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EXECUTION OF PATRICK REID. FOR THE

MURDERS AT MIRFIELD. The following appeared in a Second Edition of the Mercury last Saturday.]

It is undoubtedly a melancholy reality that erime, and especially the crime of murder, is not diminishing throughout the country; but, whether the means employed be or be not the best and most efficacious, it is a fact which cannot be controverted, that a feeling of satisfaction—far he it from us to say, of pleasure—animates at least the inhabitants of this district, upon the reflection that the perpetrator of a crime which will for ever pollute the records of our country, has not, in this instance, gone uppunished.

Patrick Reid, the Mirfield Murderer, has just undergone the punishment of an assassination, or indeed we may say a series of assassinations, as foul, cruel, and monstrous as ever darkened the ages of the greatest barbarism and ignorance, and ere this, his immortal spirit has reached Eternity, there to meet his victims at the bar of an offended Deity.

minently brought before the public on two separate as only to require the mere mention of "the Mirfield Murders" to vivify the recollection of the present generation so long as it shall exist. It is therefore unnecessary to recapitulate them upon the present occasion. Removed to the condemned cell, Reid saw no further chance of escape, and, racked with compunctions of

conscience, he yielded to the appeal which his fellowprisoner's agony of mind made to him, and confessed that M'Cabe was innocent. Since this statement was made, M'Cabe has been respited, but nothing, as yet, is known as to his ultimate fate. He

has, however, been removed from the condemned cell, and

is now naturally more easy in his mind. We have little to add respecting Reid. He repeated his confession, and therein detailed more minutely the circumstances of the murder, which only strengthen our remarks already made, that a more premeditated and cold-blooded outrage never stained the annals of a civilised country.

After his condemnation, Reid was frequently visited · by his friends. He leaves a father—a mother—and a wife and infant child, and for the latter he expressed much concern. His contrition came upon him too late. It is, alas! a painful fact to reflect upon, that, in passing sentence upon the guilty, punishment is necessarily inflicted upon the innocent. At the same time, as was recently remarked by a high authority, the justice of the country would always be defeated, if persons were allowed to put forward, at the last hour, after the commission of their offences, and after conviction, those pleas for mercy which they ought to have considered before they gave way to the temptation of committing the crime. Therefore the husband and the father should consider the wife and the child in the hour of temptation, for it is too late to put them forward when the period of retribution has arrived. With regard to Reid, however, it is satisfactory to know that he complied with the exhortation of the Learned Judge who tried him, and laid aside all hopes in this world. The short time Reid was permitted to remain here after his conviction, being an Irishman, and a Roman

chaplain of the Castle, the Rev. Thomas Sutton, had, of course, no participation in the religious services which were performed, and no "condemned sermon" was preached on the day previous to the execution, as is the case when the culprit is a member of the Protestant Church. Yesterday afternoon Reid was visited by his wife, father, mother, and brother. The interview was one of a painfully affecting character; but Reid evinced much firmness on

the occasion. The farewell, as may be easily imagined, can

be better conceived than we can pourtray.

Catholic, he was regularly attended by the ministers of his

church, and his contrition and repentance were, it

is said, complete. Under these circumstances, the

Long before daybreak this morning, the carpenters were

THE EXECUTION.

busily engaged in erecting the scallold, and soon after their work was completed, the unhappy youth—unhappy as regards his sad fate, and a routh as applied to his years, having only attained the age of 20,—was removed, as is customary, from the condemned cell, and conducted to a room set apart for the purpose, close to the spot where he was to a be executed. During the forenoon, he was attended by his spiritual ad-

visers, who administered to him the peculiar rite of that | " Church of which he was a member. Between eleven and twelve o'clock, the operation of pinioning was commenced, and shortly before the fatal

hour, the Under-Sheriff, Wm. Gray, Esq., arrived at the Castle, and in the usual form demanded the body for execution. The culprit being brought forth, the mournful procession was formed, and moved forward to the scaffold, in front of which an immense body of persons were assembled. Long indeed before twelve o'clock, the hour of execution, | a crowds of persons were wending their way to the fatal spot, in order to secure the best positions for seeing the proceed.

At precisely two minutes past twelve o'clock, the un-

ings at the drop.

fortunate culprit, attended by the usual officials, came with a firm step upon the scaffold. His first appearance excited in the crowd mingled emotions of sympathy and lac execration. As soon as he had approached the front of the | in scaffold, where the fatal rope was suspended, he turned his back upon the spectators, and knelt down. The Rev. J. Render, the Roman Catholic priest, also knelt, facing the culprit, and read aloud a long form of prayer. When the Rev. gentleman had given his parting benediction, both rose, at precisely twelve minutes past twelve o'clock. Reid apparently regained his feet without any difficulty. He then turned towards the spectators, seemingly with the most 1.11 perfect resignation to his fate, but with a countenance ce ghastly pale. Howard, the county hangsman, then advanced, ť and having drawn the cap over the culprit's face, firmly tied his legs, and then, with much seeming care, adjusted the Ditt rope round his neck. But a moment more elapsed, and the profound silence, with which the spectators had viewed these preliminaries, was broken by the drawing of the fatal bolt, which excited some involuntary manifestations of TO horror as the body dropped—dropped, we regret to say, UU not with the effect of instantaneous deprivation of life, but to strangle rather than hang the unfortunate man, owing to the looseness of the rope, which considerably bent the neck. Nevertheless, not more than two minutes elapsed be before the evidently severe expiring convulsions were over. and this world was closed upon the murderer for ever. 111 ЯIJ It had generally been rumoured that some remarks to the 101 people would be made by Reid on the scaffold, but this expectation was not realized, and many of the morbidly curi-

ous spectators expressed disappointment in consequence. He did, however, just before the fatal bolt was removed, make the following statement to the officers around him :-"Well, gentlemen, I wish to say that I alone am the

