

In pursuance of a special Commission of Oyer and Terminer, and Gaol Delivery, for the purpose of trying Joseph Farrow, then in custody, charged with having committed a rape on the body of a young girl between the age of 12 and 13 years, the Honourable Peter Stewart, Chief Justice, Judge Robinson, and the Hon. Charles Lyons, Justice, Commissioners appointed by the aforesaid Commission, met at the Court House in this town on Friday the 20th inst. and the Court being opened by proclamation, the Grand Jury were called and sworn—After a short, but pertinent charge from the Chief Justice, the Jury retired for about a quarter of an hour, when they returned into Court a BILL of Indictment found against Joseph Farrow.

The Prisoner was then ordered to be brought to the Court and set to the bar; where being arraigned, the indictment was read—to which he pleaded 'Not guilty.'

The question 'whether he was ready for his trial,' being put to the prisoner by the Court, and answered in the affirmative, he was informed of his right to challenge the jury as they came to the book to be sworn—and after having exercised this right agreeably to his judgment, the jury was completed, and the prosecution was opened by Mr. Attorney General with that propriety and decency of language which could not fail to arrest the approbation of an audience possessed of the least sensibility. The Evidences for the Crown were then called and examined. They both swore positively to the fact. Several persons were called and interrogated as to the character and behaviour of the unfortunate young girl, all of whom declared, that though they had known her many years, they had never seen any thing but what was perfectly innocent and decent.

Our readers, no doubt, will spare us the pain of detailing the Evidence as delivered on the part of the Crown; it could only tend to wound the feelings of delicacy, which we profess it our intention ever to avoid. It would be equally unnecessary to excite their indignation against the violator of female innocence by a recital of the circumstances. Suffice it to say, that the Evidence was distinct, positive, and under such circumstances as hardly ever accompanied the commission of a rape before, a small boy of about 17 being eye witness to the whole transaction. No part of this was attempted to be contradicted by the prisoner.

The prisoner had no evidence in his behalf. The Counsel for the prisoner was placed in an embarrassing situation—between the desire of defending his client, and the fear of attacking the character of the young girl—there was no alternative—on the one hand, while endeavouring to

preserve to an unfortunate and wretchedly distressed woman the husband of her bosom, the protector of herself and her three little helpless innocent babes, he might blast forever the character of the young girl, on whom, Mr. Attorney General had observed, 'not even the foul breath of fame had ever dared to blow,'—and heap affliction on the already too unhappy parents, then bewailing the misfortune of a darling child. Every attempt to vindicate the one would be a stab to the other.

In closing the prosecution, as indeed through the whole business, the Attorney General shewed much poignancy of feeling for the unfortunate situation of the parents and daughter.

The jury retired, and in about half an hour returned with their verdict GUILTY.

The Chief Justice then told the prisoner that if he had any thing to say in arrest of judgment, he must prepare it against the next morning.

The Sheriff was then ordered to take the Prisoner back to jail, and have him well secured—and to bring him before the Court on the next morning to receive his sentence.

The prisoner was brought next morning, and received sentence of death, to be executed on Monday the 30th of this month.

He was asked if he had any thing to say in vindication of himself, he replied 'No.' He was taken back to jail, and again put in irons.

JULY 28.

During the night of Wednesday the Prisoner had nearly effected his escape. He had filed off his irons, and was prizing open the bars of the window before he was discovered—when the guard were called and he was again secured without any resistance. Whether unfortunately for the prisoner, or not, we cannot say, but at that time a petition was handed about in his behalf, which this attempt entirely silenced.

MONDAY, JULY 30.

This day, a little after twelve o'clock, and pursuant to his sentence, Joseph Farrow was taken from the public jail to the gallows, whither the Rev. Mr. Desbrisay attended him in prayer and exhortation for a considerable time, and amidst a great number of people, who were mournful spectators of most this horrid scene, he was launched into eternity. Thus died Joseph Farrow, a victim to passions which we all have in common with him, and which it is our duty circumspectly and diligently to watch over.

He died with that composure which only a confidence in the mercy and goodness of his Creator could inspire.

He has left a disconsolate and amiable wife, with three little innocent babes, to deplore their loss.—We trust that no passionate language need be used on this mournful occasion to excite the benevolence of a compassionate public.

Just before the Minister left him he gave a paper into his hands, the substance of which is as follows:

"That notwithstanding he was condemned to die for a rape, he declared to the world he was not guilty of this crime. He hoped that it might be a warning to all beholders, and the means of awakening them to those important duties which the spirit of our holy Religion requires, and which could be attained only through the merits of a blessed Redeemer. It had pleased God to awake him to a sense of his unworthiness by a heavy stroke; but he desired to praise his holy Name for his loving kindness, and for all his mercies manifested towards him. He observed, that it would hereafter be said, that Farrow was hung—but it was better, he said, for him to die now, with an interest in the blessed Jesus, than to have a longer continuance in sin.—I desire, says he, gratefully to praise God for having graciously brought me to a sight of my lost state by nature, and enabled me to lay hold on the Rock of my Salvation."

And now, addressing himself to his unhappy wife, he says,

"My dear wife, I pray that you would not mourn for me—but mourn rather for yourself. Be earnest in prayer to God, that he would, for his dear Son's sake, who was crucified for the Redemption of the world, make us all partakers of his heavenly glory. I pray that you would not give 'Sleep to your Eyes, nor Slumber to your Eyelids, till you find Peace to your Soul'—I pray that you and all others may take this to heart, and search and try yourselves. This from your dying husband Joseph Farrow."

It is difficult to reconcile the last words of this dying man, with his behaviour on the trial, where he did not even endeavour to vindicate himself. It would be unnecessary to comment on this circumstance—we leave it to every one to weigh as they think most proper—and shall only observe, that as it is not the lot of mortality to be omniscient, so it is our duty neither to attack the innocent, or defend the guilty.—

As this is the first execution that ever took place in this Island, it is to be hoped, that hereafter there will be no necessity to repeat so dreadful an example for the terror of all evil doers—but that all our actions may be such as that we may not be even the objects of Suspicion itself.

The attention paid to this unfortunate man, while in jail, by the Rev. Mr. Desbrisay, and others, exhorting him to prepare for that most awful of all scenes, the dissolution of nature, and his appearance before the Throne of that transcendent, eternally glorious, and mercifully Supreme Being, who 'willeth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he would turn from his wickedness, and live,'—before whom no subterfuge can avail, and from whom nothing can be hid, merits the highest praise. That their endeavours were successful, it is our sincere hope.