

THE LATE PROFESSOR HOLMES.

On the evening of the 9th, Death numbered among his victims one of the most eminent physicians of this City and Province, ANDREW FERDINANDO HOLMES, M.D., LL.D., Professor of the Principles and Practice of Medicine in the University of McGill College, and Dean of the Faculty of Medicine, in his 63d year. It is with feelings of the deepest sorrow that we thus announce the death of a colleague and sincere friend, one with whom we have been associated for twenty-five years, and whose place will not be easily supplied. For a few days before his decease, he complained of a constriction of the chest, which he compared, to a friend, as like an attack of *angina pectoris*; and on Monday afternoon, on his way to the new College building, whither he was going to look after certain arrangements, he experienced that sensation chiefly while walking against the wind, which was blowing rather strongly, although he did not feel it after ascending a pair of stairs. On the following day, Tuesday, the 9th, he attended to his duties as usual, complaining of little else than a want of appetite, arising out of the continuance of the same sensations. He returned home from an evening visit about 7 p. m., and while writing out notes to the members of the Faculty for attendance at a meeting which he intended to have held at 3 p. m. the following day, he was observed by his wife to drop his head on his hands, his elbows resting on the table, and without replying to the question put to him, "if he felt unwell," dropped from his chair dead. Dr. Campbell was in prompt attendance, but the vital spark had fled.

It is not our intention at present to give a history of his life and labours. This we must reserve for a future occasion. But here we may say, that few have worked harder than our deceased friend for the advancement of science in this City and Province, and few have associated with those labours a more sincere recognition of the Author of those works which he felt an especial delight in studying and revealing. We say it, and this with feelings of the deepest conviction, that our lamented friend lived as if he ever felt the presence of his Maker, to whom he had to render an account; he emphatically "walked humbly with his God," and was therefore prepared, as far as human infirmity could be, for the suddenness of that change which overtook him, and which it was his frequently expressed desire should so occur. Of him it might with truthfulness be said, that to "die was gain."

An autopsy was held forty-three hours after death. Decomposition had evidently set in. The brain was healthy, with the exception of a general turgescence of the blood-vessels, and a rather increased amount of serosity. The chief abnormal appearance here presented was a thickened condition of the arachnoid at the vertex, indicative of an old-standing subacute inflammatory affection. About fifteen years ago, it is to be observed, he suffered intensely from headaches. The thoracic viscera were healthy, with the exception of the heart, which was rather larger than usual, but not morbidly so, and showed evidence of atheromatous degeneration, but not to any marked extent. The abdominal viscera were perfectly healthy. In fact we have never examined a body whose viscera were in a more healthy-looking condition generally. At this autopsy all the members of the Faculty were present, with the addition of one or two friends. Under such a view of facts, the cause of death must be sought for in the nervous system, and spasm of the heart, indicative of a death from syncope, offers the only escape from all the difficulties which present themselves. It is perhaps one of the most rapid deaths on record.

A meeting of the members of the Faculty took place on the evening of the 11th, when it was resolved that a letter of condolence should be transmitted to the widow and family; and that the members should wear mourning for the period of a month, in memory of their deceased colleague.