

voice, adressing one of the shopmen. ent of her conviction, to his relatives "No - no - no!" screamed the in Devonshire. Z wretched woman, falling on her bend-

The sessions were, at last on; a "true ed knees in wild supplication. "For bill" against Esther Mason for shopmy child's sake-in mercy of the innocent babe as yet unborn-pity and lifting as it was popularly termed, was unhesitatingly found, and with forgive me!"

a heavy heart I wended my way to the The harsh order was reiterated; and court to watch the proceedings. A Esther Mason, fainting with shame few minutes after I entered, Mr. Jusand agony, was conveyed to the prison in Giltspur Street. The next day she tice Le Blanc and Mr. Baron Wood, was fully committed to Newgate on who had assisted at an important case of stockjobbing conspiracy, just over the capital charge of privately stealleft the bench: the learned recorder ing in a shop to the value of five being doubtless considered ouite equal pounds. A few hours after her incarceration within those terrible walls, to the trial of a mere capital charge of theft. she was prematurely delivered of a

The prisoner was placed in the female child

dock: but try as I might. I could not I have no moral doubt whatever, I never have had, that at the time of look at her. It happened to be a calm the committal of the fclonious act, the intellect of Esther Mason was disord intellect of Esther Mason was disordhumming with busy, lusty life; so ered. Any other supposition is inconthat, sitting with my back to the sistent with the whole tenor of her previous life and character. "Lead us prisoner, I could, as it were, read her not into temptation" is indeed the demeanor in the shadow thrown by holiest, because the humblest prayer. her figure on the opposite sun-lighted

Three weeks had stapsed before the wall. There she stood during the first intimation of these events reach- brief moments which sealed her earthed me, in a note from the chaplain of ly doom, with downcast eyes and ut-Newate, an excellent, kind-hearted terly dejected posture; her thin fingmechanically with th

"if you have anything to urge entenced is pronounced." I started up, and turning to the risoner, besought her in hurried ac ents to speak. "Remind them of the nfant at your brest-your husband"-'Who is that conferring with the risoner?" demanded the judge in an

ngry voice. I turned and confronted him with ook as cold and haughty as his own. He did not think proper to pursue the nquiry further; and after muttering omething about the necessity of no nterrupting the proceedings of the

court, again asked the prisoner if she had anything to urge. "Not for myself-not for my sake," at last faintly murmured the trentbling woman; "but for that of my pool dear infant-my poor witless boy! I do not think sir, I was in my right enses. I was starving. I was riendless. My husband too, whom you have heard"- - She stopped abruptly; a choking sob struggled in her throat; and but for the supporting arm of one of the turnkeys she would have fallen to the ground.

"Unhappy, guilty woman," said the ecorder, with the coolness of a denon, "the plea of insanity you would set up is utterly untenable. Your usband, it seems, is serving his maesty in the royal navy; defending his country, while his wife was breaking its laws, by the commission of a crime which, but for the stern repression of

he law, would sap the foundations of he security of property, and"----I could endure no more. The at-

mosphere of the court seemed to stiffe me; and I rushed for relief into the open air. Before, however, I had reached the street, a long, piercing scream informed me that the learned judge had done his duty. No effort was spared during the in terval which elapsed previous to the ecorder presenting his report to the privy council-a peculiar privilege at

procure a mitigation of the sentence legible. A petition, setting forth the peculiar

circumstances of the case, was care fully prepared; and by the indefatier gentleman-whom, as he is still alive, and might not choose to have

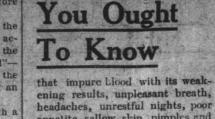
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age, who, first having carried of

poor woman's husband, left her



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Romilly to enter on his celebrated scareer as a reformer of the criminal law.

The remains of Esther Mason were obtained from the Newgate officials. and quietly interred in St. Sepulchre's church-yard. A plain slab, with her name only plainly chiselled upon it was sometime afterwards placed above the grave. A few years ago I attended a funeral in the same graveyard; and after aslight search, discovered the spot. The inscription, though of that time attached to the office-to curse much worn, was still quite

I had not seen Henry Mason since his return: but I was glad to hear from Mr. William Friend that, after gable exertions of an excellent Quak- the first passionate burst of rage and grief had subsided, he had, apparently at least, thanks to the tender and

pious expostulations of his wife-with whom, by the kind intervention of the sheriffs, he was fermitted long and requent interviews-settled down into calmness and resignation. One thing only he would not bear to hear even from her, and that was any admission flicted for twenty years, and I can say that she had been guilty of, even the that Cascarets have given me more ve- slightest offence. A hint of the kind, lief than any other remedy I have ever tried. I shall certainly recom- him into a paroxys, of fury; and the subject was consequently in his pres-

ence studiously avoided. A few days after the execution, Mr. William Friend called on me just after breakfast accompanied by the bereaved husband. I never saw s changed a man. All the warm kindliness of his nature had vanished, and as replaced by a gloomy fierce aus erity, altogether painful to contem-

