the colony, which were only stopped for a time by the peace of Montreal, in 1701, when representatives of tribes, from the Gulf of St. Lawrence to the Mississippi, to the number of 1,300 chiefs and deputies are said to have been present.

Time will not permit us, however, to trace the fortunes of the aborigines through the long period of colonial history, during which the Iroquois, allied to the English, and the Algonkins, supported and encouraged in war by the French, occupied a position, as, they said, between the blades of the scissors, in which their number and importance were continually diminishing. The history of the Indians in this period, is besides, so much that of Canada and New England that, though capable of treatment from our standpoint, it is too well known to need recapitulation here.

It has at times been affirmed that the English government did not extinguish the Indian title in Canada proper, when it took possession of the country. This is not however, strictly speaking, the case; for in the proclamation of George III, in 1763, consequent on the treaty of that date, by which Canada became finally British, the following passage, relating to the Indians, occurs:

"And we do further declare it to be our royal will and pleasure, for the present, as aforesaid, to reserve under our sovereignty, protection and dominion, for the use of the said Indians, all the lands and territories not included within the limits granted to the Hudson's Bay Company; as also the lands and territories lying westward of the sources of the rivers which fall into the sea, from the west and north-west, as afore said. And we do hereby strictly forbid, on pain of our displeasure, all our loving subjects from making any purchases or settlements whatever, or taking possession of the lands above reserved, without our special leave and licence, for that purpose."

Different commissions of enquiry into the condition of the Canadian Indians have since been issued from time to time, and of which those of 1847 and 1856 were probably the most important. In reference to the Indian title, the commissioners of 1847 thus state their views: * "Although the Crown claims the territorial estate and eminent dominion in Canada, as in other of the older colonies, it has, ever since its possession of the

* Quoted by Hind, Canadian Exploring Expedition.