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# THE MURDER TRIAL OF WILLIAM PALMER, SURGEON

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MUSIC LP

EDITED AND ABRIDGED BY BERNARD ROSENBERG • OF THE NEW YORK BAR (New York)

Adapted and directed by Wallace House,  
with Eric House, Wendy Carter, Kenneth Buckridge, Wallace House

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**THE MURDER TRIAL OF  
WILLIAM PALMER, SURGEON**

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**THE MURDER TRIAL**  
OF  
**WILLIAM PALMER, SURGEON**

EDITED AND ABRIDGED BY

**BERNARD ROSENBERG**

of The New York Bar (New York)

Adapted for recording by

**WALLACE HOUSE**

Assistant Professor of Speech, Radio, and Television,  
New York University

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1958  
MUSIC LP

SIDE I,

In Cen  
on the  
Willia  
having

of November, 1855, willfully and with malice afore-  
thought, committed murder on one John Parsons Cook.

The prisoner pleaded not guilty.

The jury being empanelled and sworn, the Attorney-  
General opened the case for The Crown.

#### ATTORNEY-GENERAL

Gentlemen of the jury, William Palmer was a medical  
practitioner in the town of Rugeley, in Staffordshire,  
for several years. In later years, however, he became  
addicted to turf pursuits, which gradually weaned him  
from his profession. Mr. Cook was a young man origi-  
nally articled to a solicitor; but, inheriting some  
£12,000, he abandoned the laborious profession of the  
law, and betook himself also to the turf. In the course  
of his operations he became much connected with the  
prisoner William Palmer. It is for the murder of that  
Mr. John Parsons Cook that the prisoner stands in-  
dicted today, the charge against him being that he took  
away that man's life by poison. The case which I  
have to urge against Palmer is this -- that, being in  
desperate circumstances, which could only be averted  
by money, he took advantage of his intimacy with Cook,  
when Cook became the winner of a considerable sum,  
to destroy him, in order to obtain possession of his  
money. I have the satisfaction of knowing that the pris-  
oner will be defended by one of the most able of men,  
and that everything will be done for him that can be  
done. If in the end all should fail in satisfying you of  
his guilt, in God's name let not the innocent suffer!  
If, on the other hand, the facts that will be presented  
to you should lead you to the conclusion that he is  
guilty, the best interests of society demand his convic-  
tion.

#### NARRATOR

Ishmael Fisher, wine merchant, sworn and examined by  
The Prosecution.

#### ISHMAEL FISHER

I remember the race for the Shrewsbury Handicap won  
with a mare called "Polestar," the property of Mr.  
Cook. At Shrewsbury I stopped at the Raven Hotel. Mr.  
Cook and Mr. Palmer were also stopping at the Raven  
Hotel. I went into the sitting room in which Mr. Cook  
and Mr. Palmer and Mr. Myatt were. Myatt is a  
friend of Palmer. Mr. Cook asked Mr. Palmer to have  
some more brandy and water. Mr. Palmer said, "I  
shall not have any more till you have drunk yours."  
Mr. Cook took up his glass and drank it at a drop. He  
said, "There is something in it. It burns my throat  
dreadfully." Mr. Palmer took up the glass. He sipped

was left of the glass, and said, "There is noth-  
" A Mr. Reid came in. Palmer handed the  
Reid, and asked if he thought there was anything  
the glass was also handed to me. We each said  
being so empty we could not recognize anything.  
led me out of the room. He said he thought  
ner had dosed him. He handed me over between  
300 pounds in bank notes, to be taken care of.  
mer and Mr. Cook jointly occupied a sitting  
They occupied different bedrooms. After Cook  
had given me this money he was immediately seized  
with sickness. He asked me to go with him to his bed-  
room. While there he was violently vomiting so that we  
sent for the doctor. After taking some medicine Cook  
became more composed. The next morning Mr. Cook  
came up to my bedroom. He was looking very ill. I  
gave him back his money. I frequently had been settling  
his bets when he did not settle them himself. At Shrews-  
bury I saw Cook's betting book in his possession.

SIDE I, Band 2:

#### NARRATOR

Elizabeth Mills, sworn and examined.

#### ELIZABETH MILLS

I was chambermaid at the Talbot Arms at Rugeley in  
November last. On Thursday, the 15th, Mr. Cook came  
to the Talbot Arms. He said he was feeling poorly. On  
Saturday morning, Palmer, who lived opposite to the  
Talbot Arms, ordered coffee for Mr. Cook. About half  
an hour afterwards I returned into the room and found  
that the coffee had been vomited. During that Saturday  
I heard (Palmer) say to Mr. Cook that he would send  
over some broth. (On the Sunday morning), a large  
breakfast cup of broth was brought to the Talbot Arms.  
I tasted about two tablespoons before I took it up. I  
vomited violently all the afternoon till about five o'clock.  
Up to that time I had been quite well. I had taken noth-  
ing that I am aware of that had disagreed with me.  
About eight o'clock that night the housekeeper gave me  
a pillbox to take to Mr. Cook's room. I retired between  
ten and eleven. About a quarter or ten minutes before  
twelve I heard violent screaming from Cook's room.  
He was sitting up and beating the bedclothes, with both  
his arms and hands stretched out. He said, "I cannot  
lie down. I shall suffocate if I do. Fetch Mr. Palmer."  
His body, his hands, and neck were sort of jumping or  
jerking. Sometimes he would throw back his head upon  
the pillow, and then he would raise himself up again.  
He appeared to have much difficulty in breathing. The  
balls of the eyes were much projected. It was difficult  
for him to speak. He screamed three or four times.  
He called aloud, "Murder" twice. He asked me to rub  
one hand. I found the left hand stiff. It stretched out as  
though the fingers were something like paralyzed. The  
stiffness did not appear to be gone after I had rubbed him.  
He recognized Palmer when he came in, and said, "Oh,  
Palmer, I shall die." Palmer replied, "Oh, my lad,  
you won't." Palmer left. He brought back some pills.  
He gave him a drop from a wine glass after giving him  
the pills. Cook said he could not swallow them. At

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Palmer's request I gave Cook a teaspoon of toast and water. He snapped at the spoon with his head and neck, and the spoon was fast between his teeth. It was difficult to get it away. The water washed the pills down. Mr. Palmer handed him the wine glass. It was three parts full with a liquid of a dark, heavy-looking nature. Cook drank it. The liquid was vomited up immediately. The stuff smelt like opium. Palmer said that he hoped the pills were not returned, and he searched for the pills with a quill. He said, "I cannot find the pills." Cook seemed to be more easy.

I next saw Cook about six o'clock on the Tuesday morning. He asked if I had ever seen anyone suffer such agony. I asked, "What do you think was the cause of all that?" and he said the pills that Palmer gave him at half-past ten. I saw Cook several times that evening. He appeared to be in very good spirits, and talked about getting up the next morning. Palmer was with him in his bedroom when I left. I gave Palmer a jug of toast and water for Cook about half-past ten. I did not go to bed but remained in the kitchen, as I was anxious to see how Mr. Cook went on. The bell of Mr. Cook's room rang violently a little before twelve. Mr. Jones was sleeping in Cook's bedroom. Cook was sitting up in bed, and Mr. Jones appeared to be supporting him. Mr. Cook said, "Oh, Mary, fetch Mr. Palmer directly." I went over for Mr. Palmer. Palmer came two or three minutes afterwards. Cook asked to be turned over on his right side. Mr. Palmer was feeling Mr. Cook's pulse, and he said, "His pulse is gone." Mr. Jones pressed the side of his face to Cook's heart. Mr. Palmer asked me to fetch Mr. Bamford. From the time I was called up till Cook's death would be about three-quarters of an hour. I saw (Mr. Bamford) when he came downstairs. He said, "He was dead when I arrived." Mr. Jones came out of the room and told me that Mr. Palmer wanted me. I went into the room and saw Mr. Cook. I had seen a book in Mr. Cook's room before Mr. Cook's death. I have never seen that book since. I have searched everywhere. When I went into the room I noticed that Cook's clothes were placed on a chair. I saw Palmer searching the pocket. That was about ten minutes after Cook's death. He also searched under the pillow and bolster.

#### NARRATOR

On cross-examination by the Defense Counsel, Elizabeth Mills testified as follows:

#### ELIZABETH MILLS

I never heard (Cook) complain of anything except a sore throat or something of that kind through cold. After Cook's death I stayed at the Talbot Inn till the day after Christmas. I have been in service in Dolly's Hotel, Paternoster Row, London. About a week after I came to London I saw Mr. Stevens (Cook's stepfather) about six or seven times. I never received a farthing from him, and he never made me any promise to get a place. He never talked to me about the symptoms which Mr. Cook exhibited before his death.

#### DEFENSE COUNSEL

Were the symptoms of strychnine ever mentioned to you by anyone?

#### ELIZABETH MILLS

No, never.

#### DEFENSE COUNSEL

You stated that on the Sunday broth was brought in a breakfast cup; that you took it to Cook's bedroom; that you drank about two tablespoonfuls; that you were sick the whole afternoon, and vomited till five o'clock. Did you state one word about that in your deposition before the coroner?

#### ELIZABETH MILLS

It never occurred to me until three days afterwards.

#### DEFENSE COUNSEL

Did you state before the coroner that there was nothing peculiar in the taste of the broth?