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man, to whom Mrs. Mason had confidflowers and sweet-scented herbs ed her sad story. I immediately hasspread before her. The trial was

tened to the prison; and in a long in his name blazoned to the world. I will very brief: the evidence, emphatically terview with her, elicted the forego call William Friend-was soon very conclusive, was confidently given, and ing statement. I readily assured her numerously signed. The prosecutor vainly cross-examined. Nothing rethat all which legal skill could do to however, obstinately refused to at mained but an elaborate and miseriextricate her from the awful position tach his name to the document; and cordiam exhaustive defense, which the in which she stood, the gravity of been prepared by me, and which the which I did not affect' to conceal strangely did men reason on such prisoner begged her council might be should be done. The offence with matters in those days-would, it was allowed to read. This was of course which she was charged had supplied feared, weigh heavily against the suc refused: the recorder remarking, they the scaffold with numberless victims: cess of the petition. The amiable and might as well allow counsel for felons and tradesmen were more than ever enlightened Sir Samuel Romilly no o address juries as read defences; clamorous for the stern execution of a only attached his name, but- aided and that, as every practical man knew law which spite of experience, they still regarded as the only safeguard of

us zealously by his advice and in would be utterly subversive of the due administration of justice. The clerk duence. In short, nothing was omitted their property. My wife was over that appeared likely to attain the de of the court would read the paper; if whelmed with grief; and in her anxi sired object the prisoner felt too agitated to do so.

ety to save her unhappy foster-sister Two days before the petition was t This was done: and very vilely done sought, with my knowledge, an inter e forwarded to the proper quarter The clerk, I dare say, read as well as view with the prosecutor, in the hope Henry Mason arrived in England, the he was able; but old, near-sighted. of inducing him not to press th exertions of his employers having prond possessed of anything but a clean charge. Her efforts were unavailing cured his discharge. The "Active" nunciation, what could be expected? He had suffered much he said from was one of Captain Hoste's squadron 'he defense, so read, produced not the such practices, and was "upon prin which obtained the celebrated victory lightest effect on the court or jury ciple" determined to make an exampl of Lisba, over the Franco-Venetian The recorder briefly commented or of every offender he could catch. As fleet commanded by Admiral Dobour he conclusiveness of the evidence fo to the plea that the husband had bee lieu. Henry, Mason, it appeared by the prosecution: and the jury in the forcibly carried off by the pressgang the testimonials of the captain and same brief, business-like manner, re it was absurd: for what would becom turned the verdict of Guilty. officers of the ship, had greatly disof the property of tradesmen if the nguished himself in the action. We wife of eevry sailor so entrapped were

"What have you to say." demanded nclosed these papers with the petition to be allowed to plunder shops with the clerk, "why sentence of death and then, having done all in our powimpunity? This magnificent reasonshould not be passed upon you er, awaited with anxious impatience ing was of course unanswerable: and cording to law?

he result of the recorder's report. I the rebuked petitioner abandoned her The shadow started convulsively as was announced to me, as I was sitting bootless errand in despair. Messrs the terrible words fell from the man's somewhat later than usual at cham Roberts, I should have mentioned, had lips: and I saw that the suddenly-upbers, by Mr. William Friend, Th by some accident discovered the na raised eyes of the prisoner were fas udgment to die was confirmed! All ture of the misfortune which had be ened on the face of the fearful quesour representations had not sufficed fallen their officer, and had already The lins, appeared to move rbalance the supposed neces made urgent application to the Ad ound reached my ears sity of exhibiting terrible examples o

mirality for his release. The Old Baily sessions did not "Speak, woman," said the recorder



"Well, sir," said he, as he barely ouched my proffered hand, "they have killed her you see snite of all you could say or do. It much availed me. too, that I had helped to win their boasted victories;" and he laughed with savage bitterness.

"Henry- Henry!" exclaimed Wiliam Friend, in a reproving accent. To be continued.

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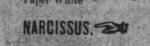
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colds and sore throat and would ot be without these medicines for

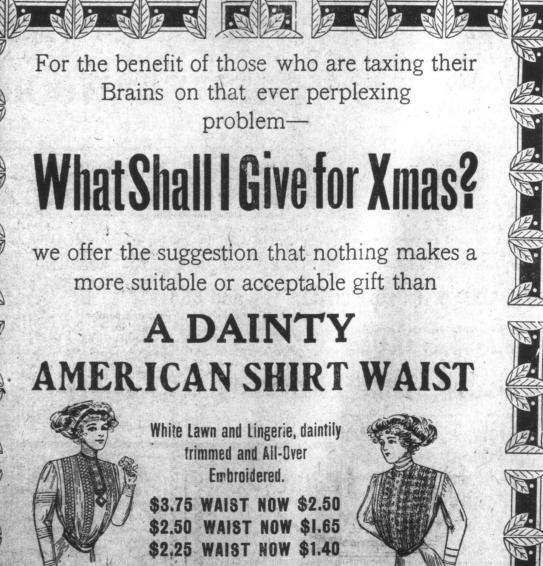
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