

March.

AN ACCOUNT OF SOME TUMULI NEAR
THE FALLS OF NIAGARA.

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the British Army.

About three miles from the Falls of Niagara, near the house of Sir P. Maitland, there is a range of rising ground, commanding an extensive view of Lake Ontario and the surrounding country, which is for the most part in this vicinity covered with wood.

On the most elevated part of this ridge, which is now called Mount Dorchester, two years ago, a large oak tree, measuring at the base five feet in circumference, was blown down, and an opening made in the soil by the roots of the tree being torn from the earth, which exposed to view a quantity of human bones. The person who discovered that the accident had happened caused an excavation of about ten feet in diameter to be made, and found a deep stratum of human bones regularly disposed, and forming a vast number of perfect skeletons. The wrist bones of many of the skeletons had a species of arm-lett upon them; the head of a tomahawk, several Indian pipes, beads, and other ornaments, were also found interred amongst the skeletons; and the conjecture suggested by the discovery is, that the remains in question are those of some of the aboriginal inhabitants of the country, who had fallen in some sanguinary conflict on the spot, and found their graves upon the field of battle.

The most interesting part of the discovery, however, consists in the circumstances, of many large couch shells, some of them bored so as to be used as a rude kind of musical instrument, having been found disposed under the heads of several skeletons. Several fragments of shells were also found near the upper parts of the bodies, and seem to have been worn upon the shoulders and arms, either as armour, or for the purpose of ornament, as they were perforated with

holes, which were probably intended to put fastenings into, to secure them upon the person. I was assured that these shells were of a species which is only found on the western coast of America, and on the shores of the neighbouring islands within the Tropics. On seeing the shells, I immediately recollected that in the museum at New York, there is a dress which belonged to the son of the King of Owhyhee, which was brought to Europe originally by one of Captain Cook's vessels, and that upon the same dress there is a couch shell of the species of the Niagara ones, which forms a very conspicuous ornament. Does not an investigation of this subject promise to throw some light on the history of the original population of the American continents, and the Islands of the Pacific.

The spot where these remains were found, bears every appearance of having been an Indian encampment. The ground on the side of the lake, which is distant about seven miles, seems to have been rendered steep by artificial means; and Mr. Rorbach, who first discovered the bones, says that when the ground is freed from the leaves of trees, which are every where strewed over it in great thickness, that holes, resembling the marks of pickets, may be seen surrounding the space of several acres. We should hence infer, that those warriors who fought with the tomahawk, and who used shells as musical instruments, and as defensive armour, were not ignorant of the art of war, so far as the construction of an extensive encampment, defended by works possessing some pretensions to regular fortification, goes.

Where the first excavation was made, there can be little doubt that a tumulus had originally been constructed over the bones; four heaps resembling tumuli have been opened, and found to contain bones and ornaments of the kind which I have described.

The people in the neighbourhood