

DEATH IN THE DOCK.

On the 28th of April, 1794, a messenger from the Chief Secretary's office, with four policemen, entered Hyde's Coffee-house, College-green, Dublin. The entrance to the house had been watched through the night, and the appearance of the messenger had been anxiously awaited by at least one resident in the hotel. This person was a London attorney, named Cockayne, who had arrived in Dublin on the 1st of April with a friend of ten years' standing, the Rev. William Jackson, a clergyman of the Church of Ireland, but apparently without a cure. Jackson slept in the room next to that occupied by Cockayne, and opening on the same passage. The messenger addressed a few words in whispers to Cockayne, who, pale and trembling, met him on the stairs. The party proceeded to the corridor, with which Jackson's room communicated. Cockayne begged leave to remain outside. The messenger and his assistants entered. The noise awakened Jackson. Starting up he endeavored to seize some papers piled upon a table beside his bed. He had cleared that table the night before, and now saw at a glance that treachery had been at work. The messenger caught Jackson's hands, and motioning to his assistants to seize the papers, read aloud a warrant addressed to Thomas Crawford, keeper of Newgate, directing him to hold in safe custody the Rev. William Jackson, clerk, late of London, charged with high treason, and, especially, with inducing the king's enemies in France to invade his realm of Ireland.

Windows of the court, and the cold air came rushing in. But the spirits of death gathered closer round him, and now he faintly sank down in the dock. The crowd heard the hollow sound of his convulsive movements against the panelling. The closing scene is thus described:— Lord Clonmell:—"If the prisoner is in a state of insensibility, it is impossible that I can pronounce the judgment of the court upon him." Thereupon, Mr. Thomas Kinsley, an apothecary, who was in the jury-box, said he would go down to him. He stooped down over the dock, felt Jackson's pulse, and then turning round towards the judge, declared that the prisoner was certainly dying. By order of the court, Mr. Kinsley was sworn. Lord Clonmell:—"Are you in any profession? Mr. Kinsley—I am an apothecary. Lord Clonmell:—"Can you speak with certainty of the state of the prisoner? Mr. Kinsley—I can; I think him verging to eternity. Lord Clonmell:—"Do you think him capable of hearing his judgment? Mr. Kinsley—I do not think he can. Lord Clonmell:—"Then he must be taken away. Take care that in sending him away no mischief be done. Let him be remanded until further orders; and I believe it is as much for his advantage, as for all of yours, to adjourn. But the further orders never were delivered; the case of the prisoner had been already transferred to another tribunal. The sheriff, pale and horror-stricken, informed the court that the man was dead. All rose and hurriedly left the court. The jailors laid the corpse straight on the floor of the dock, and hastened away. Many a man dead by the execution of the law had they seen, but never such a sight as this. All through the night, the dead lay there, a guard of soldiers keeping silent watch. There is a story that at midnight a weeping woman stole in like a spirit, kissed the cold lips, clasped the rigid hands, and vanished. Next day an inquest was held; the body contained a large quantity of metallic poison. The jailor swore that on the preceding day, a little before the prisoner was brought up to court, he found him, with his wife, greatly agitated, and vomiting violently. "I have taken some tea," said Jackson, "which has disagreed with me." He had died of poison, and balled the law. Whether it was to save himself and his family from the shame of an ignominious execution, or to preserve his property from confiscation, he had hurried to the final Court of Appeal. In his pocket, as he lay dead, were found some passages from the penitential Psalms, in his own handwriting. Such a scene could never be forgotten by those who witnessed it. Few, however, could imagine the effect it had upon the judge. Here is his "note," written with his own hand on the very night of Jackson's death, when the eyes of the corpse were rigidly fixed upon the ceiling of the Court:—"April 30, 1795.—Recollect the death of that Jackson, at the moment that judgment was about to be pronounced upon him. This should make a new judicial era in your life. As to regimen, diligence, and exercise, remember to ride and walk as much, to eat and sleep as little as possible; to read law as much, to iddle as little as you can, and never to fret at all; to laugh and smile as much, to frown and sulk as little as may be. Never to be drunk. Put yourself into no person's power. Live as long and as happy as you can. Turn each moment to the best account, and make the most of each good occasion, and the best of every bad one. Look to God and yourself only."

And now, at length, preparations were made for Jackson's trial. The court was formed of the Earl of Clonmell, Lord Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench, Mr. Justice Downes, and Mr. Justice Chamberlain. Mr. Justice Bond was absent. The names of the leading counsel for the accused are remarkable in Irish history. Amongst them are found those of John Philpott Curran, George Ponsonby, L. MacNally, and Thomas Addis Emmet. The case from the first was clear against the prisoner. There were the letters and reports, originals and copies. It was proved, indeed, that Cockayne swore his loyalty to the king, before the petty jury council under a menace from the Lord Chief Justice. "Remember, sir, you are in our power as to committing you if you do not swear." The case against the prisoner hinged upon the evidence of Cockayne; but the court decided that in Ireland one witness was sufficient to condemn a man of treason, though two were required in England. At 4 o'clock in the morning of the 28th of April the jury found Jackson "guilty." They recommended him to mercy; but the Lord Chief Justice explained that they had done so "only" through compassion. "I never want the means of dying. So long as his head is within reach of the prison-walls, he can prevent his body being suspended to scare the community." A partisan of the Government of the day saw Jackson as he passed on his way to the Court. This person remarked to one of Jackson's counsel, "I always said Jackson was a coward, and I am not mistaken. His fears have made him sick. I observed him, as the coach drove by, with his head out of the window, vomiting violently." His friend hurried to the court only to witness a most appalling scene. Jackson's frame quivered, rather than trembled, but his mind was firm and collected still. With clammy and nerveless fingers he tried to press the hands of his counsel, and sadly smiling, whispered the words of Pierre. "We have deceived the Senate." The Chief Justice, perceiving the condition of the prisoner, thought of remanding him, but the Attorney-General prayed for judgment. Then "the Reverend William Jackson was set forward." All eyes were directed towards him. His body teemed with profuse perspiration, the steam rose from his hair, the muscles of his face twitched in convulsions, his eyes were nearly closed, and when at intervals he opened them the dull dry light of death glared out of them. Ordered by the court to stand up, his mind strove to command his falling body. He rose, but tottered and reeled as if about to fall. At last he crossed his arms tightly over his breast, and, rocking to and fro, awaited the traitor's dreadful sentence of doom. When the clerk of the court directed him to hold up his hand, he strove to raise it, but the powerless arm dropped instantly at his side. When the clerk demanded, in the usual form, "what he had now to say by judgment of death and execution thereon should not be awarded against him according to law," Mr. Curran rose and moved an arrest of judgment. A legal argument of some length ensued. All the while the prisoner grew worse and worse; he presented the aspect of a living corpse. Mr. Curran proposed that he should be remanded, as his state of body rendered communication between him and counsel impossible. Lord Clonmell thought it would be leniently to dispose of the sentence with all speed. They opened the

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