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ARTICLE I.

THE DIVINE APPOINTMENT AND OBLIGATION OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT.*

1. *The Rights of War and Peace, including the Law of Nature and of Nations.* By HUGO GROTIUS. 3 vols. 8vo.
2. *The Relations of Christianity to War.* By the Rev. THOMAS SMYTH, D. D. Charleston. 1847.
3. *The Punishment of Death for the Crime of Murder, Rational, Scriptural and Salutory.* By WALTER SCOTT, President and Theological Tutor in Airedale College. Bradford: Yorkshire.
4. *Capital Punishment, the Importance of its Abolition: A Prize Essay.* By the Rev. JAMES BEGGS, Late Missionary to India. London. 1839.
5. *An Essay on the Ground and Reason of Punishment, with special reference to the Penalty of Death.* By TAYLOR LEWIS, Esq. And a Defence of Capital Punishment. By Rev. GEORGE B. CHEEVER, D. D. With an Appendix, containing a Review of Burleigh on the Death Penalty. New York: Wiley & Putnam. 1846: pp. 365.

* With its bearing on the recent execution of colored persons, and their religious instruction.

6. *The Increase of Crimes against Life.* NEW ENGLANDER. July, 1844.
7. *The Right of Civil Government over Life.* IN IBID. October, 1845.
8. *Shall Punishment be Abolished?* IN IBID. Oct. 1846.
9. *Capital Punishment. Biblical Repository.* July, 1837.
By S. S. SCHMUCKER, D. D.
10. *Capital Punishment. Biblical Repertory and Princeton Review.* April, 1842. And in the second Series of Reviews from that work.
11. *Capital Punishment.* By DANIEL R. GOODWIN. In *The Bibliotheca Sacra*, for May, 1847.

It is our object, in the ensuing article, to present to our readers the subject of capital punishment. This we believe to be timely and important; and as it has been pressed upon us by the recent cases of the execution of colored persons, for the crime of poisoning two innocent and unoffending individuals, against whom they did not even pretend to have ground for retaliation or revenge,* we will draw from their case illustrations of our argument.

We have placed at the head of our article a number of works in which this subject will be found discussed, chiefly for the purpose of directing our readers to sources of information on both sides of the question, and of giving them palpable evidence of the interest the subject is exciting, and of the great necessity of "stirring up the minds" of those who are already "established in the truth."

In the extensive and learned work of the celebrated Grotius will be found a treasury, in which all the principles lying at the foundation of human society, and which determine authority and rights, in a state both of peace and

* From our own knowledge and their confessions, we know that in this case the treatment of the parties, by their owners, had been gentle and humane, and that their crime is traceable to distinct causes, foreign to such a source.

war, are discussed on the grounds of natural and revealed truth.*

In the Discourse by the Rev. Thomas Smyth, will be found a synopsis of the arguments in support of the right of society, both to inflict capital punishment and to prosecute a just war.

Mr. Scott's treatise, contains a very satisfactory statement of the scriptural argument in support of the divine appointment and permanent obligation of capital punishment.

Mr. Beggs' Essay is a very condensed view of what can be said in opposition to the law of death; and exhibits, in a remarkable degree, the difficulty of preventing genuine piety and true philanthropy from degenerating into a morbid and sickly sympathy for *distress*, even while it is the result of the most heinous and desperate guilt; and how easily the mind, in such circumstances, can delude itself, with the most inconclusive reasoning.

In the full and comprehensive work by Taylor Lewis will be found a survey of the whole argument, and of all the objections as urged by the latest advocates for the abolition of capital punishment. Of Dr. Cheever's labors on this subject the public have formed a very high opinion, and have derived from them important benefit, in staying that flood of wild speculation which threatens to overturn, in the State of New York, every landmark of security.

In the article in the *New Englander*, for July, 1844, the increase of crimes against life, which is, it is said, awfully notorious in the Northern States, is traced to the constantly diminishing value that is set upon human life; the mixture, in our population, of individuals of different races and nations; the loss of property and disappointed ambition; the absurd and barbarous custom of carrying deadly weapons; the diminished dread of a trial; the constantly increasing difficulty of procuring convictions on indictment for murder; the increasing uncertainty (owing to the unpardonable abuse of their prerogative by Governors,) whether, in case of conviction, the penalty of the law will be rigidly enforced; and the influence of the unprincipled por-

* On this subject, see particularly Book I, and Book II: ch. xx, on Punishments.

tion of the press. "What then, (it is asked,) can be done? We answer, we have the same remedy that we possess for all other evils, moral, civil, political or religious. We shall never expel tyranny by the sword, nor heresy by the flames. We shall never eradicate vice by law, nor protect life or property by an armed force. Such remedies partake not of the spirit of our institutions. We must aim our efforts at the minds and hearts of freemen. Our safety depends on constant and persevering efforts to enlighten the one and to purify the other."

The article in the same Review, on the right of civil government over human life, is a short but conclusive one. It thus concludes:

"We have taken this cursory view of certain conditions under which it is right for the 'powers that be' to destroy human life, for the sake of establishing this right as a general principle. We claim it to be a plain corollary from the divine institution of human government, that life may be justly taken in vindication and support of the laws; for nothing is more certain than the dependence of civil government on this right, for its existence and power to answer the ends of its existence. And we feel authorized to charge all deniers of the right of capital punishment, of the forcible suppression of domestic insurrection, and of war with foreign powers, with a logical denial of the right of civil government itself. Their position leads, by irresistible inference, to the grossest errors of the non-resistants. Starting with the doctrine that life is inviolable, and that the intentional destruction of life is always murder, to what other conclusion can they come, than that civil government is a usurpation, and that God intended man should be controlled by moral influence alone, in this world? If the enemies of society are not liable to the loss of life, for their crimes and criminal attempts, no restraint can be exercised over them, and no penalty, however mild, can be inflicted. They will not suffer themselves to be seized and imprisoned by the nerveless arm that dare not strike; and there will in fact, and from necessity, be no such thing as government, which, by supposition, God has ordained."

The last article, from the same Review, of 1846, we regard as a very lucid, able, and conclusive refutation of the objections made to this law of death, and commend its pe-

rusal to any who may feel a desire to pursue the investigation.

Dr. Schmucker discusses, in his own didactic manner, the various questions to which the subject gives rise, both on the grounds of natural right and scriptural authority.

Of the elaborate article in the *Biblical Repertory* and *Princeton Review*, in reply to the reports presented in favor of the abolition of capital punishment, to the Legislatures of Massachusetts and New York, we cannot speak too highly, nor commend it too warmly; and by the republication of two volumes of separate essays from this able *Review*, it is placed within the easy access of all our readers.

