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THE

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AND CONCEPTION BAY JOURNAL.

Vol. IV.

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 8, 1838.

No. 214.

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EXTRAORDINARY INTREPIDITY.

At the Cork Assizes, Maurice Noonan stood indicted for a burglary, and attempting to rob the house of Sir John Purcell, at Highfort, on the night of the 11th of March, 1812.

Sir John Purcell said, that, on the night of the 11th of March last, after he had retired to bed, he heard some noise outside the window of his parlour. He slept on the ground-floor, in a room immediately adjoining the parlour. There was a door from one room into the other; but this having been found inconvenient, and there being another passage from the bed-chamber more accommodating, it was nailed up, and some of the furniture of the parlour placed against it. Shortly after Sir John heard the noise in the front of his house, the windows of the parlour were dashed in, and the noise, occasioned by the feet of the robbers in leaping from the windows down upon the floor, appeared to denote a gang not less than fourteen in number, as it struck him. He immediately got out of bed, and the first resolution he took being to make resistance, it was with no small mortification that he reflected upon the unarmed condition in which he was placed, being destitute of a single weapon of the ordinary sort. In this state he spent little time in deliberation, as it almost immediately occurred to him that, having supped in the bed-chamber on that night, a knife had been left behind by accident, and he instantly proceeded to grope in the dark for this weapon, which happily he found before the door leading from the parlour into the bed-chamber had been broken.—While he stood in calm but resolute expectation that the progress of the robbers would soon lead them to the bed-chamber, he heard the furniture which had been placed against the nailed-up door expeditiously displaced, and immediately afterwards the door was burst open. The moon shone with great brightness, and when the door was thrown open, the light streaming in through three large windows in the parlour, afforded Sir John a view that might have made an intrepid spirit not a little apprehensive. His bed room was darkened to excess, in consequence of the shutters of the windows, as well as the curtains, being closed; and thus, while he stood enveloped in darkness, he saw standing before him, by the brightness of the moonlight, a body of men well armed; and of those who were in the van of the gang, he observed that a few were blackened. Armed only with this case-knife, he aided only by a dauntless heart, he took his station by the side of the door, and in a moment after one of the villains entered from the parlour into the dark room. Instantly upon advancing, Sir John plunged the knife at him, the point of which entered under the right arm, and in a lile with the nipple, and so home was the blow sent, that the knife passed into the robber's body, until Sir John's hand stopped its further progress. Upon receiving this thrust, the villain reeled back into the parlour, crying out blasphemously that he was killed; and shortly after another advanced, who was received in a similar manner, and who also staggered back into the parlour, crying out that he was wounded. A voice from the outside gave orders to fire into the dark room. Upon which a man stepped forward with a short gun in his hand, which had the butt broke off at the small, and which had a piece of cord tied round the barrel and stock near the swell. As this fellow stood in the act to fire, Sir John had the amazing coolness to look at his intended murderer, and without betraying any audible emotion whatever, which might point out the exact spot which he was standing in, he calmly calculated his own safety from the shot which was preparing for him. He saw that the contents of the

pieces were likely to pass close to his breast without menacing him with, at least, any serious wound, and in this state of pain and manly expectation, he stood without flinching until the piece was fired, and its contents harmlessly lodged in the wall. It was loaded with a brace of bullets and three slugs. As soon as the robber fired, Sir John made a pass at him with the knife, and wounded him in the arm, which he repeated again in a moment with similar effect; and, as the others had done, the villain, after being wounded, retired, exclaiming that he was wounded. The robbers immediately rushed forward from the parlour into the dark room, and then it was that Sir John's mind recognized the deepest sense of danger, not to be oppressed by it, however, but to surmount it. He thought that all chance of preserving his own life was over; and he resolved to sell that life still dearer to his intended murderers than even what they had already paid for the attempt to deprive him of it. He did not lose a moment after the villains had entered the room, to act with the determination he had so instantaneously adopted. He struck at the fourth fellow with his knife, and wounded him, and at the same instant he received a blow on the head, and found himself grappled with,—he shortened his hold of the knife, and stabbed repeatedly at the fellow with whom he found himself engaged. The floor being slippery with the blood of the wounded man, Sir John and his adversary both fell, and while they were on the ground, Sir John thinking that his thrusts with his knife, though made with all his force did not seem to produce the decisive effect which they had in the beginning of the conflict, he examined the point of his weapon with his finger, and found that the blade of it had bent near the point. As he lay struggling on the ground, he endeavoured, but unsuccessfully, to straighten the curvature of the knife; but while one hand was employed in this attempt, he perceived that the grasp of his adversary was losing its constraint and pressure, and in a moment or two after, he found himself released from it; the limbs of the robber were, in fact, by this time unnerved by death. Sir John found that this fellow had a sword in his hand, and this he immediately seized and gave several blows with it, his knife being no longer serviceable. At length the robbers, finding so many of their party had been killed or wounded, employed themselves in removing the bodies; and Sir John took this opportunity of retiring to a place a little apart from the house, where he remained a short time. They dragged their companions into the parlour, and having placed chairs with the backs upward, by means of these they lifted the bodies out of the windows, and afterwards took them away. When the robbers retired, Sir John returned to the house, and called up a man servant from his bed, who, during this long and bloody conflict, had not appeared, and consequently received from his master warm and loud upbraiding for his cowardice. Sir John then placed his daughter-in-law and grandchild, who were his only inmates, in places of safety, and took such precautions as circumstances pointed out, till the day light appeared. The next day, the alarm having been given, search was made after the robbers, and Sir John having gone to the house of the prisoner Noonan, upon searching, he found concealed under his bed the identical short gun with which one of the robbers had fired at him. Noonan was immediately secured and sent to gaol, and upon being visited by Sir John Purcell, he acknowledged that Sir John had like to do for him, and was proceeding to show, until Sir John prevented him, the wounds he had received from the knife in his arm. "An accomplice of the name of John Daniel Sullivan, was produced, who deposed to the same effect. The party met

