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THE
TRIAL,
AT LENGTH, OF
WILLIAM CORDER,
CONVICTED OF
The Murder
OF
MARIA MARTEN,
AT POLSTEAD, SUFFOLK,
BEFORE THE LORD CHIEF BARON,
AT
BURY ASSIZES,

On *FRIDAY, the 7th day of AUGUST, 1828.*

With a Portrait from a sketch by Mr. RACKSTROW.

BURY ST. EDMUND'S:
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As it is intended by the Publisher, to confine this Pamphlet to the mere, but faithful, detail of the proceedings on the trial, that the country at large may have the means themselves of forming an impartial judgment on the evidence adduced before the jury ; he has carefully abstained from the narration of those matters with which the columns of the London papers have almost daily teemed since the apprehension of Mr. Corder, which, if not altogether untrue, are generally so highly charged as must inevitably have tended to prejudice the public mind ere it possessed the means of forming a temperate and dispassionate opinion. A danger that ever increases in proportion to the magnitude and enormity of the offence charged. With this object in view, the Publisher feels it only necessary to preface the narrative of the Trial with the simple statement, that about the 18th of May, in the year 1827, a young woman of light character was supposed by her friends to have gone away from the neighbourhood in which she lived (Polstead) in company with the Prisoner ; that, in consequence of certain suspicions, search was made, and her remains were found interred in a barn belonging to the mother of Corder ; and that Corder, who had subsequently married, was apprehended at Ealing Lane, by a London Police Officer, and conveyed to Polstead, to abide the event of an Inquisition, which was held before J. Wayman, Esq. and under whose warrant he was committed to Bury Gaol for Trial. The Commission of Assize opened on the evening of Saturday, the 2nd of August, but the trial of Corder did not commence till Thursday morning, in order to accommodate the counsel, who were specially retained and brought down for the defence.

TRIAL

OF

WILLIAM CORDER.

At an early hour, every avenue leading to the Court was thronged by multitudes of persons eager to hear the trial, and it was with the greatest difficulty, that the Counsellors, Magistrates, Grand Jury, &c. could gain admission to the Court. The indictment, which contained ten counts stating the manner of death in several ways, as by stabbing, shooting, choking, &c. was read by the Clerk of the Arraigns, to which, the Prisoner in a firm voice, and without the slightest emotion, answered "NOT GUILTY, my Lord;" when, after considerable delay in getting the Jurymen together, the learned Counsel for the Crown (Biggs Andrews, Esq.) commenced as follows:—

"May it please your Lordship and Gentlemen of the Jury.—However painful my duty as counsel for the crown in this case, to lay before you the facts and circumstances upon which you will have to decide upon the guilt or innocence of the prisoner at the bar; it has always appeared to me to be the duty of counsel, placed as I am, not to enlarge upon the facts, which are to be given in evidence, or to make an aggravated statement to the Jury. To this rule, in a case so serious and important as the present, I shall strictly adhere; it is, however, necessary and proper, that I should shortly lay before you the facts with which I am instructed, and shall be able to prove to you in evidence, in order to give you a general idea of the case, and thereby enable you to judge of the importance, weight, and bearing, which attaches to each. Corder is the son of respectable parents at Polstead, in this county; his father, who is dead, for some time carried on the business of a farmer to a considerable extent: after his death, his mother, assisted by an elder brother, also dead, and subsequently by the prisoner. Maria Marten, a young woman of more humble parents, resided in the same village, had been for some time known to the prisoner, but it was not until within twelve months previous to the eighteenth of May, 1827, that they became intimate, the result of which was the birth of an illegitimate child. The

young woman was not confined at her Father's house, but removed to a distance, and about six weeks before the period in question she returned home with an infant—her child. The child which was always weakly died a fortnight after her return. It is right that I should inform you that Corder had been heard to tell Maria Marten, that the parish officers were talking of having her taken up because of her bastard child, and that some difference was also known to exist between them, with respect to a £5 note, but of these facts they would hear more from the Witnesses. On one occasion before the 18th of May last year, Maria Marten was heard to say to the Prisoner—"Well if I go to gaol you shall go too." Corder upon that occasion told her he should make her his wife. On the Sunday before the 18th of May (which was the Friday) Corder called at her Father's house, and told her they would go to Ipswich, but they did not go on that day. On the 18th of May, Prisoner called again at the house of the deceased, who was at the time upstairs with her mother. He called to her and said, "I am now going, are you ready?" She said, "I cannot go out in the day as the people will see me." He told her that he had been disappointed several times, and that she must prepare to go then. It was arranged that she should put some clothes in a bag, which he would take to the Red Barn, to which she was to repair in male attire, and she could there change her dress and proceed with him to Ipswich, where he would marry her. She put her dress into the bag, and also a small basket; into which she put a black velvet bag or reticule lined with silk. Corder left the house, and was absent about a quarter of an hour; and on his return, Maria Marten had habited herself in a coat, waistcoat, and trowsers. She had also on a part of her own dress, consisting of a flannel petticoat and stays, with an ashen busk. She wore ear-rings, and a comb, and had round her neck a green handkerchief. They left the house at the same time, but by different doors, both going in the direction of the Red Barn. From that period the friends of Maria Marten never saw her any more alive, nor heard anything of her, save such accounts as had been furnished them by the Prisoner, and which accounts will be given to you in evidence. Before she left her house he told her he had received a letter from a person named Balham, who was to take her into custody, on the ground of her having an illegitimate child, but Balham will tell you he never gave the Prisoner any such letter. A younger brother of hers who was getting some grass in an adjoining field saw the Prisoner going towards the Red Barn, with a pick-

axe on his shoulder, this, gentlemen, you will find to be a material circumstance in the case. The next time the mother of the deceased saw the Prisoner was on the following Saturday, but nothing particular occurred on that occasion. On the Sunday she again saw him, who told her that he had not yet married her daughter, he said he had got the license, but it was necessary to send it to London, and that in the mean time he had placed Maria with some friends of his, who resided at Yarmouth. She again saw the Prisoner on the following week, and she told him of her son's having seen him go towards the Red Barn on the 18th of May, with a pick-axe on his shoulder. But he said "it could not be *me*, it must have been a man named Acres, who was stubbing up some trees in a field near there." Now Acres will be called before you, and will tell you, that he was never so employed in that neighbourhood. Between the 18th of May, and up to harvest time, the family of the deceased frequently saw the prisoner, and he assured them that she was still living with his friends, whom he said were named Rowling; he represented her as being in good health, and when her friends complained of her silence, he accounted for it in various ways. At one time she was too much occupied with him, at another, she had a sore on her hand, and was unable to write, and he contrived to amuse her friends by similar statements up to harvest time. On one occasion, he got into conversation with a female, named Stowe, who lived near the Red Barn. She asked him if Maria Marten was likely to have any more children, and he said, she was not. Stowe asked why not, and observed, that Maria was a young woman, and likely to have many more children; but he said, No, she would have no more, she had had her number. Stowe asked if Maria was near, he replied, she is where I can always see her, and where I am sure no one else can. There is another circumstance, which trifling in itself, I shall state to you. The prisoner, about this period, borrowed a spade from Stowe, she does not recollect the precise day, but will tell you that she had a child about a month before the 18th of May, and had not at that time been churched. This brings us to the harvest time, which took place in September, up to which time the barn was empty, with the exception of some old litter, which remained from the preceding year. When the first field of wheat was cut and brought in, the Prisoner ordered that the upper part of the Barn should be first filled, and was present when the two first loads were deposited. [Here the learned Counsel proceeded to describe the Barn as it was represented by the model on the table.] The harvest being

over, the Prisoner left Polstead, from which place he was driven to Colchester by Mr. Pryke: he then stated he had not seen Maria Marten since May. But I should have stated that before leaving Polstead, he saw the father of the deceased, with whom he shook hands, saying—"that he was going to marry his daughter soon, and that he had purchased a new suit for the purpose." In the course of the following October, the father of the deceased received a letter, bearing the London post-mark, in which the Prisoner stated that he had made Maria Marten his wife, and expressed his surprise at not having had an answer to a previous letter written by Maria, in which, she stated that Mr. Rowling had acted as father, and Miss Rowling as bridesmaid at the wedding. In a subsequent communication, he stated that the letter had not passed through the London post-office, and accounted for it, by saying that it had to cross the water, he being then residing in the Isle of Wight. In a short time after, the prisoner met a gentleman named Matthews, in London, and a conversation, and a circumstance took place between them relative to the deceased, which conversation will be mentioned in evidence, and I shall for the present forbear to enter further, than to observe, he said he had not up to that time been able to marry Maria Marten, in consequence of some family affairs, but would shortly do so. The parents of Maria Marten not hearing anything for a considerable time, became uneasy, and suspicious about her fate. These suspicions at length assumed a definite shape, and they became anxious to search the Red Barn. In April, this year, the whole of the corn was thrashed out but a little straw. The barn was then searched by the friends of the deceased, and in the upper part they perceived that the earth was not so firm as in other places, and, on digging down about one foot and a half, discovered the body of a female, covered with portions of her dress, viz.—stays and shift, and round her neck was a green handkerchief. The body and clothes were carefully inspected by the father and sister of the deceased, and they will describe to you the grounds of identity of their deceased relative. The Surgeon will also tell you the different marks, which appeared in her person. She had a wen on the throat, which was found on the deceased; she had lost two lower teeth, the loss was to be perceived in the lower jaw of the body. The features were not altogether disfigured, she was easily recognized. The deceased had been afflicted with a pain in her side, and the Surgeon on examining the body will tell you, that on the body they discovered in that part the marks of a pistol ball on the cheek, a wound in the neck