The article in the *Biblical Repertory* and *Princeton Review* will be found especially satisfactory and valuable, as containing a full view of the argument, from history and experience.

In the extended and elaborate article in the *Bibliotheca Sacra* will be found a full philological investigation of all the scriptural passages involved in the controversy, particularly as it regards the sixth commandment, which, it seems, is regarded by the abolitionists as a stronghold. The subject is to be continued.

We will now proceed, in as condensed and practical a manner as possible, to give a summary of our own views on this vitally important question. There is, at present, a great outcry on this subject extending itself over the world, and promulgated, with vehement emphasis, throughout our own country. Capital punishment, even for the wilful destruction of human life—to which and to very few other crimes, it ought, we think, to be limited—is spoken of in terms of unmeasured reprobation; represented as a lingering remnant of a barbarous age; or the custom of savage feudalism, and unworthy of a civilized state. In the terms of a prevailing but morbid sensibility, it is coupled with the calculations of utilitarianism. It is contended that putting to death according to law is “an ill-judged evil-working expedient, and worthy of no higher designation than legalized murder.”

Now it must be admitted that the subject of capital punishment is often treated in this manner, from honest conviction and good motives, and from an apprehension that

the genius of Christianity is inimical to it, under any circumstances. But while this must be admitted of many holders of the above opinion, we fully concur with the London Record when it says, "We reiterate our opinion, that the present attempt to do away with the punishment of death where murder has been committed, proceeds from no other than the practical infidelity of the age. It is from foolish and corrupt man, affecting to know better and be more benevolent than 'the only wise God,' a God full of compassion and tender mercy, but 'who will in no wise clear the guilty.'" And that such is the true source of this opposition would appear from the obvious character of the avowed opponents of this law. "All those," says the New Englander, "whose impulses and habits put them in opposition to law, and who not unnaturally feel somewhat as if it were for their interest that the punishments of crime should be abolished, are agitated with the movement. The haunters of dramshops; the frequenters of brothels; those whose oaths shock you as you pass along the street—are generally in favor of the abolition of capital punishment. Those who profess to believe that there is no retribution for wickedness in the world to come, and that the murderer, dying with all a murderer's malice in his heart, dies only to enter into perfect bliss—cry out against the dreadfulness of the death penalty, and demand that the murderer shall have a kinder and less vindictive treatment. Philanthropic projectors of a reconstructed moral universe, who hold that society is all wrong, and that everything existing must be overturned to prepare the way for a new era of social equality—utter the same outcry. Those whose religion is mere sentimentalism—whose Christianity, as they call it, is little else than a low conception of the poetry of nature—and who conceive of God chiefly as a great artist that has made the world for its beauty—give in their adhesion."

The benevolent and philanthropic character of the age—according to the universal tendency of weak and imperfect reason—is carried out into absurd and extravagant theories, as if all the tares of human depravity could be at once and completely eradicated by the devices of man's wisdom and man's philanthropy; all temptation and trial be entirely done away; and an age of perfect holiness and therefore of perfect happiness, be restored and perpetuated. Now while

it is hard to resist a current apparently so pure and gentle in its flow, so benevolent in its design, and so beneficent in many of its *partial* and *present* results—yet truth compels all lovers of equity to stand fast against the Syren voice, even though it speak in the tone and assume the garb of “an angel of light.”

In the decision of every question of conscientious obligation and moral duty, “TO THE LAW AND THE TESTIMONY” must be our immediate and our final appeal; and every theory that is not accordant with these, and based upon them, must be rejected—however specious and refined—as having “no truth in it.” And this is the true and only criterion by which we can determine whether ANY plan of man’s devising, having for its *professed* object the promotion of man’s welfare—is pure gold, or only a glittering counterfeit—“the hay, the wood and the stubble;” and whether, therefore, under the cover of a present and apparent good, there will not be found, in all such schemes, the seeds of future and ultimate evil.

Now the opponents of capital punishment—while, of necessity, they attempt to shelter themselves behind a few isolated passages of scripture, severed from their context and misinterpreted in their true meaning—nevertheless aim as much as possible to divest the question of its scriptural character, and thus clear the way for reaching bold and plausible conclusions, and for enlisting public sympathy.

This question, however, so far as it is one of *obligation and right*, is purely theological. It is altogether a Bible question, and to be decided by the proper answer to the question, “Is there a law framed by divine authority and by which, in every case, it is made necessary that the crime of murder should be punished with death?” For our own part, we could give no sanction nor concurrence to the infliction of death—terminating as it does the period of man’s probation for eternity—except under the authority of divine requirement or sanction. And therefore we regard the propriety or impropriety of this punishment to be at once and forever decided by a knowledge of what God has required and ordained, and as we would not allow any reasons of mere expediency or self interest to *establish* the law of death, so we cannot admit loose and declamatory statements to have any weight *against* a law of God, un-

less there can be produced some decisive intimation in the Bible of the subsequent repeal of that law. Our direct and decisive reference, therefore, is made to God's law and to God's testimony.

But in doing this, let it not be supposed that we have any fear of bringing this question to the decision of sound reason and of long tried experience.

On the contrary we maintain that the infliction of death for the crime of wilfully taking away life, is in itself right; is sustained by every principle of justice; and is required by the moral sense and conscience of every unprejudiced mind. That such is the moral nature of this law of death, we might argue from the fact that God has unquestionably authorized and required the punishment of death by the Jewish law, and under the whole period of the Jewish economy. This fact no one ever has, or ever can possibly deny.* But if this fact is true, how can any one who believes that God is so necessarily and immutably holy, that He cannot either authorize or sanction what is wrong;—how, we say, can such a person question that the punishment of death must be in itself right, and accordant with the principles of justice, when it was instituted and required by God himself? Who, without blasphemy, can say that God, *under any circumstances* or *for any length of time*, could do evil to secure good? And who, therefore, without blasphemy, can affirm that the legal punishment of death, which God most assuredly instituted and required, can, in its own nature, be either unjust or cruel.

It is indeed said, that one of the ten commandments embodied in the Jewish Law, is a plain and positive requirement in no case, and in no circumstances, to kill. But to kill, in a legal sense—and in this sense only is it used in Decalogue or Law—is “to put an end to the vital functions, either in destroying or essentially injuring the organs necessary to life, by the sword, by poison, by disease or by suffocation—and to do this not by any legal authority, but under the influence of malice, covetousness and revenge.”

