

capital of the Upper Province. This officer, it seems, more by useless annoyance than by actual severity, had exasperated the men to that degree, that at length they formed a plot to rise on their officers, and to avenge themselves on the few who had incurred their resentment. Far be it from us to justify the attempt, which indeed was highly criminal, but in all such extreme cases we hold that a sad abuse of power, or a gross want of tact, must be the predominant cause, and that, even in the passive obedience of a military life, there may be a limit to human endurance. The proximity of the United States rendered this plot a very feasible one, as the men in a body could have crossed the river without molestation or difficulty. Colonel Brock was privately informed, it appears, by one of the men, of the conspiracy, and he immediately proceeded in an open boat from York to Fort George. On his arrival he ordered the detachment under arms, and walking up to a sergeant, whom he knew to be the ringleader, commanded him to lay down his pike. The sergeant, taken by surprise, mechanically obeyed, and those most culpable were fortunately secured without the slightest resistance, although, we believe, the plot was to have been carried into effect that very day. On being tried by a court martial four were condemned to suffer death, and, with three deserters, were shot early in the month of March, in presence of the garrison at Quebec. A most awful and affecting sight it was: the wind was easterly, strong, and cold,—a thick drift of snow added to the gloom,—and, as if to increase the horror of the scene, a few of the firing party, fifty-six in number, instead of advancing to within eight yards of the prisoners as was intended, owing to some mistake, commenced firing at the