inflicted by some sharp instrument, also a wound in the left side, and that the green handkerchief around her neck appeared to have been drawn so tight as to cause strangulation. Upon the body being found, suspicion fell on the Prisoner. An active officer was dispatched in search of him, who found him at Ealing Lane, and took him into custody, telling him that he arrested him on a very serious charge, about a young woman named Maria Marten, and asked if he knew anything about her, the Prisoner said "No!" This question he repeated thrice, and received a similar answer. Your name is Corder and you are the person I am in search of. Did you ever know a young woman named Maria Marten? The Prisoner answered again, "No, never," he was committed to prison. The officer Lee on searching the house, found a black velvet bag, or reticule, lined with silk, and having a selvage inside, to that bag the mother of Maria Marten will speak. In the bag was found a pair of pistols, he also found a sword which corresponded with the cuts through the stays and other parts of the dress. It will be shown to you that before the 18th of May, the Prisoner was in possession of such a sword, and had sent it to be ground in the neighbourhood, and that it had been seen in his possession before he left Polstead. These are the main facts of the case, the comments on the case will be made by my Lord, but there is an observation which I may make, indeed I owe it to you and the Prisoner to make it. In a case of such great importance, much rumour has necessarily gone abroad, and many things been stated without the slightest foundation, with these rumours you have nothing to do, and I beg of you to dismiss them from your minds. For the important enquiry you will look only to the evidence and discharge your duty with justice to the public, the prisoner, and yourselves. Upon the evidence which I have to lay before you, carefully sifted as it will be in the cross-examination, I trust God will lead you to a right conclusion. If, upon that evidence you should feel the slightest doubt, in God's name give the prisoner the benefit of it, by a verdict of acquittal; but if that evidence should lead you to the painful conclusion, that he murdered Maria Marten, then you can only discharge your duty by finding him Guilty."

Examination of Ann Marten.

Ann Marten is wife of John Marten of Polstead, her husband had a daughter named Maria ; knows the prisoner at the bar, he lived at Polstead ; he was acquainted with her daughter, and used frequently to come to their house ; came for a twelvemonth before the 18th of May, 1827. In the course of 1826 she was with child ; about two months before the 18th of May, 1827, Maria went away, and returned home with a child ; heard Corder admit that he was the father of that child, has sometimes heard some conversations between them, once about the burial of that child ; heard him say he carried that child to Sudbury. Heard a conversation about a five-pound note at different times. She always told him he had taken the child's bread away, and her's. Maria had had a child by another person before that by Corder ; this conversation was after the birth of that child. In another conversation, the prisoner told Maria that the parish officers would take her up for having had bastard children ; this was before the 18th of May : could not hear the rest of that conversation. About a week before the 18th of May, the conversation took place about the five-pound note ; she accused him of taking her and the child's bread away, he made no answer. On the evening of the Sunday before the 18th of May, he came to the cottage : they had some conversation together, and it was agreed between prisoner and Maria to go to Ipswich on the Monday, and that Maria was to sleep at prisoner's mother's that night ; she went away with him, but she did not go to Ipswich, but returned on Monday morning, between 3 and 4 o'clock. Corder came again in the course of the day ; he then said they should go to Ipswich on Wednesday night, he could drive her ; on the same afternoon he again put off the journey, because Wednesday was Stoke fair ; Maria and he then fixed to go on Thursday ; they did not go on Thursday, Corder saying his brother James was so bad, they expected him to die every hour. Between 11 and 12 o'clock on Friday, witness was upstairs with Maria — Corder came up to them ; he said on coming into the room " Come Maria, make haste, I am going ;" she said, " How can I go at this time of the day without any one seeing me ?" he said " never mind, we have been disappointed a good many times, we will not be disappointed any more." Witness was in the room all this time. Maria said, " how can I go without being seen ?" he said, " you can go up to the Red Barn and stop until I come for you with the horse and gig ;" she said, " how am

I to order my things?" prisoner said, "I will take the things and carry them to the barn, and I will come back to walk with you;" she again expressed fears of being seen; prisoner said, "there is none of my workmen in the field or near the barn, I am sure the course is clear." Her things were put into a Holland bag; there was a black velvet bag put into a wicker basket; there were two pair of black silk stockings, a black silk gown, a cambric shirt, and several other things; should know the black velvet reticule again; have seen it frequently. When the things were in the bag, he took them in his hand; she then dressed herself in man's clothes; brown coat, striped waistcoat, and blue trowsers; she had on her shift, a flannel under-petticoat, and stays; the shift was Irish, and witness should know it again—Maria made it. The stays were jean; had seen them before the 11th of May; the day before she went away she bent the busk and whalebones in it; the busk was ash, and put down the front; she put it in instead of bone; has frequently seen that busk; it was made by master Rayner; she had on a pair of shoes, the fore part is leather, the hinder part satin. The prisoner went away and then returned; Maria was upstairs; prisoner said to me "the reason I go to Ipswich to-day is, because John Balam, the constable, came into the stable to-day to me and told me he had got a letter from Mr. Whitmore, from London, and in that letter a warrant to have Maria taken up and prosecuted for having bastard children;" I said "William, if you had but married Maria before this child was born, as I wished you to have done, all this would have been settled;" he said "Mrs. Marten, do not make yourself uneasy, I am going to Ipswich to-day to see if I cannot get a license to be married to-morrow;" I then asked him what he would do if he could not be married;" he said "do not make yourself unhappy, I will make her my lawful wife before we return; but if I should not be able to get a license, I will get her a place somewhere till we can;" Maria was upstairs all this time; she then came down, and asked if there was any body about that could see her go away; she was dressed all this time in man's clothes. They then went away. She had a man's hat on. She had a large comb in her hair, and two side combs, and ear-rings; had frequently seen those ear-rings. They went away about half-past twelve; she went out at one door and he at the other; he went out at the one next the road. They went out at the same time, saw them go towards the barn; she went by the field and the pen, and met him in the road; they both got over the gate, and crossed the field together; the gate leads

from the road into Hare's Hill field, they then walked together along the path ; there is a barn beyond that field, the " Red Barn". There are two closes between the road and the barn. Saw neither of them again that day, and has not seen Maria Marten since. He (the prisoner) had a gun when they went across the field, the gun was in the cottage, and he said he would remove it, because of the children. She had an umbrella in her hand, it had a bone top, it fastened with a button ; had frequently seen that umbrella and button before. Saw Corder on the next Saturday night to speak to him ; saw him again on the Sunday. I was in a room next the chamber where the prisoner's brother James lay on the Saturday night. On the Sunday saw him at my house, he came, and I said, " William, what have you done with Maria ?" he said " I have left her at Ipswich, I have got her a comfortable place, she is going down with Mrs. Rowland to the water side." I said, " William, what will she do for clothes ?" he said, " Miss Rowland has got plenty, and Miss Rowland would not let her send for any." He said he had got a license, but that it must go to London to be signed, and that he could not marry for a month or six weeks ; he said he had changed a cheque for 20*l.* and had given her the money, this was on the Sunday the 20th. He said they went by Spatwell, or somewhere by that way ; I asked him where they dressed ? he told me she dressed in a barn, and put on the great coat she took away with her ; she told him that the great coat and hat were put into the seat of the gig, and she put on her own bonnet. In consequence of something her little son George said to her on the day Maria went away, witness said to Corder the next week after, " William, you did not go from the barn so soon as you told me you should ?" he said, " yes, Mrs. Marten, that I am sure I did, I left within half or three quarters of an hour of the time I left here." I answered, " no, William, you did not, for my George saw you go down Thistley-lea, with the pickaxe across your shoulder" — Thistley-lea is next to Hare's Hill. Prisoner replied and said, " I am sure that was not me, it was Tom Acres, who went to plant trees on Mr. Hoyes's hill." Prisoner's brother John died about Polstead fair-time, in July, 1827. Frequently saw him after the month Maria went away ; up to the time he went away, sometimes two or three times a day. He often used to say she was purely well, and was at Yarmouth, at home with Miss Rowland, at Yarmouth. Sometimes did not see him for a day or two ; before those times he said he was going to see Maria ; on his return has said to witness that Maria was purely well ; he said he

should take her home at Michaelmas, and put her into the farm. Never received a letter from Maria after that time; has more than once mentioned to Corder her not writing; he said that she had a bad hand—he said this several different times; he never assigned another reason. Before prisoner left Polstead, he took leave of witness, and said he was going to the water side for the benefit of his health; prisoner said he should go to Yarmouth, and take Maria with him, and get married at Ipswich; did not see Corder after that time till he was apprehended—did not see the dead body, witness was ill at the time. Maria had a wen on her neck—she had a cough when she went away on the 15th of May, had had it some time; had lost two teeth, one on the left side of the upper jaw and one on right of lower jaw, I believe. She had besides her other clothes, a silk handkerchief round her neck, it was a red ground, with yellow flowers; it belonged to her little boy; that was to have been brought back: witness asked prisoner why he had not brought it back; he said it was lost. Was at James Corder's funeral; prisoner was there also; he had Maria's umbrella with him; the funeral took place soon after Maria went away; after the funeral, a day or two, I said to him, "Wm. you had Maria's umbrella at your brother James's funeral," he said "it was not Maria's, but Deborah Prykes', and I am going to send it home;" she said "No, William, I think it was Maria's;" prisoner said "No." About a week before he went away he said he had been to Ipswich, and saw Maria, who went to meet him, and should have got dripping wet if Maria had not lent him her umbrella; prisoner said he was going to take it with him. Prisoner shew witness a gold ring before his brother Thomas was drowned; he had bought it at Colchester; saw Corder once with a pair of pistols at the cottage; it was after Maria had come home from Sudbury with the infant child.