#### ELIZABETH MILLS

I stated I thought it was very good. It never occurred to me to mention that I vomited frequently in the course of the afternoon.

#### DEFENSE COUNSEL

You stated that you asked Cook on the Tuesday afternoon what he thought the cause of his illness was, and he said, "The pills which Palmer gave me at half-past ten."

#### ELIZABETH MILLS

Yes.

#### DEFENSE COUNSEL

Did you say that before the coroner?

#### ELIZABETH MILLS

No.

#### DEFENSE COUNSEL

What brought to your mind afterwards the vomiting after taking the broth?

#### ELIZABETH MILLS

Someone mentioned it. I cannot remember who, but it was some of my fellow-servants.

SIDE I, Band 3:

#### NARRATOR

Mr. William Henry Jones, sworn and examined by the Attorney General.

#### MR. WILLIAM HENRY JONES

I am a surgeon and medical practitioner in practice for fifteen years. I have known the deceased intimately for nearly five years, (and) of his acquaintance with William Palmer for over a year. On the Tuesday of the Shrewsbury Races, I spent the day with him. On the Monday I received the following letter from Mr. Palmer:

"Mr. Cook was taken ill at Shrewsbury, and obliged to call in a medical man; since then he has been confined to his bed with a very severe bilious attack, combined with diarrhoea, and I think it advisable for you to come as soon as possible."

I did not arrive at the Talbot Arms till half-past three on Tuesday afternoon. Cook expressed himself as very comfortable, but said he had been very ill at Shrewsbury. Bamford came about seven o'clock. He expressed satisfaction with Cook's improved health. Whilst Bamford, Palmer and I were consulting what we should prescribe, Cook objected to the pills he had the previous night.

He said they made him ill. Palmer proposed that Mr. Bamford make up the morphine pills as before, but not to mention what they contained, as Cook objected to morphine. Mr. Bamford agreed. Later, Palmer proposed to Cook to take the pills, but he protested, as they had made him so ill the previous night. Ultimately he did take them, and he immediately vomited. Palmer and I, at his request, searched the utensil for the pills, but we found nothing but toast and water, so that the pills were retained. I went downstairs and had supper. I returned about twelve, and had some conversation with him, and then went to bed, it being arranged that I should sleep in his room, which was a double-bedded one. He seemed sleepy, and there was nothing to excite any apprehension in my mind. I had been in bed ten minutes, and had not gone to sleep, when he suddenly started up and called out, "Doctor, get up; I am going to be ill; ring for Mr. Palmer." I rang the bell, and the chambermaid came to the door. He himself called out to her, "Fetch Mr. Palmer." He asked me to rub his neck. I rubbed the back part of his neck and supported him with my arm. There was a stiffening of the muscles; a sort of hardness about the neck. Palmer came two or three minutes at the most. He gave Cook two pills, which he said were ammonia pills. Directly he swallowed the pills he uttered loud screams, threw himself back in the bed, and was dreadfully convulsed. He said to me, "Raise me up or I shall be suffocated." The convulsions lasted five or ten minutes. There was a violent contraction of every muscle of the body, and a stiffening of the limbs. When he called out to me to raise him, I endeavored to do so with the assistance of Mr. Palmer, but found it was quite impossible owing to the rigidity of the limbs. When he found I could not raise him he asked me to turn him over, which I did. He was quite sensible. I listened to his heart. I found it gradually to weaken. I requested Palmer to fetch some spirits of ammonia in the hopes of reviving him. Palmer fetched a bottle from his house. He was not away above a minute. (Cook) died very quietly. From the time when he raised himself in bed and called upon me to go for Palmer to the time when he died would be from ten minutes to a quarter of an hour. In my judgment, he died from tetanus, or lockjaw.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

How would you express in ordinary English the general symptoms of tetanus?

MR. WILLIAM HENRY JONES

Violent spasmodic affection of all the muscles of the body. That effects the immediate cause of death by stopping the action of the heart (and) respiration. When death took place he was still upon his side. As there was only one candle in the room, I could not make the observation I otherwise should have made. I observed the clenching of the hands immediately the attack took place.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Did you observe anything in the position of the head or neck?

MR. WILLIAM HENRY JONES

Yes; the head was bent quite back. If I had placed the body upon the back, on a level surface, it would have rested upon the head and heels. As his face was turned away from me, I did not observe anything about the jaw. After death, the jaw was not in its natural condition. I spoke to Palmer about the laying out of the body, and left him in the room while I went to see (the housekeeper). I returned and found Palmer with Mr. Cook's coat in his hand. He remarked that I, being Cook's nearest friend, should take possession of his effects. I took his watch and purse, containing five sovereigns and five shillings. That was all I could find. I did not find any betting book or papers. In the consultation which we three medical men had on Tuesday night nothing was said about the symptoms which had occurred the night before.

NARRATOR

Mr. Jones was cross-examined by the Defense Counsel.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

Was Cook apprehensive about some spots which appeared upon his body?

MR. WILLIAM HENRY JONES

I heard him express apprehensions of his being affected by secondary symptoms of venereal disease. I do not know that he had a chancre at the time he died, although I believe he had had one twelve months ago.

NARRATOR

Lord Chief Justice Campbell, then asked ...

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE CAMPBELL

Supposing he had any secondary symptoms of syphilis, do you think they could have produced the symptoms you saw on the Tuesday night?

MR. WILLIAM HENRY JONES

No, I say not, decidedly.

NARRATOR

Charles Newton, sworn and examined by The Prosecution.

CHARLES NEWTON

I am assistant to Mr. Salt, practising surgeon at Rugeley. On Monday, 19th November, about nine o'clock in the evening, Palmer came in to Mr. Salt's surgery. He asked me for three grains of strychnia, which I gave to

him. In the evening of Sunday, the 25th November, I went to Palmer's house in consequence of being sent for by him. He asked what dose of strychnia would kill a dog, and whether it would be found in the stomach. I told him a grain, and that there would be no inflammation, and I did not think it would be found. I was examined before the coroner, but I said nothing about giving Palmer the three grains of strychnia on Monday night. The reason I did not mention about the purchase of the three grains of strychnia before last Tuesday to the Crown was because Mr. Salt was not on speaking terms with Mr. Palmer, and I thought Mr. Salt would be angry at my letting him have it. I communicated the fact of my own accord.

SIDE I, Band 4:

NARRATOR

William Vernon Stevens, sworn and examined by The Crown Attorney.

WILLIAM VERNON STEVENS

I am a retired merchant. I am the stepfather of John Parsons Cook, having married his father's widow eighteen years ago. He did not live with me, but we were always on friendly terms. He became entitled to property worth about £12,000. The last time I saw him alive was on the afternoon of 5th November. He looked better than I had seen him for some time. I searched for a will and papers. I found a will. The next day I went to the Talbot Arms, and met Palmer. I said to the prisoner that I understood he knew something of my son's affairs. He replied, "Yes, there are £4000 of bills out of his, and I am sorry to say my name is to them; but I have got a paper drawn up by a lawyer, signed by Mr. Cook, to show that I have never had any benefit from them." I told him I feared there would be no money to pay them, and asked if he had no horses or property. He replied that he had horses, but they were mortgaged. I then said that, whether Cook had left anything or not, he must be buried. Palmer immediately said, "Oh! I will bury him myself if that is all." I replied I could not hear of that, that I intended to bury him in his mother's grave, and that the body would have to be at the inn for a day or two. Palmer said that would be of no consequence so long as the body was fastened up at once. Some short time afterwards I asked Palmer for the name of some responsible undertaker in Rugeley, so that I might order a coffin. He replied, "I have ordered a shell and a strong oak coffin." I asked Mr. Jones to bring me Cook's betting book and papers. He went along with Palmer, and in about ten minutes he returned, saying he could find no book or paper. I expressed my astonishment and Palmer said, "It is of no manner of use if you find it." I said I understood my son won a great deal of money at Shrewsbury. Palmer replied that when a man dies his bets are done with, and that Mr. Cook received the greater part of his money at Shrewsbury. The next morning I communicated with my solicitor, who gave me a letter to Mr. Gardner, of Rugeley. I returned to Rugeley by the two o'clock train. Palmer travelled by the same train. I remarked that it would be well

to know something of the complaint of which Cook died, and that I should like his body opened. Palmer replied, "That can be easily done." He then asked me if I knew who was to perform the examination, and I told him I did not. On the Friday when I twice saw the body, I did not perceive anything which called for its being speedily put into a shell.

NARRATOR

Witness for The Prosecution--Dr. John Thomas Harland.

DR. JOHN THOMAS HARLAND

I am a physician. On 26th November I made a post-mortem examination of Mr. Cook. Mr. Palmer and several others were in the room. Mr. Devonshire operated and Mr. Newton assisted. The body seemed stiffer than bodies generally are six days after death. The muscles showed there was a strong spasmodic action in the body before death. The hands were firmly closed. The abdominal viscera were the first parts examined internally. They were in a healthy state. The liver was healthy. The lungs were healthy; there was blood in them, but not more than could be accounted for by gravitation. The brain was quite healthy. There was no extravasation of blood nor serum on the brain. The heart contained no blood. The stomach was taken out. At the larger end there were numerous yellowish-white spots about the size of mustard seed. These would not account for death, nor would they affect the health of anyone. The kidneys had no appearance of disease. The blood was in a fluid state. About the whole body there was no appearance of disease that would account for death. The lower part of the spinal cord was not minutely examined on this occasion. The upper part presented a perfectly natural appearance.

