

THE DISMISSALS

new election took place in May. Shortly afterwards the governor took the impolitic step of dismissing from the militia Lieutenant-Colonel Panet (the speaker), Captains Bédard and Taschereau, Lieutenant Borgia and Surgeon Blanchet. The letter of dismissal to each, signed by H. W. Ryland, stated that the reason of the dismissal was that His Excellency could place no confidence in the services of a person whom he had good ground for considering as one of the proprietors of a seditious and libellous publication.

As to the opinion expressed by Brock in his letter of July, 1808, that war with the United States was now out of the question, it may be well to glance at the condition of affairs in Europe, and to find out what had produced the change of feeling in America. Russia, in 1807, had vainly struggled to free herself from the power of France, but after an unsuccessful campaign had concluded the Treaty of Tilsit with Napoleon. By its secret articles France allowed Russia to take Finland from Sweden, and Russia, on her part, promised to close her ports against British vessels. Napoleon's Berlin decrees had not really gone into force until the summer of 1807, when he ordered them to be executed in Holland, and in August a general seizure of neutrals took place at Amsterdam. From that time trade with the continent ceased. The seizure of their vessels had been a severe blow to the United States, and had roused in that country a feeling of