To inflict the punishment of death, however, for the crime of murder, of which the culprit has been legally convicted, by hands of justice, and in accordance with the

*See Exod. 21: 11—14; Num. 35: 17—21; Deut. 19: 11—15.

sentence of a proper legal tribunal, this is not to kill. Capital punishment and killing are as distinct as law and passion; conviction and revenge; calm solemnity and sudden and infuriated assault; the august authority of a state or community and the rash and hasty fury of a lawless criminal.

The same law, therefore, may very properly, and ought unquestionably, to prohibit killing and to enforce the legal infliction of death. God *has* done this, in the very law quoted, since—while in the decalogue He prohibits all taking of life by *individuals*, unless in the case of unavoidable self-defence—in that very code in which the decalogue is embodied, He has, in numerous places and for numerous crimes, required of the legal officers the infliction of death, as a legal punishment.

And hence, for any man to justify the abrogation of capital punishment, by pleading the language of the sixth commandment, is to make God contradict himself, and even to convict His own laws of a blood-thirsty and revengeful spirit. For us, let it be enough to say “let God be true, consistent and perfect, though every man should be found guilty of a dangerous treason against His wisdom and His mercy. The works of God’s hands are verity and judgment—all his commandments are sure. They stand fast forever, and are done in truth and uprightness.”* The question, therefore, to every one who believes in the holy and just character of God can never be—“is the punishment of death wrong in itself?”—but the only question is, “is the punishment of death still permitted or required by God.

But to proceed, let any man consider what the crime of murder is, and then ask himself, is it severe or cruel to punish with death the man who has either alone, or in company with others, taken away the life of a fellow-being? If a man cuts short the life of a fellow-being by poison, fire, or other means;—if he thus deprives his neighbor of all earthly good and happiness;—if he introduce misery and distress into the bosom of the bereaved family;—and if he *forces* his victim into eternity, whether prepared or unprepared;—if a man does all this knowingly and wilfully;—

* Ps. iii : 7, 8.

is it, we ask, improper or cruel that the arm of justice should seize upon him, and imprison him, and try him, and when proved to be guilty,—should put him to death?

But to show still further the *reasonableness* of this punishment, let us consider the design and object of punishment. One object of all law and of all punishment is to ensure the welfare and security of the living, and above all things else, to preserve them from violence and murder. But if a man can take away life without forfeiting his own life, there are so many temptations to prevent the discovery of other crimes by taking away the life of those who could betray and expose them, that no man's life would be safe. The only way to prevent men from committing murder, either for its own sake or in order to conceal other crimes, is to make them feel that **AS SURE AS THEY TAKE AWAY LIFE, THEIR OWN LIFE WILL BE TAKEN AWAY.**

Much, we know, is said about the dreadful nature of solitary imprisonment for life, as a substitute for death. If, however, as is alleged, solitary imprisonment for life is the most terrible and the most frightful of all punishments, and in this respect more terrific, as a warning, than death itself—then where is the honesty or the propriety of such reasoners in denouncing the punishment of death, because it is so awful and severe? And, on their own reasoning, who, we ask, is most righteously to be condemned as cruel and severe? Such reasons assuredly demonstrate one of two things—either the hypocrisy or the absurdity of their objections. But let men talk as they may on this subject, it will still, we think, remain undeniably and universally true, that a man will give up every thing and endure every thing rather than give up life, and that whatever may be the severity of the punishment of solitary confinement in its *actual* endurance, it has but little power in its *anticipation*, to hold back pride, passion, hatred, revenge, and the insatiate thirst for money, from perpetrating murder, when it is once compared with the awful conviction in the mind of those who are led to meditate murder that as sure as their murder is found out, (which God and conscience assure them it will,) they will themselves be put to death, and whether prepared or unprepared, be made to stand before the judgment seat of Christ. And of this truth we have certain proof in the fact that it was never known that a prisoner

labored, through his counsel, to transmute a conviction of manslaughter into a verdict for murder, that he might die rather than be imprisoned for life—or that a prisoner on the way to the penitentiary devised and desired a plan for his immediate execution. Death is—must be—and ever will be “the king of terrors” to a guilty and self-condemning conscience, and “is therefore the only adequate and *certain* preservation against the commission of murder, and for the security of society.

Besides murder may be and has often been committed by those who were already under sentence of solitary confinement for life. “And what shall be done in such a case? Imprisonment for life, according to the new theory, is to be the ultimate sanction of law—the highest punishment that human justice can inflict. There remains, therefore, no further possibility of punishment for those who are already under that sentence. In other words, you put a score or more of murderers into your prison, and by that act proclaim to them that there is nothing more for them to fear, and they may kill their keepers if they will; the law has already done its utmost upon them, and can not hurt them. Plainly, if you abolish capital punishment entirely, you cannot maintain government within the walls of your prison. The life of the warden, and the lives of the guard, are completely—so far as the law is concerned—in the power of the prisoners. Your law, then, for the abolition of capital punishment, must make an exception against such cases as these. The dreadful gallows must still project its dark shadow into the convict’s cell, to make him feel that law has still another and more awful sanction; or your abolition of the death penalty will go far either towards abolishing punishment altogether,” or towards driving society to some mode of self-vindication. “Abolish capital punishment altogether, and by that very act you establish either the primeval barbarous rule of blood-revenge by the next friend of the murdered, or a horrible Lynch court to take cognizance of crimes peculiarly atrocious. In other words, if the magistrate lays down the sword or bears it in vain—if the state, as such, abdicates its proper function of maintaining justice by penalties adequate to the protection of life, society itself, by an irresistible tendency, begins to be disorganized.”

But another end aimed at by punishment, is to impress upon the heart of the condemned culprit a proper sense of his criminality and guilt, and thus lead him to repentance. And what possible punishment, we ask, can awaken the hardened and seared conscience of a wilful murderer to a true sense of his awful guilt, but the punishment of death? When he knows that by the law of God and the law of man, he is not to live, and cannot be permitted to live, and that "ALL MURDERERS" who die impenitent "SHALL HAVE THEIR PART IN THE LAKE THAT BURNETH WITH FIRE AND BRIMSTONE"—and that within a short and unalterable period, he must be in eternity, and beyond the reach of mercy—then it is, if ever, that hard heart can or will feel penitent and in earnest about his salvation—and then it is, if ever, that the man appointed to die will listen to instruction, call upon God in earnestness and truth—and lay hold of eternal life.

