

BRITISH "MASQUERADING."

Trial of Boulton and Park in London—Felony and Misdemeanor—The Case Postponed—Arguments in Court—The Indictment.

[From the London Globe, June 9—Evening.]

"THE WOMEN PERSONATORS"—CHARGES AGAINST BOULTON AND PARK.

This remarkable case came on for trial to-day at the Central Criminal Court, before Mr. Justice Blackburn. The prisoners, Ernest Boulton, twenty-two, law clerk, and Frederick William Park, twenty-three, clerk, were indicted with having committed felony with each other, and with Lord Arthur Peiham Clinton, and with aiding and abetting; also with misdemeanor. The Attorney General, the Solicitor General, Mr. Poland and Mr. Archibald appeared for the prosecution. Mr. Sergeant Parry, Mr. Sergeant Ballantine, Mr. Besley and Mr. Straight defended the prisoners.

Mr. Sergeant Parry said that he and Mr. Straight appeared for Park. The indictment was for felony, and he desired that he might be allowed to see it.

Mr. Justice Blackburn—If you really have any doubt what the felony is doubtless the law officers of the Crown will explain it to you. The prisoners were committed by the magistrate, and the evidence is known. Had it been an application on the part of the others who were not charged before the magistrate the application would have been a very different one.

Mr. Sergeant Parry—I was also going to ask generally for a postponement of the trial until next session.

The learned Judge—On what ground?

Sergeant Parry—We are really unprepared now to take the trial.

The learned Judge—I think they must first hear the indictment read, and we can hear any application afterwards.

The various counts of the indictment were then read over to the prisoners, to all of which, with the exception of the charge of misdemeanor, they unhesitatingly pleaded not guilty. On the count as to misdemeanor there was a slight hesitation, but, after a look towards their counsel, they also pleaded not guilty to this. The prisoners were very pale, and the nonchalance with which they had treated the charges when preferred at Bow street had given place to an evident sense of the gravity of their situation.

The indictments having been preferred,

Mr. Sergeant Parry said:—In the first place, as regards the indictments for felony, this is the first time that the various charges of felony have been made against the prisoners. I think I speak for Sergeant Ballantine also when I say that various charges are now made which have never been distinctly made before, and of which neither the prisoners nor their counsel, nor their attorneys, had any notice until the indictment was just read. I think it will require considerable time and attention to read through the depositions, in order to shape the defence against those charges of felony. As to the second count of misdemeanor, I have now, for the first time, heard of it; and if I had not now heard it for the first time, I do not know whether I should or should not have advised my client to demur to it. The indictments we have never heard before, and do not understand now—at least, I, for one, do not.

The learned Judge—I do not know whether your object is that all these charges should be postponed till next session or that some of them should be tried now.

The Attorney General—They should all be postponed.

The learned Judge—Of course, if both the prisoners and the prosecution wish them to be postponed it will only be reasonable to do so.

The Attorney General—I think I ought to say that, after reading the depositions very carefully, and after also considering additional evidence which has since been furnished to us, I felt it my duty to see that indictments were preferred against other persons. I think it would be hard for those persons to be called upon to plead now, and should prefer, upon every ground, that the charges should be postponed. I think there are many reasons why we should not enter upon the investigation until next session.

The learned Judge—That being so, I shall have no objection to postpone the trial.

Mr. Besley—Mr. Sergeant Ballantine concurs in the application.

The learned Judge—I understand, then, that it is the application of both sides?

Mr. Besley—In the case of Louis Charles Hurt, who is indicted for misdemeanor, I beg to apply that he may come in and surrender and give bail for his appearance.

The Judge—As to bail, that is another question; but, of course, he has the right to come in and surrender.

Mr. Besley—I believe that there is no objection to bail being given, and that your lordship would be asked to fix the amount.

The Judge—If there is no objection to bail it will then only be a question of amount.

The Attorney General—I should not object to bail being given.

Mr. Besley—Would your lordship mention the amount?

The Judge—I cannot do that without hearing all the facts.

Mr. Besley—Mr. Hurt has not been keeping out of the way at all, but has been seen from day to day by Inspector Thomson, who has charge of the case, and his whereabouts are known. The indictment is only for misdemeanor.

The Judge—He must be admitted to bail in such an amount as we may reasonably conclude will secure his attendance. You may apply to any judge—not necessarily to myself—and if the Attorney General and yourselves agree as to what would be a sufficient amount the Judge will grant it. The trial of the prisoners is postponed until next session.

Trial postponed accordingly.

It is stated that £5,000 has been sent anonymously for the defence of Boulton and Park.

The London *Globe* adds on its editorial page the following remarks:—

We have reason to believe that all the parties against whom fresh warrants were yesterday issued in the "men-women" case, so far from keeping out of reach, were, with the exception of Lord Arthur Clinton, who has been abroad for some time, among the crowd in or about the court. It is rather unfortunate that by the fact of all the persons whose names have been implicated being put on their trial, they will be unable to be called as witnesses, and will lose the opportunity of giving any explanation they might desire.