

only ten in all, but fine looking men—apparently men of influence amongst their tribe. They awaited Hay's approach into their midst with the utmost indifference; but as soon as he entered the circle, with one of the voyageurs who had a smattering of Indian, (whilst the rest remained a few paces off, on the verge of a little clump of trees opposite the camp,) a tall Indian, evidently a chief, arose immediately, and said in his own language:

"My brother is welcome."

Hay acknowledged the courtesy, and then said:

"What brings the Abenaki chief so far from his village? Why did he not call and see the British at the Fort?"

After a pause, the chief answered: "The Abenakis go to visit their brethren near the Big Lake; when they return perhaps they will call and see my brother."

"The Abenakis must call and see their friends, the English, who will give them the best they have."

"The Abenakis require no gifts," said the chief unconcernedly; "they have plenty to eat."

Hay asked some further questions, with the object of obtaining some insight into their feelings towards the English; but they returned such cool, evasive replies, that he found it useless to pursue the enquiry further. He ascertained, however, one fact, which corroborated the surmise he had formed, that they were deputies of their tribe to the conference to be held at Johnson Hall, a few weeks later.* He then

turned to another subject, which was of the deepest interest to him, though he put it in a quiet, unconcerned manner, so that he might not awaken the suspicions of the chief.

"My brother has had a French visitor to see him? Why has he not remained to welcome his English friend?"

The chief heard him without moving a muscle of his face, and replied with the most perfect indifference,

"The Lynx"—such appeared to be the chief's name—"does not understand the English chief. He has no French brave in his camp—he has not seen any stranger since he left his village by the Great River."

Hay and his party remained for some hours at the camp, with the hope of obtaining a clue to the whereabouts of the stranger, but to no purpose. The Indians resumed their former indifference, and seemed perfectly careless of the presence of the English officer and his party. Hay, however, saw in this very indifference an attempt on the part of the Indians to lull any suspicions he might have. He then resolved to try a stratagem before he gave up his design of entrapping the stranger, and gaining some knowledge as to the mission of the Indians.

Hay took a ceremonious leave of the chief, who accompanied him to the shore, and stood watching the party whilst it moved up the river, apparently with the intention of making as much progress as possible in the direction of St. Johns that afternoon. This part of the river was much broken by rapids and impeded by shallows, but the voyageurs, well used to its navigation, propelled their canoes rapidly over the picturesque stream. In the course of an hour they had reached a point where there was a prettily sequestered cove, and sheltered by overhanging trees. Here Hay gave orders to land and make preparations as if it was their intention to remain there during the night, whose shadows were already commencing to creep over forest and river. He had thought it very probable that the Abenakis would send one of their party to watch his movements, and this suspicion was soon strengthened by

* While Bouquet was fighting the battle of Bushy Run, and Dalzell making his fatal sortie against the camp of Pontiac, Sir W. Johnson was engaged in the more pacific yet more important task of securing the friendship and alliance of the Six Nations. After several preliminary conferences, he sent runners throughout the whole Confederacy to invite deputies of the several tribes to meet him in council at Johnson Hall. The request was not declined. From the banks of the Mohawk, from the Oneida, Cayuga, and Tuscarora villages; from the valley of the Onondaga, where, from immemorial time, had burned the great council fire of the Confederacy, came chiefs and warriors to the place of meeting. The Senecas alone, the warlike tenants of the Genesee Valley, refused to attend, for they were already in arms against the English. Besides the Iroquois, deputies came likewise from the tribes dwelling along the St. Lawrence and within the settled parts of Canada.—*Parkman's Conspiracy of Pontiac.*