

AN INTERESTING AFFAIR.—Mr. R. K. Wilson has furnished us an account of the trial of James Anderson for the murder of the Pettigrew family, in this county in 1846. We will publish it next week. It will be remembered by the older citizens as a case of intense interest and still shrouded in mystery.

(From the Valley Star, May, 1852.)

The Pettigrew Tragedy, Dec. 16, 1846.

COMMONWEALTH vs. JAS. ANDERSON.

This case, which was removed from the Circuit Court of this county at its April term, 1851, to that of the county of Bath, was finally decided on the 24th inst., by the acquittal of the accused. He was indicted for the murder of Mrs. Mary Jane Pettigrew and her five children on Wednesday the 16th of December, 1846. The deceased resided between the two House Mountains in this county. The house, which was built of logs, twenty feet square, and a story and a half in height was burned on the night of the 16th inst. by the acquittal of the accused. Several witnesses testified that they saw a large and brilliant light in the direction of the house between the hours of seven and nine o'clock that night. Another, at a distance of something more than a mile, saw that the house was not standing on the next day. It commenced snowing late in the evening, and at 9 o'clock the snow was some three or four inches deep. The storm continued to increase until 12 o'clock. At this time, in the language of one of the witnesses, it was most terrific, the wind blew in a perfect hurricane from the northeast. No evidence was introduced as to the condition of the weather during the rest of the night. The next day was excessively cold and windy. The ground was covered with a deep snow, much drifted.

The husband of Mrs. Pettigrew was engaged at work in the neighborhood during the week. He returned to his home on Sunday, as was his habit, and was the first to witness the evidences of the sad calamity which had befallen him. He went to the house of a neighbor and informed him of what had occurred. During the evening a large number of persons assembled at the ruins. Mrs. Pettigrew was sitting, as stated by one witness, on a bed—a chair was leaning against her back from which she seemed to have fallen; she was in an erect position, her body inclined forward. Her youngest child, a boy six years old, was lying across her lap. Another witness stated that she was sitting on a chair which leaned forward, the back legs not touching the ground, and that her boy was lying across her lap. She had on but one garment—a cotton night dress which was not fastened. A handkerchief was tied around her head and had fallen down over her eyes. She had her shoes on.

The oldest girl was lying on her side seven or eight feet from her mother; her right arm was extended; one leg was extended through the rungs of a chair which sat at her feet, and the other was drawn up across it. Her eyes were open and much protruded. Her face was as white as paper.

The second daughter, as stated by several witnesses, was sitting on the end of a bed rather leaning against the stump. Her head was hanging forward. One leg was drawn up under her and the foot of the other imbedded in the frozen ground. She was wearing but one garment—a thin cotton dress. She had a shoe and a stocking on one foot, a shoe without a stocking on the other.

The two youngest girls were lying at the foot of a stump, with their faces on the ground and in the direction of each other. They were covered with a piece of jeans in which some holes were burned. The bodies when found were all stiffly frozen and blackened with dust and smoke. One witness stated that they had the color of iron ore. Diligent search was made for tracks of persons but none were found either in the snow or upon the ground where the snow was melted, to the distance of some thirty or forty feet in the direction of the bodies. One witness stated that Mrs. P. was some ten or twelve feet from the house; another that she was some twenty or twenty-five feet. The oldest daughter was distant about twenty feet. All the others were still nearer. Three beds, a part of a bedstead, several chairs, a trunk, a quantity of bed clothing, and other articles of household furniture had been removed from the house. There was snow under the bed upon which Mrs. P. was sitting. A hole was burned in the wall immediately under her but her dress was not. A bed was found about one hundred yards from the house in the direction of the wind. Mrs. P. had silver spoons, and some four weeks before had some sixteen dollars in silver. The ruins of the house were searched, and neither spoons nor money could be found.

The bodies were taken, in a wagon, to the house of W. Wilson on Sunday evening.—There they were thawed and washed in warm water and straightened. When washed, the faces of all except the oldest daughter looked natural. To use the language of one of the witnesses, they just seemed as though they were asleep. A coroner's inquest was held and a post mortem examination made of the bodies on Monday night. Drs. Wilkinson and Rogers were present. Dr. Wilkinson testified that there was a wound on the neck of the left temple of Mrs. P., two and a half for three inches in length, and a half inch wide, which seemed to have been made with a stick. The margins of the wound were parallel and there was an effusion of blood under the skin. The skull was not fractured. She had one wound on the right side of her neck, and two or three on the left. The blood vessels were ruptured and the blood extravasated on the cellular tissue. The color of the spots was uniform; it was visible through the skin. The neck seemed to have been grasped with a hand so as to produce strangulation. From the wounds on the head and neck of Mrs. P., he concluded that she must have died from violence. There were similar appearances on the neck of the oldest daughter. Her eyes were turned in their sockets and looking back as if she had been running. The examination made was but slight and cursory. Dr. Rogers differed in some respects from Dr. Wilkinson. He was of the opinion that there were no external