Cross-examined by Mr. Broderick—There are three other children of her husbands before they were married; was anxious that Corder should marry Maria—they were about two months at Sudbury before Maria returned with the infant—the infant died about a fortnight before the 18th of May; do not know when the child was buried, Maria and Corder took it away; they were gone two nights and one day—to the question, don't know where the child was buried?—prisoner hesitated a long time, at last she said Maria told her that it was buried at Sudbury—thought so—on her oath; don't know that Maria was at Mrs. Corder's two nights; Maria dressed rather smartly; her sister quarrelled with her about it, as did her husband and herself. Maria was very low

spirited about it, both before and after she went to Sudbury ; the other daughter was present when they set off to the Red Barn, when she saw the pistols—Corder was snapping them by the fire side. Maria had a child by Mr. Matthews, who allowed her £5 a quarter. Corder once gave Maria some slices of ham ; but he never sent her either victuals or money before they went away. Corder afterwards gave her money for the maintenance of the child, she thought it came from Maria. There was a report that Maria would be taken up on account of having had three children, she, therefore, kept close to the house—and never went out after she had entered, except when they went to Sudbury until the 18th of May. Witness was examined at the Cock, at Polstead, by Mr. Wayman, after the inquest ; could not tell how long after, whether it was a week or ten days after ; neither Corder nor the Magistrate was present then. On her oath could not tell how long after. Did not see Corder at the inquest ; saw the umbrella at the funeral ; Corder never went away during the time after the 18th, until when he quite left and took leave of witness. Heard Maria and Corder talk about the five-pound note : he said, “ never mind that Maria, as long as I have a shilling you and your child shall have it.” Maria when she went away, cried. When she went away, Corder and she seemed very fond of each other. Corder had the conversation upstairs. Being reminded of what she had before sworn, she still persisted that the conversation took place upstairs. They went away about the middle of the day, and went out by two separate doors.

Re-examined by Mr. ANDREWS—Corder gave her but two pounds : believed that to be on account of Mr. Matthews' child's allowance.

Thos. Marten, the husband of the last witness, is a mole-catcher, at Polstead ; his daughter Maria was 26 ; Maria went out early on the morning of the 18th. Corder frequently was at witnesses house ; he afterwards told witness that he had got a license, but that it must go to London to be signed ; he said that he had got Maria a situation with Miss Rowland, who was sister to a young man he had been to school with ; had several conversations with him respecting Maria ; he always said she was quite well when he last saw her. About five or six weeks after she went away, witness expressed his surprise that Maria did not write ; the prisoner replied that she could not write, because she had a sore on the back of her hand. I could not write ; saw prisoner about a week before he went away ; has since received

two letters from him, which he gave to somebody at the first examination ; heard no further from him ; searched the Red Barn on the 12th of April last (a model was shewn to witness.) There is a yard before the barn, with buildings on each side, and a gate leads into the yard. Persons were with him ; when witness searched there was litter in the bays. Pryke, Mrs. Corder's bailiff, was in the barn ; first tried to find anything ; the straw was too thick, they then rolled the straw off and found some great stones, and the earth seemed to have been disturbed. They then began to prick down with the handle of the rake and the mole-spike they had with them ; pushed down and turned up some black earth, and then cleared the earth away, and about three inches below something stuck to the spike like a piece of flesh ; both of us were struck at seeing this, and then wished to have some one with us ; the iron of a mole spike is about a foot long, and is rounded and short, there is a spade at the other end. [The prisoner seemed somewhat agitated.] Pryke, the bailiff, went for some assistance ; he locked the doors and took the keys with him ; witness remained near the barn for awhile and then went home ; in about two hours and a half he went again to the barn, Boutell was then with Pryke, all three went into the barn, cleared the earth away till they came to the body, cleared first the head part, and found the handkerchief tied round the neck, they parted it a little on the neck, and could see the collar, it appeared very high round the neck ; next cleared away the earth towards the feet—the body was not stretched out, it laid in about three and a half feet, the legs were drawn up a little, and the head bent down into the earth ; the spike went into the body about the hip bone—the spike at the bottom was about the thickness of the finger, and increased to about two inches, it was round ; there were three of them, witness went away and left the others there ; witness then returned with some others. Mr. Whitmore, of Polstead, advised the body to be left alone, untill the coroner came. When the coroner and Mr. Lawton, the surgeon, came the body was raised up on a shutter—I could not tell the body, but when they turned the mouth up I thought it was my daughter's ; she had a wen on the side of her neck ; she had had a severe cough for a week or two ; there was a handkerchief and part of a shawl found with the body ; the shawl was underneath the body ; there were her earrings ; part of her stays and the busk ; saw nothing of a petticoat—saw something which looked like a piece of shift ; the things were removed in witness's presence ; the busk was an ash one.

Cross-examined by Mr. Broderick.—Pryke when he was examined had first a fork, he did not use it but the handle of a rake, had tried about to put the spud in several places; at last in one place something came up like a piece of flesh—did not move the whole of the body—part only was uncovered—went to the Cock to be examined subsequent to the inquest—was sworn before the coroner; there was no coroner; there was no justice there then and no jury.

Ann Marten, a very interesting young girl, the sister of the deceased, said her sister, before she left home, heard Corder say she was to change her dress when she got to the barn; had frequent talk with Corder respecting her sister; he said he had happened with a gentleman, a schoolfellow of his, and his sister, and that she was gone to the water side, to wait till she was married. Saw the dead body on a Sunday in April, it was lying on a door; had seen it before, knew her by the face, the features, and the things she had on; the handkerchief was a green striped one, it was round the neck part, knew it was her sister's, can't say when she last saw it before; knew the ear-rings, one was on the body, knew that again. Her sister had lost two teeth, one on the right side of the lower jaw, and one on the upper jaw. Her sister had a wen on her neck. Her sister had a dry cough when she went away, she had had it some time.

Cross-examined by Mr. Prendergast.—When her sister went away she was very low spirited. Don't know that she wanted to marry Corder; never heard her say that she was going to be married to him; had sometimes quarrelled with her sister; her mother sometimes had words with her, but not very often.

George Marten, a little boy, brother of the deceased, recollects his sister going away on the 18th of May; she went alone out at the door—Corder was at their house that day; he went away at the same time as his sister—he had a gun with him, he said the gun was loaded, and he said to mother don't let the child meddle with the gun, he had nothing else with him then; he had carried a bag up to the barn before him; his sister went away about half-past twelve. Never saw his sister after. Did see Corder, saw him coming that day from the barn with a package, it was about half-past three that afternoon; he went from the barn towards his own home, he went by Thistley-lane; saw nobody else near or with him at the time; witness was in Well-field cutting grass for the dickies; prisoner passed about twenty rods off, and witness was sure it was him; his sister was crying when she went away, and seemed unhappy.

Prisoner's counsel did not cross-examine this witness.

Phœby Stow, by Mr. KELLY—Lives at Polstead—is the nearest cottage to the Red Barn; recollects Corder calling on her one day in May, 1827, it was about one o'clock in the day, but cannot exactly say what day it was; prisoner asked to borrow a spade; witness went and gave him a spade of her husband's; prisoner enquired after her health, and she replied "I am very weak and low;" witness had been confined on 29th of April; prisoner said you look bad enough, but I am in such a hurry I cannot stop to talk to you; was churched on the 29th of May, and is sure it was before she was churched. Did not see the prisoner again that day; the spade came back, but she did not know how. Sometime after, witness asked Corder what had become of Maria's child—he said "it was dead and buried, and she will have no more children." Witness said, "she is a young woman, and likely to have many children;" he answered "no, Maria Marten is not likely to be troubled with any more children;" I said "you said you are married, why do not you live with Maria?" prisoner said "I will when I can settle here—I can go to her whenever I like;" I said "you are not jealous, how do you know when you are away that somebody else is not with her?" "Oh," he answered, "I know when I am not with her nobody else is."

