

assembled, and, when the Commissioners summoned them to the marquee tent adjoining the militia encampment, the Crees duly appeared, led by their chief, Loud-Voice. Chief Cote, of the Saulteaux, absented himself, however, though a number of his followers were present. After the Lieutenant-Governor had explained the object of the gathering, Loud-Voice announced that his followers were not yet ready to proceed to business, and a day's delay was agreed to. On the morrow, however, several armed Indians came as ambassadors to ask for a further delay of two days, and after considerable parleying, the morning of the 11th was agreed upon as the time of the next conference. That the chiefs were by no means freely exercising their own volition was manifest. Their armed followers kept them under the strictest supervision, and in many ways hampered proceedings by their turbulent conduct. Indeed, on the 11th of Saulteaux kept away altogether, and did all they could to prevent attendance on the part of the Crees. On the 12th business really commenced. The formal Indian ceremony of elaborate hand-/p.211/shaking marked the opening of the interview, whereupon the Cominion Commissioner outlined the terms they had to offer.

Much difficulty was experienced by the Commissioners in finding out exactly what were the special causes of discontent on the part of the savages with whom they had come to treat. The original place chosen for the meeting had been upon a Hudson's Bay Company reserve, and to this reserve the Indians objected with a great vehemence, as it had been surveyed without consulting them. They considered that the Company was robbing them of their property. "When one Indian takes anything from another, we call it stealing," said a notable Indian chief, The Gambler. "What did the Company steal from you?" said Lieutenant-Governor Morris. "The earth, trees, grass, stones; all that which I see with my eyes," replied the Indian. The Commissioners told how the company had become entitled to this reserve, and explained the vested rights for the surrender of which Canada had paid the company the sum of three hundred thousand pounds.