

tree on his right of the tree as he stood. He then picked up a piece of split wood, about four feet long, intending to place this against the tree, at an angle, climb up so as to get one foot on the end of this split stick, and so reach the coveted gum. In placing the split stick, however, the gun barrel was rather in the way, he took hold of the muzzle of the gun in his left hand—the stick being in his right—and in endeavouring to put the gun aside, a branch of the scrub beech must have caught the hammer, and fired the gun. This is the account given by the lad before alluded to, and I accept it, as he was standing close to Mr. McConechy—touching him in fact—at the moment ; but, as there were five persons present, so are there five different versions as to minute details. I am thus particular as to time and circumstances, so as to arrive at some idea of the state of the stomach about an hour and a half after a hearty meal, and also as to the direction of the wound. According to the above description the muzzle of the gun must have been *within* 12 inches of Mr. McC's body, and the burnt state of his vest, the shape of the holes in his trowsers, flannel drawers, two flannel shirts, and the appearance of the wound corroborate the description, and prove that the whole charge entered the abdominal parieties in one compact mass. The force of the explosion caused Mr. McC. to recoil against the lad beside him. I may as well state here that the gun was an old one, single barrelled, of 6-8ths bore, with a very stiff spring, and that it was loaded with a very uncertain quantity of both powder and shot. The sporting party carried their ammunition in the most unsportsmanlike style—to wit—in two glass bottles ; and measured the charges in the palms of their hands ; totally ignoring all the modern improvements in the art of war ! The phial containing the shot had a mixture of all known varieties from snipe to buckshot ! Mr. McC. was uncertain how many buckshot were in that particular charge ; at first he thought 4 or 5 ; then 2 or 3 ; and at last, as things passed along so harmoniously he came to the conclusion