at Noonan's house; that they were nine in number, and had arms; that the prisoner was one of the number, and that he carried a small gun. Upon the gun, which was in the court, being produced, with which Sir John had been fired at, the witness said it was that with which the prisoner was armed the night of the attack; that two men were killed, and three dreadfully wounded. The witness stood a long and rigorous examination by Mr. Counsellor O'Connell; but none of the facts seemed to be shaken, though every use was made of the guilty character of the witness. The prisoner made no defence, and Judge Mayne then proceeded to charge the Jury, and commended with approbation the bravery and presence of mind displayed throughout a conflict so very unequal and bloody by Sir John Purcell. The jury, after a few minutes, returned their verdict—guilty."

VIEW OF A HAREM.

Strange to say, the harem I saw at Stamboul, which exhibited the most complete picture of Oriental luxury, belonged to a rich Frank. This gentleman, whose name, through courtesy, I suppress, was not in spite of our character for eccentricities, an Englishman.—He has entirely adopted Turkish manners, even to public attendance at the mosques; though his friends well know, that, in these observances there is more hypocrisy than faith, as he makes no scruple in expressing opinions totally at variance with the tenets of the Koran. His immense wealth enables him to live in great splendour; and, being of a generous disposition, he frequently gives superb entertainments but, since the attempt of the traveller, P. P. to rob him of one of his fair flock, he was become shy of the society of Franks in general, and now seldom invites any persons to visit him, except Turk. The first time I was introduced into this harem, or, properly speaking, reception saloon, I found him, as the weather was excessively warm, reclining on a divan, attended by his women, who were vieing with each other in endeavouring to win his approbation. One was performing his beard with otto of roses, another fanning away the flies, and a third, with her soft hands, shampooed his feet; here, a beautiful Circassian was performing on a sort of lute; there, another displayed her graceful form in the voluptuous mazes of the dance; while several sat embroidering at a distance; and, lastly a bold looking Georgian, who, by her confident airs and great beauty seemed conscious of being the favourite, exhibited her well-turned arms as she reclined on a Persia carpet, and enjoyed, apparently with much gusto, her tchibouque. The most aromatic perfumes were burning in the apartment, and the murmuring of the water, from a marble fountain in the centre, was once calculated to cool and refresh

the air, lull the indolent to sleep, and supply the vacant mind with thought. In short, every aid was resorted to, that could in any way pander to the senses. The room opened into a garden filled with flowers, costly carpets covered the floor, and cushions of purple velvet, embroidered in gold, the divan; the ceiling was just painted in fresco, and the panels inlaid with mother-of-pearl or looking glasses. The women, who were generally lovely, appeared gay and happy; and, in order, I suppose, that his selection should be perfectly Turkish, they were beautifully fat! Their dresses were superb and becoming, the colours well blended, though gaudy; and their hair, which was ornamented with pearls and precious stones, either fell in long plaits to the waist, or was confined by embroidered gauze.—*Spencer's Travels in Circassia.*

THE SABBATH.—The keeping of one day in the seven holy, as a relaxation and refreshment, as well as for the public worship, is of admirable service to a state, considered merely as a civil institution. It humanises by the help of society & conversation, the manners of the lower classes, which would otherwise degenerate into a sordid ferocity, and savage selfishness of spirit; it enables the industrious workman to pursue his occupation, in the ensuing week, with health and cheerfulness; it imprints on the minds of the people that sense of their duty to God so necessary to make them good christians—but yet which would be defaced by an unremitting continuance of labour, without any stated time for calling them to the worship of their Maker.

TURKISH VENERATION OF MOTHERS. A beautiful feature in the character of the Tuaks, is their being. Their wives advise and reprimand unheeded; their words are *bosh*—nothing; but their mother is an oracle; she is consulted, confided in, listened to with respect and deference, honored to her latest hour, and remembered with affection and regret beyond the grave. "My wives die, and I can replace them," says the Osmanli; "my children perish, and others may be born to me; but who shall restore to me the mother who has passed away, and who is seen no more?"

We promised to give a summary of all that is proposed by the various parties, and we have not yet named the greatest of all the lions by far—we mean the *Victoria*, now on the stocks at Limehouse. This extraordinary ship is the project and property of the British and American Steam navigation