

EXTRAORDINARY TRIAL FOR MURDER, IN BELGIUM.

(From the *Leed's Mercury*, June 7.)

A remarkable case is now on trial before the High Criminal Court of Hainault, at Mons. The accused are the Count and Countess of Bocarme, of a family stated to be one of the oldest in Belgium. The crime laid to their charge is that of having poisoned the Countess's brother, Gustave Fagnies, in order to obtain his fortune. Count de Bocarme resided at the chateau of Bury; he married in 1843, for her fortune, Lydia Fagnies, the daughter of a retired grocer, and got with her a sum representing £100 a-year of English money. This, after all, was no great sum, and as the Count was somewhat of a spendthrift, his affairs assumed gradually a most embarrassed state. His wife's brother, Gustave Fagnies, had become possessed, by his father's death, of considerable property, and as he was unmarried, the Count and Countess had every prospect of inheriting his fortune. Gustave, though weak in constitution, and amputated of a leg, determined, in November, 1850, to marry. The state of Count Bocarme's exchequer was at this time quite ruinous. He owed large sums to his legal advisers, and had mortgaged most of his property. Fagnies' marriage would have been a blow to his hopes. Suddenly the Count became addicted, in the beginning of 1850, to the study of chemistry. He went under a false name to a manufacturer of alembics, corresponded also under a false name with a professor of chemistry, and ultimately succeeded in distilling from tobacco leaves a deadly poison known as nicotine, and for which hitherto it has been impossible to find a reactive. This poison he tried on various animals, and, according to his own statement, he obtained tremendous results, death being instantaneous after the slightest absorption of the poison. In November, 1850, Gustave Fagnies was induced to accept an invitation to dinner at Bury, it being proposed to him to become trustee for the Count and Countess, during a voyage they intended making in

tess, during a voyage they intended making in Germany. He came on the morning of the 20th November, and after dinner on the same day, died in the room where were present both the Count and the Countess. It was found, on examination, that death had ensued, not from apoplexy, but from the forcible injection of a poisonous and corrosive substance. There were marks of violence on the face of the dead man, and part of the poison had run down the side of his face, corroding the flesh and blistering it. An examination of Count Bocarme's hands showed the presence of a bite from human teeth, and a red tinge on one of his nails corresponded with certain marks and scratches on the face of Fougnyes. The clothes of Fougnyes and those of the Count, which he had changed, were found wet, and hanging up to dry in an attic of the chateau. This had been done by the Countess, as she states, by order of her husband. The floor had been scraped with glass, but insufficiently to prevent the marks of the corroding liquid, which seemed to have been spurted all over the room. There were no traces of chemical instruments or of any apparatus for the distillation of poison. The false name assumed by the Count in his dealings with the chemical instrument-maker, however, became known. After six weeks search, the alembics used in producing nicotine were found, and Bocarme, when informed of these discoveries, for a moment gave himself up to despair. The Countess then openly accused her husband of being the murderer. She described how, after dinner, her brother expressed his determination to go home, and Bocarme went out to order his horses. In his absence she and her brother were talking together, when Bocarme rushed in, seized Gustave by the shoulders and threw him down. She fled, and did not return into the room till all was over, and the body of Gustave lay lifeless on the ground.

(From the Atlas, June 21.)

After seventeen days of trial, the case of the Count and Countess de Bocarmé was brought to a conclusion at the Assize Court of Mons on Friday. After considering their verdict for an hour and a half the jury returned into Court and the foreman in a somewhat tremulous but firm

the foreman in a somewhat tremulous but firm voice declared the finding of the jury to be, "on my honour and conscience, and in the presence of God and man," a verdict of guilty against the Count, and not guilty against his wife, Madame Bocarmé:—The President then ordered the accused to be brought into Court. This time the Count was admitted first. His appearance was calm and collected. Madame de Bocarmé had her veil down, but her step was firm. On hearing the verdict of guilty a slight momentary flush passed over the Count's face, but he evinced no other sign of emotion. On hearing not guilty on his wife, an expression of internal satisfaction animated his features. He looked affectionately toward his wife, who gave no visible signs of emotion. She left the dock with a firm step, without speaking to her husband. The Procureur du Roi, having asked the prisoner if he had anything to say, he replied—"No, except that I am perfectly innocent." He then entered calmly into conversation with his counsel. At eleven o'clock the Court pronounced sentence of death upon Hippolyte Visart de Bocarmé, and decreed that the execution should take place in one of the squares of Mons. The prisoner left the Court under guard with a firm step.

BANK OF AUSTRALASIA.—Yesterday, the 17th annual meeting of the shareholders of this Company was held at the establishment in Austin Friars, City. Oliver Farren, Esq., having taken the chair, Mr. Milfiken, the secretary, read the report, which was to the following effect:—
"The current business of the bank during the past year has been of a healthy, profitable, and improving character. The bad debts of the year have been unimportant, and all provided for; the profits have greatly increased; and considerable progress has at length been made in the realisation of the securities held against the old dependencies. The greater part of the securities have been realised; the loss on their realisation is shown in the financial statement; and the directors can assure the shareholders that any further losses which can reasonably be ex-