

THE
MONTREAL MEDICAL JOURNAL.

VOL. XVII.

AUGUST, 1888.

No. 2.

Original Communications.

ON A CASE OF
POISONING BY BICHROMATE OF POTASH.*

BY DRs. R. F. RUTTAN AND H. A. LAFLEUR.

The case which forms the subject of this paper is briefly as follows:—

A young Englishman, Charles Bartley, aged 25, committed suicide by taking about two ounces of bichromate of potassium in the solid form. From the evidence at the coroner's inquest and from subsequent inquiries it was established that he could not have taken the poison before 11.15 A.M. A few minutes later Bartley was found lying in the outhouse, vomiting, purging and in great agony. When seen by the ambulance surgeon of the Montreal General Hospital he was writhing with pain on the floor of the shop, speechless, his mouth, hands and clothes stained with greenish-yellow vomit, surface of body cold, face contorted and of a dusky hue, pupils unequally dilated, pulseless at the wrist, respirations very rapid and shallow, abdomen retracted and painful on pressure, and the knees drawn up to the body. The breath was cold, and the mouth contained a yellow, frothy mucus. The emesis, which had ceased, was brought on again by passing the finger into the back of the mouth. He was taken to the hospital as quickly as possible, a hypodermic injection of ether administered, and an attempt made to use the stomach pump, but without success, the patient dying a few minutes after

* Read before the Medico-Chirurgical Society of Montreal.