On the 25th of January the body was again exhumed, so that we might examine the spinal cord with more attention. Opposite the third and fourth cervical vertebrae, eye and finger detected, beneath the arachnoid, some twenty or thirty minute, irregularly shaped granules of some hard material, scattered over less than an inch square. These granules could have no connection with the death. When the intestines and stomach were being placed in the jar, and while Mr. Devonshire was opening the stomach, I noticed Mr. Palmer pushed Mr. Newton on to Mr. Devonshire, and he shook a portion of the contents of the stomach into the body. The stomach contained about two or three ounces of brownish liquid. The stomach was then emptied into the jar. The intestines were examined, and nothing particular found. They were placed in the jar, with their contents. I tied the jar over with two bladders, sealed it, and placed it on the table beside the body. My attention had been called away by the examination and I missed the jar. I called out, "Where is the jar?" and Palmer, from the other end of the room, said, "It is here; I thought it more convenient for you to take it away." I found there was a cut through both bladders. I cut the strings, replaced the bladders, and tied them separately again, so that the slit was not at the top.

NARRATOR

Dr. John Thomas Harland was then cross-examined by the Defense Counsel.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

Do you adhere to your opinion that the lungs were healthy?

DR. JOHN THOMAS HARLAND

Yes.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

Did not Mr. Devonshire express a contrary opinion?

DR. JOHN THOMAS HARLAND

He said he thought there was emphysema, as well as congestion of the lungs.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

Is that not a diseased state of the lungs?

DR. JOHN THOMAS HARLAND

Yes.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

Supposing you discovered a softness of the spinal cord, might not that have been sufficient to account for the death of Mr. Cook?

DR. JOHN THOMAS HARLAND

No; softening would not produce tetanus; it might produce paralysis.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

Supposing there had been a softening, do not you think it was necessary to examine the spinal cord at an earlier period after death than two months?

DR. JOHN THOMAS HARLAND

If there had been a softening it would have been detected at the second examination. There was no symptom of anything syphilitic.

NARRATOR

Witness for The Prosecution-- Charles John Devonshire.

CHARLES JOHN DEVONSHIRE

I am an undergraduate of medicine of London University. I performed the post-mortem on 25th November at the Talbot Hotel. I took out the stomach and as I was opening it there was a push from behind. I do not think any of the contents of the stomach escaped. I punctured the anterior surface of the stomach, and a spoonful of the contents fell out on the chair. I gave (the jar), on the 28th, to Mr. Boycott, Messrs. Landor & Gardner's clerk. The body was opened again on the 29th to get the liver and kidneys and spleen. They were placed in a jar, which I sealed and handed to Mr. Boycott.



SIDE II, Band 1:

NARRATOR

Witness for The Prosecution-- John Boycott.

JOHN BOYCOTT

I am clerk to Messrs. Landor, Gardner & Landor, attorneys at Rugeley. On the 26th of last November I received a jar from Mr. Devonshire. I delivered it on the next day to Dr. Taylor at Guy's Hospital. On a subsequent day I received another jar from Mr. Devonshire, and I also delivered it to Dr. Taylor.

NARRATOR

Witness for The Prosecution-- John Myatt.

JOHN MYATT

I am postboy at the Talbot Arms at Rugeley. On 28th of November last I was engaged to drive Mr. Stevens to Stafford station. Mr. Palmer asked me if I was going to take the jars. He said there was a £10 note for me if I would upset them. I told him I should not.

NARRATOR

Defense Counsel then cross-examined the witness.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

Were the words used not to this effect, "I should not mind giving £10 to break Mr. Stevens' neck?"

JOHN MYATT

I do not remember that.

SIDE II, Band 2:

NARRATOR

Witness for The Prosecution-- Samuel Cheshire.

SAMUEL CHESHIRE

I was for upwards of eight years postmaster at Rugeley. I am now from Newgate suffering punishment for having opened a letter. I know the prisoner very well, he and I having been schoolfellows together. I cannot remember whether during October and November, 1855, I gave him letters addressed to his mother or to Mr. Cook. I remember seeing Palmer while the inquest was going on. He asked me to let him know if I had seen or heard anything fresh. The letter which I read, and for which I am suffering, was a letter from Dr. Taylor to Mr. Gardner, the solicitor. I did not give nor send that letter to Palmer. I merely told him of its contents -- that there were no traces of strychnia found. He said he knew they would not, for he was perfectly innocent.

NARRATOR

Witness for The Prosecution-- Captain John Haines Hatton.

CAPTAIN JOHN HAINES HATTON

I am chief constable of the police of Staffordshire.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Did you obtain this letter which I have just proved to be in Palmer's handwriting, and envelope from Mr. Ward, the coroner?

CAPTAIN JOHN HAINES HATTON

I did.

"My dear Sir: Whatever Professor Taylor may say tomorrow, he wrote to Gardner to say "We have this day finished our analysis, and find no traces of either strychnia, prussic acid, or opium." What can beat this from a man like Taylor, if he says what he has already said, and Dr. Harland's evidence? As regards his betting book, I know nothing of it, and it is of no good to anyone. I hope the verdict tomorrow will be that he died of natural causes, and thus end it."

NARRATOR

Witness for The Prosecution-- George Bates

GEORGE BATES

I was brought up a farmer. I have known William Palmer for eight or nine years. Last year I looked after his stud, and saw that the boys who had care of the horses did their duty. I know Mr. William Webb Ward, the coroner. I saw Palmer while the inquest was being held. He gave me the letter, and told me to give it to Mr. Ward. He also gave me a letter to Frantz, a dealer in game, and said that there would be a package of game from Frantz which I was to send to Mr. Ward. I got a basket of game from Frantz and directed it to, "Webb Ward, Esq., coroner, Stafford." I afterwards met Mr. Ward, and gave him the note. I saw the prisoner that night and told him what I had done.

NARRATOR

On being cross-examined, the witness said ...

GEORGE BATES

Palmer had four brood mares, four yearlings, and a three-year-old mare. I am not aware that Gold Finder's dam slipped her foal. I once saw the turf cut up with horses feet, and attributed it to the mares galloping about. I never saw any dogs run.

SIDE II, Band 3:

NARRATOR

Witness for The Prosecution-- Mr. Thomas Blizzard Curling.

MR. THOMAS BLIZZARD CURLING

I am a Fellow of the College of Surgeons. There are two sorts of tetanus, idiopathic and traumatic. Idiopathic tetanus is tetanus originating as a primary disease, without any wound. Traumatic is from a wound. During twenty-two years I have been surgeon to the London Hospital I have never seen a case of idiopathic tetanus. I have seen over fifty cases of traumatic tetanus. Traumatic tetanus first manifests itself by a stiffness about the jaws and the back of the neck; rigidity of the mus-

cles of the abdomen, pain at the pit of the stomach, and in many cases the muscles of the back are sensibly affected. The spasms, though continuous, are liable to aggravation in paroxysms. As the disease goes on these paroxysms become more frequent and more severe. The body is drawn backwards; in some instances, it is bent forwards; in an acute case, difficulty in swallowing is very common; difficulty in breathing also during the paroxysm. The disease may end, supposing it be fatal, in two ways; the patient may die suddenly of suffocation, owing to closure of the windpipe, or worn out by the severe spasms, the muscles may relax and the patient gradually sink and die. Traumatic tetanus is generally fatal, and the locking of the jaw is an almost invariable symptom. The lower extremities are sometimes affected, and sometimes the upper; the muscles affected are chiefly those of the trunk. A case of traumatic tetanus which ends fatally takes from one day to four days, or longer. I never heard of a case in which a man would be attacked one day and then have twenty-four hours' respite, and be again attacked the next. The sudden onset and rapid subsidence are not consistent with the true form of tetanus. The poison, nux vomica, produces tetanic convulsions. One of the characteristic features of tetanus is that the consciousness is not affected.

SIDE II, Band 4:

NARRATOR

Witness for The Prosecution--Dr. Robert Bentley Todd.

DR. ROBERT BENTLEY TODD

I have been in practice as a doctor for twenty-five years, and have been a physician to King's College Hospital for many years. I heard the symptoms described which accompanied this gentleman's seizure and death, and also the appearances after death and the post-mortem examination. I am of opinion there was neither apoplexy nor epilepsy.

NARRATOR

The Attorney-General said that he had intended to place Dr. Bamford on the stand at this time, but that he was unable to do so because Dr. Bamford was too sick to appear in person. He then requested the Court's permission to place into evidence Dr. Bamford's depositions before the coroner so that he could lay a proper foundation for a question to be asked the witness now on the stand. Dr. Todd and Dr. Tweedie swore that they had examined Dr. Bamford - that he was ill with English Cholera - that he was too sick to testify in person. The court ordered the Clerk of the Arraigns to read Dr. Bamford's depositions.

