

THE

THE NICHOLS' CONFESSION

p59953.

POWER OF MIND OVER MATTER:

OR,

THOUGHTS SUGGESTED ON READING NICHOLS' CONFESSION

OF THE PARRAMATTA RIVER MURDERS.

BY

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By Scripture we are commanded to love and honor God, and obey his laws—TO

HOLD FAST TO THE FORM OF SOUND TRUTH AND THE WORD OF GOD.

SYDNEY;

GIBBS, SHALLARD, & CO., PRINTERS, 108 PITT STREET.

1872.

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MONEY is a useful friend and servant, but the want of it often proves a rather cruel, villainous, and mischievous enemy. 'Tis further said, where there is gold or money that there there is generally, also, an abundance of sin, disease, misery, crime, and wickedness. By this it is implied that all evils and crimes, less or more, take their root, in some way or other, in money. Be this as it may, there is invariably always some kind of premonitory warning or symptom to denote the beginning of every motive and action in life. If an original impulse be wrong, it naturally and inevitably follows, *à priori*, that the act itself must likewise be wrong. When our reasoning or guiding faculties, therefore, are sound, healthy, natural, and true, no sin or temptation, however great, can ever befall, derange, or drive us to do wrong. Let mind once, however, give way to a wrong thought, or a single false act, anything, in fact, that is contrary to reason, truth, or the statutes of the moral law, then the false thought and act, or what is commonly termed "devil," sooner or later, leadeth to destruction in an endless variety of ways. Not by this that there is any reality or truth in the existence of a devil, or that the devil tempts people to commit sin, for I hold that the term "devil" is but a mere myth, or, at least, representing nothing more or less than the act of an upright spirit or mind when it first begins to fall away from the ordinary or accepted path of truth and moral rectitude. Were people to first reason honestly and fairly on every act and thing that's to be done, in place of, as too frequently happens, jumping to rash, ill-digested conclusions, probably derived from erroneous inferences, or to meet, perhaps, the demand of some present or urgent want, then right would always rule wrong—and good, likewise, would predominate over evil. In many cases crime, and criminal acts, however, too frequently take their first origin or root from a total disregard to some of the original laws which are intended to regulate mind and nature, viz., that right and truth must ever rule. When error or falsehood, however, pre-

X James 1st 13. 14 & 15.

7 Eccles 7 & 29. — 4th Ec 22 & 3

vails over mind, and especially when reason, sense, or judgment is unappealed to, then crime or sinful offences must naturally follow, because truth and the moral law is thus made subordinate to the ruling and irregular wants of passion, or other misleading, unnatural, sordid, or morbid desires. When animal propensities, therefore, predominate over the moral and normal spiritual mind, then God's laws become subverted by giving evil the precedence in place of following, as we are commanded to do, viz., His ways and not our ways, and to be ever on our guard against falsehood, or any other means which may lead us astray from the right path of duty, truth, and good works. The moment Adam had partaken and eaten of the forbidden or evil fruit, he instantly knew that he had done wrong. The devil, I contend, did not tempt him to commit the disobedience or wrong, but rather, I am inclined to believe, his reasoning or moral faculties seem to have, by some unknown means or other, become either perverted or defective, and thence happened the fall, not, however, from any devil's temptation, for I hold that this interpretation of Scripture is absurd; but rather that he (Adam) being made a responsible being chose rather to follow the dictates of his own imaginative thought, false reasoning, or aberrant mind, in place of continuing in the perfect, upright state in which he was first created, viz., that mind and reason shall ever rule and govern matter. The fall, as it is termed, was nothing more or less than the penalties arising from this very transgression, on the same principle as fire produces pain when the naked hand is suddenly thrust into the midst of burning coals of fire, or any other kind of burning substance. The mind is assuredly as much under the dominion and control of spiritual laws, as the body is under physical. Because we are unable to understand or explain either its profound functions or constitution, is no proof that mind, or the laws which regulate mind, don't exist. In my belief, there is as much an inward mechanism of mind as there is an inward physiological function of body, or other portions of the latent or material world; but that constitution is founded on laws far higher than those on which the phrenologist seeks to found his absurd, delusive doctrine, that mind emanates from the distribution of special organs disseminated throughout the brain. In other words, that some brains show a superior development to others—that they are defective in some qualities and superabundant in others—that every brain, in reality, contains two sorts of organs or faculties—viz., those of good and those of evil, a thing as monstrous as it is ridiculously absurd. And even classed with an artful cunningness to make the ignorant and vulgar believe that by these outward tokens experts in this would-be a considered science can readily divine the guilty from the innocent, the murderer from the hypocrite, and the swindler from the knave. It will need some more powerful and reliable a science, I imagine, than that of phrenology to teach and enlighten us on the true working principles or mysterious operations of the pure from an impure mind. To the vast majority of people, nay, indeed, to mankind in general, mind is a thing

