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JAMES BINNIE, M.A., - - - *Editor-in-Chief.*
 J. W. MUIRHEAD, - - - *Managing Editor.*
 A. E. LAVELL, - - - *Business Manager.*

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All literary contributions should be addressed to the Editor, Drawer 1104, Kingston, Ont.

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MUCH has been written on the subject of capital punishment in Canada during the past few months. In our opinion many things have been said which are hurtful in tendency. However, in a general way, we think the discussion may do good, as it may lead some to a more intelligible conception of what society means by the death penalty. From among the views advanced we select three which we think seize some part of the truth and are therefore worth considering by all who wish to have an adequate idea of the meaning of the law on the subject. It has been said by some that the infliction of the death penalty is simply a preventative, *i.e.*, that it deters persons who have murderous intentions from carrying them out. In our opinion it has no direct influence in that direction. And the testimony of the most experienced judges is, we believe, in line with this view. A second opinion is that the infliction of the death penalty is educational, *i.e.*, that the aim of society in carrying out the sentence of death is to teach man the majesty of the law. A third view is that it is simply society taking vengeance on one who has transgressed its laws, *i.e.*, that in inflicting the penalty of death society is vindicating the majesty of the law; not seeking to teach men that there is a majesty in the laws of society. Many writers who have advocated one or other of these views, have insisted that any one of them excludes the other two. We do not think so, we are inclined to think there is an important truth in each of the three views, and hence, that properly understood, each view is simply one aspect of the whole truth. We think capital punishment is a preventative of crime not because it really deters the murderously disposed

man from committing murder, but because it teaches that we are all members of one organism (society) and therefore brethren. And so it tends to prevent men from having the murderous spirit, which is pure individualism. We think it is educational, not because it teaches men what is the usual consequence of murdering a fellow man, but because it tends to bring out the idea that murder, and indeed all wrong-doing, is a violation of the primal conditions of society, *i.e.*, it tends to lead men to fear the *crime*, not the punishment of the crime. Finally it vindicates justice, not because it expresses the feelings of the friends of the murdered person, but because it is the expression of the truth that murder negates the conditions under which society is possible.

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The Editor of the Free Church of Scotland Monthly, now on his travels in the United States, writes of men and institutions with charming directness. Of one minister in San Francisco, to whom he had a letter of introduction, he says, giving the name of the poor man: "He called for the purpose of asking me to preach for him, to suit his own convenience, but he did not further condescend to trouble himself about me or my affairs." Another brother was kinder, he "drove me to see the new university, which is now rising, and which is starting with an endowment of £4,000,000, the gift of one man, a Mr. Stanford, who is thus erecting a permanent memorial on the grave of his only son. Even as it is, there is no lack of colleges in California. In San Francisco alone there is a State University, one or two Medical Colleges, and a Presbyterian Theological Seminary. The last named institution is rather a 'one horse' affair, with some ten or twelve students, none of the professors having any reputation except Dr. Burroughs, who is said to be a scholar, and who has written a book on the Song of Solomon, which Mr. Spurgeon, it seems, has pronounced the best book on the subject. I have no doubt the seminary has the right to confer degrees, and that may account for almost all the clergy here, as elsewhere, being doctors of Divinity." San Francisco did not agree with the editor, apparently. It is a bad city, but the number of D.D.'s may explain why there are so few Christians. "It has a population of over 300,000, and only 15,000 of these are attached to any church." The Canadian Church is not so rich in D.D.'s, but it is richer in pastors, students and people. Formerly, Queen's alone gave degrees in Divinity, and it gave them so sparingly that a cry arose to heaven and the General Assembly for more manufactories of the much prized articles. Knox, Montreal and Pine Hill Colleges—and other institutions it may be—now assist in supplying the