CLERK OF THE ARRAIGNS

I attended the late Mr. Cook at the request of Mr. William Palmer. I first saw him about three o'clock on Saturday, the 17th of November, when he was suffering from violent vomiting. I prescribed a saline medicine. That evening Mr. Palmer again requested me to visit Mr. Cook. I gave him a slight opiate. Mr. Palmer

took the pills from my house. I again visited Cook the following morning and evening and on Monday morning, accompanied by Palmer. On Tuesday night I examined Mr. Cook in the presence of Mr. Jones and Mr. Palmer. Mr. Palmer asked me to make two more pills similar to those on the previous night, which I did, and he asked me to write the directions on a slip of paper; I gave the pills to Mr. Palmer. The effervescing mixture contained twenty grains of carbonate of potash, two drachms of compound tincture of cardamom, and two drachms of simple syrup, with fifteen grains of tartaric acid for each powder. I never gave Mr. Cook antimony. I did not see the preparations after they were taken away by Mr. Palmer. I considered death to have been the result of congestion of the brain. I filled up the certificate and gave it as my opinion that he died from apoplexy.

NARRATOR

Dr. Todd now continued testifying.

DR. ROBERT BENTLEY TODD

Having heard the deposition of Dr. Bamford read, I do not believe that the deceased died from apoplexy or from epilepsy. There are poisons which produce tetanic convulsions. The chief of these is nux vomica. There is a marked difference where death ensues after taking strychnia and a case of tetanus. In strychnia poisoning, as long as the poisonous influence lasts, the symptoms last, but the poisonous symptoms subside after a time. The shortness of the duration of the symptoms is decidedly in favor of strychnine poisoning. There are no other poisons that I know of that produce convulsions of a tetanic character. The symptoms described which attended this gentleman's death are not referable to idiopathic or traumatic tetanus. In the case of Mr. Cook, it is an important distinction that he seems to have been able to swallow sufficiently easy, and there was no rigidity of the muscles of the jaw which is characteristic of tetanus, of disease, or of wound. The symptoms in his case were those of tetanic convulsions from strychnia.

NARRATOR

Dr. Todd was then cross-examined by Defense Counsel.

DR. ROBERT BENTLEY TODD

The results of the administration of strychnine exactly imitate the convulsions of tetanus. It does not produce the exact phenomena of the disease in a clinical sense. In traumatic tetanus I do not recollect any instance of the limbs being affected before the jaw. An examination of the spinal cord in tetanic affections shortly after death is of importance. I heard the evidence of the gentlemen who examined the spinal cord after Mr. Cook's death. From their description it appeared that those parts were in such a condition that any indication of disease might have been discovered.

NARRATOR

Witness for The Prosecution--Sir Benjamin Brodie.

SIR BENJAMIN BRODIE

I was surgeon at St. George's Hospital for a great number of years, and have had a considerable practice. I have had many cases of death from tetanus. I heard about the attack on the Monday night and its ceasing, and the patient being comfortable during the Tuesday, and then the attack again about ten minutes before twelve on the Tuesday night. I never knew symptoms of ordinary tetanus to last for a few minutes, then subside, then come on again after twenty-four hours. I do not believe that death here arose from what we ordinarily call tetanus, either idiopathic or traumatic. The symptoms of the death of Mr. Cook are not consistent with a fit of apoplexy. I never saw a case in which the symptoms that I heard described arose from any disease.

SIDE II, Band 5:

NARRATOR

Witness for The Prosecution-- Caroline Hickson.

CAROLINE HICKSON

I was nurse and lady's maid in the family of Mrs. Serjeantson Smith, at Romsey, in Hampshire. Mrs. Smith was unwell, and medicine was sent to her by Mr. Jones, a druggist in Romsey. I saw her take about half a wine glass of the medicine. About five or ten minutes afterwards she was lying on the floor and screaming, but did not open her teeth. She asked me to have her legs pulled straight. She still screamed as if in great agony, and requested water to be thrown over her, which I did. Her feet were turned inwards. I put a hot water bottle to them, but this had no effect. Shortly before she died she said she felt easier, and her last words were, "Turn me over." She was conscious, and knew me during the whole time. From the time she took the medicine until she died would be about an hour and a quarter.

NARRATOR

Witness for The Prosecution-- Mr. Francis Taylor.

MR. FRANCIS TAYLOR

I am a surgeon at Romsey. I was summoned to the house of Mrs. Serjeantson Smith. I arrived shortly after she died. The hands were clenched; the feet were contracted, turned inwards; the soles of the feet were hollowed up. The limbs were remarkably stiff. I made a post-mortem examination three days after death. No trace of disease was found. The heart was perfectly empty, the blood fluid. I analyzed the medicine Mrs. Smith had taken. It originally contained nine grains of strychnia, and Mrs. Smith had taken one-third.

SIDE II, Band 6:

NARRATOR

Witness for The Prosecution-- Dr. Alfred Swaine Taylor

DR. ALFRED SWAINE TAYLOR

I am a Fellow of the College of Physicians, a lecturer on medical jurisprudence at Guy's Hospital, and the author of a well-known treatise on poisons and on medical jurisprudence. Among other poisons, I have made strychnia the subject of my attention. It is a product of nux vomica. I have never witnessed the action of strychnia on the human subject. I have tried experiments, about ten or twelve, on rabbits. I have found half a grain sufficient to destroy a rabbit. In a fluid state it produced its operation in two or three minutes; in the form of pill, from about six to eleven minutes. The time is influenced by the strength of the dose, and strength of the animal. The poison is absorbed into the blood; then circulated through the body, and the poison especially acts on the spinal cord, the part of the body from which the nerves affecting the voluntary muscles proceed.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Are the muscles more than usually rigid?

DR. ALFRED SWAINE TAYLOR

In some instances the muscles (were) so strongly contracted that for a week afterwards it was possible to hold the animal horizontally by the hind legs without the body falling. The descriptions given by Elizabeth Mills and Mr. Jones are similar to those I have seen in animals to which I have administered strychnia. If the minimum quantity (of strychnia) required to destroy life was given, it would be removed by absorption, and no longer discoverable in the stomach.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Are there any chemical means whereby this poison can be detected in the tissues?

DR. ALFRED SWAINE TAYLOR

There is no process I am acquainted with when it is in a small quantity. We sought for prussic acid, oxalic acid, morphia, strychnia, veratria, the poisons of tobacco, hemlock, arsenic, mercury, antimony, and other mineral poisons (in Cook). We found small traces of antimony. The part was in the most unfavorable condition for finding strychnia if it had been there. The stomach had been completely cut; the contents were gone, and the fine mucous surface, on which any poison if present would be found, was lying in contact with the outside of the intestines, all thrown together. At my request, other portions of the body were sent -- liver, spleen, two kidneys, a small bottle of blood, unlabelled. We searched for mineral poison in liver and kidneys, and discovered antimony in an eighth part of the liver; we analyzed only the left kidney and the spleen, and there were traces of antimony in each.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

From these traces of the antimony can you form any judgment as to the time when the antimony was taken?

DR. ALFRED SWAINE TAYLOR

I think that which I found in the liver might have been administered within eighteen hours of death or within two days.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Do you know any other cause in human diseases to which the symptoms of Mr. Cook's death can be referred except to strychnia?

DR. ALFRED SWAINE TAYLOR

I do not.

NARRATOR

Dr. Taylor was then cross-examined by Defense Counsel.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

You used the words, "traces of antimony." What was the meaning of "trace?"

DR. ALFRED SWAINE TAYLOR

A very small quantity. We have about half a grain.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

In your judgment would that be sufficient to cause death?

DR. ALFRED SWAINE TAYLOR

No.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

You wrote a letter in reply to a letter from Mr. Gardner. "We wish a statement of all medicines prescribed for deceased to be sent to Dr. Rees. We did not find strychnia nor prussic acid or any trace of opium. From the contents having been drained away, it is now impossible to say whether any strychnine had or had not been given just before death. But it is quite possible for tartaremetic to destroy life if given in repeated doses; and, as far as we can at present form an opinion, in the absence of any natural cause of death, the deceased must have died from the effects of antimony in this or some other form." Was that your opinion at the time?

DR. ALFRED SWAINE TAYLOR

It was.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

Have you not told me that the quantity of antimony that you found in Cook's body was not sufficient to account for death?

DR. ALFRED SWAINE TAYLOR

What was found in Cook's body was not all he took. We found antimony, and we could not account for its being there. I wrote to know whether antimony had been given as a medicine, and, as people had died from antimony, it was necessary to have information of the symptoms connected with the man's death; finding antimony, and no explanation, I put it as the only hypothesis to account for death.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

Had you any reason to think any undue quantity had been administered to him?

DR. ALFRED SWAINE TAYLOR

I could not speculate from the quantity there, for I did not know what quantity he had taken, and whether it had been prescribed medicinally.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

May not the injudicious use of quack medicines containing antimony have accounted for as much antimony as you found in the body of Mr. Cook?

DR. ALFRED SWAINE TAYLOR

Any antimonial preparation would account for it. I knew strychnia, prussic acid, Batley's sedative solution of opium, had been bought by the prisoner.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

Do you, from your reading, know of any fatal case in which the patient under strychnia poison has had, while the paroxysm lasted, as much command over the muscles and voluntary motion as Mr. Cook had on the Monday and Tuesday nights, according to the evidence of Mills and Jones?

DR. ALFRED SWAINE TAYLOR

His symptoms are in accordance with the ordinary action of strychnia.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

Have you known any instance in which the patient has screamed before he was seized with the fit?

