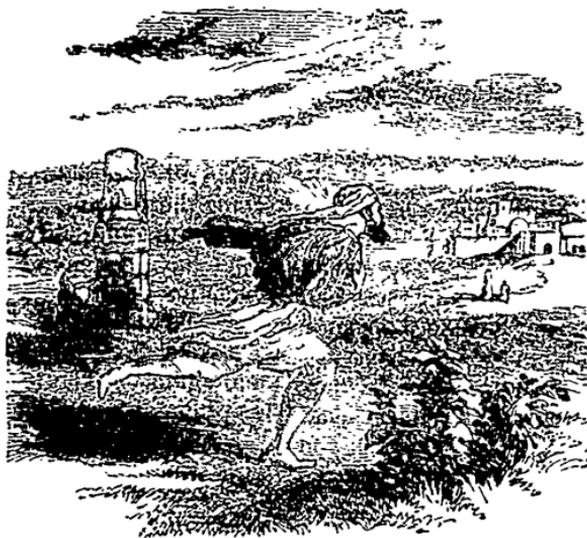


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CITIES OF REFUGE.

There were six of the Levitical cities divinely appointed by the Jewish law as asylums, to which those were commanded to flee, for safety and protection, who had been undesignedly accessory to the death of a fellow creature. The kinsmen of the deceased, or other person who might pursue to kill him, could not molest him in one of these cities, until his offence was investigated, and the judgment of the congregation passed. If he was not within the provisions of the law, he was delivered to the avenger and slain. The custom of *blood revenge* was deeply rooted among the Israelites, and continues among the Arabs to this day; and the institution of cities of refuge was wisely designed to check the violence of human passion. Several sections of the Jewish law have relation to this subject. For the size and situation of the cities, see Num. xxxv. 4, 5, 14; the description of persons, and the manner of killing, in cases which entitled the slayer to protection, Num. xxxv. 15—23. Deut. xix. 4—11. For the mode of ascertaining whether the offence was worthy of death, and the consequences of the judgment, see Num. xxxv. 24—33; and for the rules to be observed by the manslayer, in order to avail himself of the benefit of the city of refuge, see Num. xxxv. 25—28. It is doubtful whether the trial of the manslayer was had at the city of refuge, or in the vicinity of the place where the offence occurred. Perhaps there were two processes; one introductory to the other, as we have a preliminary examination to determine if the party accused shall be held to answer for his offence. This first process might have been at the city of refuge. The Jew-