

The last paragraph had been altered by partial erasures. Including the blotted parts, it ran thus: "Must beg to subscribe myself your unfortunately, though unworthy, son,

"W. CORDER."

The letter was addressed as follows on the outside:—

"Mrs. Corder, Polstead by Stoke, favoured by Mr. Catchpool."

On Thursday morning the prisoner was visited by several Magistrates at the inn, where he still remained under strict surveillance. A number of persons, actuated by curiosity, were anxious to see him, but were refused their proposed gratification by Lea. Among those who saw him was the Rev. Mr. Seaman, a Clergyman resident near Colchester, and who was acquainted with his family. The Rev. gentleman begged him to accept his services, and gave him a handsomely bound Testament and hymn-book. After some general conversation, he asked him how he came to swerve from the paths of virtue, and urged him to unbosom his mind. The prisoner made no answer, and confined himself to a general acknowledgment of the obligations he was under to the Rev. Divine for his kind intentions. He was afterwards visited by his brother-in-law, who, in the course of conversation, asked how he could think of sending letters, declaring himself to be living happily with the deceased Maria Marten, when, in point of fact, he was residing with another female, whom he had married. The prisoner replied, "I shall answer no questions now. Say nothing about it." Lea interposed, and suggested the impropriety, as well as the indelicacy, of pursuing such an inquiry; and it was accordingly desisted from.

The conduct of the prisoner was very different on Thursday from what it was on the previous day. At times he paced about the room, with a silk handkerchief thrown loosely round his neck, scarcely speaking for an hour together, and his head downcast. Again he would sit down and turn over the tracts and other books sent him; but from the rapidity with which he passed over their leaves, it was evident that he was not in that composed state which would admit of a patient and calm perusal of their contents. Once or twice in the course of the day he exclaimed, while pacing the room, in a half-suppressed voice, "Oh, if I could but be as free from sin as my beloved wife is!"

About nine o'clock on Thursday evening, Mr. Taylor, the chief clerk in the banking-house of Messrs. Alexander and Co., of Manningtree, and Mr. Dale, of the White Hart Inn, which is opposite to the banking-house, arrived in Colchester, and had an interview with the prisoner, whom they both instantly declared to be the person who had obtained 93*l.* from the bank upon a check, which it is alleged was forged. On entering the room where the prisoner was, Mr. Taylor, advancing to him with a check in his hand, said, "Pay me the money—the 90*l.* odd you obtained on this check." The prisoner appeared dumb-founded, and held down his head. Mr. Taylor again addressing him, said, "Why don't you look me in the face? Hold up your head like a man." The prisoner made no reply, but kept his head down for full two minutes, when he threw himself into a chair, and covered his face with his hands. Messrs. Taylor and Dale then retired. The circumstances under which the check was presented and cashed were detailed afterwards by Mr. Taylor, and were as follows:—

On Monday, the 14th instant, a person, said by Messrs. Taylor and Dale to be the prisoner, arrived at the White Hart, kept by Mr. Dale, which is opposite the banking-house, and stated himself to have a check which he wished to get cashed. Mr. Dale told him he was before office hours, but if his business required despatch he would speak to the clerk to expedite it. The party said he was in no particular hurry, and there the matter rested; but in a short time after, Mr. Dale happening accidentally to see Mr. Taylor told him of the affair. Soon after the bank was opened, the prisoner came over and presented a check, purporting to be drawn by R. Atkins, on the Hadleigh Bank, in favor of Mr. Cooke, for 93*l.* The Hadleigh Bank, and that at Manningtree, are intimately connected; but as in this case neither the name of the drawer nor the person of the presenter were known to the clerk, he demurred to paying the check. The party said he was well known in the neighbourhood, and had taken the check from Atkins, who was an opulent farmer, in payment for six beasts he sold him the previous market-day. After considerable hesita-

tion, the clerk, from the plausible manners of the prisoner, and from some slight facts which he mentioned, corroborative of his statement, was induced to cash the check. On its presentation to the alleged drawer, he declared it to be a forgery, and a description was in consequence advertised of the party who presented the check. The advertisement led to a communication, which brought Messrs. Taylor and Dale to Colchester, both of whom unhesitatingly declared themselves to be satisfied the prisoner was the party who passed the check.

Lea, who was present when the above account was given, said, that after apprehending the prisoner, he took him to the Red Lion inn, which is opposite to his house, and having placed a guard over him returned back to examine his desks, boxes, &c. After so doing, he resumed his custody of the prisoner, who instantly inquired whether he had not found 80 sovereigns in a private drawer, in his writing desk. Lea declared he had not, and the prisoner replied, "Then my wife must have taken them out; send for her." This was done, and she accordingly came over, and acknowledged having taken out the 80 sovereigns, 20 of which she then placed in the prisoner's hands.

At half-past 11 o'clock on Thursday night, the prisoner was removed, well secured, and attended by Lea and Ayers, in a post-chaise, to the Cock Inn, at Polstead.

His removal at that hour of the night was owing to a suggestion of Sir W. Rowley, who considered that it would best obviate those popular excitements which the circumstances of the case were calculated to produce. Besides, as the prisoner would have to pass the residence of his mother, who is generally respected in the neighbourhood, it was wished to give her as little pain as possible, under the distressing circumstances of the affair.

