

however appalling; he is borne away by a momentary passion, carrying before it all remnants of common sense or regard for the future. We have no reason for supposing that capital punishment would not be more likely to deter him than anything else. On the contrary, we must suppose that if he stopped to think for a moment, he would be more affected by a punishment which appeals so powerfully and vividly to the imagination than by one less striking but more prolonged. At all events, the discussion as to the relative efficiency, for deterrence, of various punishments, cannot be affected by the case of one who is momentarily blind and deaf to any future punishment whatever.

We arrive, then, at the conclusion that Deterrence is more effectively achieved by capital punishment than by any other method; and that it satisfies the requirements of our second canon as completely and thoroughly as I have previously shewn it does the first.

My third canon was Reformation of the criminal. Since capital punishment involves destruction of the criminal, there is no need to reform him, and the canon is irrelevant. Some naïve persons have suggested, indeed, that we ought to give the criminal time to reform and lead a better life, lest his soul should be eternally damned. To that I have two answers: (1) That it is not the business of the State to trouble itself as to what happens to the souls of the departed; its business is to regulate society for the benefit of the living. (2) That the height of a criminal's repentance is most likely to be reached shortly after he has been condemned to death, and the gravity of his offence thus strongly brought home to him. By executing him at this auspicious moment, he will be relieved of the danger of a moral relapse—alas! only too probable with human nature as it is—and his soul will in consequence be given the very best opportunity it is likely to have of getting into heaven.

The fourth canon—Humanity—brings me to the centre of the controversy that has raged round the whole subject. It is said that capital punishment is so horrible and barbarous that it