often, but very little, cared for; or in what way it's trained or cultivated, for it's a sad state, I fear to think, that it's almost universally regarded as a perfect blank in regulating our thoughts, wants, actions, and duties in our pilgrimage through this life. Training, decorating, and gratifying the physical body, everyone seems readily enough to believe; but what, it is almost needless to ask, would have been the real, true state or condition of the human or physical body without it had first been illuminated and impregnated with the vital spirit or principles of an everlasting, immortal mind? A physical body would then have possessed but very little real happiness or everlasting enjoyment beyond, perhaps, a mere animal instinct. It is mind alone which gives or constitutes the essence of life, and when this mind or spirit is properly cultivated and guarded by sound truths, faith, and sterling principles, no crime or evils, as it's falsely supposed, can ever, then, tempt the truly upright and faithfully pious to swerve from the one, true, honest path of duty. When mind rules matter, mind then is as when first originally created; but when matter rules mind, or moral law, sin and crime follow as the natural consequence of the irregularity. No real lover of Scripture Gospel, or firm believer in God or eternity, can well, or feasibly attempt, I think, either to disprove or gainsay so obviously palpable, and incontestible a fact. All penalties of the physical body seem to me to take their first counterfeit in some obscure aberration of the mind. When mind is wrong, or off its proper healthy balance, the body then, also, by participating in the error, must likewise be wrong; and thus when the body is unguarded, or inadequately protected by a sound, stable mind, it may then be said to be out of its true, natural, healthy vortex, and, consequently, it is rendered more liable to the pains and penalties of its own abnormal, irregular, or unhealthy action. Mind must be nourished, supported, and governed by as eligible a class of laws, as much as the physical body; but it unfortunately so happens that very few people seemingly believe in the existence of mind, or that it is composed and regulated by its own peculiar functions. The action of the one is as apparently necessary and perfect as the intricate, physiological mechanism is to the healthy order of the other. The general error seems to consist in the belief that body governs mind, in place of which it is mind, rather, which governs body. Animal instinct is, of course, in a limited sense, a type, perhaps, allied to mind, but only in an inferior or a modified degree, to suit the wants of the general creation. When body (*i. e.*, our worldly wants) rules, matter then, strictly speaking, is made to rule mind—the carnal over the moral—the perishable world and all it contains over the everlasting edicts of Heaven, and thus consequently mind becomes, and is made the secondary, in place of being always regarded as the one, primary, fixed standard of life and universal law of nature, truth, holiness, uprightness, faith, justice, and mercy. When this law is not so considered, then the door becomes widely opened for the ready admission of all manner of temptations,

miseries, and sins. It is said, "hold fast to the law." Can this allude to any other fact than that of mind or moral law? for stupefy, as with chloroform, drunkenness, or other narcotic sedatives or agents, and how, then, is it possible to make the physical body susceptible of its proper natural feeling when the main functions of its life and vitality are, either actually deadened, or else arrested by the use of these foreign narcotic agents? It is surely plain from this one, simple, single illustration, that the brain or mind of man inherits the sole dominion of all physical functions of the human body. I argue from the major to the minor proposition, the only true way in which, I believe all acts of life may be reasonably explained, viz., that good and evil, truth and falsehood, must first be conceived by the normal or abnormal state of mind, ere the physical body can ever execute a purpose, be it for good or for evil. The moral training of the mind, therefore, is of far higher importance, and indispensable to life and happiness, than contriving to cram the youthful mind with a smattering of heterogeneous learning, knowledge, accomplishments, or education. Educate as we will, and store the mind with the superb riches of every tongue and language on earth, if judicious moral training be neglected in early life, then these things very often prove cumbersome rather than auxiliaries to shield us from the many fierce, physical struggles and battles of this world; lacking this all-powerful, essential, moral element of training, how many an otherwise noble mind has gone down to the grave in sin, or given way to error, falsehood, degradation, and crime? An upright, honest, moral mind must make an ever steadfast, faithful, and inflexible body. The one grand aim and object of all pure religion is but to keep the moral mind of man within the precincts of truth, and while faithfully living to fulfil this one law, he is protected with a shield, a help to prevent him from falling into the numerous snares of the world of sin and sinful ways. Nursing and doting over the things of the world is but treasuring up things temporary and perishable; but ever diligently striving to inculcate the mind with sound, solid, enduring moral truths, is preparing to reap the fruits of an eternal, spiritual happiness awaiting us above. As long as mind or reason remains healthy, unbiassed, and perfect, no man, then, can readily go astray; and, therefore, all evil habits, sins, temptations, or devils are kept at proper bay. This is the only way, I believe, whereby we are most enabled to resist sins, temptations, the devil, the world, and the flesh, viz., ever striving to live in conformity to the laws of God, and ever still making mind the sole and chief ruler of body or matter. Once depart from the unerring laws which regulate a healthy-constituted, well-balanced mind, and we depart also from truth, and as we depart from this truth, so also do we render ourselves more liable to sinful encroachments, and manifold temptations and transgressions. A strict adherence and fervent abidence in moral truths operates as an auxiliary or ample fortification to the mind, and while mind continues so fortified, neither sin, temptation, or the devil can ever enter therein

