

CONFESSIONS OF AN UNEXECUTED FEMICIDE.

A deeply affecting narrative, under the above title, has just issued from the Glasgow press. It is declared to be "no fiction." It is published according to the will of William Mearns, Esquire, of the County of Stirling, Scotland, for the purpose of deterring others "from the commission of a similar crime, by the thought, that if they escape the punishment of the law, they are sure to meet with that of a racked and harassed conscience." The *Confessions* are powerfully written and seldom have we read a more touching narrative than that, which is contained in the work before us. We insert, to-day, an extract from the first part of the *Confessions*, and in our next paper we propose making an extract from the sequel of the story. — *Liverpool Edition.*

Twenty years—and the vision still haunts me! Yes, it is twenty years since I perpetrated that crime which has poisoned my existence, and thrown over it a cloud of unutterable sorrow. All other crimes may sleep, but indignity like mine never can. The words that pierce my heart are: "I am the victim of remorse!"

My house stood in the midst of a plantation of elm and pine. Its situation was considered romantic by those who had an eye for the beauties of nature; but such I never had. It was a large isolated building, white and airy in its appearance, and decorated in front with a portico of four Ionic pillars. Before the door was a plot of green ground bordered with flowers, and in the centre of this a fountain of clear water. Behind the mansion house there was a spacious garden, and about fifty yards to the right flowed the little river of *the murmur* among rocks, and shaded over by bowers of the birch and chestnut tree.

"Few places were so retired and beautiful, and here, if my miserable state of mind had permitted, I must have been happy. I had no companion but an only sister, and Heaven assuredly never formed two beings so completely different as we. Poor Eliza; she was every thing that is amiable in woman. Fair, beautifully proportioned, and graceful in her movements, beyond even the most gifted of her sex, her light and airy countenance, her blue, deep blue, eyes, her ever crossed with smiles, and her complexion, which was as fair as the fairest of things I could speak, but I have not time to dwell on these things. They are gone, and nothing save their remembrance remains behind. Memory may do much to hallow even the divinest beauties, and imagination may rouse with more delicate hues what the former brings before the deities of time; but their fairy power were useless here. My sister had a form and a mind which fancy never excelled, and which no her bright dream could outdo."

Strange to say, she loved me, would say strange, for what heart but that of an angel could bear affection towards a being so malignant—so horribly wicked as I! I can now recall how harshly I returned all her little acts of kindness. She would try, by every art, to bring from me some deed of tenderness. She would smile, and come and sit down before me, and throw her delicate arms around my neck in a mood of gaiety and love. She would flatter me, and watch over my concerns, and anticipate my wishes, but all in vain. My ungrateful heart refused to acknowledge her attentions; her fondness became painful to me, and I repulsed her. Not when I was stretched on a bed of sickness did I show any tenderness about me. When the burning fever raged in my veins, and but a step lay between me and eternity, she attended me with more than a mother's care. Night after night she sat watching over my couch. I have seen her, when she little thought I so remarked, weeping in my dimly illumined chamber, and raising her fair hands to Heaven in supplication for my recovery. And when I did recover, who can paint the joy that lighted up in her beautiful countenance? All saw it with delight save one, and that was her wretched and ungrateful brother.

"She had a friend named Mary Ellison, also a beautiful girl. Their friendship had commenced in childhood, and their souls were knit closer together by succeeding years. Mary lived with us, for she was an orphan; and being originally of a respectable but unfortunate family, my father gladly adopted her as a companion to his daughter. She was tall and exquisitely made, and all her movements were full of female dignity. Her form wanted the richness and voluptuous swell of Eliza's, but it was more airy, and, if possible, more graceful. My sister's complexion had the brightness and bloom of northern beauty. Her yellow hair waved like streaks of sunshine over her temples, and her blue eyes, deep and lucid as the sapphire, were full of animation and mirth of soul. Mary had more of the Italian cast in her countenance, which was of a darker and warmer hue. Her hair was black and shining, and her eyes, of the same complexion, were full of melancholy. Never were two lovelier beings associated together under the same roof. Eliza was all affection, and smiles, and innocence, and she showed them on every occasion. If she loved, she expressed in bright and undisguised language the emotions of her soul. Mary was not more lovely, for that was impossible, but she was evidently a being of profounder and intenser feelings. Her spirit was more full of pathos. Her fervour was not so easily excited, but, when once aroused, it flowed in deeper channels, and its influence upon all the passions was most striking and irresistible."

