

THE ASSASSINATION OF MR. PERCEVAL.

It is under feelings of horror, grief, and dismay, that we record an event unparalleled in the history of our country, or, perhaps, of any other—the assassination of Mr. Perceval, as he was entering the lobby of the House of Commons yesterday, at a quarter past five o'clock. Of this atrocious act we thought it our duty—God knows how painful a duty it was! to communicate at different intervals last night as many and accurate particulars as we could collect. We this day publish more ample details, beginning with the following accounts taken from different Morning Papers, to which we add as many further particulars as we have been able to collect this morning:—

Mr. Brougham had closed his examination, and Mr. Stephen was in the course of his cross-examination of the same witness, when about a quarter past five o'clock, the report of a pistol shot was heard in the House and Gallery; it did not at first interrupt the business of the House—was heard between the door and the bar, and cried of order. A whisper ran round that somebody was shot. The assassin was seized near the fire in the lobby. He made not the slightest resistance, but allowed himself as the perpetrator—said that his name was John James Bellingham, ship-broker, of Liverpool—that he had been travelling in Russia, in the service of Government—and that Mr. Perceval stood in the way of his remuneration, and that thus he had avenged himself.

The villain had kept post near the door, and as soon as Mr. Perceval approached sufficiently near, he put the pistol to his breast and shot him.

The following are Minutes of the Examination, taken before Mr. Alderman Combe and another Magistrate in the Committee Room, whither the prisoner was conveyed.

EXAMINATION OF WITNESSES.

(From the British Press.)

The first witness examined was Mr. Burgess, of Carlton-street, Mayfair, the tenor of whose deposition was as follows:—He was in the lobby of the House of Commons a few minutes after five o'clock, waiting to have an interview with one of the Members. He heard the report of a pistol, saw Mr. Perceval walk forward towards the House door, and, about the centre of the lobby, stagger and fall. He observed the Prisoner, at the same moment, with a pistol in his hand, move towards the Bench near the fire, whither followed him, and took the pistol from his hand, or from under his hand, on the Bench. The barrel was warm, if just discharged. He asked the prisoner what could have induced him to commit so vile an act? and he said he was an unfortunate man, and had sought redress from Government of his grievances in vain, or words to that effect. He confessed that he was the man guilty of the deed. Witness then put his hand into the waistcoat pocket of the prisoner, from which he took a guinea in gold, a pound note, a Bank token of 5s. 6d. two of 1s. 6d. a small pen-knife, and a bunch of keys. He also observed another person take from the person of the prisoner a pistol similar to that which he had himself taken from his hand, together with some papers which were taken from him by Gen. Gascogne.

The deposition having been read to the prisoners, he was cautioned by Mr. Taylor, not to say anything to criminate himself, and asked if he had any questions to put to the witness. He said, “Perhaps Mr. Burgess was less agitated than I was; but I think he took the pistol from my hand, and not from the bench under me.”

Mr. Stephen then entered the room, and mentioned to the Chairman circumstances, which he considered to be important. He had been informed by Mr. Spottiswood, a Gentleman of great respectability, that he (Mr. Spottiswood) saw two tall men running through Westminster-hall at a time which must have been immediately consequent upon the shot being fired, and who, from the rapidity of their course, he conjectured at the moment were escaping from bail, or from some legal or other restraint. No proceeding took place upon this information.

General Gascogne was the next witness examined. He deposed, that, shortly after five o'clock, he was writing in the smoking room, he heard the report of fire-arms—started up, and said, “That is a pistol; what can it mean?” He then rushed down stairs to the lobby, and was told by the way, that Mr. Perceval was shot. On entering the lobby, he found the prisoner on the bench secured, as we have already described. He also assisted in securing him, and searching his person—from which he took a bundle of papers tied with red tape, which the prisoner seemed unwilling to part with, and which he held above his head, to prevent him from recovering. The pressure was extreme at this time; and apprehending, from an apparent struggle which was made, that a rescue was attempted, or might be attempted, he delivered up the papers to Mr. Hume, and held the prisoner with additional force, and never lost sight of him till that moment he was now under examination. He thought it necessary also to observe, that he recognised the person of the prisoner the moment he saw him, but did not at first recollect his name, which he now knew to be Bellingham; he was also aware that he was formerly a merchant at Liverpool.

