

TRIAL OF PATRICK J. WHELAN.

PATRICK J. WHELAN was born near the city of Dublin about the year 1840. At 14 years of age, he was bound apprentice to a tailor in Dublin, with whom he served the full term of his apprenticeship. After learning his trade and obtaining his majority, he seems to have led a wandering life, travelling to and fro and working in several of the principal towns in England; and his restless disposition finally led him to seek fresh adventure and better fortune on this side of the Atlantic. His arrival in this country was probably about the year 1865, and the first traces of his movements were in the latter part of that year, in the city of Québec. In that place he seems to have worked somewhat industriously at his trade, and in the beginning of the following year he joined the Volunteer Cavalry. On the breaking out of the Fenian excitement his sympathies seem to have been in favor of that organization; and being unable to restrain his feelings, he was led into the commission of some rash act which brought him under the notice of the authorities. He was arrested, but from want of evidence, he was allowed to depart unpunished. We next find traces of him in the hot-bed of Fenianism—Buffalo—and possibly he had some connection with the band of marauders who left that city in June 1866, bent upon the destruction of the British Empire, using Canada as their base of operations.

It is supposed that he afterwards appeared in Hamilton. The papers of that city give an account of a tailor who appeared there in the latter part of 1866, who was a full-blown Fenian, and who, for using treasonable language, was arrested and afterwards liberated, and the description given fully answers to the appearance of Whelan. From Hamilton he appears to have again gone to Buffalo, and from the latter place he went to Montreal where he remained for about twelve months and worked in the establishment of Mr. Anderson. While in Montreal he entered the matrimonial state, choosing for his spouse a lady who was of undoubted respectability and possessed of a snug property; and who is, according to the statements of the witness Turner, about thirty years his senior. The union, as far as the lady was concerned, was an unfortunate one. The prisoner has impaired her property, and by his manner of life and associations has given her much cause to grieve. His strong Fenian proclivities led him to associate with that element of the Irish party in Montreal, whose proceedings in connection with the St. Patrick's Society, were marked with suspicious circumstances. He was a prominent member of that society; and it is probable that his hostility towards Mr. McGee took deep root in his heart owing to the uncompromising exposures which the deceased made of the doings of the Society.

In the fall of 1867, Whelan came to Ottawa, and while here his associations have been such as to stamp his character with the very strongest suspicion. As to personal appearance, Whelan is by no means a bad looking man, but is a person of violent temper and strong impulse; and his expression of countenance, which bears the indelible furrows of passion, fully bears out the accounts which are given of him in that respect. As point after point of evidence was brought out during his trial, his uncontrollable restlessness of body, his constant turning of the head, his knitted brows, his staring eyes and twitching mouth, gave evident marks of his anxiety.

MONDAY, 7th September, 1868.

Before the hour appointed for the opening of the Court, quite a number of people had gathered in the neighbourhood; but to prevent overcrowding, it had been wisely arranged by the Sheriff that admission should be gained only by ticket.

At about half-past nine o'clock the Hon. Chief Justice Richards, preceded by the Sheriff, entered the court room, and the crier thereafter opened the court in due form.