

# THE BULLFROG.

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## MURDER.

What a ghastly but attractive title! Yes, attractive because it is ghastly. Of all the words in the English language there is none so speaking as this. It tells of hatred, of coarse ungovernable rage, of deadly, if stealthy, wicked purpose. Raise the cry of Murder in the streets and every one is roused. No other cry will so excite. Shout "stop thief" and raise a pursuit, and doubtless plenty will join in. Stealing is a great vice and must be put a stop to—so all will be glad to have the thief caught. The plundered man will head the pursuit if he can, and some respectable men will help him if they can, and the rabble will rush along just as they would after a mad dog or a Lord Mayor's show. But the crowd as they career along will chaff and make merry. But cry out "Murder" and then mark the effect on men's minds. If the murderer is flying, watch the faces of the pursuers. There is no nonsense among those set features. The eyes are gleaming and the lips are hard. The swiftest and the strongest will spring upon the villain. Nobody knows yet who is dead, but the cry went forth that a murderer was in the street and the swift and the strong put forth their speed and strength to hand over the ruffian to vengeance. Blood for blood!

Death has its terrors for all, but to be murdered is not simply to die. The father hears that his well beloved son has fallen in battle and he mourns and is sad. The widow hears that her only child has left her to her loneliness, the victim of pestilence, or flood, or fire. She draws down her dark veil still closer, and hopes that she too may soon depart in peace. At every tick of the clock a soul leaves this world for the next. In every house at some time or the other the unsparing foe sits triumphant. A father or a mother, husband or wife, brother or sister or lover—each and all go in turn. And tears are shed and hearts are wounded. But the tears will dry up and the broken heart may be healed. But if the dead have been murdered, there is no forgetfulness in the household. A memory will cling round the name speaking of sin and brutality and degradation. There is no honor in the grave here. The chances seem to be lessened (if we may use such an expression without irreverence) of salvation hereafter.

How the crowd flocks to see the body of a murdered man! All horrors are attractive, by some law of our formation for which we cannot account. Let an accident occur in the street, attended with injury to limb or organ, and every one "wants to see." Hundreds of thousands of people from London flocked to see the devastation occasioned by the explosion of the Dartford Powder Mills. The more shattered the victim is reported to be, the more eager is the anxiety to see him. But if in addition to the fact of there being a victim, there be whispered round a suspicion of murder, the excitement is doubled. People wish, so

the body of a man who has had some extraordinary call to meet his maker face to face. But if that call has been carried out by an impious fellow-man, if the knife or the bludgeon or the bowl have been playing their wicked part, another motive seems to be added. In the first case there is pity for the dead. In the second there is a cry against somebody living. In the first case we can but say the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. In the second we say the Lord gave life and man hath taken it. Put the murderer from among us and purify our atmosphere. Blood for Blood!

Such we should say are the feelings which prevail in most, we need hardly say civilized countries, for among the most savage of savages the instincts of humanity we fancy would prompt to the destruction of a murderer. It has remained for Halifax, the rising city of the west, the metropolis that is to be of British power and grandeur, the nucleus of a hundred railways that are to tap,—that's the expression,—to tap all the rivers and markets round about, so soon as our delegates have had a few more summer trips with their families at our expense—it has remained for this rising city to show a contempt for such little matters as murder. We must all die, musn't we, and what's the use of making a fuss? Half a dozen young men get into a brawl one evening in one of our public streets. Two of them have an especial grapple. During the grapple a third comes near them. In a few moments one of the combatants rises, staggers across the street and falls with the blood spouting from a wound through the neck. In a short time he is dead. The man with whom he was grappling is seized by some policeman,—the others are left to concoct any story that they please. Next morning a Coroner's inquest is held. The dead body is scientifically carved and cut up by some surgeons, who pronounce under oath that they have examined the body from head to foot, sliced up his heart, smelt his liver, and peered into the rest of his anatomy and that they have no doubt that the deceased came to his death in consequence of having had his throat cut. Nobody else doubts it either. What next? Witnesses are examined, these same witnesses being the fellow brawlers of the night before—But we will not go into detail because it is unnecessary for our present purpose. The jury find the accused person not guilty, and it is there that we wish to begin our charge against our officials. Nobody believes that the accused person committed the crime. We do not believe it. But just in proportion as that opinion influenced the jury and the public, just so much the more imperative become the call to find out who did commit it. Mark it well. If WOODILL did not stab the deceased, and if the deceased did not stab himself, somebody else stabbed him. Somebody must have bent over the disputing youths and driven a cowardly and deadly weapon right through the throat of one of them. That somebody is one of the gang. He is among us. The common opinion is that he went up to the combatants intending to stab WOODILL but by mistake killed his unhappy fellow-blackguard. But be that as it may, never was there a clearer case upon which the authorities would be justified in acting. Six men get into a brawl