

vent his joining the Royal standard. His old tutor, President Wheelock, sent him a long epistle on this subject, to which Brant ingenuously replied:—"I recall to mind, with pleasure, the happy hours I spent under your roof, and especially the prayers and family devotions to which I listened. One passage in particular was so often repeated it could never be effaced from my memory—viz., 'That they might be able to live as good subjects, to fear God, and honor the King!'" This letter was sufficient to convince anyone that Brant was firm in his attachment to the British cause. In June of 1776, Brant visited Unadilla for the purpose of procuring provisions, which were perforce furnished him. In a conference held at this time, he again expressed himself decidedly in favor of the Royal cause, alluding to old covenants and treaties entered into between the King and his people, and complaining of ill-treatment from the hands of the colonists. Shortly after this, Gen. Herkimer, of the American militia, started with a strong force for Brant's headquarters, upon what terms does not appear. Before the troubles between Great Britain and America, these two men were great friends. The troops that Gen. Herkimer thought proper to bring to this conference, accordingly, were viewed with suspicion by Brant. The chieftain concealed himself for a week, and when the conference was entered into, had a body-guard of five hundred warriors with him. The respective parties met unarmed, and every precaution was taken to prevent treachery. The parley terminated unsatisfactorily, and another appointment was made for the coming morning. Afterwards it was discovered that the General had engaged one Joseph Waggoner, with three associates, to shoot Brant and his three principal men. Whether the chieftain entertained any suspicion of foul play is not certain; but, as he entered the circle, he drew himself up with dignity, addressing Gen. Herkimer as follows:—"I have five hundred warriors with me, armed and ready for battle. You are in my power. As we have been neighbors and friends, I will not take the advantage of you." Saying which, at a signal, a host of armed warriors darted from the forest, painted,

and ready for the onslaught, as their war-whoops too plainly proclaimed. The Chief then thanked the General for his civility in coming so far to see him, and trusted some day he might return the compliment. The late Colonel Robert Nelles, father to the present missionary to the Six Nations, the Rev. Canon Nelles, was a volunteer with the Indians and present on this occasion.

Brant next marched to the British place of rendezvous at Oswego. Here a great council was held with the representatives of Great Britain. The result of this conference was a treaty of alliance between the Indians and the British. In August of 1777, the bloody battle of Oriskany was fought. The destruction on both sides was very great. The veteran officer Herkimer here received his death-wound. Although the Indians were worsted on this occasion, the Six Nations, with the exception of the Tuscaroras and the Oneidas, remained faithful to the king. Brant, aided by Johnson and Butler, used strenuous exertions to win over the Indians of the Far West to the royal cause. Failing in all these efforts, the chieftain returned to his old quarters at Oghkwaga, where he continued to harass and plunder the colonists. In this guerilla warfare Brant always strove to stay the hand uplifted against the feeble and helpless. In his attack on Springfield, for instance, he drove off or took prisoners all the men, but concealed in safety the women and children.

Early in November, 1778, Brant was reluctantly prevailed upon to leave his winter quarters at Niagara, and accompany Walter Butler, a man whom he greatly disliked, in an attack on the beautiful and prosperous settlement of Cherry Valley, a village defended by fortifications and garrisoned by troops under Col. Alden. The motive that impelled Butler to this expedition was a desire to avenge an imprisonment he had suffered on the charge of treason. The wholesale slaughter of the inhabitants of this settlement is said to have been fearful. The ferocious Senecas spared neither old nor young in their indiscriminate attack. The terrible scenes in the carnage of Cherry Valley cannot be shouldered upon Brant, since he held but a subordinate position in