Such, in a most striking manner, was the case with the two colored culprits who were recently executed in Charleston, for the crime of poisoning. Henry, who was shrewd and knowing, and to some extent informed, at once realized his condition, and felt and admitted the justice and necessity of the punishment. Jane was hard of hearing, and therefore, though naturally shrewd, *actually* very ignorant of all divine truth. Her mind was dark—oh how terribly dark!—on all subjects relating to God, to duty, and to eternal retributions. Her conscience was, therefore, seared, and her sense of crime feeble and imperfect. She was one of those sordid souls,

"Such as do murder for a meed—
Who but of fear know no control;
Because their conscience, sear and foul,
Feels not the import of their deed."

We found her, therefore, in her cell at first bitter in her outcries against the severity of her punishment, and looking into the grave and eternity, with sullen, blank, and absolute despair. But when her mind was led to an understanding of her guilty heart and life, and of the real enormity of her crime, and had been further led to see that it was God who had appointed death as the punishment for murder, she emphatically and repeatedly said, "I did think

my punishment was too hard, but now I think it is right." And as she saw that there was hope even for her, that the blood of Christ could cleanse even her sins, that *she* might be pardoned, justified, and saved, and that this was the heart's desire and prayer, even of her injured owners, by whose wish we had come to her—her soul became pacified, calmed, and we would humbly hope truly penitent. She met death, therefore, calmly, and as the executioner was tying up her arms behind her back, before she was led out to execution, she leaned her head upon our breast, as we stood beside her, and with deep and solemn tone, said "Yes, I know that it is God that is doing it, and I hope He will save my soul."

The penalty of death is, therefore, of all possible punishments, most adapted to lead the guilty culprit to real penitence, prayer, and earnest anxiety to be saved, and to prepare him for death and for that "judgment which is after death."

Another end of punishment is, to secure an equivalent to society—a reparation for the evil that has been done against it. But in the case of murder, nothing can be an equivalent, and no reparation can be adequate—except the taking of life for life. Punishment is the price or value which society sets upon the life of man, and when the life of man has been wilfully and wickedly taken away,—society could accept of nothing short of the life of the murderer—without reducing the value of the life of man, and lowering the sense of humanity, justice, obedience, in every heart. But while it is thus the design of punishment to secure the welfare and the safety of the living ;—to lead the culprit to a true sense of his crime, and to make reparation to society—**THE PRIMARY AND CHIEF END OF PUNISHMENT IS TO VINDICATE THE RIGHT.** The moral judgment of man tells him that it is just that a man should suffer according to the evil he has done ;—and that every crime should be followed by an evil equal in degree, similar in kind, and proportionate in severity. Conscience enforces the infliction of punishment, proportionate to the degree of the moral guilt of the crime, independent of any ulterior consideration, and solely with a view to the past guilt of the offender. It further demands such a punishment as will prevent, by the terror it excites, or the removal it secures, the repetition

of the offence, on the part either of the present criminal, or of others who may be tempted to the same offence; and the influence of punishment in the prevention of crime *generally*, by the terror of example, is of immeasurably more importance than its effect upon individual offenders.

Punishment, therefore, is not founded in revenge, or cruelty, or expediency; nor does it aim at the benefit of the offender, except so far as that may be made to consist with its true and higher ends; so that this, instead of being, as many suppose, the first, is in reality the last end of punishment. Punishment is the expression of the moral sense against crime. Its first and chief object is to excite such an estimate of crime as to make it at once loathsome, infamous, and dreadful. It would thus, by the pain and ignominy it inflicts, deter from the commission of crime, and by the "magnitude of the penalty, proclaim the magnitude of the interests which law protects and natural justice makes inviolable."

Neither individual nor general interest, therefore, confers the right to punish with death; nor is this right to be based upon necessity, direct or indirect; nor upon the supposed existence of a social contract. There is—as Mr. Rossi, in the most recent and able treatise on this subject, well says—a moral order in the world, binding upon all free and intelligent beings, which demands absolute justice. Upon this justice, then, punishment is founded, and punishment is retribution, inflicted by legitimate authority, for the violation of what is right and obligatory. And since wilful murder is the highest possible crime against society, this moral sense of mankind universally requires the infliction of the greatest punishment, which is that of death.

"The sentimental philosophers of the day, who would do away with the punishment of death, have committed not only gross blunders in reasoning, but they have been guilty, doubtless unintentionally, of the hardly less pardonable error of misrepresenting facts. It is asserted by them that the abolition of capital punishments, hitherto, has always been attended with a decrease in the crimes for which those punishments were inflicted. This is the very opposite of the truth. The following extract from a paper which appears in the Law Magazine, in England, will abundantly establish this point: 'On the 1st October, 1836, death

punishment was abolished, for—1st, attempts to murder, attended with no results dangerous to life; 2d, burglary; 3d, robbery; 4th, arson; and, in the year 1841, for rape. *In every one of these crimes there has been an increase since the removal of the punishment.* Taking the three years which preceded the change in 1837—namely, 1837, 1836, and 1835, and comparing the total number in this period with the last three years, namely, 1844, 1843, and 1842, we find that in attempts to murder, with and without injuries, and shooting, stabbing, &c., the increase has been 89 per cent.; in burglaries of both kinds, it has been 115 per cent.; in robberies of all kinds, it has been 124 per cent. In rapes we find a similar result: the law was changed in 1841, and on comparing the three years, 1837, 1836, and 1835, with those of 1844, 1843, and 1842, we find the increase of rapes in these last years has been no less than 102 per cent.* If this be not satisfactory on the point that the abolition of death punishments has not hitherto had the effect of checking crime, it is difficult to say what amount of proof the abolitionists will then require. These figures clearly and incontestably prove that the punishment of death is more dreaded than any other punishment, and that, therefore, it is the most effectual of all punishments, in deterring the wickedly disposed from committing crimes. Here are proofs in support of its truth, drawn not from *a priori* reasoning, but from the irrefragable evidence of facts themselves.” And what is thus true of England is true also of other countries, and most emphatically of our own.

In the *Conversations Lexicon*, a recent work of undoubt-

* In the *Pennsylvania Law Journal*, for October, 1847, at p. 574, the following is the closing summary of an article extracted from the *London Law Magazine*, for August, 1847, on Capital Punishment: “The increase, therefore, of these very offences, (in respect to which capital punishment has been abrogated,) has been no less than 34.5 per cent., in fifteen years! Whilst the number of attempts to murder, rapes, burglaries, robberies, and arsons have increased since 1836, that is, during ten years, in the early part of which they ceased to be capitally punished, to the following enormous extent: attempts to murder, 64.52 per cent.; rapes, 114.74 per cent.; burglaries, 154.81 per cent.; forgeries, of both classes, 108.85 per cent.; arsons, 58.74! And yet we are told that crimes diminish in proportion as capital punishments are abolished! The assertion has no other foundation than its audacity. Murder, it will be observed, which is not exempted from capital punishment, has very slightly increased last year, and during the last five years has actually decreased.”

ed authority, and almost universal circulation in Europe, the same which is the basis of the Encyclopædia Americana, of Dr. Lieber, it is expressly asserted: "That even in those countries where the governments, from a mistaken feeling of humanity, abolished capital punishments, they were compelled again to introduce them; because, according to the prevailing views of men, death is regarded as the greatest evil, to avoid which men will willingly submit to the most laborious life, so long as there is any hope of escaping from it; and because, moreover, the punishment of death is the most terrible of all penalties."