marks on the neck of Mrs. P., and that the color of the spots was not visible through the skin; that there was no rupture of the blood vessels, and no extravasation of blood upon the cellular tissue; and that the spots arose from a congestion of blood in the vessels. He thinks that an examination was made of the eyes of Mrs. P. and that they appeared natural. Her face was paler than usual and rather calm in appearance. Her stomach was entirely empty. The other bodies presented no external marks of violence and were not dissected. He would not undertake to express an opinion as to the cause from which the deceased came to their death; whether it was from exposure to the cold or from violence. Mrs. P. was about 40 years of age. The ages of the five children varied from five to fifteen years. They were all strong and healthy, and accustomed to manual labor.

The accused resided about a half or three-quarters of a mile from the deceased. In May or June preceding the time of their death, the accused was at the house of James Smith, who resided about half a mile from the deceased. They heard some dogs in the direction of the house of the deceased, which the accused supposed to be running his dogs. The accused went in that direction and the witness accompanied him. They met with Joseph Robinson and Pettigrew near the house of the latter. A quarrel arose between Robinson and the accused. The accused took up a rock to strike him. Pettigrew interfered, and the accused threw him down, choked him and raised his fist to strike him. The witness told the accused that he ought not to strike the old man, and to let him up. The accused did so.

An old house which stood on the premises of Pettigrew was burned in October. Some time afterwards the witness Smith met the accused who inquired of him whether he knew that Pettigrew's old house was burned. To which the witness replied that he did not. The accused then said: "before long you'll see that the other will go in the same way." The witness did not remember anything else which passed between them at that time. He knew that Pettigrew had raised some tobacco that fall, but where it was fired he did not know. He knew that Pettigrew had but two houses on his premises—that in which he resided and the old house referred to in the conversation with the prisoner.

The accused met Joseph Robinson in the latter part of October or first of November. He asked the witness whether Mrs. P. had as much money as she was reported to have. The witness said in reply that he did not know. The accused then said that he believed she had that much and was worth more. The witness said that he had seen her at a farm for Mrs. P., and had offered \$450 for it. It was generally known in the neighborhood that Mrs. P. had money and wished to buy a farm.

The accused met one of the neighbors who assembled at the ruins on Sunday when the bodies were discovered. He was not at Wilson's whilst the bodies were there, nor was he at the funeral. In removing the bodies to Wilson's they passed along the road a distance of some 300 yards in sight of the house of the accused, and some 250 yards from it. Whilst in sight of the house, they met a number of persons, and there was much loud talking.—The dogs of the accused barked, but neither he nor any of his family were seen. The door of his house was on the side farthest from the road. The snow along the road was about a foot deep.

The accused was at the house of Wm. Bryan on Monday or Tuesday night after the deceased were found. He had with him a little bundle, and said that he was going to Augusta. He said nothing about what had happened to the Pettigrews. His nearest way to the house of this witness was the road which passed near and in sight of Pettigrew's house. He could not have reached the house of the witness by any other road without going 4 or 5 miles further. The witness knew nothing of the contents of the bundle. Some two weeks afterwards the accused and a man named Talton Page staid all night at the house of the witness. They both had little bundles.

Subsequently the prisoner removed with his family to the county of Craig. In the summer of the year 1850, a letter was received from Rockbridge, stating that he had been whipped for stealing, and was suspected of having murdered a family. Some time afterwards the accused was at the house of Zekeiah Wilson in New Castle. He complained to the witness that he could not get justice there. The witness said in reply, that he could not get justice, that since the letter had come from Rockbridge, the people mistrusted him, and he had better move off to some place where he was not known. The accused then said that "if he had murdered a family he was as good as some of the people of New Castle, and Bishop for one." The accused had gotten into a number of lawsuits with the people about New Castle. Bishop was a conveyancer and had levied or was about to levy a distress warrant upon the property of the accused. W. W. Campbell was present at the conversation and gave substantially the same testimony. The witness Wilson had another conversation with the accused a short time before his arrest in March 1851. He spoke of instituting a suit for slander against Sampson P. Moore, and spoke of going to Fincastle to employ a lawyer for that purpose. He stated that Moore was a man of property, and that he was poor; he wished the witness to join him in carrying on the lawsuit and to receive part of what was recovered, for his trouble and expenses. The witness advised him not to go to Fincastle, and told him that if he went there they would let him in jail and send him to Rockbridge, and there they would either hang him or wear out his body by keeping him in jail. To which the accused replied that if they did, they would do it by swearing lies on him.

