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THE MASSACRE AT THE CEDARS.

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been fired, efforts had been made to enlist the Indians on the side of the colonies. This will appear from a comparison of some of the documents published in the "American Archives," with the dates of the early events of the war. At Lexington, on April 19th, 1775, the first blood was shed. On June 17th, 1775, was fought the battle of Bunker's Hill. In September of the same year the continental army invaded Canada. St. Johns was captured two months afterward, and Montreal was occupied until the middle of June, 1776. On July 4th, 1776, appeared the Declaration of Independence, and only five weeks previously occurred the event stigmatised as the "Massacre of the Cedars."

There was at first, upon the English side, some hesitation about enlisting Indians. The Earl of Dartmouth, under date, London, Aug. 2nd, 1775, writes to General Gage, that "the steps which you say the rebels have taken for calling in the assistance of the Indians leave no room to hesitate, upon the propriety of your pursuing the same measure." A letter, signed "A Soldier," which appeared in the London papers on October 22nd, 1776, refers to General Carleton's aversion to employ them, and urges their enlistment. Among the colonists, General Schuyler alone seems to have hesitated; no suspicion of wrong in the matter appears to have existed in the mind of any one else. The alliance of the great Iroquois Confederacy was eagerly courted, and for a long time the colonial party thought that all the Indians, even the Mohawks at Caughnawaga, would side with them.\* Eventually the Mohawks, Senecas, Cayugas and Onondagas sided with the Crown, but the Oneidas and Tuscaroras espoused the cause of the colonists. In the east, so doubtful was the conduct of the Micmacs, that the settlers at Halifax were forbidden to sell them powder, and they were obliged to resort to the Massachusetts Commissariat. The first Indians who took up arms for the British were the Abenakis.† A small number of that tribe formed part of the garrison of St. Johns, and in Sept., 1775, joined, not in an attack upon the frontiers of the United States, but in the defence of a frontier town of Canada against an invading enemy.

Long previously, as early as the winter of

\* Col. Ethan Allan to the Massachusetts Congress, June 9, 1775.

† Maurault—Histoire des Abenakis.

1774-5, the revolutionary party had been tampering with the Indians of Canada. One of their emissaries, writing from Montreal, gives full details of his visit to the Caughnawaga Indians, and informs the Massachusetts Congress that those Indians had received overtures from Israel Putnam, and had assured him in reply that, if they took up arms at all, it would be against the King.‡ During the whole of the winter of 1774-5, and the following summer, emissaries from the colonies were busy among the Indians of Canada and Acadia. In the Colony of Massachusetts the Indians of Stockbridge were enrolled as minute men, and each received from the Provincial Congress a blanket and a ribbon for "taking up the hatchet" against Great Britain.§ This people were not, from the fact of their being in Massachusetts, more civilized than others of their race, because in their reply to President Hancock,|| they ask only to be shown their enemy, and hope that no regulations may be made to prevent them "fighting after the manner of their forefathers." This policy of arming the Indians was therefore adopted even before Lexington. In an Address of the same Congress to the Mohawk tribe, dated April 4th, 1775, it as clearly appears. The Address is long, but, as it is typical of the style of many others, a few extracts are given:

"BROTHERS—Our fathers in Great Britain tell us our lands and houses and cattle and money are not our own—that we ourselves are not our own men but their servants. \* \* \* \* Brothers—We used to send our vessels on the Great Lake, whereby we were able to get clothes and what we needed for ourselves and you, but such has lately been their conduct that we cannot, they have told us we shall have no more guns nor powder to use and kill our wolves and other game nor to send to you. \* \* \* How can you live without powder and guns? \* \* \* Brothers—We think it our duty to inform you of our danger, and desire you to give notice to all your kindred, as we fear they will attempt to cut our throats, and if you should allow them to do that, there will nobody remain to keep them from you. We, therefore, earnestly desire you to *whet your hatchet*

‡ J. Brown to the Committee of Correspondence, March 29, 1775.

§ Address of Congress to the Indians of Stockbridge, April 1, 1775.

|| Address of the Stockbridge Indians to Massachusetts Congress, April 11, 1775.