In the accounts which have appeared of the circumstances which led to the discovery of the body of Maria Marten, it is possible there may be some slight inaccuracies; but when it is considered that those accounts were collected at a distance of nearly seventy miles from the scene of the occurrence, and allowing for the exaggerations and misstatements which inevitably attend any affair of interest, some lenity of judgement may be reasonably asked for. Even on the spot, scarcely any two persons can be found who exactly agree in their statements. Some believe in the story of the dream to its fullest extent; others reject that part which relates to the particular spot being pointed out, while some few repudiate the dream altogether. From a careful comparison of accounts, we believe the following to be a pretty correct outline of the affair.

The prisoner, who is the son of a widow lady, renting an estate of 400 acres in the neighbourhood, had formed an intimacy with the deceased, who was the daughter of a common labourer. The result was the birth of a child, which subsequently died, and was placed by the prisoner in a box, and buried by him under circumstances partaking somewhat of an appearance of clandestineness.

It is, however, but fair to state, that the elder Marten declares the child to have died a natural death. The parents of the girl, as well as herself, had subsequently importuned the prisoner to marry her, and at last he professed his willingness to do so. On the 13th of May he agreed to meet her at the Red Barn belonging to his mother, which is situated on the brow of a hill, and is distant 50 yards from any house. He, in the presence of her mother, requested she might dress herself in male attire, for the purpose of avoiding notice, and he would follow with a gig, and take her to Ipswich, where the marriage ceremony was to be performed. The deluded girl did as required, carrying with her, her bonnet, gown, &c., in a bundle, for the purpose of changing her costume at the barn. It should appear she was in the act of so doing, when the foul deed was perpetrated, for the coat worn by her, and the hat, and her own bonnet, were found lying beneath her, and her remains were completely dressed in her proper attire, with the exception of her gown. Neither the gown nor the trousers worn by her have been discovered. The remains have been anatomically examined; but if we are rightly informed, they do not display decisive proofs of a violent death.

FRIDAY AFTERNOON.

We have already stated that the prisoner was removed from Colchester at midnight in a post chaise. He reached Polstead by two o'clock this morning. During the greater part of the journey he slept

tolerably sound; but on approaching the residence of his mother, he roused himself and appeared much agitated. On recovering, he with much appearance of feeling spoke of the manner in which his family had been cut down within the last two years. One of his brothers had been accidentally drowned in the pond almost fronting the family residence; his father had died within that period, as also had his sole surviving brother and sister, leaving him the only remaining branch of the family. The distress of his mother, he said, affected him deeply, and but for that he did not fear death. He was lodged at the only public-house in the village, where the deficiency of artificial securities was supplied by the vigilance of his gaolers. The village itself is an exceedingly obscure one, and does not contain more than from 20 to 30 houses. The residence of the prisoner's mother is, perhaps, the best building in the place. It is a neat and moderately sized white-washed cottage, with a door in the centre, and stands about midway on the hill leading from Stoke on to the Green, where the village public-house, called the Cock, is situate. The barn where the body was deposited, and where it is the opinion of many, the murder was committed, lies about half a mile to the left of the village. With the exception of two small cottages, distant about 100 yards, there are no buildings for a quarter of a mile round. Since the exhumation of the body, the barn has been narrowly inspected. There are some perforations of small shot, about the size of No. 7, observable in one of the walls, and there are also some spots and stains on the floor, which by many are considered to be produced by blood. On the other side there are several among the intelligent inhabitants of the neighborhood, who incline in the opinion, that the murder was perpetrated in some one or other of the lone pathways diverging from the barn, and that the body was afterwards brought there for interment. It is confidently said, that the prisoner was seen going in a direction from the barn about four hours after the time when the assignation was to have taken place with a pickaxe on his shoulder. It is also said, that proof will be tendered that he borrowed a spade on the same day. And here is a remarkable circumstance that the witnesses who speak to the precise day, derive their confidence from the fact of its having been the second day of the Polstead fair, an epoch of no small importance in a retired and secluded village like that to which the witnesses belong. It is remarked in the neighbourhood as a singular fact, that the accused, who previously to the month of May had expressed no anxiety to keep the key of the barn in his possession, had afterwards uniformly retained it. In the stacking of the wheat in the barn also, it is now remembered, although little thought of at the time, that he personally assisted in placing the first layers over the spot where the body was found.

INQUEST ON THE BODY OF MARIA MARTEN.

An inquest was held soon after the body was discovered, but was adjourned till Friday, when

The first witness called was John Bailam, a constable of the Parish of Polstead, who deposed that he had not, during the month of May last, nor at any subsequent period, told William Corder that he had a warrant for the apprehension of Maria Marten.

The Coroner remarked, that his reason for examining the witness to this point, was in consequence of the evidence given by the mother of the deceased on the last examination, and which, with the permission of the jury, he would then read. He did so, and it was to the effect, that Wm. Corder, in accounting for the urgency of his wish in getting married to her daughter on the Sunday, was owing to her (Bailam) having a warrant in his possession, granted by the Rev. Mr. Whitmore, the Rector of the Parish, and a magistrate for the County, to apprehend and punish her for the two illegitimate children which she had previous to his becoming acquainted with her.

Mr. Humphries, who had just arrived from London in a post-chaise, to attend the proceedings on the part of the prisoner Corder, here entered the room and addressing the Coroner, requested that his client might be permitted to be present at the proceedings, so that he might be able, either by himself, or through him (Mr. Humphries), as his legal adviser, to put such questions to the witnesses as might elucidate that which might be available to his case. Such an opportunity he thought should, under the circumstances, be granted to the accused individual.