DR. ALFRED SWAINE TAYLOR

That is common in convulsions not occasioned by strychnia poisoning.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

Do you know a single case in which the symptoms have manifested themselves as long as an hour and a half after the ingestion of the poison?

DR. ALFRED SWAINE TAYLOR

I do not.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

Do you not know that even in rabbits, that immediately with death, or just before death, that the body becomes perfectly pliant?

DR. ALFRED SWAINE TAYLOR

It does in one out of five cases.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

Have you any reason to say that the clenching of the hand is a distinctive feature of strychnia poison?

DR. ALFRED SWAINE TAYLOR

It occurs in other violent spasms.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

In all forms of convulsions?

DR. ALFRED SWAINE TAYLOR

No; in tetanus it remains so; in other convulsions it comes and goes.

NARRATOR

Witness for The Prosecution--Professor Robert Christison.

PROFESSOR ROBERT CHRISTISON

I am a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Professor of Materia Medica to the University of Edinburgh. I published a treatise on poisons in relation to medical jurisprudence. Among other poisons, I have turned my attention to strychnia.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Is there, in your opinion, any marked difference between what I may call natural tetanus and tetanus of strychnia?

PROFESSOR ROBERT CHRISTISON

In all natural forms of tetanus the symptoms begin and advance much more slowly; and, secondly, they prove fatal much more slowly. I heard the evidence given by Elizabeth Mills of what took place on the Monday, and by Mr. Jones of what took place on Tuesday night when Mr. Cook died.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Now, of the two classes of tetanus, to which should you refer the spasm and other symptoms spoken to by those two witnesses?

PROFESSOR ROBERT CHRISTISON

To strychnia, or one of the natural poisons containing it. There is no natural disease that I have ever seen or that I otherwise know to which I can refer these symptoms which I heard described.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

When death takes place from tetanus or tetanic convulsions, does consciousness continue?

PROFESSOR ROBERT CHRISTISON

As long as one can make an observation upon it, it remains. Colour tests are not to be relied upon in the case of strychnia.

NARRATOR

Witness for The Prosecution-- Mr. Thomas Pratt

MR. THOMAS PRATT

I am a solicitor. On the 28th day of November, 1855 there were eight bills of Palmer's held by clients of mine or by myself and for which his mother was purportedly responsible also. The total was £12,500. I remember the death of Walter Palmer, brother of the accused. That occurred in August, 1855. I was instructed by William Palmer to claim from the Prince of Wales Insurance Office £13,000 due upon a policy upon his brother's life. While holding these bills I from time to

time addressed letters to (Mrs. Palmer) and to Palmer.

On the 18th of October I wrote to Palmer: "You or your mother should prepare for payment of the £4000 due in a few days. I cannot obtain delay." On the 27th of October Palmer called and paid me £250. I received the following letter from him, dated 28th of October: "For goodness' sake, do not think of writs; only let me know that such steps are going to be taken and I will get you the money, even if I pay £1000 for it." On the 6th of November, I issued writs against Palmer and his mother for £4000. On the 21st of November Palmer wrote: "I am sorry to say (Cook) died this day. I must have Polestar, if it can be so arranged. I will send you £75 tomorrow. You shall hear about other moneys." On the 22nd of November I wrote to Palmer: "The death of Mr. Cook will now compel you to look about as to the payment of the bill for £500 on the 2nd of December."

NARRATOR

Witness for The Prosecution-- Thomas Smerdon Strawbridge

THOMAS SMERDON STRAWBRIDGE

I am manager of the bank at Rugeley. Mrs. Sarah Palmer had an account at our bank, and I know her handwriting. None of these acceptances, purporting to be the signature of Sarah Palmer, are in her handwriting.

PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

That is the case for The Prosecution.

NARRATOR

Then followed the speech for The Defense.

DEFENSE ATTORNEY

May it please your Lordships, Gentlemen of the Jury. They say that the prisoner having in the second week in November made up his mind that it was his interest to get rid of John Parsons Cook deliberately prepared his body for deadly poison by the slower poison of antimony, and afterwards despatched him by the deadly poison of strychnia. If (Cook) died from strychnia, he died within two hours of the administration of a very strong dose -- he died within a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes of the effects of that dose being visible in the convulsions of his body; the post-mortem and examination took place within six days of his death -- there is not the least reason to suppose that between the time of the ingestion of the poison, if poison was taken, and the paroxysm in which he died, there was any dilution of it in the stomach, or any ejection of it by vomiting. Never were circumstances more favorable for detection of the poison of strychnia. (Yet) it is beyond all question, that it was not found. We have not the least reason to suppose that (Dr. Taylor) and Dr. Rees, who assisted him, did not do all that the science of chemical analysis could enable man to do to detect the poison of strychnia. In their letter of the 4th of December they say, "We do not find strychnia, prussic acid, or any trace of opium." Having afterwards attended the inquest, and heard the evidence of Elizabeth Mills and of Mr. Jones, Dr. Taylor came to the conclusion that the pills administered to Cook on the Monday and Tuesday night, contained strychnia, and that Mr. Cook was poisoned by it; and he came to that conclusion, though he expressed an opinion in writing that he might have been poisoned by antimony, of which some trace was found in the body, while no trace was found of strychnia. They contend that once (strychnia) has done its fatal work, and becomes absorbed into the system, it ceases to be the thing which it was when it was taken into the system; becomes decomposed, no longer capable of responding to the tests, which, according to them, would certainly detect the poison of undecomposed strychnia. That hypothesis is not supported by any eminent toxicologist but themselves.

I will call before you analytical chemists, to utter renunciation of that theory -- these gentlemen ready to depose to it that if twenty times less had entered into the human frame it could be detected by tests which are unerring. I will satisfy you by evidence that the only safe conclusion at which you can arrive is that strychnia not having been found in Cook's body it never could have been there. Palmer was a man who added to a shrewd knowledge of the world a knowledge of his profession, and, a knowledge of chemistry. Palmer knew perfectly well that, if strychnia was administered, it would in all probability throw the victim into horrible convulsions in a very short time, and in a way so striking as to be the talk of Rugeley, and to provoke inquiries

into the circumstances of the death, which must in all probability end, if he was guilty, in his conviction. (Were) the symptoms of Cook before death and the appearance presented by his body after death consistent with the theory of his having died by strychnia poison, and inconsistent with the theory of his having died from natural causes? I submit it is much more probable that Cook died in general convulsions than that he died from idiopathic, traumatic, or strychnia tetanus. Mr. Jones had not light enough to see the patient's face.

There was only one candle, and he could not tell whether there was any change in (Cook's) countenance -- a very important symptom. They say it cannot have been tetanic, because there is a peculiar expression in the face -- a fact which nobody observed. It was too dark to take notice. I shall call respectable physicians, surgeons, and general practitioners, having extensive experience in our large cities, who support the view that these fits of Mr. Cook were not tetanus, but violent convulsions. Charles Newton has sworn that he saw Palmer at Mr. Salt's surgery at nine o'clock on the Monday night, and that Palmer asked for three grains of strychnia; that he weighed it, and gave it to him. He did not tell that to the coroner. A man who so conducts himself is utterly unworthy of credit. That Palmer should purchase strychnia in Rugeley is not to be wondered at. Strychnia is sold to kill dogs and vermin, and Palmer had often occasion to complain of the dogs from the slipping of the foals and the galloping of the mares. He had been to London on the Monday. In London there is no difficulty for a medical man to get anything of the sort. He has only to write it down in the technical way, and it is given. Again, if he could not get it there, he could get it at Stafford. Why should he get it at Rugeley? That is the last place that he would have gone to for it. Is it credible that a skilful medical man, who has studied at the London hospitals, would have gone to Newton to ask him as to what would be the effects of strychnia on a dog's stomach? There was a person of the name of Myatt in the room at the time they say the brandy and water was drugged. Why was he not called? The supposition of the Crown is, that Palmer intended to dose Cook with antimony, to keep his stomach in a perpetual state of vomiting, in order the more easily to despatch him by strychnia. Now, being bent, as it is supposed, upon destroying Cook, there is one man in the world who would be the very last witness he would select as a witness of his proceedings. He was a medical man, in the prime of life, intimately acquainted with Cook, much attached to him -- Mr. Jones, of Lutterworth.

(Mr. Stevens) expects that Palmer is bound to look after everything of every kind that was in the hotel belonging to Cook. The last person who saw (the betting book) was Elizabeth Mills, on the Monday, and on that day there were several people there with Cook. I throw imputation on nobody; I simply say, that as many people had access to the room, it is not right to fix it on him without any proof that he even had it in his hands, when nothing like a proper search

was made for it until some time after Cook's death. Find a verdict for the Crown, if you believe that guilt is proved; but if you have a doubt upon the point, depend upon it the time will come when the innocence of this man will be made apparent, and when you will deeply regret any want of calm consideration of the case which it will be my duty to lay before you.

SIDE III, Band 2

NARRATOR

Mr. Thomas Nunneley, sworn and examined by Defense Counsel.

