

The Legal News.

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A very distinguished member of our bar will be installed as the Mayor of Montreal, on Monday, March 14. There has been reason to regret in the past, that municipal honors have been unwelcome to some of the most eminent citizens. The office of chief magistrate of a city of 200,000 inhabitants certainly affords scope for the exercise of talent and sagacity, and there is no reason whatever why it should not be the object of honorable ambition. The opportunities of usefulness are greater than in the local legislature or in the senate, and these offices are sometimes eagerly sought after. The Hon. J. J. C. Abbott, the mayor elect, it is true, would have seemed to be more appropriately placed, if he filled the office of Chief Justice of the Supreme Court or of the Court of appeal, in either of which positions his commanding abilities would have had the happiest influence upon our jurisprudence. Such an appointment, of course, would have involved a great pecuniary sacrifice on the part of Mr. Abbott, since the state is far from being the most generous paymaster. Our belief is however, that eminent lawyers exhibit more public spirit than merchant princes, and are less likely to be deterred from assuming important duties by selfish considerations. Mr. Abbott has shown both courage and public spirit in consenting to accept the mayoralty, and it is to be hoped that his example will promote a change which has already commenced, by which a superior order of men are coming forward as aldermen and giving their time and energies cheerfully to the service of the city.

An indictment for murder under peculiar circumstances, was tried before Mr. Justice Field at Nottingham, February 4. The prisoner, John Jessop, and the deceased John Allcock, had gone to several chemists' shops and procured at each a small quantity of laudanum. They retired to a barn and

took the poison between them. The prisoner recovered from the effects, but Allcock died shortly afterwards of narcotic poisoning. Jessop subsequently made several statements as to what had occurred. Among others he said, "We both got ourselves into disgrace and we did not know what to do with ourselves. Allcock proposed doing away with himself somehow. He said to me, "Shan't you die with me?" I said, "I am not particular." Allcock pulled a bottle out of his pocket with laudanum, and said this would do it if we could only get some more." The prisoner's counsel submitted that there was no evidence of murder. He referred to the case of *Regina v. Alison*, 8 C. & P. 418. In that case the prisoner had procured poison and persuaded the deceased to share it with him, and Mr. Justice Patteson had held that this was murder. Here, however, the evidence showed that Allcock was the leading spirit. He had announced his intention to commit suicide, and the prisoner had followed suit. There had been no definite agreement between the men to commit suicide together. The learned judge overruled the objections, and told the jury that if they considered the men had agreed together to commit suicide—and the evidence was very clear—they were bound to find a verdict of guilty. The jury convicted the prisoner, with a strong recommendation to mercy, and he was sentenced to death.

An extraordinary admission of evidence is reported in Pennsylvania. A young woman named Scott, who was far advanced in pregnancy, appeared before a justice of the peace, and charged a young man named William Bloodgood with assault. She deposed that two weeks previously, Bloodgood had entered her house and choked her until she was almost unconscious, and had also twisted her left wrist very severely. Bloodgood, who denied the assault, of which there was no witness, was held for trial. Before the case came on, the woman gave birth to a child, and at the trial appeared with her baby. Her lawyer offered to exhibit the child to the jury, and the judge permitted this to be done. On one side of the infant's throat appeared the distinct impression of four fingers, and