

ACCORDINGLY, agreeable to his Majesty's orders, the 14th of June was appointed for a grand congress of commissioners from the several provinces, to be held at Albany, as well to treat with the Six Nations, as to concert a scheme for a general union of the British colonies. Messengers had been dispatched to the Indian castles* to request their attendance; but they did not arrive till the latter end of the month; and the Mohawks, who live but 40 miles distance, came in last. This occasioned various speculations: some imputed it to fear; lest the French, in their absence, should fall upon their countries: Others to art, — imagining that by exciting our jealousy of their wavering disposition, at so critical a juncture, the more liberal would be the presents made them by the several governments. Not a few thought it an artifice of Mr. Johnson's, who expected to rise into importance, from the reputation of a mighty influence over the Indians, kept them from a punctual attendance; being very confident of a public request to himself from the commissioners, to go up, and hasten their progress. There

* The Indians call their villages, which are only surrounded with pallisades, castles.

1754.

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