Cross-examined by Mr. Broderick—Is not a gossiping sort of woman; though several times pressed, could not recollect that any of Corder's men had been in the habit of borrowing tools of her husband. When first examined before the coroner, had not said a word about these conversations; cannot tell how long after it was before she mentioned that their conversation had taken place. She first told it to Mr. Creswell, the magistrate, on oath—the prisoner was not present—her cottage, which is part of a double tenement, is the nearest of any to the barn—is a quarter of a mile nearer than any other.

Rachael Burke examined by Mr. ANDREWS—Knows the prisoner; lives at a farm-house, and the prisoner called and said that Maria Marten would not be her (witness' mistress) as she was going in the steam packet to France.

This witness was not cross-examined.

William Marten is a first cousin to Maria Marten; knows Corder had a conversation with him respecting Maria, about the latter part of last harvest, about twenty rods from Marten's cottage. Corder gave him some harvest beer, and said, "make haste and drink the beer, I don't want they should hear our conversation."

Francis Stowe examined by Mr. ANDREWS—Harvested with Corder. Corder was present when the first load was put in, it was put in that part where the body was found; when they went with the corn, the bays were already foddered. Corder had some conversation with witness, in which he said he would give witness a pound note to cut his (prisoner's) throat.

Cross-examined by Mr. Broderick—Was examined before the Coroner; can't say whether it was a week or three weeks after the body was found.

William Marten, the cousin, was recalled; he was not examined before the Coroner's jury, but afterwards before the Magistrate.

William Towns, examined by Mr. KELLY—Is a labourer, and has been several years in the service of Mrs. Corder. The prisoner assisted in managing of the farm; assisted in filling the barn with wheat in August last; heard William Corder give directions about filling it—he told witness to get up America field, and put it into the barn, but did not tell them which particular bay; they had been in the habit of filling the right bay first with wheat. The floor of the barn had been littered—it was an old litter, not a fresh one; but witness can't say how long it had been littered. The bay was cleared of corn by Stoke fair; cannot exactly say when it was. Assisted in thrashing the corn out of the barn; thrashed out the last dressing; began thrashing some time in last February, and finished in the middle of March; as witness took away the sheaves, he began to lay the straw as soon as there was room; he had no particular orders to lay the straw.

Cross-examined by Mr. Broderick—Has known the prisoner 18 years; he has served the family all that time; he never saw him out of temper; he was a humane well-behaved man. He lost his father and three brothers during the last two years.

Wm. Pryke, bailiff to the mother, drove Corder to Colchester; when Corder went away he talked about the management of the farm, as he was going to superintend it. Maria Marten's name was mentioned, Corder said he had not seen her since May; he spoke highly of her, and that is all he can recollect about what occurred. Witness was present when the barn was searched for the body; had a rake; witness assisted to take out the body; it was lying on the right side, doubled up; the barn was locked up on the Saturday night, witness kept the keys.

Cross-examined by Mr. Broderick—Prisoner had been ill before he went away; he spoke of her as a well deserving

young woman. Witness was present at the inquest, but was not examined; the prisoner was not present at the inquest; was not permitted, and did not hear a single witness.

The Judge.—Is not this unusual?

Mr. Broderick.—Yes, my Lord; and still more unusual that the Coroner should act as attorney for the prosecution, as in this case.

Witness continued, was examined afterwards by the Coroner, who then officiated as attorney for the prosecution. A dissenting minister preached since at the Red Barn before 4 or 5000 people, and all treating the prisoner as guilty.

William Chaplin, farmer, produced 2 letters; is churchwarden at Polstead, and was bound over to prosecute. Heard a report that parson Young preached, but did not go near. Knows that shows have been exhibited on this subject, and that one is being exhibited at this time.

The elder Marten was called, and proved receiving the letters.

George Gardiner has frequently corresponded with the prisoner; believes that the letters produced are his hand writing, but can't swear—had a conversation with Corder respecting Maria Marten, he said she was well off.

Mr. Edgell read the first letter, it was addressed to the elder Marten, and was dated "Bull Inn, Aldgate."

Mr. Peter Matthews, by Mr. Kelly.—Lives in London, but has some connexions at Polstead, has known Maria Marten for a length of time; knows the prisoner at the bar. Saw Maria the last time in August 1826. Was at Polstead last July, saw Corder there twice, conversed with him respecting a £5 Bank note witness had lost. Put a variety of questions to him respecting a letter he had sent on the 2d of Sept. last, in which a £5 note was enclosed; Corder said, "he knew nothing about it." Witness produced a letter from the prisoner.

This letter was then handed to *Mr. Gardiner*, the last witness, who identified it as the prisoner's writing.

It being read contained an acknowledgment of an offence of another kind—*Mr. Broderick* objected to this letter as evidence, and it was withdrawn.

Witness then put in another letter from the prisoner, dated in July, wherein he states that Maria Marten was living in the neighbourhood of Yarmouth with some kinsfolk of his, and expressing prisoner's intention to make her his bride as soon as his family affairs were settled. The hand-writing was proved. The witness then detailed subsequent conversations with the prisoner at Polstead in July 1827; where he reite-

rated that Maria was with his kinsfolk near Yarmouth. Met him again on 19th November, by accident, near Somerset-house, London, and enquired whether prisoner had forwarded a letter which witness had enclosed to him on 2nd of Sept. for Maria Marten; he said, "yes;" witness then expressed his surprise that he had never received an answer or heard at all from her. Prisoner said, "he either had or thought he had written an answer." Witness then asked him where Maria Marten was, as her father had written once or twice respecting her, and he was anxious about her, not having heard from her. Prisoner said "she was in the Isle of Wight, and that she had written to her father so;" he said that he was not yet married, and assigned as a reason that he had not been able to get his family affairs settled.

This gentleman was not cross-examined.

Thomas Lee, a London Police Officer, examined by Mr. Andrews—went down to Ealing to apprehend the prisoner; as witness entered the front door, the prisoner came into the hall out of the parlour, witness told him he had some particular business, prisoner invited him into the drawing-room. Witness then told him that he was come down to apprehend him on a very serious charge, and that he must consider himself witness's prisoner, he said "very well." Witness told him it was respecting a young woman he had kept company with, named Maria Marten, who had been missing some time and that strong suspicion attached to him. He said "no, I don't know such a person;" witness asked him, "if he never knew such a person," prisoner replied, "no, you must have made a mistake;" witness said, "no, your name is Corder, and I am certain you are the person; I bade him recollect himself. I had asked him twice if he had known such a person, he said 'No.' I then proceeded to search his person, from which I took a bunch of keys. I took him to the Red Lion; on our way there I said the body of the young woman had been found in his barn. After we had gone some distance, prisoner said, 'when was the young woman found?' I said on Saturday morning last; nothing further passed there. Witness then returned to the house; saw Mrs. Corder, and her brother; they showed them upstairs; witness examined his desks, one was in his dressing-room, and lay opened there.

Mr. Broderick objected to this examination, as there was nothing to shew that the desks belonged to the prisoner.

Mr. Andrews did not press the question.

Witness continued—he found a pair of pistols in the drawing room and when he mentioned them to the prisoner, he

said, he bought them at Ipswich when 10 years of age. When in the chaise he told witness he would make him a present of the pistols he found; witness was then conveying the prisoner to Polstead. Witness was examined at the Coroner's inquest; his deposition was afterwards read over to the prisoner. The pistols were hanging in a black bag on a nail; he produced the bag.

Mr. Broderick objected that the bag and pistols were not sufficiently identified as the prisoner's property.

The Judge said he would reserve the point.

Examination continued—there was also a powder flask, containing percussion caps, bullets, and bullet mould

Robert Offord—is a cutler at Hadleigh, knows the prisoner, he came to witness's shop about the end of March or beginning of April, and brought a small sword to be ground; said he wanted it done that afternoon; said he wanted it as sharp as a carving knife, as his cousin was going to be married; witness ground it.

Lea, the officer, produced the sword, or dirk, a small one such as is used by midshipmen, he found it in the house at Ealing where he apprehended the prisoner. Offord identified the sword as the one he sharpened up for Corder.

Cross-exam. by Mr. Broderick—Cannot swear that it was not previous to Christmas 1826.

Re-exam. by Mr. Kelly—There are now some stains on the blade that were not there when he returned it to Corder.

Gardiner was re-called to identify the sword. He said "he had seen one like it in Mrs. Corder's house."

Re-exam. by Mr. Prendergast—there was a report in the spring of 1827, that Mrs. Corder's house would be robbed, witness sat up there in consequence, and he understood Corder had this sword sharpened for purposes of defence.

William Balham, the constable of Polstead, knows the prisoner; knew also Maria Marten; never had a warrant to apprehend her; never told Corder he had, nor had a letter from Mr. Whitmore desiring him to take her into custody.

Re-exam. by Mr. Broderick—that though he had not a warrant to apprehend Maria Marten it was generally reported in the village that she would be taken up. Corder bore an excellent character for humanity.

Henry Harcourt lives at Sudbury, a gun maker; knows the prisoner; he came to witness' shop in February, 1827; bought a pair of percussion pistols to be repaired; cannot say that those produced are the same, they are like them.

Cross-examined by Mr. Broderick.—Corder himself fetched them away, he was accompanied by a young woman.