The accused sometime before his arrest, applied to Andrew Taylor to write some notices to be sent to the neighbors, and to be living on land which he wished to enter. The witness told him that it was to be sent to the neighbors. He said, well, they had better leave. His wife said, yes, look at Rockbridge, to which he replied, yes, look at Rockbridge, I'll serve them in the same way if they don't go. This witness was asked by the counsel for the accused whether he had not been when examined at a previous trial of this case, asked whether he had ever heard the accused say anything upon the subject, and what was his reply to the question. He answered that such a question had been propounded, and that he said in reply to it, that he did not remember having heard Anderson say anything about it.

A counterpane, table-cloth, pillow-case and toilet, which had been found in the possession of the accused when arrested, were exhibited in Court. Several witnesses identified them as the property of Mrs. P. Upon this point some of the witnesses testified positively and others as to their belief. The counterpane was found by Sampson P. Moore, the brother of Mrs. P., on the bed of the accused when he went with an officer to search the prisoner's house for property of the deceased which was believed to be in his possession. The witness claimed it at the time as the property of Mrs. P. The wife of the accused denied that it was, and said that she would. Weeks afterwards, when he returned, with an officer to arrest the accused, he found the counterpane publicly exposed; no efforts having been made to conceal or destroy it. The articles which were found near the ruins of the house when the deceased were discovered remained there for several days.

Such were the facts disclosed by the testimony in this case. From these facts it is no easy task to trace the history or ascertain the cause of this melancholy occurrence. Upon the supposition that no violence was used, and that the fire was accidental, it is strange that the deceased did not go to the house of Smith or some other neighbor to seek assistance from the storm, if they had thought proper to remain expecting that some one would be attracted by the light of the burning house and come to their assistance why did they not use the beds and bedclothes for their protection? Why did they not approach nearer the house as the fire became gradually extinguished? The wound upon the head of Mrs. Pettigrew may perhaps have been occasioned by a fall. How can we account for the wounds upon the neck? Writers upon the subject of medical jurisprudence, inform us that a person who has been strangled, the gravitation of blood to the most dependent portions of the body, sometimes closely resemble those appearances which indicate violence applied during life. Upon the supposition that no violence was used in this case, it is a most remarkable coincidence, that one spot of blood should be found on the right and two or three on the left side of the neck of Mrs. P. as well as that of her eldest daughter.

Some of the facts proved, seem inconsistent with the hypothesis that they were murdered. The eyes and face of Mrs. P. did not exhibit that appearance which almost invariably attends death from strangulation. If death had been produced by this cause, the eyes would have been blood-shot; the face would have been livid, swollen, and distorted. If these symptoms had ever existed, they would not have been altered or obliterated by the subsequent freezing of the body. In cases of death from cold, the blood is driven inward and the face exhibits a calm and pallid appearance. Such was her's. The sitting postures which Mrs. P. and the second daughter occupied when found and the inclination of their heads forward would seem to indicate death from cold and that those positions were of their own selection.

The manner in which they were clothed would seem to indicate that they had retired to bed; that they were suddenly aroused and had attempted to get on the clothing which they had been in the habit of wearing during the day. Some of them had their shoes on.—If they had been aroused from sleep by a murderer, would they have waited to dress themselves before they attempted to escape? How happens it that the furniture was removed from the house; a bedstead taken to pieces, and part of it carried off? If it was removed by the deceased it was done for the purpose of saving it, and the house must have been on fire whilst they were thus engaged. Where was their murderer? Manifestly present for he had been his work by setting fire to the house. Was he standing by, a mere spectator of the scene? The would be strange conduct in a man who came there on such business. But suppose that this is all true.—Did he afterwards murder them? Whilst he was taking the life of one by the process of strangulation, would not the others have made their escape? He had no means of confining them as the house had been fired.

When were they murdered and placed in the positions which they occupied when found? If they were murdered, the furniture removed, and the bodies placed in the positions in which they were found, before the house was fired, then how does it happen that they, within ten or twelve feet of the house, and in the direction of the wind, were not scorched and burned? How does it happen that the bed upon which Mrs. P. was sitting, was burned immediately under her and her dress not burned at all?

Did he murder them and remain there until the house was so far burned down that the bodies would not be affected by the heat, before he placed them in their positions? He had every reason to believe that the light of the burning house at that hour of the night would have attracted the neighbors. Is it reasonable to suppose that he would have remained so long, and have incurred the risk of detection? Would not the bodies dis-

ting this time have become so stiff and rigid that it would be impossible to bend them into the positions which they occupied. If they were murdered, it is strange that the murderer should leave the bodies in the house, that all might be burned together. This would have been the most certain means of destroying the evidence of the crime.

