

And last the people, frenzied or depressed  
 By sight or sound, or knowledge of the deed,  
 Are wronged and injured by the law's effect;  
 Crime follows execution; thought breeds  
 thought,

And, as from thistledown new thistles spring,  
 So violent actions to disorders lead.  
 That vengeful God of Hebraic lore  
 Has blocked the progress of the world too  
 long.

When Science seeks the cause, and Love the  
 cure,

Then crime will vanish from the human race.

Did you ever for a moment contemplate the moral wrecks, the devastation and depravity, that have followed in the wake of war and of active armies? If anything, it is worse than the active warfare itself. Notwithstanding that the guerilla knew he would be shot by his captors, hundreds of formerly honourable men, or at least apparently so, became sutlers, ghouls, horse thieves, or common robbers, and even little value or respect was placed on the virtue of womanhood. Some of the women themselves were contaminated by the general moral stagnation, and many yielded to the degeneracy of the times. Human life especially became so cheap, in the estimation of the people, that murder became the rule instead of the exception. The Government itself was engaged in the vocation of killing; the citizen, or at least the criminally inclined, put no higher value on life than his Government, and that is always true. If we are to teach our citizenship that life is sacred, we must not take it by law, nor even by law sanction it. As an example, the Quakers even refuse to go to war or for any reason take life, and they do not commit murders.

But you say it deters others from committing crimes. If that is so, why have States that do not kill the smallest homicidal rate per capita? Why are such crimes increasing, while the death penalty is being enforced? If it deters to kill by hanging or electrocuting, it would certainly act as a much stronger deterrent if you would, as of old, torture and mutilate the murderer? You say that would be too cruel and barbarous and would demoralize the public and even brutalize men. Well, the majority of people think inflicting the death penalty is too cruel and barbarous, and that the majority of people think so is proven by the fact that great majority of people want the sentence on the condemned man commuted to life imprisonment in each instance. Our descendants a century hence will look back on our legal executions with the same aversion and

[Mr. Bickerdike.]

horror, and denounce us as we do our ancestors who burnt at the stake and mutilated the body of the condemned, or caused it to hang, for weeks, as a warning.

Dr. A. B. Martin, Dean of the Lebanon Law School of Cumberland University, gives a demonstrative illustration from his own observations, that hanging does not deter others from committing crimes. A man was to be hanged on the public square in Lebanon, Tenn., and the gallows was erected. Two enterprising—I think infamously so—young men erected an arena around the scaffold, and on the day of the hanging were present and collected a great deal of money for their seats. Within one and a half years both of the men were hanged for the same offence for which the victim that they had exploited was executed.

Some of the most shocking crimes follow closely the most notorious executions. For example, the Allens murdered Judge Massey and four others in the Court House at Hillsville, Va., while the papers of said state were heralding the news of the execution of the noted wife murderer, H. C. Beattie. The assassination of Rosenthal in New York city followed closely on the heels of the execution of four men in New York State within one hour. Instances are reported in which the spectators at a hanging in England for picking pockets committed the same offence for which the victim was being executed.

Another reason why capital punishment should be abolished is that innocent men are sometimes executed. We know of one innocent man who was hanged in Canada, and we have grave doubts that there were not three innocent men hanged.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: Who were they?

Mr. BICKERDIKE: One innocent man that we know of was hanged in New Westminster, B.C. In one case two men—I do not say they were innocent, and we know they were thieves—went into a saw-mill office, stole a cash-box and went to the park to divide the spoils. It was getting dark, and one of them struck a match, and a policeman came along and one of them fired. Some said that both fired, but one of them claimed he did not fire, and the other claimed he merely fired to frighten the policeman, but the bullet struck a tree and glanced off and killed the policeman. As a result of the exami-