Thomas Acres is a labourer, at Polstead, he never crossed the Thistle lane with a pick axe last year.

Cross-examined by Mr. Broderick.—Is quite certain.

Mr. J. LAWTON, examined by Mr. Kelly—Is a surgeon at Boxford, went to the Red Barn on the 20th of April last, saw the body

lying in the hole, it was partly uncovered; examined the body; parts of it were more decomposed than others. There was a handkerchief round the neck, pieces of a shift, of a flannel petticoat, and of a leg-horn bonnet; [the vestiges of the raiment taken from the body were produced,] there was also part of the sleeve of a blue coat, and some pieces of sack; the piece of coat was not there; the corpse was that of a young woman about 24 or 25. Examined the face carefully; there was the appearance of a blow or wound on the cheek; the body was crushed into the hole. The green handkerchief was tied round the neck; it was tied in the usual way, but drawn extremely tight, so tight as to occasion a depressed groove in the neck. It was apparently so drawn on purpose, and was sufficiently tight to have strangled a living person. There was a cut or stab in the left side of the neck, about two inches in length; witness passed his finger into the wound and it passed deep into the neck. Could not tell whether or not such a wound would have occasioned death to a living person, as the body was so much decomposed that witness could not exactly discover what part was injured. The deceased had a wen or enlargement of the neck. There was also a wound in the right eye, and another on the left cheek, he should imagine that it was occasioned by a ball, it entered into the left cheek, from above the grinders, and passed out at the right orbit. Should think that the ball would not have occasioned death, but coupled with the stab and the handkerchief. He entertained not the least doubts that these concurrent causes would occasion death. The bone that separates the nostrils had been broken. The lungs had been diseased; there was an adhesion of the lungs to the pleura membrane. The symptoms of such disease would be manifested while living by coughing, and other inflammatory symptoms. The brain was in such a state as to preclude the possibility of an examination. The hand had fallen off; it was like the hand of a skeleton; that appearance, he should think, occasioned by decomposition. He should think the injuries detailed would not, apart from the handkerchief, have occasioned immediate death. Did not examine farther; the body was disinterred for further inspection; since the examination I have seen the heart; examined the ribs, between the 5th and 6th there was a wound, which was occasioned by a stab and not by a ball. Examined the shift, and there was a perforation in it which corresponded with the wound on the ribs; the stays were too much destroyed. The sabre was passed into the wound in his presence about 2 or 3 inches, and it exactly fitted. The ribs between which the wound was situated were in a pretty tolerable sound state of preservation. Examined the heart; there was a wound in it; witness saw the point of the sword applied to it, and it appeared to fit. Applied the sword to the wound in the sphenoidal sinus, it did not appear to penetrate more than a quarter of an inch; the hanger or sabre also fitted. Again examined the wound in the head, dropped one of the balls found in the reticule and it passed through the wound, which must have been occasioned by such a ball.

Saw blood on the handkerchief, on the shift and on the stays, and apparently also on the bonnet. The pistol appeared to witness the first instrument used. Witness took off the garters, they were of narrow white tape. Observed the shoes, for while looking at one the foot came off in his hand. Examined the jaws, there were 2 teeth out, one on the upper and one on the lower; more than those are out now, several have fallen out, but can distinguish between those that were out before death and those that have fallen out since. Can speak positively to one being out before death on the right side of the upper jaw.

Cross-examined by Mr. Broderick.—Has been a surgeon for himself one year, is 30 years of age, and practised under Mr. Mudd of Gedding. The body was not so much decomposed but he could trace the cause of death. Did not say any thing of the pistol ball when in the barn; but he could not sufficiently clean the bones to ascertain the cause. Is certain that the wound in the neck is not a recent one, it would not have gaped so much if it had been inflicted after death; opened the chest and abdomen, made one wound in the heart in the operation; but is certain that it was not the same as he described, that was on the right ventricle; there is a division between the right and left ventricle near the apex. Saw no other injury; none occasioned by a spud or other implement put down. Lifting up the body by the outer fold of the handkerchief might have much tightened the inner side. Never examined the body but in the barn. Did not notice the wound in the shift at the time witness took it off, it might have been done afterwards; did not see the wound in the ribs either. Had not an opportunity of examining such a case before.

Re-examined.—Has been at the profession 15 years, has seen many dissections of dead bodies.

Second Day's Trial.

The Lord Chief Baron entered the court a few minutes after nine, and the counsel and jury being already assembled, and the prisoner being put to the bar, the trial immediately proceeded, the names of the jurors being first called over.

John Charles Nairn—Is a usurgeon, proceeded to his diploma about 12 months, but has been in the profession upwards of 12 years. On 19th of last May attended at Polstead. John Balham, the constable, disinterred the body in his presence; witness examined the cavities of the chest.

Mr. Broderick thought the body ought first to have been identified.

Balham was again called, he did not see the body interred, he had put it in the coffin and screwed it down, re-interred the coffin, it was the same and the body was the same.

Mr. Nairn's evidence continued—The internal parts of the chest were in a most perfect state of preservation; so much so that the slightest injury or penetration into the cavity would be perceived. There was a large wound in the back part of the right venticle. I formed no opinion of that wound when I first saw it; upon a subsequent examination I formed an opinion that it was a recent one. I detached the heart from the vessels and laid it aside for further examination. Examined the ribs, and in the space between the 5th and 6th ribs discovered a wound. The wound was about three quarters of an inch broad; my opinion was that the wound was of long duration, and not a recently inflicted one. After witness returned home, examined the heart, about 2 in. from the apex discovered a slight wound. The direction of that wound corresponded with the external one between the ribs. The wound had been inflicted with a sharp instrument like a sword. [the sword was shown to witness] Such was the kind of instrument with which it had been inflicted. That wound was sufficient to produce death. Has since examined the head. Has applied the sword to the wound with which it corresponds to the extent of 2 or 3 inches. There is a slight discoloration on the back of the sword to that extent. On the heart the wound was made with the point of that sword. On examining the head, found the track of a ball; it proceeded from the left side of the upper jaw to the internal angle of the right eye. It was a small pistol ball; that wound might have caused death. Examined the head further, there was a fissure or opening into the sphenoidal sinus behind the face, corresponding with the vertebræ; and a sharp pointed instrument would have made that opening. It extended a quarter of an inch into the sphenoidal sinus. This wound might have occasioned death, the point of the sword corresponded with it.

Cross-examined by Mr. Broderick—Examined the body on the 19th of May. The body might have been exposed a month before. In

that state it was not so much decomposed as might have been expected. The heart had been separated from the pericardium by an instrument ; the wound in the right venticle being smooth, induced him to think it was recent ; the other had gaping edges, which induced him to believe it was inflicted before death. While living, the apex or point of the heart touches the ribs ; a wound made through the carthileges after death would present the same appearance ; a knife would have inflicted the same kind of wound.

Re-examined by Mr. Andrews—A knife of the same breadth and form as the sword would have inflicted the wound.

Mr. Lawton and Mr. Balham were recalled to prove that the head examined by Mr. Nairn was the same taken out of the hole in the barn.

Mr. Chaplin, a surgeon, had been three years practising dispensary, and one year on his own account, confirmed the testimony of the last witness as to the wounds in the heart ; but from the appearance of it could not tell whether it was recent or not ; the wound in the side, it was in the direction of the wound of the heart, which appeared in continuation of the external wound ; that wound in the heart might possibly have been inflicted in stripping off the pericardium : the wound in the ribs could not have been so inflicted ; the wound in the heart was a mortal one. The witness corroborated the testimony of Mr. Lawton and Mr. Nairn, as to the appearance of the wound in the head ; this appearance could not have been produced by decomposition ; it might or it might not have been mortal ; there was also a thrust in the eye, apparently inflicted with a sharp instrument with a broad back, and might have been inflicted with the same instrument. [The sword was here handed to the Jury, and it appeared to become broader at the back from the point.]

Cross-examined by Mr. Broderick—Saw no appearance of an effusion of blood about the heart ; such a puncture in the heart of a living person would have occasioned such an effusion as ultimately to have stopped the motion of the heart.

Mr. Lawton produced the skull, and pointed out to the jury the mark of the sword in the sphenoidal sinus, and fitted it in. Mr. Broderick desired him to reverse the sword, and it would not go in the wound in the bone. He also explained the track of the bullet. He then shewed the state of the teeth ; one appeared to have been decayed out the remains still being in the socket, in the right side of the upper jaw. One other appeared either to have been drawn, or fallen out, as the socket was gone. There was also one out of the lower jaw.

Mr. Matthews being re-called, stated that Maria Marten had an enlargement, or wen, on her neck.

The mother being recalled, identified the combs found in the hole in the barn as the property of Maria, saw her wear it on the 18th of May, 1827, also the ear-rings, the green handkerchief on her neck, nearest to her skin, and the red and yellow one over the same. Maria had a leghorn hat, trimmed with black ribbons, like the one produced ; identified also the shoes, the ashen bust, the stays and the shift, could speak to the make of the sleeves of the latter.

Lea, the officer, produced the black velvet bag.

Mr. Broderick objected to this being evidence against the prisoner.

The Judge thought that the bag had not been identified sufficiently as having been in the possession of the prisoner.