We have thus shewn that the punishment of death, for wilful murder, is sustained by the almost universal sentiment and practice of mankind, and is founded upon the moral nature of man.

But still we repeat the declaration that the plain, indubitable, and all-sufficient authority for the punishment of death, is to be found in the requirement of God. Man, it is true, has not the right to take away his own life, and of course he cannot give that right to others, but God has a right to take that life which He gave, when it is used for purposes contrary to His will, and this right, we have seen, God has delegated to civil government.

Examine, then, the words given to the human race by the voice of God, immediately after that great catastrophe by which he exhibited his infinite hatred against sin: "Surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, *and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: FOR in the image of God made he man.*" (Gen. ch. 9: 5, 6.)

That this is a plain and imperative law cannot be gainsayed, and that it is still in force is, we think, as unquestionable.

"This law, as given to Moses, does, in its most obvious sense, command that the wilful murderer shall be put to death. The most critical inquiry into the meaning of its terms only serves to confirm this interpretation. It has been so understood by all men, in all ages, until these latter days. The universal belief of all Christian nations has been that God has pronounced this doom upon the mur-

derer; and the public conscience has everywhere, with mute awe, approved the dread award of human justice, made in fulfilment of this divine command." The supposition that *yisshaphek* should be rendered *will*, instead of *shall* be shed, appears highly improbable. The context indicates the imperative character of this verse. It is in the midst of a series of commands whose preceptive nature is undisputed; and the form of the word is exactly what it must be, to express a command in the third person. For it need not be remarked, that the Hebrews have no third person in the imperative mood, and that the third person of the future is always used in its stead. We are, therefore, constrained to regard this passage as a universal sanction for the capital punishment of murder, unless it has since been revoked." It is however alleged, that this command was temporary, and has passed away—first, because Cain was not punished with death—secondly, because similar laws, under the Jewish economy, have been abrogated; and, thirdly, because it has been done away by the milder spirit of the gospel and of Christ.

As it regards Cain, we would remark that both his own conscience and confession, and the reasoning of God with him, concur in shewing that the infliction of death was what Cain deserved and expected;—but, as God had not yet made known, by a distinct law, that murder should be punished with death, and as civil government was not formally established, he inflicted upon Cain a combination of other and terrible evils. If it is said that this law was not enforced during all the antediluvian age, we answer that this cannot be proved; and if it could, the universal wickedness which prevailed would be a sad proof of the necessity of such a law. The obscure passage, however, (Gen. 4: 23, 24,) in which Lamech's speech to his wives is introduced, can, we think, admit of no interpretation which will not involve the existence, or apprehension of the law of capital punishment, and the conscientious approval of it, as in itself right.

As it regards the Jewish law, it is true that under this law several other crimes, for special reasons, were punished with death as well as murder, and it is true, also, that as the Jewish law has been abolished with the Jewish state and economy, we are no longer required to punish with

death any crimes, but those for which it is elsewhere prescribed, or for which the reasons are not of present and universal application. The law proclaimed to Noah, however, was not given to the Jews, but was proclaimed some nine hundred years before their law was established. It was given through Noah, their progenitor and representative, to the whole world. It extended to all nations, and not merely to the Jews. It is unlimited by time, circumstances, country, or condition. The removal of the Jewish law, therefore, which was given nine hundred years after, and to the Jews only, could not in any way alter or remove it.* The law of Noah is, in its own nature, universal. It is based upon a reason which is common to all men and to all times, that is, that every man is made in God's image, and that to kill a man is to destroy an image of God, and therefore to attempt the injury and dishonor of God himself. And this law is also *enforced* by a reason which is equally universal, namely, that if the proper authorities in any community refuse to inflict this punishment, God will punish them by inflicting some other retributive punishment upon the community itself. Now, wherever we find, in the Old Testament, a precept or law of this kind, we may feel confident, that as the reason of the law continues, and the ground of it continues unchanged, the law or precept is, in its nature, moral, and not ceremonial, and is therefore of permanent and not of temporary duration. This conclusion is further confirmed by the fact that God has repeatedly and most peremptorily enforced this law of death, during the Old Testament economy, not only in this law, and in the Jewish law, but by the mouth of many of his holy prophets and inspired psalmists, so as to enforce it even in the devotional praises of the sanctuary. (See Judges, 9: 24; Ps. 9: 12; I Kings, 21: 18; Ezek. 7: 23, 24, and 22: 2—4, and 24: 7, 8; Prov. 28: 17; II Sam. 4: 11; I Kings, 21: 5, &c.)

This law, then, given through Noah, remains binding, because it is not affected by the abrogation of the Jewish law, neither is it done away by anything in the Christian dispensation. The supposition that God is revealed, under the Christian dispensation, as at all less holy, less just, less

* See the Apostle's argument, in Galatians 3: 17.

absolute in his laws, and less severe in exacting the most perfect obedience and the most complete enforcement of the penalty of disobedience than He is under the old, is a most ruinous and unfounded mistake. God, it is true, has more clearly and fully revealed his mercy and the plan of salvation in the gospel than he did under the law; but he was just as merciful and just as willing to save *then* as *now*; and he is just as terrible in his holiness, in his hatred of sin, and in his vengeance against sin *now*, under the gospel, as he was formerly, under the law. God is "the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." "He changeth not," and as with Him "there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning," so is it with his law, in its requirements and in its penalty—for "Heaven and earth may pass away, but one jot or tittle of what he has said shall never pass away." And as it regards the threatenings, the denunciations, and "the terrors of the Lord," with which men are persuaded to repent and obey the gospel, instead of being less severe, less awfully terrible and alarming than those of former dispensations, the truth is, they are unspeakably more so. They are, it is true, *more* generally connected with the soul than the body; with eternity, than with time; with hell than with earth; but, they are all the more fearful, because they are clothed with immortality—surrounded by the blackness of darkness forever—and hold the soul in the grasp of His vengeance who is "a consuming fire" to evil doers, and "who can cast both soul and body into hell forever." "If he who despised Moses's law died without mercy, under two or three witnesses, of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace? For we know Him that hath said, vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, the Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." (See Heb. 10: 28, 29, 31.)

