

THE LIFE AND EXECUTION

OF
JOHN PEGSWORTH.

With a correct Sketch of a Letter sent to his Wife on Monday; and also a Copy of Verses written by himself.



In the House of Commons the question was asked why was Pegsworth not hung, but no answer was given. Probably the Hon. Member was not aware that a Bill passed last Session to obviate the evil consequences of precipitate execution for murder. The case of a murderer has to go through the same tribunal as other convicts. The Recorder delivers his Report on Wednesday, when His Majesty's Council will consider the case of Pegsworth, and whether at the time he committed the act, he was in a state of mind that might be termed sane, or whether as has been stated in the different Petitions sent by respectable persons numerous signed, that he was at the time labouring under a fit of insanity. A Mr. Clark, of Nelson Square, that at the time Pegsworth was in his employ, he at times would act so contrary as for to be obliged to send him out of the counting house, and when asked the reason, he would say it was owing to his infirmities. His wife states in her petition to the Home Office, that he once attempted to cut his throat. But it appears all the interest that was used was all in vain, as the result of the Report was as Follows:

RECORDERS REPORT.

Yesterday (Wednesday) the Recorder made his Report to his Majesty in Council of the following prisoners in Newgate under Sentence of Death—T. Westwood, aged 20, G. Allen, 25, H. Living-

ton, 25, Jn. Jones, 27, W. Mills, 29, Henry Bates, 29, all for Burglary, Jn. Smith, 28, for shooting at a person, and Jn. Pegsworth, for Murder, all of whom his Majesty was graciously pleased to respite during his royal pleasure, except the said Jn. Pegsworth, who is left for Execution on Tuesday next.

Letter.

NEWGATE, March 6, 1837.

Dear Wife,

The hour has at length near arrived for me to be thrust in the midst of all my crimes, in the presence of ONE who I have sadly offended, and from whom I cannot hope for forgiveness. You, my dear Wife, with many of my friends, have endeavoured to prove to the world that I was, at the time I committed the rash act, labouring under a fit of Insanity, for which I am from my heart grateful; but at the same time, I am perfectly prepared for the awful end which awaits me; knowing that I am fully deserving of the penalty I have subjected myself to, and which is about to be inflicted by man, but how to atone to my Maker I know not.—The Chaplain has endeavoured, and I may say succeeded in proving to me the necessity of devoting the whole of the few moments I have to live to fervent prayer, calling on my Almighty God for his most gracious pardon, in the name of his son, Jesus Christ. That you will join me in this prayer, is the sincere desire of your ifuted Husband,

JOHN PEGSWORTH.

P.S. Be mindful to curb the temper of my dear children, that it may not grow with them. Point to them the doom of their unhappy parent, and endeavour to make them respected

members of society, and their prayers may then be heard on behalf of their wretched father.

That the Almighty God will bestow his bountiful blessings on you all, now and for evermore.—Amen.

Execution.

This day (Tuesday) having been announced for the Execution of the culprit Pegsworth, at an early hour the jail and all avenues leading thereto was thronged with spectators of both classes. At the usual hour, after having been pinnioned, he was brought out, followed by the Sheriffs, Chaplain, &c, with whom, for a few minutes, he attentively joined in prayer, when the signal was given, and he was launched into eternity.

A COPY OF VERSES

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF AFTER HIS CONDEMNATION.

You parents all now listen unto me,
And children too, a lesson I'll give thee;
Let not unruly passion sway your mind,
Or else like me the evil you will find.

I once did live in great respect with man,
But now the very meanest will me shun;
And even my wife and children dear,
In my disgrace they do partake a share.

Think! then, ye parents, think on this sad case,
Think of their feelings, and of their disgrace;
Let not your passion rise, but think with fear
The misery you entail upon your family dear.

Tho' I did go to church to sing and pray,
I to wicked thoughts did oft give way;
Nor asked my God for help to keep me right,
Depending on myself for doing what I might.

When I by Mr. Ready for the debt was press'd,
His family and him I sorely curs'd,
I ran with haste and bought the fatal knife,
With which I resolv'd to take his precious life.

Now for this deed I am condemn'd to die,
And hopeful to my God for mercy cry;
I also crave of man for mercy great,
And hope they'll take a warning by my fate.