Ann Marten, the sister, identified the green handkerchief, the ear-rings, the shoes and combs as worn by Maria Marten on the morning she went away.

Balham, the constable, re-called, said the soil was loose loam and stone, gravelly, and a little dry; and Polstead was in the Liberty of Bury.

Mr. Matthews re-called, said Maria wrote very well.

Mr. ANDREWS—This is my case, my Lord.

Prisoner's Defence.

The Chief Baron, "Prisoner, the time is now come for you to make your Defence."

The Prisoner took from his pocket a written paper, and read in somewhat a low and tremulous voice, and part of the time seemed much agitated;—his defence was as follows:—

"Gentlemen of the Jury—My Counsel informs me that upon a trial where the life of a human being is at stake, I cannot have the benefit of Counsel addressing you while a contrary practice prevails. This being the case I feel bound to address you, and have collected a few observations upon the nature of the present charge, and should you find them obscure and ill arranged, or not bearing exactly upon the evidence against me, I trust you will attribute it to the anxiety of mind under which I labour, and the difficulty in which I am placed, in which, indeed, every man must naturally be placed, in endeavouring to reply to the charge of which he has been kept in ignorance, and that are now made for the first time in his hearing. In this state of ignorance it has been my misfortune to be placed.

"Gentlemen, while I deplore, as much as any man, the untimely death of the female, I must implore you to discharge from your minds the various and disgusting matters which have been put into circulation to my injury by the press, from the period of my being charged until now. We all know how much the public opinion, and the mind is formed by that powerful engine, the Press, tho' perhaps, unintentionally, the character of an individual may be assailed. By the publications of the day have I been held up as the Murderer of the unhappy Maria Marten. It is not to be wondered at that statements like these should make strong impressions, but as you value the institutions of your Country and the sanctity of an oath, and as you value the tranquillity of your minds, and honestly wish to discharge your duty to God and your Country, I beseech you to dismiss from your minds all such impressions, and judge only from the evidence. I am not willing to throw imputations upon any man's character, but I will beg to make a few remarks upon what occurred at the Coroner's Inquest. Is it proper on the part of the Coroner, to act as an Attorney for the Prosecution, as his conduct in the one capacity is likely to influence his conduct in the other? His Lordship, and you, gentlemen, must see the impropriety of such proceedings. I must also remark upon the unfairness in not being allowed to be present at the inquest, altho' several authorities were produced to shew the right I had to be present; I repeat that this is the first time I have heard the evidence against me, for at the inquest it was only read over to me. My solicitor was refused copies of the depositions which made me remain ignorant of charges which affected my life. I will ask, gentlemen, whether it is in the power of any person properly to defend himself under such circumstances; how can a man protect himself from evidence thus cut down! It is impossible to explain at the instant any fact that is equivocal or has a doubtful appearance? It has truly been said, "that truth is often stronger than fiction," and upon no occasion was that assertion more fully found out than upon the present occasion; and during the last few years of my life which have been years of misfortune. I have within the last 6 months been deprived of 3 brothers, and shortly before of my father. I admit the evidence against me, but I can explain it away, and therefore beg most earnestly

for your attention to the statement I shall now make.—I regret the death of the unfortunate Maria Marten, and feel most sincerely sorry that I should have concealed it ever for a moment, but I did so because I was horror-struck and stupefied at the time, and knew not what to do. The nature of my connection with her you have heard; it was a connection contrary to the wish of my Mother, therefore to conceal her situation I procured lodgings for her at Sudbury, at which place she was confined; and when at the usual period she returned to her Father's house, that infant died in a fortnight by a natural death. I wished to keep the circumstance from my friends, and the neighbourhood; it was agreed with me by her mother and father, that Maria and myself should bury the child in the fields, and we took it away for that purpose. After this, Maria returned to my house, and by means of a private staircase, I took her to my own room, where she remained concealed two days. The pistols were hanging in the room loaded, she had seen them before, and knew how to use them; on returning she by some means contrived to take them, unknown to me. It is well known that Maria was then much depressed, and anxious I should marry her. I had reason to suppose she was then carrying on correspondence with a gentleman in London, she had had a child by. But I at last agreed to her entreaties, and fixed to go to Ipswich for a license and be married. It was agreed Maria should dress herself in male attire to go to the red barn. Some conversation passed between us respecting our marriage, on which Maria flew into a violent passion, and upbraided me with being too proud to marry her. This irritated me, and I remonstrated with her and asked her what I was to expect from her treatment now after I was married. She upbraided me again; I then said I would not marry her, and left the barn, but had scarcely reached the gate, when I was alarmed by the report of a pistol. I instantly went back, and with horror I beheld the unfortunate girl stretched on the floor, seemingly dead. For a short time I was stupefied with horror, and knew not what to do. I first thought of running for a surgeon, and happy should I have been had I followed that resolution. I tried to render the unfortunate girl some assistance, if possible, but I found her lifeless, and I found the horrid deed to have been effected by one of my own pistols, and that I was the only creature that could tell how the rash and fatal catastrophe happened. The sudden shock stupefied my faculties, and I was for some time before I could perceive the awful situation I was placed in, and the suspicion which would naturally arise by delaying to make the circumstance known: at length I thought the only way by which I could rescue myself from the horrid imputation was, by burying the body, which I resolved to do as well as I was able. Having done so I accounted for absence in the way described by the witnesses.—It may be asked, if innocent, why did I give these answers? I reply first from fear then from guilt. Nor can I form an idea how the unhappy woman got possession of my pistols. As to the stabs and other wounds described I can only say they were not given by Maria or myself, and would not have been mentioned had I not had a sword in my possession. These stabs must have been given when disinterring the body. Gentlemen, these are all the facts of the case. Is there let me ask any adequate cause assigned for such a deed? I ask any man whether if I had contemplated such an act I should have selected that Barn, a spot surrounded by cottages and persons to whom I was known. That I concealed the death was purely accidental. None but a madman could have expected concealment in such a place and under such circumstances. Or having perpetrated it was easy for me to have made my escape. You have heard of a passport for France having been found in my Desk, that passport was obtained by desire of my wife who was anxious to visit Paris, but I objected to journey on account of the expence.

Articles belonging to the unfortunate Maria, are proved to have been in my possession. Would I, had I been the guilty man I am represented to be, have retained those articles, or would I not for my own protection have at once destroyed them? I can prove that whilst in Town last year, I advertised the sale of my house belonging to my wife, and in that advertisement I gave my name and address—did this look like guilt or concealment? I have now, gentlemen, stated the case exactly as it stands, and should any doubt still linger in your minds, I hope you will extend to me that generous principle of English Law, which holds a man to be innocent until his guilt is clearly established. Gentlemen, whatever may be the result of this inquiry, my conscience tells me that I am innocent, and implore you not to send me to an ignominious death. I have no more to say, but that my life is in your hands. The prisoner occupied a quarter of an hour in reading his address.

At its conclusion, Mr. Broderick called

William Goodwin, of Sudbury, with whom they lodged ; he spoke to the lying-in of Maria Marten at his house, and to her being in bad spirits.

Mrs. Havers and Balham the son of the constable, gave him an excellent character for humanity ; as did several others.

The Learned Judge, in summing up, stated that the indictment charged the murder as being committed in various ways : it was necessary that the specific form should be set forth on the indictment. It was charged as being occasioned by a shot, a stab, and by strangulation, and death by burial ; and if on the evidence the Jury were satisfied that the prisoner occasioned the death of the unhappy woman by any one or more of these means, it would then be their duty to find him Guilty. The learned Judge, after an impressive address, left it to the Jury, and concluded by hoping that God would direct them to a right issue.

The Jury retired for about three quarters of an hour, and found the Prisoner—GUILTY.

The Chief Baron then put on the black coif, and addressed the prisoner as follows ;

“ William Corder—It now becomes my painful duty to announce to you the end of your mortal career. You have been arraigned at this bar, charged with the Wilful Murder of Maria Marten, late of Polstead, in this county. You have pleaded not guilty, and thrown yourself upon the laws of your country.

“ After a long, important, and painful investigation, an intelligent, and I am convinced an impartial Jury, have pronounced you guilty, and I think very justly. The laws of every country require that an example should be made for so foul and atrocious a deed ; your high offence manifests the most deliberate cruelty. I cannot flatter you with any hopes of mercy here, though repentance may insure it from the Almighty. You sent the unfortunate young woman to her last account without giving her a moment to go on her knees, and offer up a few prayers for her previous misgivings ;—the same is not meted to you ; a short interval remains—make good use of it ; turn your eyes to another and a better world, and beg of your offended Redeemer forgiveness with sincerity of heart.

“ Remember the impressions instilled into your mind in early life,—listen to the advice and counsel of the ministers of your religion, and devote the few moments that now remain to the best advantage.

“ Nothing now remains but to pass the dreadful sentence of the law upon you, and that is, that you, William Corder, be taken to the place from whence you came, and from thence to the place of execution, on Monday next, there to be hanged by the neck until you are dead, and after death that your body be delivered to the surgeons for dissection. May the Lord have mercy upon your soul !”

APPENDIX.