Mr. Hume, Member of the County of Wicklow, the Gentleman alluded to by General Gascogne, deposed, that he rushed from the House to the lobby, on the alarm being given, he saw a crowd collected about the prisoner, and saw General Gascogne take the papers, which he then produced, from his person. He also saw another person draw

a pistol from the prisoner's breeches pocket. These papers Mr. Hume then marked separately, with his initials, and having enclosed them in a sheet of paper, which he sealed with his own seal, delivered it over to Lord Castlethorpe.

A Messenger was now dispatched to the lodgings of the prisoner, No. 9, New Millennium-street, Bedford-row, to secure whatever papers or property might there be found. A messenger was likewise dispatched to procure a pair of hand-cuffs, and the attendance of the Police Officers.

The prisoner, on being asked whether he had any thing to say upon the last deposition, stated, that when General Gascogne seized him, he held him with so much violence, that he was apprehensive his arm would be broken, and that by this said, “You need not press me, I submit to justice.”

Michael Sexton, a Lancashire bookseller, residing at No. 12, China-row, Lambeth, deposed, that he was in the lobby at the time the shot was fired. He saw two Gentlemen coming from the House (Lord Osborne and Mr. Colborne), and saw them make way, as he thought, for a Gentleman who was entering the lobby, and whom he afterwards understood to be Mr. Perceval. He heard the report of the pistol; saw Mr. Perceval walk forwards to the middle of the lobby, stagger, and fall. He heard him cry, “Murder!” or “I am murdered!” and saw him carried into the Secretary's room. He also witnessed the pressure, and circumstances which took place about the Prisoner, and heard him say, “I am the unfortunate man that did it.”

Mr. Colborne next gave his testimony—he was leaving the House with Lord Francis Osborne, and in passing through the lobby stopped to talk with a person who accosted them—at that moment he heard the report of a pistol, saw Mr. Perceval advance towards the House and fall, and immediately ran to his assistance and supported him into the Secretary's room.

Lord F. Osborne corroborated the testimony of the last witness in every particular.

Francis Phillips, of Longsight-hall, near Manchester, deposed, that he was standing near the fire in the lobby, when he heard the report of a pistol. He saw Mr. Perceval walk forward, stagger, and fall on his knees, and heard him exclaim, “I am murdered!” twice—he rushed forward, caught him in his arms, supported his head upon his shoulder, and assisted in carrying him into the Secretary's room, where he soon after died in his arms—it might be ten, five, or fifteen minutes, he was so extremely agitated, that he could not state the precise time. He did not hear him utter a word after the time of his first exclamation until his death.

Francis Romilly, a clerk with a Gentleman at No. 36, Gower-street, was standing in the lobby by one of the pillars on the right of the door of entrance to the House; he saw the prisoner and two other persons standing together on that side of the lobby next the fire-place, and near the door. He saw Mr. Perceval stagger, and fall. He heard the prisoner shout the cry of “Burdett for ever!” and attempted to open the opposite door of the coach, as if to give the murderer an opportunity of escape. A party of Life Guards arrived about this time, and formed a semicircle in Lower Palace-yard; but the crowd, which was at first composed of decent people, had been gradually swelled by a concourse of pick-pockets and the lower orders, who mounted the coach, and were exceedingly troublesome and even dangerous, that it was not deemed advisable to send him to Newgate in the manner intended. We heard, with pain, repeated shouts of applause from the ignorant or depraved part of the crowd, as if they were hailing some oppressed but innocent victim, some of whom even mixed with the British populace? Are we to hear this in England from Liverpool next the fire-place, and near the door?

After the examination, the assassin was fully committed to Newgate for trial. A hackney-coach was brought to the iron gates in Lower Palace-yard; but the crowd, which was at first composed of decent people, had been gradually swelled by a concourse of pick-pockets and the lower orders, who mounted the coach, and were exceedingly troublesome and even dangerous, that it was not deemed advisable to send him to Newgate in the manner intended. We heard, with pain, repeated shouts of applause from the ignorant or depraved part of the crowd, as if they were hailing some oppressed but innocent victim, some of whom even mixed with the British populace? Are we to hear this in England from Liverpool next the fire-place, and near the door?

Having closed, for the present, this sad narrative, it seems almost useless to turn the attention of our readers to other subjects; but there are some amongst them which cannot be wholly overlooked, and which we shall now state as briefly as possible, only premising, that the extracts from the *Gazette*, which we have postponed, relate to the gallant action in the Adriatic, in which the French ship *Rivoli*, of 74 guns, was taken, to the recapture of the *Apelles* in the Channel, and to the dispatches from Lord Wellington, of all which the substance is already before our readers.

On Monday, dispatches were received from Lord

WILLINGTON, dated Alfyates, April 24.

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