"I know not how it was, but this pure-minded and intellectual girl conceived for me a strong affection. God knows, there was little in my society to attract the love of any one, and above all, of such as she. I never did her any act of kindness. I scarcely ever spoke to her with common civility; yet, strange to say, I unknowingly gained her heart, and she loved me at last as if I had been the most deserving object upon earth. How my grovelling soul came to be invested with such power, remains a problem which I have never been able to solve. In all other respects, the mind of Mary was pure and heavenly. That spirit so full of poetry and romance, that mild enthusiastic spirit, conversant only with lofty thoughts, and whose existence had passed in a world of fancy and feeling, how did it descend from its high estate to seek companionship with a base earth-born heart like mine? In this only she erred; in this only she showed that hinge of humanity which clings to all below. Perhaps she might have been influenced by her affection for my sister. Be that as it may, I saw her feelings, and, with the true villainy of my nature, resolved to take advantage of them. It would be sickening to relate all the schemes I put in practice to ruin the virtue of this unfortunate girl. She loved me, and I watched her, and I but too well succeeded. But how was my poor, hard conquest gained? By a proceeding the iniquity of which no language can characterize. I invoked the Most High to witness that my future intentions were honourable; and swore, in the name of all that is sacred, to make her my own. I never intended to keep my promise. What were broken vows oaths to me! What were broken hearts and combined hopes to one who looked

upon virtue and honour as baubles, and whose polluted soul seemed born for the atmosphere of the blackest iniquity.

"Time rolled on, and the state of Mary became apparent, but still I never felt remorse. I looked on unmoved at the ruin I had effected; and when the unsuspecting victim required the performance of my vows, she was answered with a contemptuous sneer. Her spirit from this moment, faded utterly away. She felt that she had been betrayed, and saw the dreadful precipice on which she stood. Had I been any thing else than a villain—had one spark of generous feeling still animated my bosom, I must have pitied the miserable girl; but compassion was unhappily a feeling to which I had ever been a stranger, and I looked upon the wreck of beauty with savage indifference.

"Eliza's tender heart was moved, and she saw her companion with other eyes. She did not with the pseudo-like barbarity of many of her sex, cast off this erring sister. She saw that she had been led astray, and knew, that although in the eyes of the world she was a lost and worthless thing, yet she was not to be abandoned to misery and neglect. So far from turning away from this object of distress, she pressed her to her bosom—nor did she consider herself dishonoured in so doing. Her pure heart told her that Mary was innocent, and that what had occurred was a misfortune rather than a crime. She soothed her in the midst of her misery, and tried to sustain her broken heart with the hope that I might one day repair the injury I had done, and restore her, blameless and unblemished, to society. Nor did she stop here, for on her knees she conjured me, as I valued the welfare of a wretched creature—as I valued the honour of our house—as I valued my own eternal happiness, to tender that tardy justice which uprightness and virtue demanded. The appeal was as eloquent as beauty and affliction could make it; but it was in vain. I heard it with contempt."

"About this time, a young lady of considerable fortune came to reside in our part of the country. She was rich, and I considered that now or never had an opportunity occurred of gratifying my passion for money. My situation in life was well known, and I was cordially received as a visitor into her mother's house. I endeavoured to make myself as agreeable as possible, and in a short time had the satisfaction of thinking that I was listened to with not an unfavourable ear. There was only one bar that stood in the way, and this was Mary Ellison. My faith was pledged to her in the most solemn manner, and I well knew that if this reached the ears of my new mistress, my prospects in that quarter were at an end. Besides, Mary was now in that state which rendered her misfortune palpable to all eyes. No one as yet knew the author of her misery, but he could not remain concealed much longer; and his name once mentioned would sink him to infamy and degradation. I cared little for exposure, on the score of honour or virtue, but I dreaded it on that of self-interest. Let me get possession of my object—let her wealth be once fairly secured in my iron hand—and my shame, for aught I cared, might be trumpeted to me uttermost ends of the earth. But all this, that all decisive, that irrevocable moment, it behoved that all should wear the aspect of integrity, that all should run smooth as the untroubled sea. I covered my hypocrisy with the semblance of virtue, as the ashes of the dead are covered with flowers, and crawled like the viper, under cover, the better to entrap my prey."

"That no evil report might injure my reputation till that time, I had Mary sent off about ten miles to a small country house

on the banks of the Forth. There the sorrows of that unhappy girl only became more pungent—she felt the misery of loneliness. Deprived of my sister's society and mine—and the last, strange to say, she prized above all other—her heart became more desolate and broken. She wrote me a letter: the paper was stained with tears, and every word breathed unutterable affliction. It implored me to take compassion on her wretched state, and fulfil the promises I had so solemnly made. I know that you are addressing another, but if she has the spirit of a woman, never will she listen to you utter what you have done to me."