Upon the ungodly and the unrighteous, therefore, the gospel heaps punishment as much greater and more severe than did all former dispensations, as its knowledge, motives, and encouragements to obedience are greater. And while

it does substitute, as far and as fast as possible, persuasion for fear, and conscience for compulsion, it nevertheless presses these motives by "the terrors" of a coming judgment. And while it has led and will continue to lead to the mitigation of temporal punishment, as far as the moral elevation of the community will permit, it nevertheless leaves this law of death unrepealed and in all its force. For such a repeal, not a word can be quoted from Matthew to Revelation. While the punishment of death, when these books were written, was the law of every nation under heaven, there is not a word of condemnation uttered against it, either by Christ or his Apostles. This law of God is, therefore, unrepealed and still in force, and God still requires that every man who is guilty of wilfully taking away human life, shall be punished with death.

How could our Saviour more pointedly repeat and authenticate this ancient law of death, than he has done in His Sermon on the Mount? After (Math. 5: 17) assuring us that "He came not to destroy, but to fulfil the law or the prophets," he goes on to say, (v. 21,) "Ye have heard that it was said to them* of old time, thou shalt not kill, and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment," that is, of the penalty adjudged for such offence.† "But I say unto you" that not only are murderers obnoxious to such a penalty, but that even those offences of hatred and malice which the elders allow to pass by unreprieved, render their perpetrators, according to the intention of God's law, justly liable to the punishment of the "Judgment" and "the Council," or Sanhedrim—both of which courts then punished criminals with death.

Does not Christ allude to this universal sentiment, practice, and law of men, when he commanded Peter not to kill with the sword, or he should himself be put to death—as culprits commonly are in the East—by the use of the sword? Does not Christ explicitly recognize the same law, and the propriety, justice, and designed terror of this law, when he says—"Fear not them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do, but I will tell you whom ye shall fear, Fear Him who can cast both body

* See the marginal reading.

† See Gen. 9: 5, 6; Exod. 20: 13; and 21: 12—14, &c.

and soul into hell forever—yea, I say unto you, fear Him,” —“even according to whose fear, so is his wrath.” Does not Christ further implicitly enforce the righteousness of this law in his parable of the husbandmen, who killed the servants and the son of their master, (Math. 21: 36, &c.,) when he says, “When the Lord, therefore, of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto Him, he will miserably destroy those wicked men?” Did not Christ submit himself to the execution of this punishment by a human tribunal? Did Christ not impliedly allow that it was in accordance with a divine law the punishment of death was inflicted by Pilate, as a judge, and that but for this he could have had no power over Him? Did not Christ, when upon the cross, impliedly give his sanction to the opinions of the dying thief, when this culprit referred the condemnation of the other thief and of himself to God, and declared that their punishment was just? (Luke 23: 39, 40, 41.) Do not all the Evangelists everywhere admit the abstract correctness of this punishment, where it is Justly deserved? Does not the apostle Paul expressly teach that civil government is authorized by God, and that civil governors are entrusted by God with the power of life and death, (the sword being, in oriental countries, the means of inflicting death,)—and that they must therefore be a terror to evil doers, while evil doers ought to fear and dread their power? Does not our Saviour, therefore, forbid all personal and individual revenge, because he would leave vengeance in the hands of the civil tribunals? And does not the apostle Paul mean the same thing, when he represents God as taking vengeance through the officers of government, and when he, therefore, requires all private citizens to let *their wrath* give place to the wrath which God legally inflicts upon those who injure them? “Avenge not yourselves, but rather give place to wrath”—ὁύτε ἑαυτοὺς τῇ ὀργῇ—wait, let God’s justice have an opportunity to assert itself; and the reason is offered—“For it is written, vengeance (punishment) is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.” Did not Paul himself, in his public defence before the Roman governor, say, “For if I be an offender, or have committed anything *worthy of death*, I refuse not to die,” and did he not thus plainly admit the justice of the law, and punishment of

death? Does not the apostle Peter as plainly admit and teach the right of punishing murderers with death, when he says, (I Peter, 4: 15,) "But let none of you suffer as a murderer"? And does not the apostle John, in the very close of the New Testament, (Rev. 13: 10,) declare that "he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword"?

And while, therefore, the New Testament does most peremptorily condemn all retaliation and revenge, and all infliction of death by *individuals*—unless in a case of absolute and unavoidable self-defence—does it not leave this law of God unrepealed, and does it not recognize the duty on the part of the civil officers, of PUNISHING MURDER, IN ALL CASES, WITH DEATH? Unquestionably it does. It is impossible to conceive that amid the unsparing condemnation with which crime of every hue is anathematized and condemned in the New Testament, the legal infliction of death, *if criminal*, would have been passed by without rebuke; or that, while every law of Mosaic and temporary appointment is so completely abrogated, this law of capital punishment, if of a similar character, should be not only NOT repealed, but implicitly assumed and indirectly and directly enforced.

Being originally instituted by God—to whom "vengeance belongeth"—this law must be, in itself, just and proper; and civil government, which is "ordained of God," being invested by Him with this right, and required to exercise it, on pain of divine displeasure, the enforcement of this law, in every case of murder, is not only just and proper, but imperatively enforced, both by duty and necessity.

To all, therefore, who believe in the Bible, as the word of God, it must appear certain that the law of death for capital offences, is both proper and expedient. "Is God unrighteous, who taketh vengeance? Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" "Or can man be more merciful than his maker?" "God forbid." Nay, in this very law, behold both the "goodness and the severity of God"—towards them that perish, severity, but towards society, whose general interests are preserved and perpetuated, "goodness." Perfect goodness is the disposition to secure the highest good of all to whom it can extend, in the exer-

cise of all the power and resources at command. In God therefore, perfect goodness must comprehend all worlds, all time, and the interests of all intelligent beings; and demands, therefore, the preservation of law, order and obedience, as the very pillar and ground of all happiness. "Justice and judgment" must constitute "the very foundation of God's throne," and it is only while God is "holy, just and true," in executing wrath as well as in distributing recompence and reward—that "mercy and truth can meet each other." "A God all mercy is a God unjust." "Vengeance belongeth unto God," as necessarily and as surely as goodness and mercy; for "God is known by the judgments which he executeth." And if man "must be just before he can be generous," and is otherwise prodigal, dishonorable, and dishonest, can we, without blasphemy, attribute a character which would imply weakness, imperfection and incapacity, to God, who "is perfect?" The fire that purifies must consume and destroy the dross, and therefore, as "a consuming fire, God must destroy all the workers of iniquity," and "cannot pass by transgression."

