

"After entering the council-room, and taking our seats, one of the chiefs commenced an address: "Englishmen," said he, "we, the Ottawas, were sometime since informed of your arrival in this country, and of your having brought with you the goods of which we have need. At this news, we were greatly pleased, believing, that through your assistance, our wives and children would be enabled to pass another winter; but, what was our surprise, when, a few days ago, we were again informed, that the goods which, as we had expected, were intended for us, were on the eve of departure for distant countries, of which some are inhabited by our enemies! These accounts being spread, our wives and children came to us, crying, and desiring that we should go to the Fort, to learn, with our own ears, their truth or falsehood. We accordingly embarked, almost naked, as you see, and on our arrival here, we have inquired into the accounts, and found them true. We see your canoes ready to depart, and find your men engaged for the Mississippi, and other distant regions.

"Under these circumstances, we have considered the affair; and you are now sent for, that you may hear our determination, which is, that you shall give to each of our men, young and old, merchandise and ammunition, to the amount of fifty beaver-skins, on credit, and for which I have no doubt of their paying you in the summer, on their return from their wintering."

The extent of this demand, which the applicants refused to modify, confirmed the traders in their determination not to comply with it, and to this they were excited, as they understood the Ottawas were a people who never paid for what they received upon credit. To resist such an iniquitous proposal, the English in number about 30 assembled in the house where Mr. Henry lived; and barricading the entrance in the most effectual manner they could, armed themselves and determined to hold out upon the defensive. The night was past, as might be expected, in the greatest anxiety, being hourly in expectation of an attack, but which did not happen. The ensuing day, they were relieved from their apprehensions by the information that a detachment of British troops was advancing; and soon after 300 men of the sixtieth regiment entering the Fort, the Indians disappeared. Parties of these troops being sent out to the different posts on the route the canoes had to pass, Mr. Henry, notwithstanding the lateness of the season, (it being the month of September) determined to despatch his canoes on their intended voyage, while he himself resolved to spend the winter in Fort Michilimackinac.

Before proceeding farther it deserves to be mentioned, that it was during the course of this winter that Mr. Henry became acquainted with an Indian chief of the name of Wawatam, who as the sequel will show, had an opportunity of rendering him many signal services.—This man had been before taken a prisoner by the English; and the very kind treatment he had received from them, particularly from Sir William Johnson, produced a warm and sincere friendship which he displayed towards every Englishman, and more particularly towards the subject of these memoirs.