"Such was the condoling lines of her letter, and they fired me to revenge. Suspicion lowered upon my heart, and the thought came upon me that they were but the prelude of a discovery. And must my plans be thus thwarted by that wretched girl? Must a fortune be torn away from my grasp? Shall she unveil to my affianced bride what for a time must rest in darkness—and for what? to ruin me—to blast my dearest prospects without benefiting herself? The evil passions were stirred up within me—hell boiled in my bosom, and I was wrought to a ecstasy of madness. For half a day I remained in this tumult of passion. Towards evening it ceased to exhibit itself on the outer man, but raged within more intensely than ever."

"Yes, I remember it well. This day—and twenty years have rolled away—I sat by the fire, moody and distracted, and meditating, apparently, some violent deed. My sister sat opposite to me. She was employed at her needle, but while she sewed, her blue eyes streamed with tears, and ever and again she cast at me looks of the deepest affliction. 'My dear brother, has any thing occurred to distress you?' I thundered out 'Silence! distract me not,' in a voice which made her start backward with terror; and, striking my hand violently against my burning forehead, I left the room and mounted up stairs to my bed chamber. A small Highland dirk hung over the mantle piece. It had been in the family for ages. I put it in my pocket, almost unknowing what I did, and descended with portentous speed. Eliza met me as I was going out. She put her slender arm in mine, and requested me, with a voice of melting tenderness, to stay at home, for that I was evidently very unwell. With brutal violence I pushed her aside and rushed into the open air."

"The evening was fair, beautifully fair. The sun was sinking down gloriously, and melioring nature over with his last departing beams; but I remarked it not. I saw nothing—I heard nothing. At sunset was in my heart; my ears were stopped, and I hurried over the earth with reckless fury. Night came down, and I found myself at Mary's door. I entered, but she was not within. She had gone out to walk by the banks of the Forth."

"I went to find her. Her lovely and interesting form was seated upon a rock which overlooked the stream. When I came up, she was in tears; but she threw her arms around me, and kissed me with unspeakable fondness. How romantic was the scene! O how unfit for a deed of villainy! The moon was up in the vault of heaven. The firmament was silvered over with her glaucous beams, and the light of the planets displayed and lost in a flood of pale and celestial glory. One solitary star twinkled by her side. And how beautifully were the rays reflected by the stream that mirrored amid its rocky channel, and gave forth a melancholy music, which was the only sound that disturbed the unbroken calm of nature. 'Could I linger here? Could vice pollute such a scene with its accursed presence? Base, cruel, treacherous was the deed. Was there no bolt of heaven to consume my coward heart?' While she clung to my bosom and called me her own, while her deep melting eyes were thrown so expressively on my savage countenance,—yes, the deed was then done—done at a moment when any heart, but that of a demon, would have been disarmed. I drew slowly the dagger from my pocket, and my spirit quaked while I relate it, stabbed her in the back! A shriek and she fell to the earth. 'Oh! do not destroy me! William, William, that was a cruel stroke. Spare me; do not kill my poor unborn babe!' She clung to my feet, but I spurned her away, and she again fell exhausted. There was no time to be lost, I laid violent hands upon her, and pitched her over the rock. I heard her rustling among the branches which opposed a feeble resistance to her fall; and then a dash among the waters, and a feeble cry—and all was silent."

The N. B. ROYAL GAZETTE, is published every Tuesday, by GEOCKE LUGRIN, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, at his Office in Queen Street, over Mr. SAMPSON'S Store, Frederickton, where Blankets, Handbills, &c. can be struck off at the shortest notice.

The price of this Paper, is Sixteen Shillings per annum (exclusive of Postage)—the whole to be paid in advance.

Advertisements, not exceeding Fifteen Lines, will be inserted for Four Shillings and Sixpence the first time, and One Shilling and Sixpence for each succeeding insertion. Advertisements must be accompanied with Cash and the insertion will be regulated according to the amount received.

Agents for the Gazette: St. John, N. B. L. GARDNER, Esq.; St. Andrews, JAMES CAMPBELL, Esq.; Miramichi, J. A. Street, Esq.; Westmorland, E. B. CHANDLER, Esq.; Shediac, JAMES TILLEY, Esq.; Grand-Town, B. P. WATSON, Esq.; for Woodstock and New Brunswick, THOMAS PHILLIPS, Esq.