The contest, therefore, on the subject of capital punishment is, as we have said,—between atheism and theism,—between infidelity and inspiration,—between the Bible and the books of men,—between the wisdom of God and the wisdom of man,—between the moral constitution of man and the utterances of a "vain philosophy falsely so called,"—in fine, between the interests of society, as these depend on the favor, protection, and blessing of God, and the phantom day-dream of a feverish and sickly philanthropy, which promises happiness to the annihilation of the moral sense, the prostitution of man's spiritual nature, and the extinction of every moral affection. And the obligation of capital punishment "has therefore, been set up and urged upon grounds which, if universally adopted and acted upon, would demoralize the universe." Capital punishment is only one of the divinely permitted institutions of society, against which wicked and weak and misguided men have set themselves, and "taken counsel together," "saying, let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us." But "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall have them in derision," and when all their cob-web theories shall have been spun and swept away by

the besom of destruction, "the counsel of the Lord shall stand sure," nor shall "one jot or tittle of it fail."

As our object, in this article, is a practical one, we will draw three inferences from the discussion, before we close: one which may be termed political; one which may be termed doctrinal; and one which may be denominated practical.

And, *first*, the bearing of this subject on the social and civil interests of men is very evident and very important.

If civil government is the ordinance of God, instituted for the temporal peace and prosperity of men; if God has founded it on principles analogous to His own moral government; if it is, therefore, apparent that a nation can only be exalted when it is established upon the principles of righteousness;—and if one of these principles which God has most expressly enunciated is that he who wilfully takes away man's life shall have his own life taken away by man;—and if, to secure the enforcement of this righteous penalty, God has put into the hands of the courts and officers of justice "*the sword*," (that is, the power and the means of inflicting death);—and if God requires that every citizen shall submit to this authority, and dread the execution of this awful penalty, seeing that they "bear not the sword in vain, but are ministers of God and revengers to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil"—if, we say all this is true—clearly and indisputably true—then does it as certainly follow that the moral welfare and prosperity of every community depend upon the certain, speedy, impartial, universal, and inexorable infliction of the punishment of death upon every murderer. And to allow therefore, any murderers to escape, because of color, sex, or station, or any murder to go unpunished, because it was committed under the excitement of ambition, politics, or revenge, or in the form of that most anarchical, savage, and demoralizing of all possible modes of murder, (and this just because it is so cool and purposed in its thirst for blood,)—we mean murder by duel—to pass by any such offenders, for any such offences, is, we say, to call down upon the community, in some form of terrible retribution, the sure vengeance of God, who can "turn a fruitful land into barrenness, for the wickedness of them that dwell therein," and who "will require the blood of every murdered man

at the hand of man—at the hands of every man's brother, for in the image of God made He man."

"In the corrupted currents of this world,
Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice;
And oft 't is seen the wicked prize, itself
Buys out the law. BUT 'T IS NOT SO ABOVE :
THERE is no shuffling; THERE the action lies
In its true nature, and we ourselves compell'd
Ev'n to the teeth and forehead of our faults,
To give in evidence."

And how many cases of heart-rending murder are permitted to come upon us, because of the unrighteous and God-defying levity of our juries, courts, and above all, of our Governors, who abuse the prerogative entrusted to them for the protection of the innocent, to the encouragement of the guilty—God alone can tell. Many passages of scripture, however, lead us to fear that they may be but the retributive punishment of that God whose law has been dishonored, whose authority has been disregarded, and whose image has been trampled upon with impunity.

"Oh, it is a dreadful thing to leave innocent blood unavenged. It cries aloud to God from the earth. It will haunt the dwelling place of guilty rulers. It will bring down swift curses on the offending land. It will not be appeased until law and justice have free course, and the nation acquits herself by the death of the murderer." "Who-so sheddeth man's blood, by *man* shall *his* blood be shed." "Thine eye shall not pity him, but thou shalt put away the guilt of innocent blood from Israel, that it may go well with thee." The temple of liberty, the very altar of God must not shield him, from the just retribution. God requires the blood of the innocent at the hand of society; and though we may refuse to answer the demand, though we may leave the innocent unprotected, unavenged, yet WHEN HE MAKETH INQUISITION FOR BLOOD, HE WILL REMEMBER THEM!

Our second inference is a doctrinal one. In this law of all human societies we have a forcible and standing illustration of the universal law of God's moral government that "without shedding of blood there is"—that is, there can be—"no remission of sins," and that every capital offence—as a sin which aims at the authority and power of

the Almighty Ruler—is, and must be visited with death. Physical death, that is, the destruction of the living frame, is the greatest of all penalties, and must therefore be visited upon murder, which is the greatest of all possible crimes against a fellow-man.

In like manner, ungodliness, unbelief, enmity, hatred, opposition, indifference and contempt of God, his authority and his law, these are the greatest of all possible crimes against God and against his universal dominion. "THE SOUL that sinneth," therefore, "IT also shall die," for "the wages of sin is death." And hence, that it may be possible for the *soul* to die—that is, to suffer spiritual and "everlasting destruction," in its separate and spiritual capacity—"there is a judgment after death," and a "second death" after the first death of the body.

Now of this final, fearful and everlasting death of every guilty and impenitent soul, "on which the wrath of God must abide forever,"—the death of the body is an awful type, emblem, and evidence. "Fear not, therefore,"—to repeat a passage already quoted — "them who kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do, but fear Him who can cast both body and soul into hell forever. Yea, I say unto you, fear Him." And of this typical nature of this punishment, our Saviour affords us an express declaration, in the parable of the husbandmen, to which also reference has been made—the propriety and certainty of a miserable death in this world, as the punishment of their murderous deeds, being made to shadow forth the equally certain and awful death to be visited upon the ungodly, in the world to come.

Death is God's curse, and the consequence of "sin, by which it came upon all men, because that all have sinned." And as the whole nature of man was involved in sin, so is it in the penalty, and hence as the "body returns to the dust" in corruption, dishonor and decay, so "the soul that sinneth, *it*" also "shall die," and be forever deprived of spiritual life, light, and glory. This is that "wrath" which will be revealed in "the day of wrath." This is that "righteous judgment of God"—that "tribulation and anguish," from which Christ came to save. In Christ's nature and Christ's work, therefore, we have the true exposition of God's character and of God's deep, abiding, and in-

finite abhorrence of sin. In the Godhead and Divinity of the Saviour we see the infinite guilt and heinousness of that "sin of the world," from which He came to "save;"—in the nature of Christ's sufferings and death we see the true character of the death due to sinners;—and in the inexorable justice with which the "uttermost farthing" was exacted from Christ we see the immutable nature of that "everlasting death" to which every sinner is exposed.