MR. THOMAS NUNNELEY

I am a Fellow of the College of Surgeons, Professor of Surgery at the Leeds School of Medicine, and a member of several foreign and English scientific societies. I have been in practice between twenty and thirty years. I have seen cases of both traumatic and idiopathic tetanus. My opinion is that Mr. Cook died from some convulsive disease. I assume that he suffered from syphilis; the lungs were in an emphysematous condition, and there was a very unusual appearance in the membranes of the spinal narrow. Convulsions might arise from any cause -- worms in children, affections of the brain in adults, hysteria, administration of chloroform to some persons, indigestible food. These convulsions sometimes end immediately in death. Asphyxia is frequently the cause of death when a man dies in one of these convulsions. I have seen convulsions of the character I have described recurring sometimes in hours, in other cases days. I have made a post-mortem examination of two women who died from the poison of strychnia. In both cases it was by chemical analysis that I ascertained the deaths had been caused by strychnia. In one, the post-mortem took place forty-two hours after death, in the other thirty hours. I experimented on upwards of sixty animals. After death the hearts of the animals have been invariably full on the right side, very generally the left ventricle firmly contracted, and the blood usually dark and often fluid.

NARRATOR

The Attorney-General cross-examined the witness.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Have you known any instance in which rigidity greater than ordinary rigor-mortis has occurred after death?

MR. THOMAS NUNNELEY

I do not think there is any peculiar rigidity produced by strychnia.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

You say you generally found the heart full?

MR. THOMAS NUNNELY

Yes, the right side. The fact of the heart having

been found empty in this case, amongst other things, leads me to the conclusion that it was not a death by strychnia.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Are you aware how the post-mortem was made in this particular case of Mr. Cook?

MR. THOMAS NUNNELEY

The chest and abdomen were opened before the head.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

What affect would that have?

MR. THOMAS NUNNELEY

If there were blood in the heart it ought to be there.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

How do you account for the emptiness and contraction of the heart in Mr. Cook's case?

MR. THOMAS NUNNELEY

I cannot account, from the appearance of the body after death, for the emptiness of the heart, any more than it might be the usual effect of death.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Do you believe that this man died of apoplexy?

MR. THOMAS NUNNELEY

I do not.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Do you ascribe his death to morphia?

MR. THOMAS NUNNELEY

No.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Will you tell me of any convulsions which you have known end in death accompanied with tetanic symptoms?

MR. THOMAS NUNNELEY

I have known them in children. I have never had such a case in an adult.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

In epilepsy you have these tetanic symptoms?

MR. THOMAS NUNNELEY

Yes, but before death consciousness is gone.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

You have here consciousness to the last. That before the man dies he says, "Turn me over," and as soon as they turn him over he dies. Tell me of any case you know of in which death has ensued from convulsions where the death was not from tetanus, in which the patient was conscious?

MR. THOMAS NUNNELEY

I have already said I do not know of such a case.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Let me call your attention to strychnia tetanus. Would you call the symptoms tetanic?

MR. THOMAS NUNNELEY

They are called so very properly.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Is it possible that you can represent this case of Mr. Cook as one of idiopathic tetanus?

MR. THOMAS NUNNELEY

I do not think it was a case of tetanus in any sense of the word.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Why not?

MR. THOMAS NUNNELEY

The very sudden acquisition of the convulsions after the first rousing of Mr. Jones; his power of talking.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Did you not know that Mrs. Smith begged to have water thrown upon her, and talked throughout?

MR. THOMAS NUNNELEY

It did not occur to me.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

The lady continues to the last conscious, and asks to have her legs stretched just before she died; does that shake your faith?

MR. THOMAS NUNNELEY

Yes.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Do you not know that her last words were to turn her over?

MR. THOMAS NUNNELEY

I do not dispute it if it is said so.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

I ask you now, is not the difficulty of breathing one of the premonitory symptoms. Cook sat up in bed and complained of feeling suffocated.

MR. THOMAS NUNNELEY

Yes.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

I ask you whether it is not a fact that, unlike as in natural tetanus, in tetanus from strychnia, lockjaw is not the last symptom, and very often never sets in?

MR. THOMAS NUNNELEY

I have never seen an instance in which it does not make its appearance.

NARRATOR

Dr. Francis Wrightson, sworn and examined by Defense Counsel.

DR. FRANCIS WRIGHTSON

I am an analytical chemist and teacher of chemistry at the School of Chemistry at Birmingham. I have studied and made experiments in various poisons, including strychnia. I have not found any extraordinary difficulties in the detection of strychnia. I have discovered it in the viscera of a cat poisoned by strychnia, in the blood of a dog poisoned by strychnia, in the urine of another dog poisoned by strychnia. I heard the theory propounded by Dr. Taylor as to the decomposition of strychnia by the act of poisoning.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

Are you of opinion strychnia undergoes decomposition in the act of poisoning?

DR. FRANCIS WRIGHTSON

I am of opinion that it does not.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

Assuming that a man was poisoned by strychnia, and that his stomach and a portion of his tissues were sent within eight, or nine, or ten days after death for analytical examination, do you say you could discover the poison of strychnia?

DR. FRANCIS WRIGHTSON

I should have no doubt whatever in saying so.

NARRATOR

Dr. Wrightson was cross-examined by the Attorney-General.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Suppose the whole of this poison to be absorbed, where would you expect to find it?

DR. FRANCIS WRIGHTSON

In the blood.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

In its progress to its final destination, the destruction of life, does it pass from the blood, or is it left by the blood in the solid tissues of the body before it produces that effect?

DR. FRANCIS WRIGHTSON

I cannot tell.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

My question supposes the minimum dose that will destroy life to have been given; and, supposing that to have been absorbed into the circulation, and there deposited in the tissues, or part of it eliminated by the action of the kidneys, would you know where to search for it?

DR. FRANCIS WRIGHTSON

I should search for it in the blood, in the tissues, and



in the ejecta of the kidneys; and from my experiments I should expect to find it in each of them.

NARRATOR

Witness for The Defense--Mr. Richard Partridge.

MR. RICHARD PARTRIDGE

I have been for many years in practice as a surgeon, and am Professor of Anatomy at King's College. I have heard the evidence as to the symptoms of Mr. Cook and as to the post-mortem examination. In my opinion it is most important in a case of convulsions that the spinal cord should be examined after death. The gritty granules that were found would be likely to cause inflammation of the arachnoid membrane. Although I have not seen such a case, there are cases on record that such inflammation, if it existed, would be capable of producing tetaniform convulsions. The medical term for such inflammation of the arachnoid is arachnitis, or inflammation of the membrane. That disorder produces convulsions and death. It is a very rare disease.

NARRATOR

Mr. Partridge was then cross-examined by the Attorney-General.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Are you enabled to state from the recorded cases the course of the symptoms of the disease.

MR. RICHARD PARTRIDGE

No.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Does arachnitis not sometimes extend to months, even where it extends to death?

MR. RICHARD PARTRIDGE

It might go on for months.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Did you ever know, or hear of, or read of a case in which the patient died after a single convulsion of arachnitis?

MR. RICHARD PARTRIDGE

Not a single one.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Do you believe that a man could have twenty-four hours of complete repose?

MR. RICHARD PARTRIDGE

No.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

You heard the symptoms, and I presume you heard from the midnight of Monday till Tuesday Mr. Cook had complete repose. I now ask you, if in the face of the Court and of the profession, you will undertake to say that Mr. Cook's death proceeded from arachnitis.

MR. RICHARD PARTRIDGE

I should think not. The majority of the symptoms do not suggest arachnitis.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Did you ever know, except in a case of tetanus, the hand so completely clenched as to require force to take the fingers away from the hand?

MR. RICHARD PARTRIDGE

No, I do not.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Have you ever known the feet to be so distorted as to be described as assuming the form of a club foot?

MR. RICHARD PARTRIDGE

Never.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Did you hear the description given by Mr. Jones that when this man died the body was bowed so that, if he had turned it from its side upon its back, it would have rested on its head and heels?

MR. RICHARD PARTRIDGE

I did.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Have you any doubt that that indicates death from tetanus?

MR. RICHARD PARTRIDGE

Not from some form of tetanic symptoms. I am only acquainted by reading and hearsay with the symptoms that accompany death from tetanus resulting from the administration of strychnia.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

From your knowledge of the subject, having attended to the symptoms described by Mr. Jones from the moment the paroxysm set in, and the appearances attending his death, does it appear that these symptoms are consistent with death by strychnia?

MR. RICHARD PARTRIDGE

Some are consistent and some are inconsistent. The long interval which occurred after the taking of the poison is inconsistent.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Bearing in mind the distinction between traumatic and idiopathic tetanus and a case such as has been here described, have you ever seen such a death as this with the symptoms mentioned proceed from natural causes?

MR. RICHARD PARTRIDGE

No.

NARRATOR

Mr. Partridge was re-examined by Defense Counsel.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

What are the other symptoms which you consider inconsistent with strychnia?

MR. RICHARD PARTRIDGE

The sickness manifested before the attack came on; the beating of the bed clothes with the arms, and the sudden cessation of convulsions, and apparent complete recovery.

DEFENSE COUNSEL

You mentioned previously the time that occurred between the ingestion of the poison and the paroxysm coming on. What inference do you deduce from that?

MR. RICHARD PARTRIDGE

That it is inconsistent with strychnia.

