

## A FATHER KILLS HIS OWN CHILD.

One of the most awful instances of the results which sometimes follow an ungovernable temper, was brought to light at the term of the Court of Queen's Bench in Montreal, which closed its sittings about the middle of October, in the case of *The Queen vs. Lefebvre*. The facts of the case, as detailed upon the trial were as follows: Lefebvre is a Notary, and resided in the Parish of St. Marthe, County of Vaudreuil. Upon the second of September last, he was working in one of his fields, and placed his young son, aged about seven years, at a gate to prevent cattle from getting among the grain. By some means this duty was not carefully performed, and cattle did get among the grain. Lefebvre upon seeing this, became very much enraged, and ran after his son, who fled from him to another field, in his flight hurriedly crossing a fence. In this second field the father overtook him, and seizing him by one arm, kicked him violently about the body till he fell to the ground, when he gave him eight or ten more kicks. The child reached home with great difficulty, and on the following day, a Dr. Lalonde, residing close at hand, was called in to see him at the instance of Lefebvre. In evidence he thus describes the condition in which he found the boy. "Breathing slow, face pale, large drops of sweat on the forehead, the case was hopeless; returned home for medicine; on returning the child was dying. Made a post mortem on the 5th of September. There were no marks of violence; had however remarked a greenish color between the skin and muscles, and he had come to the conclusion that death was due to a shock sustained by the nervous system, occasioning congestion of the brain. The prisoner had told him he had kicked the child; he had no doubt that to these blows was due the congestion of the brain, ultimately death. There was a rupture of the intestine, which was necessarily fatal."

The evidence as quoted above, is taken from the report published in the *Montreal Herald*, and as it stands uncontradicted we presume it is correct. If so we confess regret that such evidence should be given by a medical witness. The veriest tyro in medicine would not seek to give the credit of the fatal issue to a congested sensorium, when he found a ruptured intestine, and saw the patient an hour or two previous to death, exhibiting all the signs of the last stage of Traumatic peritonitis. A clearer case of cause and effect it would be hard to find, and how Dr. Lalonde could possibly express the opinion attributed to him, we confess ourselves completely at a loss to understand. When given at the inquest it had its

effect however upon the jury whom the Coroner of Montreal assembled, and the result was a verdict of accidental death was returned. It seems hardly to be credited that a Coroner with the experience of Coroner Jones, should have received such a verdict. To doubt for a moment that its absurdity did not strike him, would be insulting. What can we think then at his not only receiving it, but letting the matter drop? We hesitate to characterise it as we think it deserves. That it was not allowed to rest, is due to the action of a resident of Vaudreuil. At the trial, which as we have already said took place the commencement of October, Dr. Lalonde gave the evidence we have quoted, and which in our opinion is far from being creditable to him. The defence, finding that the congestion of the brain theory was blown to the wind, principally by the evidence of Dr. Craik of Montreal, tried to make out that the ruptured intestine was the result of a fall the child received while crossing a fence in his efforts to escape from his father, and one Dr. Lefebvre, (no relation of the prisoner) informed the jury that if the rupture had been due to kicks, he could not have walked home, while if it was due to a fall from a fence, he could have walked home. Verily a Daniel come to judgment—yea, a second Daniel. We should like to know his authority for this diagnostic sign, as to the cause which produces rupture of the abdominal organs. In spite of all the contradictory professional evidence, that of the majority of medical men we regret to say, not being calculated to raise our profession before the public—the jury brought in a verdict of guilty, and the unfortunate father, who when too late, realized the awful position his ungoverned temper had placed him, was at the close of the term, sentenced to three years confinement in the Provincial Penitentiary.

## MONTREAL GENERAL HOSPITAL.

We have received the Fifty-first Annual Report of this valuable Institution, and appended to it is a brief history of the Hospital from its foundation. From the report we learn that the ordinary income of the year, which terminated on the 30th of April last, was \$32,342.93. There has been an increase over that of last year in the income from the following sources, viz.: Subscriptions and donations, \$816.32; Church collections, \$54.91; Medical Students' fees, \$171.50; Interest, \$3,307.51. On the other hand, the revenue from the following sources has fallen below that of the previous year, viz.:—Subscriptions from employes, \$502.03; pay patients,