

with Mr. Thomson's statement.* On the 8th of July Lieutenant Eldridge, of the 13th regiment, was ordered to the support of some American pickets with a detachment of some forty men. In the execution of this service he fell into an ambuscade, and, after a hard contest, his party, with the exception of five, were cut to pieces, by the superior force of *British* and Indians. These five prisoners along with the wounded were then, (according to Mr. Thomson,) "inhumanly murdered," and their persons so savagely mutilated that, "the most temperate recital of the enemy's conduct would, perhaps, scarcely obtain belief." Mr. Thomson here dwells at some length on the atrocities perpetrated—"split skulls," and "torn out hearts," forming part of his catalogue of horrors—he then adds, "Lieutenant Eldridge was supposed to have experienced the same fate."

What were the real facts of this case? Some stores of which the British were in particular want, had been left concealed, at the time of the retreat from Fort George, at a spot not far from an American outpost. The Indian chief Black Bird having been informed of the exigencies of the case, volunteered to bring them into the camp, and he accordingly departed on his expedition with some one hundred and fifty of his warriors. In the performance of his undertaking Lieutenant Eldridge and his party were encountered and captured. After the American officer had surrendered, he drew forth a concealed pistol and shot one of the chiefs, in whose charge he was, through the head, endeavouring to make his escape, for this act of treachery Lieut. Eldridge very deservedly lost his life, and to those who are cognizant of the Indian character it will not appear strange that some of his party should have also paid the penalty of their officer's perfidy. Not one British or Canadian was present on this occasion, (this is proved by Mr. O'Connor himself, in his account,† in which he no where alludes to the British,) yet, Mr. Thomson's rabid feelings have induced him to cite this act of cruelty on the part of the British as a cause for the Indian alliance.

A reference to dates will further disprove Mr. Thomson's statements. "This "act of

cruelty" was perpetrated on the 8th of July, now the declaration of war by the six nations of Indians was made three days antecedent, and could not therefore have been occasioned by this "case of barbarity."

"We, the chiefs and counsellors of the Six Nations of Indians, residing in the State of New York, do hereby proclaim to all the war-chiefs and warriors of the Six Nations, that war is declared on our part against the Provinces of Upper and Lower Canada. Therefore, we do hereby command and advise all the war-chiefs to call forth the warriors under them, and put them in motion, to protect their rights and liberties, which our brethren the Americans, are now defending.—By the Grand Counsellors."

It would have been far more honest had American writers come boldly forward and justified, on their real grounds, the alliance which they had all along desired to form. They would have been then spared the trouble of inventing, and the disgrace of circulating, all those marvellous tales which disgrace their pages. The credit of being foremost amongst the ranks of these modern Baron Munchausens is certainly due to the government organ, in which the "*Head of the English Church*" is first vehemently denounced as an "ally of Hell-hound murderers," and then contrasted with the United States Government. "From the organization of the government of the United States, the constant care of every administration has been to better the condition of the Indian tribes, and preserve profound peace with them. Such is the spirit of our republican institutions. We never began a war with them, or placed the tomahawk in their hands. When the British, in alliance with them, ravaged our frontier and committed murders, until then, unheard of, we *advised* this restless people to peace, and resisted their importunity to retaliate on the enemy the wrongs they had inflicted. They have been *sometimes employed as spies or guides but in no other capacity*. At this moment (April 1813) the United States could let loose on the British in Canada, upwards of one thousand Indian warriors, impatient for the field of battle, thirsting for blood. But

* James quotes this case, also, in his history, † History of the War, page 106.