

evidence respecting the husband's complicity. François Caron, who lived about seven miles from St. Jerome, stated that Antoine came to his house about half-past six in the evening of the 17th and stayed there that night (the night of the murder). In the course of some conversation, he remarked, "I am married to a woman older than myself; but she is often sick, and I have the prospect of being a widower soon, and then I shall marry a younger woman." Another witness, Antoine Beauchamp, deposed to the fact that Antoine Desforges frequently visited the female prisoner at her house. A few days before the death of Catherine, Widow Belisle said to witness, "do you think if Mad. Desforges was to die this week that Antoine would go to my daughter's wedding." The next witness, François Villeneuve, stated he had heard Antoine say if his wife was dead he would easily get another.

The trial was again resumed on Monday, 19th April, when the medical testimony was laid before the jury. Dr. Prévost, one of the medical men who examined the body, stated that he found the left lung filled with blood—much more so than if the death had been natural. The right lung was congested and stuck to the side of the chest. The heart contained black blood. The liver was congested. The stomach contained *calculi*, and the Doctor was not sure whether death had been caused by these *calculi* or by suffocation.

Dr. Craik, of Montreal, had examined the stomach. He found it smaller and redder than usual, but it contained no poison. He examined the body after it had been exhumed. The heart and liver were in a healthy condition. The brain was too much decomposed to be examined. He saw nothing to indicate positively the cause of death. Congestion of the lungs might be attributed to asphyxia, but in that case the eyes would be found open, and not shut, as some of the witnesses said those of deceased were. He observed nothing which was irreconcilable with the hypothesis that death had been caused by asphyxia, but he did not consider that the examination made by Dr. Prévost was sufficient to ascertain

the cause of death with certainty.

Dr. Jones was of opinion, from what he had heard, that death was caused by asphyxia. This would produce engorgation of the brain, heart and lungs. But it was difficult to tell the cause with certainty.

On the fourth day of the trial, Mr. Smyth addressed the jury for the defence. He appeared to rely mainly upon the fact that the medical examination did not determine, with any certainty, what had been the cause of death. He further commented upon the good character borne by the prisoners. In support of the latter point several witnesses were called.

We regret that we do not find any record of the charge of Mr. Justice Aylwin, which is said to have occupied three and a half hours in delivery, and which was no doubt characterized by the customary energy and ability of that eminent Judge. The jury, after a deliberation of two hours, acquitted Antoine Desforges, and found the other two guilty, Jean Baptiste, however, being recommended to mercy. On the following day he and Widow Belisle were sentenced to be hanged on the 25th June—a sentence which, notwithstanding a general impression that it would be commuted, was carried out before the Montreal Jail in the presence of a vast multitude.

In reading the records of this trial, one cannot help being struck with the weakness of the evidence on which the conviction was obtained, apart from the disclosures made by the woman, apparently for the purpose of throwing the whole guilt upon her companion. The jury, however, seem to have put little faith in her story as to her own share in the crime, for while they recommended her companion to mercy, a verdict of guilty, pure and simple, was recorded against her. Whether they were influenced by the "callous and stolid expression of countenance" reported to have been preserved by her during the four days' trial, we have no means of determining. All doubt, however, respecting the guilt of the unhappy pair, was fortunately removed by their own confessions before