

two of Sherburne's party were put to death on the evening of the capture, and four or five others at different times afterwards. 5th. That one of the garrison who surrendered was killed on the eighth day after surrendered. 6th. That the four hostages who were delivered as security for the fulfilment of the cartel were immediately plundered and stripped by the savages. 7th. That one prisoner was first shot and then, when alive, was roasted, as related by his companion now in possession of the savages, who himself saw the fact. 8th. That others, worn down with famine and cruelty, were exposed on an island naked.

The statement of the British officers and Canadians was drawn up at Montreal in detail, upon the 6th of September. It contains a copy of Captain Forster's letter to Major Butterfield, embodying the terms of surrender in full, and expressly granting only the lives of the garrison and the clothes on their backs. It was never denied that the baggage was plundered. As for the ill-treatment of the prisoners, the Rev. Father Detarlaye, Priest at the Indian Village, had the best of opportunities of knowing the real facts, for the Indians of that village had a large share in these transactions. He writes :

"I can say in praise of the Commander, that he kept the savages in such order that I never saw the laws of humanity better observed. Two or three watches, with as many coats taken, could not be objects of such strong complaints. Did it ever happen among the most civilized nations that the conquered lost no part of their baggage? Did the officers who were at the Lake want bread, fresh meat and fuel? It is true they were not given beds and clothes, because there were none in the place, but the officer who was wounded in the thigh was taken into the house of the missionaries, who furnished him with every comfort."

It has been related that four Captains were retained as hostages for the fulfilment of this cartel. One of them was a brother of General Sullivan, of the Continental army. Indignant at the action of Congress, he writes to his brother, under date, Montreal, August 14th, 1776, in the following strain :—"I am much surprised to hear that the Congress, instead of redeeming us according to the cartel, have not only refused to do it, but have demanded Capt. Forster to be delivered up to answer his conduct in what they are pleased to term the Massacre of the Cedars. I would fain

flatter myself that the Congress would never have thought of such unheard of proceedings, had they not had a false representation of the matter. Do not think that I am under any constraint when I say and call that God who must judge of the truth, to witness that not a man living could have used more humanity than Capt. Forster did after the surrender of the party I belonged to."

Another of the hostages was Captain Bliss. He writes,* at the same date and place, to the Rev. Wm. Emerson, at Concord, in the very warmest praise of Capt. Forster, whom he styles a Christian and a gentleman. He says the reasons of Congress in breaking the cartel are known to none but God and themselves. The third of the four hostages writes to Colonel Morey, in New Hampshire, that ever since he was a prisoner he has been used well, and that there was no massacre or ill-treatment.† He confirms the British account of the purchase of the prisoners from the Indians, and says the cartel was a sacred thing, and was fulfilled by the British.

These letters prove conclusively the falseness of the charges of ill-treatment ; but there is no need of them—the very words of the report bear their own testimony to their falsehood. The report states that as soon as the hostages were delivered up they were handed over to the Indians and plundered and stripped. This painstaking Committee actually thought that the four hostages were new men handed over fresh from the army, whereas they were not *delivered* over, but *retained* in the hands of the British. They were among the captives at Oka, as the signatures of two of them to the cartel witness. If they were "plundered and stripped" when taken, they could not have been "plundered and stripped" a second time.

The Committee were equally unfortunate in their roasting story. "A man," they say, "was first shot and then roasted"—a thing unheard of among Indians. The roasting of captives was always for purposes of torture, and the victims were kept alive as long as possible ; they add, moreover, that the cruelty was seen by his companion, *who was still with the Indians*. Upon this hearsay report, through no one knows how many mouths, the Congress were willing to base so horrible a charge. No name is given, no place, no details. No letter or direct message from this unnamed "man with the Indians" is

* American Archives.

† American Archives.