

commonplace of to-day. What will the ocean liner look like—even the new four and a half day boats—when the air-ships fly through space. The telegraph and the telephone are already an old story, and perchance wireless telegraphy will seem very crude indeed, when with some intellectual heliograph thought is flashed over seas and continents. Where can we set marks or bounds? Is so stable and dignified a thing as the administration of justice affected by the weird transcendentalism of the times? At Portland, a few months ago, I began to say something about sensationalism in the administration of justice, but when I realized that the hour hand was on its way around to three o'clock in the morning and that weary nature was sinking into a soporiferous if not a judicial calm, in which it would be difficult to realize that such a thing as sensationalism existed in the world at all, I abandoned the theme. If I return to it now for a moment it is only to draw your attention to a difficulty without suggesting any way out of it. If we abolished the up-to-date sensational trial, what would the world do for entertainment? A sensational crime, a formal arrest, arraignments and postponements, first juror sworn in the springtime, last juror toward autumn, all the arts of pleading, the refinement of cleverness in examination and cross-examination, the sworn testimony of a multitude of witnesses presenting the only example in the universe of truth contradicting truth, auroral displays of reason and sentiment, of logic and rhetoric, a disagreement of the jury, or if a conviction, appeal after appeal—behold the majesty of the law of which Crabbe wrote:

“As long as ammunition can be found,
Its lightning flashes and its thunders sound.”

In speaking of sensationalism I have certainly no particular trials in mind. I am not suggesting that the Dreyfus trial was too long or too often, or that any particular trials in England or in this country should have been abbreviated, but—applying the simple but stern twentieth century test—are these great sensational trials worth what they cost? It