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guilty person; that M'Cabe is entirely innocent; that No HUMAN BEING IN THE WORLD HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH IT BUT MYSELF." The moment the drop fell, that portion of the spectators

possessing some degree of the acuter sensibilities of human nature, left the scene of the execution; but others, with insatiable curiosity, continued to gaze upon the repulsive spectacle until the body was removed, and feasted upon its horrors as if enjoying a rich banquet.

There were present at the execution probably not less than between 30,000 and 40,000 people of both sexes, of all ages and classes; probably on no occasion has an execution, within our recollection, or that of our readers, drawn together so vast a concourse of spectators. Besides bringing

together a very large proportion of the inhabitants of York and its more immediate vicinity, many towns in the West Riding added their thousands to swell the general throng. From Leeds, Huddersfield, Dewsbury, Mirfield (the locality of the murders), Halifax, Bradford, Wakefield, Barnsley, Pontefract, and indeed from every other place, great and small, contributions of inhabitants to the vast multitude took place. Some idea of the proportion which Leeds bore, may be formed from the fact that by the 7.20 a.m. train alone there were conveyed to York more than 1,000 extra passengers. All the available carriages were put into use, and still hundreds were left behind, at that time, to be conveyed by a subsequent train. This, however, gives but a very imperfect estimate of the number of persons that went from Leeds to York, as it is exclusive of pedestrians, many of whom even as early as the previous night, left this the 1 town to visit the scene of the execution. It may be truly said of this occasion, that the soul-depressing exhibition comn of a criminal on the scaffold, drew more persons early from ing ca their rest on the coldest morning of the winter, than the by a. most transcendant exhibition of virtue could probably have instar accomplished with all the charms and temptations of one of summer's most attractive days. We fear this testifies little for delicacy of feeling or purity of taste. As an instance of the moral effect of this execution, we may mention, that scarcely had a moment elapsed after the drop fell, before one or two boys who witnessed it were in the hands of the police for pocket-picking. It was stated in York, that no execution in that city has been attended by so many spectators at any period, except it was

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those of Eugene Aram, for the murder of Daniel Clark, at Kuaresbro', and Mary Bateman, for poisoning, at Leeds. Up to this time no official communication has been received as to whether McCabe will be discharged from custody or not; we may, however, observe, that in addition to the declarations Reid had made relative to the innocence of M'Cabe, he recently made another statement in a letter to the Rev. Edward O'Neil, of Deusbury, to the effect that no other person whatever was concerned in the murder. The following is a copy of the letter referred to :-- " May it please your Reverence,—I hope you will excuse me thus troubling you, but after I have explained the reason for so doing I hope you will think it a sufficient one. Rev. Sir, you are aware of my unfortunate situation, and to add another pang to the agony which I at present enduresue for (agony almost unbearable)—I have heard that many people | Baptlet are blaming my poor mother for encouraging me to do the of the stating deed. But, Rev. Sir, I speak as in the presence of Almighty and for God, before whom I soon must stand, that neither my mother, letter ! nor any other person on the face of the earth, knew anything of Waterv

the mutter: this I say as a dying man. Rev. Sir, the reason

I write to you is if you possibly can, in any shape whatever, {

sufficient to bear in losing me, without being blamed for that which, if she had known, she would have exerted her utmost power to have prevented. Would to God either she, or any one of the family, had known, then I should not have been here. I leave the case in your own hands, as your better judgment will instruct you how to deal with it better than anything I can suggest. Humbly asking your prayers on my behalf, I am," &c.

Mr. Seymour's Defence of Reid.—Mr. Seymour like Mr. C. Phillips, whose example he has followed, is an Irishman. It is important to the English bar that it should be asserted that the principles enunciated by Mr. Seymour are, as it would appear, merely importations from the other side of the channel, and are not born and bred and domiciled on our soil. Mr. Seymour asserts that counsel is bound to preserve the secret reposed in him in professional confidence. So far he is right. Counsel is not bound to read his brief to the jury. He is also, says Mr. Seymour, equally bound "to frame the best defence in his power from the evidence given at the trial." Here lurks the fallacy. This is the truth, but not the whole truth. He should have added, "provided that in doing so he violates no moral obligation;" and a foremost duty is, that we shall inflict no wrong upon others even for our own advantage. The definition of the duty of counsel we take to be this. He is to say for the prisoner what he might say for himself had he the The facts of this atrocity have been minutely and proability. His business is to show to the court, not so much that the prisoner is or is not in fact guilty of the crime occasions; and they are so strongly impressed upon the mind | charged, as that he is not legally proved to be guilty; and this he may do, even with a full knowledge of guilt in fact, without the slightest violation of the strictest morality. But, in doing this, religion and morality forbid the resort to falsehood of any kind, and humanity unites with them in denouncing so monstrous an injustice as the attempt to shift the charge from the guilty to the innocent.—Law Times.

remove the charge from my poor mother, as she will have are und You can search for more articles at http://leedsmercury.mirfield-2ndlook.info