

think for a moment what the consequences will be, he is in the state of mind in which he has satisfied himself that he will not be found out.

Let us consider that for a moment. If he had not been in that state of mind, would he have committed the crime? Take the case of the Italians, to which my hon. friend from Carleton (Mr. Carvell) referred. Perhaps the idea was in my hon. friend's mind that those men would not have committed the crime had they known that the penalty was hanging.

9 p.m. I have a great respect for my hon. friend's opinion, but I do not think he has given the matter very careful study. Had those Italians had any idea that they were going to be found out, would they have committed the crime for the paltry sum they obtained? What good would the money be to them if they were imprisoned for life, supposing that was the penalty? It is quite possible that those Italians would rather be imprisoned for life than be hanged, whereas many other men would rather be hung than be imprisoned for life. My point is that they would not have committed the crime but for the fact that they were satisfied that they would never be found out. I do not believe there is one case in ten thousand, in a civilized country, that will not come under one of these rules: Either that a man is in a state of mind where he has not the slightest thought as to the consequences that may result from his action, owing to his being worked up by passion or otherwise, or else he is thoroughly satisfied that he will never be found out.

Mr. WILCOX: To what extent does the hon. member attribute the use of liquor to these crimes?

Mr. THOMSON: That would probably come under the first head, because I notice that men who are drunk have no ideas of consequences to themselves. That is the result of my observations; I have never had any personal experience.

If I am right on those points, that the people who commit these crimes come under one or the other of the heads to which I have referred, what difference does it make as a deterrent whether you punish them by imprisonment for life or by hanging? We are told that it is a deterrent to others. I do not believe it. Will any man be deterred from committing a crime by the fact that he thinks he will be imprisoned for life and not hanged? If there are any such beings in existence,

there are so few of them that it is not worth while considering such isolated cases. If hanging is to be used as a deterrent to others, the plan which has been condemned by those who oppose this Bill, that is the plan of public execution, should be revived. If we wish to deter the public from committing these crimes, we should give them an opportunity of seeing the execution, so that they may know what it looks like to be hanged. No man who has seen anyone hanged will want to be hanged himself. While I am not so very strongly impressed by the ideas of the hon. members who have spoken in favour of the Bill, as they themselves are, I firmly believe that it will be better for humanity, better for the country and better all round if we do away with capital punishment.

Mr. J. W. EDWARDS (Frontenac): I am sure that every one will agree with me that the Bill introduced by the hon. member for Montreal, St. Lawrence (Mr. Bickerdike) is of sufficient importance to command more than a passing moment of the time of the House. I have listened with attention and earnestness to the arguments advanced both for and against, with a view of informing my mind on this very important matter. The hon. member for Montreal has stated that when the State condemns a man to death, it says by that action that that man is unfit to live on earth. He argues from that, that a man who is unfit to live on earth is certainly unfit for Heaven, and he, therefore, lays the responsibility on the state of prescribing and limiting most unhappily the future of that person.

The hon. members who have spoken in support of this Bill have taken the ground that the worst thing you can possibly do to a man is to take away his life. They argue, no doubt conscientiously and from humanitarian motives, that capital punishment should be abolished. I am not altogether convinced that the worst thing you can do to a man is to take away his life. I do not know whether it is worse for a man to suffer a few moments of anguish, to be followed by oblivion, or to be obliged to spend the rest of his days behind prison walls; to pound ceaselessly upon a piece of limestone, to be driven to his kennel at night, to be let out again in the morning a worse man than when he went in, to return to his kennel at night more like a beast than he was in the morning, to be forced to submit to all sorts of degradation, to mental torture, to torment and to bodily tortures