The penal infliction of death is thus shewn to be a type and evidence of God's universal law, and of His holy, just, and avenging character; and while it fills us with awe and dread of incurring its execution upon our bodies, it calls upon all, as with a voice of thunder, to flee from that wrath to come, of which it is an earnest and a monitor, and which will be inflicted upon "every soul that doeth evil."

The *third* and last inference we deduce is of a practical nature, which our readers will permit us to present.

Since, as has been shewn, the law of capital punishment is so plainly and incontrovertibly the law of God, let all the pleas which our weak sympathies would urge against the apparent severity of the punishment, give place to the decision and the judgment of Him who is too wise to err, too good to be unkind; too omniscient to be deceived; and too omnipotent in His resources to resort to any needless or avoidable severity. His "judgments we are sure are according to truth against them who commit such things." He cannot be actuated by revenge or malice, and does not "willingly afflict" or punish "the children of men." And hence we may be sure that any feelings which would shrink from the most perfect commendation of God's penal threatenings, are the result of our weak and selfish imperfection, and that any reasonings which would lead to the condemnation of such threatenings are founded upon our inability to realize the true nature, and bearing of sin and crime, and from the secret partiality and favor with which "our desperately wicked hearts" regard iniquity. The language of every truly upright and right-minded soul will be that of the inspired Psalmist—"Come and see the works of the Lord, how terrible are His doings to the children of men."—"Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth, like dross; therefore I love thy testimonies. My flesh trembleth for fear of thee: and I am afraid of thy judgments." (Ps. 119: 119, 120.)

This is made manifest in the result of such feelings when they are cherished by a false or corrupt religion—a religion severe only so far as it bears on the interests of a hierarchy, but lenient and accommodating so far as the honor of God and the corrupt desires of man are concerned. Of this, proof might be drawn from the whole of papal Europe and the superstitious regions of the East. We will only, however, adduce the following illustration, from a recent tourist in Portugal, as given in the Protestant Quarterly Review :

“It is considered that the Portuguese, as a nation, are a full century behind most of the other European countries. I had not been long in Lisbon, when I felt, more than ever I had done before, the privilege of having been born and educated in a Protestant country.

“In my long morning rides to the aqueduct and the beautiful valley of Alcentra, I was in the habit of passing many of those mementos of assassination, so frequently met with in the streets and suburbs of Lisbon. I allude to the sign of a cross, made of wood, or carved in stone, which is usually placed on the side of a house, wall, or tree, whenever an immortal soul has been hurried into eternity by the hand of the assassin.

“It is impossible to pass a cross of this kind without a shudder, and a glance of inquiry in the mind as to *when* or *why* the deed was done. But the murderer is generally sheltered by the populace ; it is rarely that he is brought to justice. ‘Poor fellow, let him go !’ is the usual cry, and the crowd make way for the assassin, bestowing their pity on him, instead of on the object of his revenge.

“I heard an anecdote of a married couple, who had lived together for some time very unhappily. The husband at last attempted to murder the wife ; and she escaped to her own friends, who took up the cause, and the man was put in prison. It is customary for justice to yield to mercy, whenever the injured party intercedes for the aggressor. The husband’s relatives, therefore, came and implored the wife to exert her prerogative, and beg the life of her husband. She seemed resolved he should die, and it was long before she would listen to any proposal for releasing him. Her relations at last joined her husband’s, and made the same request ; when, overpowered by their united entrea-

ties, she consented to implore his release. The next attempt made by their united families was to persuade the wife to return to her husband's house; and she at length yielded to their solicitations and his promises of future kindness, and a day was fixed for her return. The husband, attended by his relations, and the wife by hers, met at an appointed place. The sight of her husband revived affection in her bosom, and she rushed forward to his arms. 'Take that,' said he, in a tone of savage revenge, and she sank on the ground, whilst the dagger he had plunged into her breast gave the death blow. No attempt was made by any of the attendants to secure the murderer. 'Poor fellow, let him go!' was the only observation; whilst a way was opened to facilitate his flight.

"This want of moral feeling is not to be wondered at, where the Word of God is so hid, that the true light never shineth, and where 'men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.'"

But let us come still nearer home, in this practical improvement. Let us look into our own hearts, and see what is there. "As it is written there is none righteous, no, not one: Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips; Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways; and the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes." (Rom. 3: 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.)

Such is the telescopic view given by the word of God of every human heart. And when, therefore, you read of, or behold the murderer with horror and a sense of righteous vengeance—ask yourself "who maketh me to differ?" and let your answer be that of good Bishop Hooper, in such circumstances: "There goes John Hooper, but for the grace of God." Oh, how few, to use the words of the immortal Howard, in his work on Prisons, how few are sensible of the favor of Providence which distinguishes them from the sufferers. And as to criminality, it is possible that a man who has often shuddered at hearing the account of a murder, may, on a sudden temptation, commit that very crime. Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall, and commiserate those that are fallen.

Ah yes, grace divine, free and transforming, can alone chain the tiger of man's blood-thirsty revenge;—tame the fury of his lion pride;—

“For passions in the human frame
Oft put the lion's rage to shame;”

or restrain the sudden bolts of his lightning passions. And the recent case of a duke slaughtering an innocent and helpless wife, and the every day accounts of similar enormities, prove to awful demonstration that every man is a Hazael, who, in his cooler judgment, would resent and abhor crimes which, under the excitement of passion and the corruptions of a selfish, self-willed heart, he will be found ready to plan, to prosecute, and to perpetrate.

“For jealousy by dark intrigue
With sordid avarice in league,
Will practice with their bowl and knife,
Against their harmless victim's life.”

He only who is kept by God is kept from open and from deadly sin.

ARTICLE II.

Narrative of a Mission of Inquiry to the Jews, from the Church of Scotland, in 1839. Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication, 1845.

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, convened May, 1838, in the city of Edinburgh, had its attention called to the subject of missionary effort among the Jews, through sixteen different overtures from various Presbyteries and Synods. The result was the appointment by the Assembly of a very large Committee, *ad interim*, with various instructions: among others, to collect information respecting the Jews, the world over, and to inquire what openings could be found for the establishment of missions. This Committee wisely thought the most ready and efficient