Particulars after his Trial and at the Gaol, up to the time of his Execution.

The culprit, on his removal from Court, made a great effort to rally, even after the palpable extinction of his self-possession at the breaking up of the Court—so much so, indeed, that even some about his person imagined his emotion had been assumed, for the purpose of exciting a sympathy from superficial observers, which even he, degraded as he was, must have known would be denied to him by every well-constituted mind. It is even said that some unfortunate females of his family had been so deluded by representations similar to the pitiful fiction of his defence, that they were ever preparing for his return to that decent condition of society, which he had such unparralled atrocity disgraced and dishonoured by the flagrant violation of all those household duties which reflect a peculiar character upon the middle class of society in this country. But the attempts to sustain this mere physical insensibility, evidently required a forced excitement—he jumbled himself into the cart on his return from the court to the prison, which is half a mile distant, more like a man who wanted to escape from the public gaze, than to invite its attention by any assumption of bravado. The crowd, who in their eagerness to catch a glimpse at every character, notorious for good or bad, oppose every obstacle which impedes the gratification of this curiosity, had broken the steps of the cart, in their efforts to get a close peep at the criminal, so that when he returned to the gaol, he had either to jump to the ground, or be assisted in his descent. He preferred the former, and alighted upon his legs on the threshold of the prison, with some appearance at least of renewed alacrity. He had returned however to the gaol in a different character from that in which he had left it. All the presumptions and reservations which the humane policy of our law sometimes throw around a prisoner whose life is at stake were removed, and he had, yesterday evening to re-enter the wall of his prison, for the few hours which were counted to him in this world, as a person who was no longer to be mentioned among his species, and whose annihilation was doomed by the common injunction of every civilized community. This retributive change of circumstances removed him from a convenient apartment in the front of the prison, to a cell in the rear, and exchanged a dress of fashionable attire, for the common gaol apparel. The Governor of the prison (who is represented to be a humane and considerate man) led him, first upon his return as a condemned criminal, into his private apartment, where he (probably fresh with the recollection of the suicide of a recent convict) plainly, but mildly, informed the prisoner, he must forthwith exchanged the whole of his apparel, because his (the governor's) situation with reference to him, had now become op-

great responsibility, and he had a serious duty to discharge, which he was however ready to perform with every attention to the rational wants of a prisoner in his awful situation. Corder immediately exchanged his clothes for those which were supplied to him from the prison stock, having previously given to his solicitor from his pocket his written defence, and some other papers. His penknife the governor took charge of, and a gentleman present remarked to Corder, that the evidence against him was too conclusive to be parried by any external appearances of invasion, and that it was due to his family and society to deliver his mind of the facts. To this prudent suggestion the criminal gave no reply, and the only desire he expressed was to be allowed the society of his wife, who had been for a short time in lodgings in the town. The governor repeated to him that he should have every consolation which his situation and the rules of the prison permitted; but that henceforth he could see nobody except in his presence or that of one of his officers, and that his own clothes should be at his disposal in exchange for those which he was at present under the necessity of substituting for them, on the day when he was to be brought out to die. At four o'clock Corder received some dinner from the governor's table, and a clergyman was sent for to afford him the solace (should he prove susceptible of it) of spiritual consolation.

On Friday night, Corder retired to rest at half past ten, and fell into a profound sleep about eleven; on Saturday he attended prayers at the usual hour, and appeared deeply affected.

Corder on having been urged to make a confession, said to one of the attendants, "after all I have been able to read or discover with respect to confessions, I think that confession to God is enough; confession to man appears to me to savour of Popedom." A person belonging to the gaol said to the prisoner, "Mr. Corder, you must have had a good deal of nerve to dig that grave, while the dead body of the woman was lying beside you." To which Corder replied, "Nobody knows that the dead body was lying there when that grave was dug." Then recollecting the tendency of the observation, he drew himself up, and cast a quick and piercing glance towards the person to whom he had been speaking. It will be recollected, that a Mr. Humphreys was originally engaged with Mr. Charnock as solicitor for the prisoner, and finding what was the nature of the defence, he begged to decline acting, observing that the defence might succeed, while the course he intended to recommend might fail, and as he, (Mr. Charnock) was an old friend of the family, he had rather decline incurring anything like blame.

When Lea the constable stated in his evidence that Corder had told him he would make him a present of the pistols found in his house at Ealing, he was observed to stamp furiously, and utter an exclamation of anger. When asked by Mr. Orridge the reason why he did so, he exclaimed, "what he says is untrue, he will swear anything; as I am to die, Sir, I never made use of any such words. I never told him I would make him a present of the pistols." "But" said Mr. Orridge, "you may have said so, and afterwards forgotten it in the hurry and agitation of your mind." The prisoner said, it was possible, but did not think he had ever done so.

It is, perhaps, somewhat curious, that the pistols, which are intrinsically of little value, have become an object of attraction here. Lea, who produced them on the trial, felt inclined to retain them, but the High Sheriff desired Mr. Orridge to take possession of them, and of the sword for him. Lea hesitated, observing that they had been given to him, and that a Mr. ——— was ready to give him two guineas for them. Mr. Orridge was, however, peremptory in obeying the order of the High Sheriff, and he took possession

of the sword and pistols, which he conveyed to the gaol. At the close of the proceedings, the High Sheriff went to the gaol, and after transacting some business, he said to Mr. Orridge, "My carriage is at the gate, you had better put the sword and pistols into it." Mr. Orridge represented to him, that Lea had sworn they had been given him by the prisoner, when he was only suspected. To this the High Sheriff replied, "No, No, why man I would not part with them for £100, they are all I shall get for my Shrievalty." The sword and pistols were then put into the carriage.

Mr. Orridge asked Corder "how he could get over the fact of having told Maria Marten that a warrant had been issued for her apprehension, by Mr. Whitmore, and placed in the hands of John Baalham, whereas, Baalham had sworn that he had never seen, or heard of such a warrant." The prisoner made no reply, but cast a quick, frowning glance upon him, and then held down his head. It appears that the prisoner was, from his first commitment, conscious of the dangerous situation in which he was placed, for he repeatedly advised his friends not to go to any great expence in conducting his defence, as from the nature of the evidence against him, he felt that he had little or no chance of escape.

On Saturday night Corder complained of fatigue, and retired to bed at eight o'clock; he soon fell asleep, and continued to sleep until three in the morning. He rose at the usual hour somewhat refreshed, but evidently much depressed and altered in his appearance. At nine o'clock the other prisoners were placed in the different cells or pews, into which the chapel is divided. In a few minutes Mr. Orridge entered, followed by Corder, who had a handkerchief in his hand, and was weeping. He was placed in a pew by himself, and appeared quite dejected and desponding; he wore the prison dress. On entering the pew, he placed his elbow on his knee, and leant with his face upon his hands, in which he held a white handkerchief, which was bathed with his tears. The Chaplain had been close in his attendance upon him during the preceding evening, but Corder shewed no inclination to make a confession of his guilt. This morning he appeared to be much softened, if not quite subdued in feeling. After resting in the position described, for a few minutes, he leant his hand against the side of the pew, still keeping his face covered with the handkerchief.

When the morning service commenced by the Rev. Mr. Stocking, the prisoner sighed deeply, and his whole frame appeared much agitated. The Rev. Gentleman having read a portion of the service of the day, selected the 51st and 130th Psalm, as most appropriate for the occasion; when the 14th verse was repeated, the prisoner again sighed and shuddered violently; at the close of the service, he was scarcely able to stand, sobbing violently, and nearly bent double; he retired with Mr. Orridge.

At half past twelve, Mrs. Corder arrived at the gaol to take a final separation from the wretched prisoner; the meeting was very tender, and both were deeply affected. She remained with him till two o'clock, at which time she left the unhappy man in a deplorable state; the parting was truly dreadful, Mrs. Corder fainted.

Mr. Orridge being, from a recent occurrence at Newgate, placed on his guard, gently intimated to Mrs. Corder a hope that she would not furnish her husband with any unfair means of evading justice. She exclaimed, "that nothing was further from her thoughts, and that however glad she might be to know that he escaped such an ignominious death, she would not for the world do anything to prevent it."

At half-past nine the prisoner came into Chapel much more composed than on former occasions, his demeanor during the service was similar in every

respect to that of yesterday, and the service was the same with the exception of one or two appropriate Prayers; he was dressed in the same clothes as he wore at the trial. The Sacrament was administered to him by the Rev. Mr. Stocking in his private room.

Corder retired to bed on this morning (Monday) at one o'clock and slept soundly till six.

At an early hour this morning Bury presented more the appearance of a fair, or day of public rejoicing: carts and carriages, gigs and waggons, filled with every description of persons came pouring in from all quarters, and long before the hour appointed for the execution, every avenue leading to the place was completely blocked up.

Mr. Orridge who has been unremitting in his attention to the prisoner remained with from nine o'clock on Sunday evening until half-past twelve o'clock, during which time the prisoner made the **CONFESSION**, which we have inserted in another place. This Confession was made in consequence of a Letter previously written to the unhappy man by Mr. Orridge, and which Letter we have been favoured with.

MR. ORRIDGE'S STATEMENT.

