

PETER MAILMAN.

THE MURDER.

During my attendance at the trial of Peter Mailman,—listening day after day to the horrible details of the Murder as they were brought out by the different witnesses; and holding frequent intercourse with the prisoner in his cell, I was led to contemplate very fully and seriously the crime of murder. Nothing is dearer to a man than his life, and yet, how many doors there are to let life out!—Hundreds are passing each other in the street every day; a stab with the smallest pocket knife might fatally wound. To move among men is practically placing one's life every moment at their mercy, and yet how safe we all feel. This, if we come to think, is not all due to our laws; not the result of the security which the fear of capital punishment inspires; it is the working of a natural law which instinctively leads every man to hold sacred the life of his fellow-man.

How often are two men together alone—far from the reach of mortal eye, and yet neither as a rule, trembles in fear of death. It may be laid down as a fixed principle that only a murderer at heart can commit wilful murder. It is almost impossible to conceive the depth of wickedness to which a human being has sunk—the horrible lack of all natural feeling, when he can deliberately and in cold blood strike dead a fellow-being. The mind sickens in contemplating such a revolting act, and we instinctively thank God that, although our world is full of vice and sin, happily the propensity to murder is comparatively rare.

The details of the murder of Mrs. Mailman by her husband are unusually horrible—a more atrocious murder is not on record in this country. If his confession is to be believed, the case is slightly modified, but the facts in evidence stamp the deed as a most cowardly, heinous murder. I learned that the deceased was a very beautiful woman of her class—her appearance being much more prepossessing than that of any other woman in the locality. Alas! how dread a fate!

The circumstances of the murder and the trial are taken directly from my reports written at the time for the Daily Acadian Recorder.

THE PRISONER.—HIS CELL.—HIS APPEARANCE—WHAT HE SAYS—

PRELIMINARY FACTS, &c.

More than a quarter of a century has passed since a case of wilful murder has happened in the County of Lunenburg, and the present