In conclusion, it may be said that, if the deceased were murdered, their murderer was no equal among his predecessors in crime. The depravity of heart requisite for the commission of such a deed, and the ingenuity displayed in its execution, is without a parallel in the cases furnished by the records of criminal prosecutions.

Beautiful Tribute to the South.

We copy the following beautiful tribute to Virginia and the South from the Baltimore *Episcopal Methodist*, of the 12th ult.:

And yet, amidst all this desolation and ruin, did the world ever see anything like the uncomplaining dignity with which the South has borne a hideous vindiction that left it at the time but a ghastly semblance of life? We confess that not all the magnificent valor that was her thousand victories, not the fiery onset of Jackson's Scotch-Irish, nor the superb composure with which Lee directed the advancing tide of battle, or covered the slow and sullen retreat, has ever so electrified and melted our whole souls as the sublime fortitude with which the South has borne the most unspeakable woes.

"The Nixie of nations, there she stands,
Children and crowns in her voiceless woe,
An empty urn within her withered hands,
Whose holy dust was scattered long ago."

Nor is that all. The Virginia thus treated, the "Lone Mother of Dead Empires," is also the Mother of that Union from which she has been kept out like a leper, and only admitted now under the most tyrannical and exasperating conditions. The corner-stone of this grand constitutional fabric, was laid by the hand of the giant who now stands at the threshold of the temple, his high-shaven, his eyes put out, and for the present making sport for the Philistines. It is Virginia, that proud old colony, which, having no quarrel of her own with the King of England, yet took up, from generous sympathy, the cause of Massachusetts; Virginia, but for whose Washington, the Revolutionary War would have been a disastrous failure; whose Jefferson wrote the Declaration of Independence; whose Patrick Henry roused the nation to arms by his fiery eloquence; whose Marshall was the glory of American Jurisprudence; whose Madison, Monroe, Harrison, and Taylor, adorned the Executive of the Republic. Virginia, though not directly were the leading military figures of the Mexican war; with troops of her valiant sons in the war of 1812; whose states have illustrated the councils as have her heroes the camps of the Republic—this is the old old commonwealth, which, for five long years, has been ground to earth under the heel of negro and military yassalage, and is now only permitted to enter the edifice which she made by her own hands, and adorned and immortalized by her genius and virtue, from its foundation to its pinnacle, as a captive and a slave.

Rules at Washington.

From all accounts Washington is a gay place this winter. With balls, dinners, and what not, the extravagance and display of dress were never before equalled. The President and his Cabinet and certain Senators are living in a style of imperial luxury which the petty salaries they receive do not begin to warrant. There is no difficulty in ascertaining where the money comes from to support all this extravagance. The President's salary, an exchange says, would not pay his wife's millinery and confectionary bills. The carriages and horses in the stables of the White House could not be bought for his year's salary. The insignificant pay of the different Secretaries is not equal to their mode of life. The same may be said of most of the officialdom gentry. They are living beyond their legitimate incomes, and sober folks cannot but think that the over-taxed people are paying, through the taxes, for the music, oysters, boned turkeys, salads, sweetmeats, wines and flowers, required every night in the "upper circles" of the capital. All is not "lovely" when the Secretary gets eight and spends twenty thousand a year. No wonder, the investigation of the gold ring corruption brings to view so much execrable shame. The capital is indeed an Augean stable; and the people ground down by unjust taxation, will soon furnish the Hercules to cleanse it.—*Dayton Ledger.*

Characteristics of Luther.

From the historical gives the following characteristics of Luther:

Men of Luther's stature are like the violent forces of Nature herself—terrible when roused, and in repose, majestic and beautiful. Of vanity he had not a trace. "Do not call yourselves Lutherans," he said; "call yourselves Christians. Who and what is Luther? Has Luther been crucified for the world?" I mentioned his love of music. "Music," he called "the grandest and sweetest gift of God to man. Satan hates music," he said; "he knows how it drives the evil spirits out of us." He was extremely interesting in all natural things. Before the science of botany was dreamt of, Luther had divided the principles of vegetable life. "The principle of marriage runs through all creation," he said; "and flowers as well as animals are male and female." A garden called out bursts of eloquence from him; beautiful, sometimes, as a finished piece of poetry.

At a church collection for missions the preacher feelingly said: "My good brethren, let me caution those of you who put in buttons not to break off the eyes. It spoils them for use."

Love and discretion are sworn foes; the former is nearly always the conqueror.