SIDE III, Band 4

NARRATOR

Witness for The Defense -- Dr. George Robinson

DR. GEORGE ROBINSON

I am a Licentiate of the Royal College of Physicians and Fellow of the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society of London, and physician to the Newcastle-on-Tyne Dispensary and Fever Hospital. I have practiced as a physician for ten years. From the symptoms I heard described my opinion is that Mr. Cook died from convulsions similar to those witnessed in tetanus. Convulsions of that kind occasionally assume the nature of epilepsy. I know of no department of pathology which is more obscure than that of convulsive diseases. Convulsive diseases are connected with disorders of the nervous action. The brain has great influence in producing convulsive diseases, but the spinal cord has a greater influence. Gritty granules in the neighborhood of the spinal cord would likely produce convulsive diseases. There is a disease spinal epilepsy, which is accompanied by strong convulsions, which might resemble in a great degree those described in the present case.

NARRATOR

Upon cross-examination Dr. Robinson testified as follows:

DR. GEORGE ROBINSON

In all cases of epilepsy there are violent convulsions. I cannot tell you how many I have seen assume a tetanic character; perhaps twenty. I heard Mr. Jones describe Mr. Cook's symptoms, that the body was so bowed that he could not raise it, so bowed that it would lean upon its heels and the back of its head if it had been turned over.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Have you ever seen anything in epilepsy approaching to these symptoms?

DR. GEORGE ROBINSON

I have never seen a body so stiffened that it would rest on head and heels and I have never known epilepsy unaccompanied by unconsciousness, nor have I known epilepsy producing the marked symptoms of tetanic character which occur in Mr. Cook's case.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

Do you feel yourself warranted in giving an opinion that these granules caused epilepsy in this case?

DR. GEORGE ROBINSON

If I put aside the hypothesis of poisoning by strychnia I would. The severe paroxysm, stiffening of the body, convulsions of all muscles of trunk and limbs, the complete opisthotonos, are also common to other convulsions. The symptoms are certainly consistent with death by strychnia.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

They are the symptoms that you would expect after strychnia?

DR. GEORGE ROBINSON

I think there would have been some slight premonitory symptoms. If I had no other cause to which I could ascribe the death I would ascribe it to epilepsy.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

But in this case you admit some of the symptoms are inconsistent with your experience of epilepsy?

DR. GEORGE ROBINSON

Yes.

SIDE III, Band 5

NARRATOR

Witness for The Defense -- George Myatt.

GEORGE MYATT

I am a saddler at Rugeley. I saw Palmer and Cook at the Raven Hotel on the Wednesday evening of the race week. We had brandy and water. Cook drank most of his, remarked that it was not good, and thought there was something in it. Had anything been put into the brandy and water I should have seen it. In the fly from Stafford to Rugeley, Palmer was sick, and vomited through the window. I heard other people speak about being ill at Rugeley.

NARRATOR

This closed the case for The Defense, and the Attorney-General then addressed the Jury.

ATTORNEY GENERAL

May it please your Lordships -- Gentlemen of the Jury. Two main questions present themselves prominently for your consideration -- did the deceased die a natural death, or was he taken off by poison? And if the latter, then comes the important question of whether the prisoner at the bar was the author of his death? The case which is submitted to you on behalf of the Crown is this, that having been first practiced upon by antimony, he was at last killed by strychnia; and the proposition which I have to establish is that the death of the deceased was occasioned by that poison. The first question, is what was the immediate cause of his death? Witnesses for the prosecution have told you one and all that he died of tetanus, which signifies a spasmodic convulsive action of the muscles of the body.

Of course, it does not follow that because he died from tetanus it must be tetanus from strychnia; that is a matter for after consideration; but inasmuch as strychnia produces death by tetanus, we must see, in the first place, whether it admits of any doubt that he did die of tetanus. Every muscle, says the medical man who was present at the time, was convulsed; he expressed the most intense dread of suffocation; he entreated them to lift him up lest he should be suffocated, and when they stooped to raise him every muscle of his body was so stiffened that the flexibility of the trunk and limbs was gone, so that they could have raised him as you would raise a log. It was found to be impossible, and the man prayed to be turned over in order to escape from the sense of the imminent risk of suffocation; they turned him over, and in the midst of doing so one mighty spasm, and the man was dead; the body was bowed from head to foot, and it would have rested, if it had been so placed, says the witness, upon the back of the head and the heels; the hands were clenched and the feet were curved till they assumed the appearance of a natural malformation. It is impossible to conceive symptoms more striking of tetanus. Tetanus may proceed from natural causes as well as from the administration of poison. While the symptoms last they are the same, but in the course of the symptoms before the disease reaches its consummation in death, the distinction between the two is marked. The distinctions are these -- natural tetanus is a disease not of minutes, not even of hours, but of days. It takes from three to four days, and will extend to even three weeks, before the patient is destroyed. Natural tetanus is therefore, upon the evidence, out of the question; but traumatic tetanus is out of the question for a different reason. Traumatic tetanus is tetanus brought on by lesion of some part of the body. What is there to show that there was lesion in any part of the body? There is not the slightest pretence for saying that this man was suffering under a syphilitic affection. Nevertheless the defense (uses this) as the ground to suggest that there was traumatic tetanus in this case. It is then suggested that this may have been idiopathic tetanus. They say that Mr. Cook

was a man of delicate constitution and if he took cold might get idiopathic tetanus. The man, from the beginning to end of the symptoms, was never treated for cold, or ever complained that he had taken cold. The tetanus which accompanied Mr. Cook's death is not referable to either of those forms of tetanus. They say it may have been something else. And, we have the theory of general convulsions. As regards general convulsions, the distinction is plain, that where they destroy the patient they destroy consciousness; and here, to the last moment, consciousness remained. Then comes another supposed condition from which death in this form may be said to have resulted. In the post-mortem examination of Mr. Cook, when the spinal marrow was investigated, certain granules were found.

Mr. Partridge is called to prove that this was arachnitis in consequence of the granules. I asked him, whether looking at those symptoms, he would pledge his opinion that this was a case of arachnitis, and he candidly admitted that he would not. Then we have the next proposition, that Mr. Cook's was a case of epileptic convulsions with tetanic complications. I asked, "Is there anything to make you think that this was epilepsy? -- Well, it may have been epilepsy, because I do not know what else to ascribe it to; but I must admit that epilepsy is characterized generally by a loss of consciousness."

Mr. Partridge and Dr. Robinson, two of the witnesses they called, agreed with the statement made by Sir Benjamin Brodie, and supported by other witnesses whom I brought before you, that they knew of no known disease to which the symptoms of Mr. Cook could possibly be referred. If it be the fact that no known disease can account for such symptoms as those of Mr. Cook, and that they are referable to poison alone, can anyone entertain a doubt that that poison was strychnia? They say there were no premonitory symptoms in Cook's case; I say there were premonitory symptoms of the most marked character. He jumps up in his bed and says, "Fetch me Palmer, as I am going to be ill, as I was last night." What was it but that he knew the symptoms that attended him on the previous evening were now warning him of what he might expect in a short period, unless succor could be obtained? He says, "Rub my neck, it give me comfort to have it done." Those witnesses who come and say that Mr. Cook having desired to have his neck rubbed is a fact to prove that this could not be a death from tetanus, have either wilfully suppressed the knowledge in their own minds of the evidence they heard, or they paid no attention to it. In Mrs. Smith's case, when her legs were distorted, in the agony of the convulsion she entreated to have them straightened. But, then, they say that Mr. Cook was able to swallow. So he was, before the paroxysm came on. But then they say the limbs became rigid either at the time of death or immediately after, and that ought not to be found in tetanus from strychnia. Dr. Taylor told us that in the case of one of the cats he killed the rigidity after death was such that upon taking the animal by the hind legs and holding it in the air, the body maintained its horizontal

natural position. The next thing that is said is that the heart in this case was empty. In the case of the poisoning of Mrs. Smith, the heart had been found contracted and emptied. No one can tell where the poisonous influence will put forth the fullness of its power. If it acts upon the respiratory muscles, and arrest the play of the lungs, and with it the breathing, the heart will be left full; but if some spasm seizes on the heart, contracting it, and expelling from it the blood that it contains, and so produces death, the result will be that the heart will be found empty, and the other vessels gorged with blood. So that you have never perfect certainly as to how these symptoms will manifest themselves after the death. And so again with regard to congestion of the brain and other vessels. Strychnia was not found in Cook's body; and (yet) strychnia has been detected by tests which science places at the disposition of scientific men. If strychnia has been found, of course there would have been no difficulty. The question for your consideration is, whether the absence of its detection leads conclusively to the view that this death could not have been caused by the administration of that poison. Now, under what circumstances was the examination made? There is undeniable evidence of very considerable bungling.

The witnesses upon the other side say that, no matter how contaminated, they would have been able to ascertain the presence of strychnia in the stomach, if strychnia ever had been there. Professor Taylor says no. The great bulk of (witnesses) agree in this, that the poison acts after it has been absorbed into the system. You do not know, therefore, in what part of the human body to put your hand upon it. Now, what did these gentlemen do? In their experiments for the purpose of this case, they took good care to have doses large enough to leave a small portion in the stomach. Professor Taylor and Dr. Rees may, for aught I know, be a pair of bunglers, but they tell us that they tried its effects upon four animals of the same species with fully adequate doses. Where they administered two grains they reproduced the poison in abundance; where they administered one grain they found a small indication of it; and when they administered half a grain to two rabbits they found no traces of the poison.

