

my views on this question, but as the hon. member from South Renfrew (Mr. Graham) said he was in favour of the resolution because he thought it was right, and because he thought that capital punishment was not a deterrent, I say I am in favour of capital punishment because I think it is right, and I think the figures conclusively prove that it is a deterrent.

Mr. LEVI THOMSON (Qu'Appelle): While I must disagree with some of the arguments advanced by the hon. member for Montreal (Mr. Bickerdike) and the hon. member for South Renfrew (Mr. Graham), I agree with these gentlemen on the main conclusion, that is, I do not think it is wise that we at this stage of the country's history should allow the infliction of capital punishment. My hon. friend (Mr. Bickerdike) has dealt with one of the propositions with which I cannot agree, because I think it was given too wide an interpretation. I refer to the commandment, Thou shalt not kill. My hon. friend from Kingston (Mr. Nickle) has erred on the other side, for he wants to give too wide an interpretation to the Mosaic text: if man shed the blood of another, by man shall his blood be shed. If the hon. member who introduced this Bill has erred, certainly the hon. member for Kingston has also erred. It is quite true the law of Moses did allow capital punishment in certain cases. Will the hon. member for Kingston undertake to say that we should allow capital punishment in every case where the law of Moses allowed it? Will any man in this House say that? No. And why not? They appreciate the fact, which they hide in their speeches, that the laws which suited the time of Moses are not suited to to-day. If I understood the hon. member from Montreal (Mr. Bickerdike) correctly, he seemed to approve of the theory that every murderer is insane. I cannot agree with that, but I will try to show that although that theory is not based on fact, there is still something in it. Another thing that seems to trouble him is that judges, prosecutors and hangmen, whom he seems to put all in the same class, must have a very uneasy conscience. I have never acted as a hangman or judge, but I have acted as prosecutor, and my conscience has never troubled me in the least, although I have prosecuted some men who have been put to death on account of their crimes. I do not think that argument has any bearing on the case at all. I do not think the conscience of any judge, or any prosecutor, troubles him either. I repeat that although I do not approve of all

the arguments the hon. member advanced, I want him to understand that I approve of the main conclusion: that we have advanced to a stage in this country's development where we can afford to do away with the death penalty. It is true that my hon. friend from Kingston (Mr. Nickle) seems to disagree with that. He seems to think that, at this particular stage of our history we should not think of such a thing. If the hon. member for Kingston had produced any statistics to show that we are having more murders at this present stage of our history than we have had in the past, there might be something in what he has said. But, I do not think he can do so. I have no authority before me, I have not prepared myself with any authorities at all, but I think he would be wrong in claiming that crime of this kind has increased. It is claimed on the one hand, by those who are advocating this Bill, that in countries where capital punishment has been abolished there is less crime of this description than there is in similar countries where capital punishment is still in force. The hon. member for Kingston quotes figures to show the opposite. They say that statistics cannot lie, but they can mislead very often and generally you can quote figures to prove the other side of almost any proposition. I have no doubt in the least that figures could be quoted to prove the opposite of the contention put forward by the hon. member for Kingston.

My hon. friend from Carleton (Mr. Carvell), has said, and fairly said, that we are very apt to be influenced by our own personal observations and experience. I have had some experience in dealing with matters of this kind, and possibly, to some extent, I have been influenced by what I have seen. Although, I admit, I have never made any special study of this particular subject, I have tried to study the subject generally and to find out as much as I can, not only from my own experience, but from my reading. My reading in connection with criminal cases brings me pretty much to the same conclusion as that at which I have arrived as a result of my personal experience in watching cases with which I have had to do myself.

It is admitted, apparently, on all hands, that the infliction of the death penalty for this or any other crime is horrible and repulsive. I think we all agree to that. It is a horrible idea that the State shall gather its forces together and put one defenceless man to death. It is against the better feelings of any right thinking man. I do