

tions to so incorporate and when they subdued a foreign tribe, or nation, after the usual revenge in the way of torture, making "cruel examples", they adopted their captives, who upon good behaviour, became equally esteemed with members of their own tribes. We are also told that from time immemorial, the Five Nations were the most democratic of all the native tribes of North America and their views of personal liberty and equality were most pronounced. Each nation was an independent republic governed by their sachems, or old men, who held public councils or what might be termed federal parliaments at intervals, at which speech-making was a great feature. Oratory was much cultivated and was the most distinguished of their gifts of inheritance. As a people they had good conceit of themselves, thinking they were "by nature superior to the rest of mankind, and call themselves Onguehonwe; that is, men surpassing all others."* Comparing them with other autochthonous peoples, they were probably the intellectuals of North America, as the Greeks were of the Ancient World. Do we wonder then that their descendants of to-day give the Indian Department trouble?

Another bit of history interesting for its own sake might be given. Before the first settlement of Canada by the French, what is known of the Indians is darkly clouded with tradition; but at that time the Five Nations were at war with the Adirondacks who drove them from their ancient habitat in the country around Hochelaga (now Montreal) to the territory which they made famous by their occupation. In "Colden's Indians" it is stated that the Five Nations were more or less agricultural in their pursuits and inclined to peace, being despised by the Adirondacks—whose ancient domain, by the way, was the Ottawa country—for follow-

ing business, bartering the products of the soil for the spoils of the hunt—which they thought fit only for women. It was through conflict with the Adirondacks that they became trained in warfare and warlike, and shortly the very name of "Mohawk" was terrifying throughout a vast extent of the Indian country. Like that of Cromwell, it might have been used by mothers to make their children good.

We come now to the important and pertinent part of our subject. Without referring at all to the tragic and bloody chapter of Iroquois warfare which Parkman has made as familiar to Canadian readers as the War of the Roses, or the Riel rebellion, in the War of Independence the Six Nations took sides with the British and shared the fate of the loyalists in the final issue. The British Government, in compensation for their losses in that struggle and as a recognition of their loyal co-operation, gave them a large tract of land on the Grand River in Ontario to which new home they were brought under the leadership of Brant and upon which they settled. The rest of their history does not interest us, except in the way that out of ancient treaty rights in New York state and the terms of transference to Canada certain claims have arisen, not at all new, it is true, because they have been urged for years; but pressed with great vigour last year before the Committee of the House referred to. In a very brief way, it may be stated that it is claimed on their behalf that the power of Parliament to deal with the Six Nations is limited by the international obligations between the British Crown and them. In other words, by virtue of treaty rights extending as far back as 1664, specifically recognized later at intervals, until their settlement in Canada, they regard themselves as allies, not subjects, of the

*"Colden's Indians," 1724.