

it has a demoralizing effect upon the State generally.

Permit me to give you the history of capital punishment in the state of Maine, which borders on New Brunswick. Capital punishment in Maine was abolished in 1876. This was largely due to the influence of the religious bodies, again headed by the Quakers of that state. The secretary of that state says:

The strong minority opposed to the death penalty, had much to do with its non-enforcement from 1837 to 1867, and the enforcement of the law from the latter date until 1876 had more to do with its abolition; since the executions during this period awakened discussion and debate upon the subject, and brought the people face to face with their responsibility and duty in the matter. Prof. Upham, of Bowdoin College, and Rev. Sylvester Judd, of Augusta, Me., by their speeches and written arguments against capital punishment, created a deep seated and widespread sentiment in the minds of the people against this mode of punishment. The Society of Friends within our state, were ever urgent in their petitions to the legislature, for the abolition of the death penalty. The sentiment of our people is now so strongly against capital punishment, that it may be safely assumed that it will never again be enacted in Maine.

The Secretary of State of Kansas writes:

Capital punishment in the State of Kansas was abolished between five and six years ago by the action of the legislature of that state. Prior to that time, when a man was convicted of murder in the first degree and sentenced to death, he was sent to the penitentiary to be held at hard labour one year, and after that to be hanged, upon the order of the Governor. No Governor in the history of that state has ever ordered a hanging, with one exception. Public sentiment has always been against it, and it would not have permitted the execution of criminals. It required no force or argument to induce the legislature to repeal the capital punishment law. I know of no one who thinks that the repeal of the capital punishment law has increased crime.

These twelve states and countries all admit that, from the time that capital punishment has been abolished, capital crime has not increased, and that in most of them it has decreased. It is a fact that all over the world, wherever capital punishment has been abolished, capital crime has decreased.

Hon. GEO. E. FOSTER: My hon. friend has read instances of twelve different countries in which capital punishment has been abolished. Are we to infer that in all other countries capital punishment is still the rule?

Mr. BICKERDIKE: It is still the rule, I believe, but it is not so popular as it [Mr. Bickerdike.]

was in the days of our ancestors. After all, capital punishment is neither more nor less than an off-shoot of the dark ages. My hon. friend the Minister of Trade and Commerce well knows that capital punishment is a relic of barbarism, may I say a relic of Neroism, a relic of the dark and pestilential days of Nero's misrule in Rome. I believe that the day is coming when in every country where the people believe in a Creator, capital punishment will and must be abolished. The Minister of Trade and Commerce is well aware that in England this was a burning question during the middle and latter years of the last century. A commission was appointed to inquire into the result of the abolition of capital punishment in other countries. A report was made, signed by Stephen Lushington, John Bright, Charles Neate and William Ewart.

Mr. LANCASTER: What year was that?

Mr. BICKERDIKE: On the 8th of January, 1866. The report stated:

The undersigned, Members of Your Majesty's Commission are of opinion that Capital Punishment might safely, and with advantage to the community, be at once abolished.

This was signed by these four gentlemen, amongst them the Rt. Hon. John Bright.

There is another case here cited by the Rt. Hon. Mr. Justice O'Hagan, probably one of the most eminent jurists of that day. He says:

I am of opinion—with much deference for the great authority of those who think otherwise—that the great weight of evidence and reason is in favour of the abolition of capital punishment.

One of the most revered saints, St. Augustin, deploras the fact that capital punishment was in existence in his day. The proposal to abolish capital punishment was brought up on several occasions in the House of Commons and was always supported by John Bright. The first occasion was March 18, 1848, when Mr. Ewart moved for leave to bring in a Bill repealing the punishment of death. It was defeated by 152 nays to 66 yeas. Mr. Ewart brought forward his Bill in the ensuing session and the motion was lost by a majority, this time, of only 24. Mr. Bright again supported the measure, and of this address his biographer says:

Mr. Bright again supported the proposition. He said it was unnecessary to go into what was called the Scripture argument, but he