

Four European Nations, the Spanish, French, Dutch and English began almost simultaneously the planting of colonies in North America early in the 17th century. There was a marked contrast in the treatment accorded by the governments of these nations and by these colonists to the natives of North America as compared with ~~Per~~ Mexico, Central America and South America. Mexico and Peru were found thickly populated by civilized nations, ruled over by stable and highly organized governments. These governments were overthrown the nations as such ceased to exist, the people were dispossessed of their lands, their cities were plundered. No pretence was made of recognition of any rights of possession either of real or personal property in the government or the people of Mexico or Peru.

Now the first thing to be always kept in mind in arriving at a true estimate of the Indian title to the lands occupied by them in North America is the very striking fact that the Indians were never dispossessed of their lands by any European Government. The main reasons for this contrast of treatment probably were:

(a) The Indians were Warriors and could resist European aggression very much more effectively than could the Peruvians or Mexicans; and could retaliate with as much cruelty for wrongs done them as could any of the Christian nations.

(b) The number of Indians in comparison with the vast area of North America was so small that sufficient territory to meet the needs of the European colonists consistent with all the rights claimed by the Indians in their respective territories was quite possible.

(c) The Indians had no gold, silver, precious stones or other form of compact wealth which could conveniently be stolen as had the Peruvians and Mexicans, and so there was no immediate object in attacking, subjecting or exterminating them. The Indian lacked the European instinct for owning things; hence he had no possessions. His whole passion was for the chase; his ~~only~~ use for land was to hunt over it. For this reason the only commodities to be had of the Indians were furs. Now the fur trade soon after the discovery of America came to be held in high estimation by the Europeans, especially by the French and English. Both these.....

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