What is the conclusion I draw? That although I cannot have the advantage which the positive detection of the strychnia would have afforded if it had been found, there is no room for the opposite conclusion. I have no positive proof, but my learned friend cannot say that he has negative proof conclusive of the fact of this death not having taken place by strychnia. We have here a death of which the dread manifestations bore upon their face the character of strychnia poisoning. Was the prisoner at the bar possessed of that poison? This part of the case is left untouched as regards the defense. Newton tells us that on that night when Mr. Palmer came back from London, he obtained from him three grains of the poison of which, supposing it had been administered, the symptoms and effect in life and death would have been precisely the same as those which have been described in Cook's case. It is said by my learned friend, "Is it likely that Mr. Palmer should have purchased strychnia at Rugeley when he might have got it in London?" I feel the force of the observation. He was in town on the Monday, and he had the opportunity of purchasing strychnia there. But he had much to do; he had his train to catch by a certain time; he had in the meanwhile his pecuniary embarrassments to solve if he could. Time may have flown too fast for him to be able to obtain any strychnia; and even if he had had time, I do not

believe it is sold in chemists' shops in London without the name of the party purchasing it as a voucher. If he had given his name, it would have been still worse if he had bought strychnia in London than if he had bought it in Rugeley. It is said that there are two other circumstances in this case which make strongly in favor of the prisoner, and negative the presumption of guilty intention.

He called in two medical men -- Dr. Bamford on the Saturday, and he wrote to Mr. Jones on the Sunday, and desired his presence to attend his sick friend. This death occurred in the presence of Mr. Jones, with all those fearful symptoms; yet Mr. Jones suspected nothing; and if Mr. Stevens had not exhibited sagacity and firmness, and if Mr. Palmer had succeeded in getting that body hastily introduced into the strong oak coffin that he had made, the body would have been consigned to the grave, and nobody would have been aught the wiser. It may have been that a man whose cunning was equal to his boldness may have thought the best course to adopt to avoid suspicion was to take care that medical men should be called in and should be present at the time of death. Mr. Palmer was a man with ruin staring him in the face; that nothing could avert that ruin save pecuniary means at once obtained. In the month of November, 1855, Mr. Palmer had bills to the amount of £12,500 standing in the hands of Mr. Pratt. That being the state of things upon the 13th, Mr. Pratt presses him for payment. On that day "Polestar" won. (Cook) became entitled to a large sum of money, which afforded temptation to his murderer. Mr. Palmer had no source to which to turn for money.

He could not go to his mother. I presume that source had long since been exhausted, or he would not have forged her name. What was he to do, if he could not get money to satisfy Pratt's demand? He comes back to Rugeley, and is from that moment in the possession of money. Where could he have got that money? From Cook; he gets £1020 as the proceeds of the betting at Tattersall's, but he is not satisfied with that. On the Friday, almost as soon as the breath is out of the man's body, he intimates that he has a claim upon him for £3000 or £4000 in respect of bills which had (his) name or acceptance upon them, but which, in fact, had been negotiated for Cook's purposes. On the day that followed this poor man's death, he writes to Pratt, "I must have 'Polestar' if it can be arranged." Having got every shilling of the man's money, his purpose was to secure the little property that remained in "Polestar." The mare had just won, and she might be supposed to be worth more than she had been, or he had in view speculating at other races to bring about results of benefit to himself. What has been the conduct and the language of the prisoner with reference to (the betting book)? The father-in-law says to Mr. Jones, "Be so good as to collect my son-in-law's betting book and papers." Mr. Jones goes upstairs; he is immediately followed by the prisoner -- but there is no betting book. Mr. Jones says to Mr. Stevens, "We cannot find the betting book." "Why, Mr. Palmer, how is this?" Mr. Palmer says, "Oh, the betting book is of no use." Mr. Stevens said, "Why?" "Because a dead man's bets are void, and because he received the money himself upon the course at Shrewsbury." Mr. Stevens, if he had seen that book, would have seen that his stepson was entitled to receive £1020. He would have found that every shilling of the money found its way into the prisoner's pocket. Mr. Stevens determined upon having a post-mortem examination. The stomach and intestines are put into a jar, and the jar fastened with parchment covering doubled over, and then placed upon

a table while the post-mortem examination, with reference to other parts of the body, is made. When Dr. Harland turns round he finds the jar removed, at the other end of a long room. The prisoner was found with the jar in his hand. He says, "I thought it would have been more convenient to you when you were going out." Two slits were found in the parchment cover. Then the story of the post boy, asking him to upset the carriage which was conveying those who had possession of the jar, for the purpose of its contents being analyzed. My learned friend says that this bribe of £10 to upset the carriage arose out of resentment against the officious stepfather. I believe the other to have been the true version -- if you upset him you may break the jar, and the contents never found, and there would be no danger of strychnia being discovered. The post-mortem examination having been made, a coroner's inquest becomes inevitable, and we have the prisoner sending presents to the coroner at the time the inquest was sitting. We find him obtaining information of what is taking place between the professional man who was employed to analyze the contents of the stomach and the attorney at Rugeley who was instructed on behalf of Mr. Stevens. Why should he be desirous of knowing whether strychnia should be found in the intestines of the deceased? Now, gentlemen, the whole case is before you. It will be for you to determine it. If, upon a review of this whole case, comparing the evidence upon the one side and upon the other, and weighing it in the even scales of justice, you can come to a conclusion of the prisoner's innocence, or even entertain that fair and reasonable amount of doubt of which the accused is entitled to the benefit, in God's name acquit him. But if, on the other hand, all the facts and all the evidence lead your minds with satisfaction to yourselves, to the conclusion of the prisoner's guilt, then, but only then, I ask for a verdict of guilty at your hands.

SIDE IV, Band 2

NARRATOR

Lord Chief Justice Campbell charged the Jury as follows.

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE CAMPBELL

Gentlemen of the Jury: We have at length arrived at that stage of these solemn proceedings when it becomes my duty, as the chief judge presiding in this Court, to explain to you the nature of the charge brought against the prisoner, and those questions and considerations upon which your verdict ought to be found. On the part of the prosecution it is alleged that the deceased, John Parsons Cook, was first tampered with by antimony, that he was then killed by strychnia, and that his symptoms were the symptoms of poison by strychnia. It is then alleged that the prisoner at the bar had a motive for making away with him; that he had an opportunity of administering the poison; that suspicion fell upon no one else; and that when the poison was supposed to have been administered, he actually purchased strychnia, the poison employed; and that, as they allege, his conduct before that transaction, before the deed, while it was going on, and afterwards, was that of a guilty and not of an innocent man. On the other side it is contended that the prisoner at the bar had no interest in the death of the deceased; further, that Cook did not die from poison by strychnia, but from natural disease. Gentlemen, it is for you to determine between the allegations on the one side and the other according to the evidence.

A most anxious task is imposed upon you, knowing that the life of the prisoner is at stake; and, if you find him guilty, he must expiate his crime by an ignominious death. It is of the last importance that you should be convinced of his innocence or his guilt, and, if you are not convinced of his guilt, you will rescue him from the fate with which he is threatened. It is of great importance to see whether there was a motive for committing such a crime. But, gentlemen, if there be any motive which can be assigned, I am bound to tell you that the adequacy of that motive is of little importance. We know from the experience of criminal Courts that atrocious crimes have been committed from very slight motives. If you believe that death arose from natural causes, the prisoner is at once entitled to a verdict of not guilty at your hands; but if those symptoms are consistent with a poisoning by strychnia, then you will have another and an important question to consider, whether the evidence which has been adduced is sufficient to convince you that it was a death by strychnia, and by strychnia which the prisoner administered. Gentlemen, the case is in your hands, and, unless upon the part of the prosecution a clear conviction has been brought to your minds of the guilt of the prisoner, it is your duty to acquit him. You are not to proceed even upon a strong suspicion; there must be the strongest conviction in your minds that he was guilty of this offence; and if there be any reasonable doubt remaining in your mind, you will give him the benefit of that doubt; but if you come to a clear conviction that he was guilty, you will not be deterred from doing your duty. May God direct you to a right finding.

SIDE IV, Band 3

NARRATOR

The Jury found the prisoner guilty. The prisoner was asked why the Court should not pass sentence of death upon him according to law. He did not answer. Lord Campbell then said ..

LORD CHIEF JUSTICE CAMPBELL

William Palmer, after a long and impartial trial you have been convicted by a Jury of your country of the crime of wilful murder. In that verdict my two learned brothers and myself entirely concur, and consider that verdict altogether satisfactory. Whether it is the first and only offence of this sort which you have committed is certainly known only to God and your own conscience. It is seldom that such a familiarity with the means of death should be shown without long experience; but for this offence of which you have been found guilty your life is forfeited. You must prepare to die; and I trust that, as you can expect no mercy in this world, you will, by repentance of your crimes, seek to obtain mercy from Almighty God. I will not seek to harrow up your feelings by any enumeration of the circumstances of this foul murder. I will content myself now with passing upon you the sentence of the law, which is, that you be taken hence to the gaol of Newgate, and thence removed to the gaol of the county of Stafford, the county in which the offence of which you are justly convicted was committed; and that you be taken thence to a place of execution, and be there hanged by the neck until you be dead; and that your body be afterwards buried within the precincts of the prison in which you shall be last confined after your conviction; and may the Lord have mercy upon your soul. Amen!