

HENSON CONVICTED.

Verdict of Murder in the First Degree in the Elliott City Case.

[Special Dispatch to the Baltimore Sun.]

ELLIOTT CITY, Md., March 28.—The jury today rendered a verdict of murder in the first degree in the case of Jacob Henson, colored, for killing Daniel F. Shea in Elliott City. The jury were out twenty-five minutes. One of the jurors said the verdict had been agreed upon unanimously at the first ballot taken, and that the jury had remained out to take a little rest.

The prisoner heard the verdict without showing any change in his demeanor, which had been that of a stolid entirely indifferent to fate all through the trial. His counsel, W. Ashby Hawkins, a colored man, asked the court to suspend sentence, saying that in due time a motion would be made for a new trial. Should he fail in this the counsel says he may take the case to the Court of Appeals upon the exception reserved in the testimony yesterday in the prisoner's behalf before the jury. Lawyer Hawkins made an eloquent and strong appeal and had the closest attention of those who were sitting in judgment upon the life of Henson as well as the great throngs of people who filled every foot of space in the court room. He contended that it had been shown by numerous witnesses that the prisoner was regarded as a poor half-witted creature, incapable of any crime. The many so-called confessions and the verses he wrote, the counsel contended, all proved the prisoner's unsound mind.

State's Attorney McGuire said he had never heard a more powerful appeal for the life of a murderer than Henson's counsel had made before the jury, but the overwhelming evidence proved the guilt of the prisoner, who had planned and executed the crime.

The defense called a number of witnesses to the stand to testify to the peculiarities of the prisoner's mental condition. Nearly all of them thought him to be stupid and slow, but his mind, all the witnesses thought, was not so much unbalanced, if unbalanced at all, that he could not distinguished between right and wrong. James Mackubin, John G. Rogers, Dr. B. J. Byrne and others thought the prisoner stupid and not possessed of average intelligence.

The whereabouts of Mr. Shea's money has not yet been discovered. In his confession Henson has contended that he lost it. The officers believe that he will yet reveal its hiding place when he finds all hope gone. The amount taken is supposed to be nearly two hundred dollars.