

REMARKABLE TRIALS IN LOWER CANADA.

NO. 3. THE BEAUREGARD CASE.

Among the criminal cases which have occupied a large share of public attention, the trial of Beaugard for the murder of Anselme Charron stands out prominently, both on account of the great number of witnesses examined, the length of the trial, (extending over eight or nine days) and the mysterious circumstances surrounding the commission of the crime. The victim was a well-to-do farmer named Anselme Charron, residing at the Parish of St. Charles, about two and a half leagues distant from the town of St. Hyacinthe, where the murder was committed. The only apparent motive for the murder was the desire to obtain possession of a small sum of money which Anselme Charron carried on his person. Both parties at the time were considerably under the influence of liquor, but though suspicion rested on Beaugard, who was last seen in company with the deceased, it was not till some weeks had elapsed that he was arrested.

The murder was committed on the night of the 2nd of April, 1859, and the circumstances may be briefly traced as follows:—

About nine o'clock in the morning of Saturday the 2nd April, Charron left home with his horse and cart to go to St. Hyacinthe, which, as we have already stated, was situated at a distance of two and a half leagues. A little boy, a nephew of his, stated at the trial, that on the morning of that day, he saw the deceased dressing in his room apart, and before he left he went to a small box in which, he kept money, and took out two rolls of paper money which he showed to the boy, as he was in the habit of doing in order to instruct him in the value of bank notes. The first knowledge we have of him at St. Hyacinthe is that he was seen drinking in Ducharme's tavern in the early part of the day. Hence he went to a tavern kept by a man named Guertin, and in this place, Beaugard, the prisoner, was seen kneeling by the side of Charron who was lying on a sofa, and engaged in close conversation with him. A man who owed Charron \$25 here joined them, and the three having gone to another tavern, the debtor paid the \$25 in the presence of Beaugard. They then went to Laflamme's tavern and had more

drink. Among other places visited by Charron that day was the house of a man named Ewing, who paid him \$45 in bank notes and quarter dollars. About half past seven in the evening, deceased was seen at Ewing's house taking tea. About eight o'clock, a person with whom Charron had made an appointment for that evening at Laflamme's, saw him standing at the door of another tavern. Charron proposed to him that they should go to Guertin's tavern and have a steak and some oysters. At Guertin's, Beaugard, who appears to have followed Charron with considerable pertinacity, again joined him, and called for liquor, which Charron paid for. Later in the evening, Charron, who was by this time in a state of inebriation, was at Laflamme's, and left that place in company with Beaugard. Some policemen who met them, observed the prisoner holding Charron up by the arm, and asked him where he was going, Beaugard replied, "Don't be alarmed, I will take good care of him." The policeman stationed in the street then observed the two going in the direction of the bridge known as the Biron bridge, and about fifteen minutes after, Beaugard was observed coming back alone, breathing hard and walking fast. One of the policemen meeting him inquired where he had left Charron. The reply was, "Oh! he is quite well, he is getting on swimmingly, like a hat floating on the river." Beaugard then went to Laflamme's tavern and ordered a treat. Before this he did not appear to have had any money. Then he went to Pourrin's and stayed till such time as Pourrin said he must shut up his place. There was nothing to show whither he went then. His daughter stated at the trial that he had not, to her knowledge, gone home that night.

The watch found in the pocket of deceased had stopped at 13 minutes to 11. About this hour a party playing cards at Marchesseau's, on the other side of the bridge, heard cries from the bridge so loud as to attract their attention, and they opened the door, and looked out. The cries did not continue long and the party returned to their cards. On the other side of the river, another party playing cards was also disturbed by cries of murder, and they went out and inquired of their neighbors the cause of the cries. These incidents occurred about the same time close upon eleven o'clock. A gentleman named Nagle also heard cries of murder from the bridge and rushing out went part of the way across the bridge, and thought he saw an object moving away, but was not very sure. Another person who crossed the bridge that night, met a man on it, and it was