

## CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE.

Parkton met with a stranger with whom a conversation was begun, which finally ended in an exchange of umbrellas, the stranger giving a much better one than that which he received. Together the two men then kept on their way, until York was finally reached, and the stranger, who gave his name as Conrad Winter, persuaded Kunkel to receive him at his home. Winter remained with the Kunkels for several days, and had with him a number of articles which he endeavoured to give or sell to the family. He offered a pair of ladies shoes in exchange for one of Kunkel's shirts, and the bargain being a good one, as the shoes were quite new, it was accepted. He offered a cap to one of the boys, but it being too large, was told to keep it, and also presented a handsome snuff-box to one of the children, which was likewise declined, on the plea that the child had no use for it. On the first morning of his arrival he stated that a murder had been committed in Maryland, and that the murderer had not been caught. Soon after his departure, it was learned that a murder had recently been committed near Parkton, on the morning on which Kunkel had been seen in the place, and detectives, who were already on the trail, traced Kunkel to his home, where the umbrella and the pair of new shoes were identified as the property of Mrs. Cooper, the victim. He was at once arrested and thrown into the jail at York, where he was kept several months, being finally taken to Baltimore. Mrs. Kunkel, about that time gave birth to a child. Paul Kunkel, under the weight of trouble, became insane, or at least his reason was so unsettled that he could not give a lucid explanation of how the things had come into his possession, or from whom he had obtained them. A true bill was found against him, and several trials were had, which resulted in his conviction and sentence to death; the period of his confinement in the Baltimore prison was about ten months, during which time every effort was made to establish his innocence. Persons from York testified to his uniform good conduct, but the circumstantial evidence of his being in the vicinity at the fatal

time, and the possession of the articles, was too grave to be overthrown. Being a Roman Catholic, the bishop of Philadelphia took a great interest in his case, visiting him in his prison at York, and, it is understood, in Baltimore also. Finally, about eight days before the time fixed for the execution, his mind became clear, and he was able to explain his leaving Baltimore with one man, and his meeting with the other, with whom he exchanged umbrellas, and described them both. Officers of the law were put upon the track, and before long the man with whom he left Baltimore was found, who, strange to say, shortly after parting with Kunkel, had met with Winter, and had seen the umbrella, shoes and other articles. Winter's appearance was described, tallying with that given by Kunkel, and once more the officers were successful in their search, Winter betraying himself by one of those slight actions which so often lead to the arrest of criminals when they feel the safest.

During all this time Winter, who was a blacksmith, had kept in his possession the stolen snuff-box, and one day, while at work at Ashland, pulled it from his pocket and handed it to a fellow-workman, who wished a pinch of its contents. This workman discovered what the murderer never had, that the name of Mrs. Cooper was engraved upon a silver plate within the box. Being familiar with the incident, he at once informed an officer, who made the arrest, and upon trial Winter was convicted and condemned. Paul Kunkel was saved.

Upon the scaffold Conrad Winter confessed his guilt, stating that when young he had been bound to a Mrs. Goodwin, residing near Parkton, who had compelled him to steal sheep for her benefit. On one of his expeditions he was captured and sent to the penitentiary for his offence, and while there swore revenge upon his mistress when he should be released. On the evening of the murder he was walking along the road when before him he saw a woman whom he took to be Mrs. Goodwin. Seizing a stone, a heavy blow crushed her skull, and she fell dead. Upon turning her over and seeing her face, he found that he had killed the wrong woman, it being Mrs. Coope<sup>r</sup>.