Upon William Corder's returning from the Shirehall, after he had received sentence, I took him into my office, and explained to him that I had a melancholy and painful duty to perform with respect to him: and that a part of that duty was to have him immediately stript of his clothes, and have the prison clothes put on him, this was accordingly done. I then told him, I thought the sooner he could forget all earthly matters the better, and therefore if he had any request to make I begged he would recollect himself and do it immediately, and that I would instantly tell him if his wishes, whatever they might be, could or would be complied with. After some consideration, he said it would be a great consolation to him if his wife could be permitted to spend the remainder of his time with him. This, I told him, was impossible, but that she would be allowed two interviews with him; he was then removed to another room. The Chaplain, (Mr. Stocking) attended him in the evening; after the chaplain was gone, I continued with him till half past ten o'clock. I hinted to him that his defence, though perhaps ingenious, could not be believed, and that surely he would feel an inward satisfaction in confessing the truth. **He**

then declared his defence was true, and that he had nothing to confess; indeed, he said the *confession of his faults would only tend to disgrace his family more*, and could be of no use to his soul, and upon any other question put to him respecting the murder during that evening he preserved a sullen silence.

In the course of the evening he mentioned the particulars of his marriage; he stated that he left home the latter end of September, that he went to Portsmouth, the Isle of Wight, and Southampton; that he returned to London in about two months, and then advertised for a Wife, that he had 45 applications to the advertisement, and that one of them was from a Lady who wrote to him to say that she should go to church in a certain dress, and sit in a particular place; and requesting him to go to church with his left arm in a black sling, a black handkerchief round his neck, and place himself in such a position that they might see each other, and then judge if a personal interview would be desirable. He said he accordingly went to the church but by some means he had mistaken the hour of Divine Service, so that he never saw that lady. He said that after he saw his present wife he never left her till they were married, that from the time of his advertising to his marriage was about a week. I observed to him that he was a most fortunate man, under those circumstances, to have met with a woman who had been so kind to him during the whole of his confinement.—I then left him.

My two servants told me the next morning that he fell asleep about eleven o'clock and slept till after 4 o'clock; that he did not talk to them, during Saturday, the Chaplain (Mr. Stocking) was several times with him. At other times I now and then hinted the necessity of confession, in the course of that day he said "that confession to God was all that was necessary, and that confession to man was what he called Popedom, or Popery, and he would never do it." It was hinted to him, some time in the day, that he must have had great nerve, to dig the hole during the time the body laid in his sight; his reply was "Nobody knows *that the body lay in the barn and in sight whilst I dug the hole*," and would then say no more on the subject, but exclaimed, "O, God! Nobody will dig my grave."

His wife saw him in my presence for near an hour. He expressed much anxiety about her future welfare—she entreated him to forget her, and employ his few hours, yet remaining, in prayer for his salvation and eternal welfare." I went to his room on Saturday Evening, about 8 o'clock, with an intention of sitting an hour or two with him, but he had gone to bed and was asleep, and my men told me the next morning that he slept until near 3 o'clock.

On Sunday morning Mr. Stocking was with him early, and endeavoured to lead his mind to the necessity of confession; he attended chapel and was very much affected; about half-past 12 his wife had her last interview; they were both very much affected; in the course of that interview he exclaimed, "Well might Mr. Orridge say, that I was a most fortunate man to meet with such a woman as you are!"

He then explained to her that he had told me the way in which they had come together, and that he had 45 applications to his advertisement; he entreated if ever she married again, to be sure not to answer any similiar advertisement, as woeful experience must have convinced her how dangerous a step it was. The parting scene was most affecting, the poor woman remained in a state of stupor for some time. Corder was much affected throughout the day, Mr. Stocking had several interviews with him, and in the evening

the Sheriff's Chaplain, the Rev. Mr. Sheem attended him, for which attention he expressed himself as feeling very grateful. About nine o'clock I sent him the annexed paper:—

CONFESSIO.—Confession to the world has always been held necessary atonement where the party has committed offences affecting the interests of *society at large*.

“He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth shall have mercy.”

Surely confession to *God* cannot be here meant as no man can hope to *hide* his sins from *God*. Confess your faults *one to another* and pray one for another. JAMES v. 16.

Archbishop Tillotson says, “In case our sins have been public and scandalous, both reason and the practice of the Christian Church do require that when men have publicly offended they should give public satisfaction and *open testimony* of their repentance. The text in James is a direct *command*.”

The Christian Doctrine of the necessity of restitution is strong, and if you will not confess how can you make restitution, to the *reputation of your victim*? You have accused her of having murdered herself. If you died without denying that accusation, how do you obey the command “to do that to another which we would have another do to us.”

The doctrine of confession which is objectionable in a popish point of view is the private confession to a Priest of private vices, but the duty of making acknowledgment of public crimes can have nothing to do with such objections. Even supposing it doubtful whether a man is bound after offending society, to confess his errors to the world, there can be no doubt that he will *not do* any thing wrong by confessing. One course is therefore *certain* the other uncertain. Can a man hesitate to seize the former.

“JOHN ORRIDGE.”

I begged he would read it attentively, and that I would come to him soon, I went to his room a little before ten, and remained in earnest conversation with him till half-past eleven, I told him that during the thirty years I have held my situation, I had the satisfaction in assuring him that no

man who had been executed during that time, had ever dared to take the Sacrament in sullen silence about his crime, or without confession; that I well know from his letters that I had seen, and from other circumstances, that the line of defence he had adopted was not the dictates of his own mind, at least for a long time after his commitment and that I was sure that he would not and dare not take the Sacrament, and remain silent, or deny being the guilty cause of the death of poor Maria Marten. He then exclaimed, "Oh sir I wish I had made a confitent of you before, I have often wished to have done it, but you know, sir, it was no use employing a legal adviser and then not follow his advice." I told him that up to the time of his conviction it was proper, but that being over all earthly considerations must cease, he then exclaimed "I am a guilty man!" I then went for a pen and ink, and began to ask him the particulars of the offence, which I told him the public had supposed him to be guilty of. He said, "oh, spare me, I can only mention to you the particulars of how Maria came by her death, with this the public must be satisfied; I cannot say more." I then wrote the following confession nearly in his own words. I read it to him attentively, and he signed it with a firm hand. I left him about half past one o'clock, and my men tell me he laid very still, and appeared to sleep through the night.

On Saturday he told a respectable individual whom I had asked to sit and read to him, that he was guilty of the forgery upon Messrs. Alexander's bank, and that he had been assured the money was paid; there are some parts of the foregoing statement which he also mentioned to the same individual. He also expressed much horror at the thoughts of being dissected and anatomized. He also stated, after he had signed the confession, that he felt great respect for the girl, but that he had no intention to marry her at that time.

(Signed)

JOHN ORRIDGE.

Confession.

Bury Gaol, Aug. 10, 1828. Condemned Cell, Sunday Evening, half-past 11.

"I acknowledge being guilty of the death of poor Maria Marten, by shooting her with a pistol. The particulars are as follows:—When we left her father's house, we began quarrelling about the burial of the child, she apprehending that the place wherein it was deposited would be found out. The quarrel continued for about three quarter's of an hour upon this and about other subjects. A scuffle ensued, and during the scuffle, and at the time I think that she had hold of me, I took the pistol from the side pocket of my velveteen jacket and fired. She fell, and died in an instant. I never saw even a struggle. I was overwhelmed with agitation and dismay—the body fell near the front doors on the floor of the barn. A vast quantity of blood issued from the wound, and ran on to the floor and through the crevices. Having determined to bury the body in the barn (about two hours after she was dead) I went and borrowed the spade of Mrs. Stowe; but before I went there, I dragged the body from the barn into the chaff-house, and

locked up the barn. I returned again to the barn and began to dig the hole; but the spade being a bad one, and the earth firm and hard, I was obliged to go home for a pick-axe and a better spade, with which I dug the hole, and then buried the body. I think I dragged the body by the handkerchief that was tied round her neck—it was dark when I finished covering up the body. I went the next day, and washed the blood from off the barn floor. I declare to Almighty God, I had no sharp instrument about me, and that no other wound but the one made by the pistol was inflicted by me. I have been guilty of great idleness, and at times led a dissolute life, but I hope through the mercy of God to be forgiven. “W. CORDER.”

Witness to the signing by the said William Corder.

JOHN ORRIDGE.

Sunday Evening, half-past 12 o'clock.

Condemned Cell, 11 o'clock, Monday Morning, Aug. 11, 1828.

The above confession was read over carefully to the prisoner in our presence, who stated most solemnly it was true that he had nothing to add to or retract from it. W. STOCKING, Chaplain.

Timothy R. HOLMES, Under-sheriff.

In answer to a question from the Under-sheriff, he said “that he thought the ball had entered the right eye.” He said this in corroboration of his previous statement, that he had no sharp instrument with him in the barn at the time he committed the murder. The Under-sheriff stated that Dr. Probart was with him at the time when the prisoner made this last confession.

He is quite convinced the ball entered the right eye.

The prisoner was unable to stand. His last words were:—“I deserve my fate; I have offended my God; may he have mercy on my soul.”