or lead us astray from the path of duty. The beginning of sin is but the too common neglect we pay to moral training, and the intrinsic value of mind or soul—living unto ourselves in place of unto God—thinking of the present, or nursing our vile bodies and passions with every perishable luxury of earth, in place of feeding or soothing the soul with things eternal—striving daily to wear the corruptible, while God our Father entreats, offers, and insures us of the incorruptible—bedecking the body with all manner of rich and rare perishable, precious gems, diadems, and jewels, yet starving and neglecting, all the while, the things pertaining to mind, soul, or immortality, which is hereafter to live again with the Almighty in eternity. While body rules death continues also to reign, but when mind or moral laws conquer those of flesh, then the soul is made to live for ever and ever, and where sin, crime, disease, misery, temptation, death, and the devil are unknown. The devil on earth, as it is termed, is but a metaphor or figurative expression, and implies nothing more or less, in my candid belief, than the exercise of the right or wrong internal mind or moral spirit of man : in other words, wrong passions, or the devil, tempts to sin only when our physical body attempts to rule mind ; but when mind rules, then there is no temptation to sin, because there are no transgressions of the moral law—the only law which is ever intended to direct and protect man through this life. Physical laws necessarily are ever changing—sun, moon, and stars in their revolutions—weather, seasons, life, growth, decay, and death ; but the moral law, mind, or soul, is unchangeable and immortal. To maintain mind upright is to ensure it the protection of the first law of immortality ; but if physical matter rules, then changes innumerable, and ever thirsting, begin and continue, and no matter how perfectly educated or well-instructed, while life and mind are irregular, the door is open to the entrance of every temptation, and sin, misery, and crime will probably, also, still continue. To accomplish any radical reform, it is absolutely necessary that mind should first be made to rule matter, and not matter, mind. Had the recent murderers, Nichols and Lester, followed this law in place of giving themselves up entirely to the acquisition of physical needs or sordid gains, then their numerous crimes, forgeries, and wholesale murders, &c., might, probably, never have been conceived, far less afterwards, even, ever subsequently committed. It was physical wants alone which dictated and governed morals or mind in these sad, pitiful cases ; consequently, like our first parents, matter with them was made to rule mind, and, therefore, the wrongful thought, by usurping the functions of mind, led to sin, sin to temptation, temptation to irresistible destruction, and, finally, an ignominious death—the consequence and sure penalties arising from these transgressions.

Before Nichols could finally yield himself up to the awful doom or temptation to murder Bridger, we read in his written confession, that his moral spirit was first strongly moved within, and apparently

knew by this feeling of mental commotion, from which he suffered, that the unavenged crime he was then about to perpetrate on his two innocent victims, was wrong, and still, seemingly, he either could or would not desist or resist the sad temptation, for, in the very words of his dying confession, he plainly admits, while his prey was in his own charge, of having twice failed to commit the heinous deed, and before the purpose was accomplished or ultimately effected at the third time—he says :—“ At last, as if moved by some unseen power, I grasped the pistol, and fired at Bridger’s head while he was asleep. As soon as I had done it, I felt as though my heart had leaped into my head, and said, ‘ My God ! my God ! I am a murderer.’ Bridger rose, saying, ‘ Oh ! Mr. Clarke, you have deceived me ; put me ashore, put me ashore.’ I then struck him on the head with the pistol. Lester searched his pockets, and handed all the money to me. And while the dying man kept saying—‘ Put me ashore ; put me ashore,’ Lester fastened a stone to his feet, and Nichols shoved him by the shoulder, and cast him into the water. As he was being shoved into the water, Lester said ‘ we had not searched his pockets.’ I answered, ‘ Good God, I have done enough ; let him go.’ At first the three of us started together in a boat, I sitting in the stern, Lester in the forepart, and Bridger between us. On the river we had some brandy ; I had the first glass, and then handed it to Lester. He (Lester) being at the back of Bridger, put the poison in a glass of brandy, and then handed it to Bridger twice. The second time Bridger complained that it was very bitter, and said that he would have no more of it. Neither dose taking the desired effect, the pistol then was to be used. At my suggestion we landed on a point on the river, and walked for a short time until the tide should rise, it being my intention to shoot him in the bush. My heart failed me, and we returned to the boat. Bridger then said, ‘ I think you must be humbugging me.’ In answer, I said ‘ Oh no ! we are only waiting for the tide.’ I sat in the boat in my former position, and strove to nerve myself for the deed. I thought I could not do it. I went forward to Lester, and said he must do it, for I could not. Lester went to my place in the boat, but could not fire the pistol. I again took my place in the stern of the boat, and run her on to the shore, telling Bridger that the tide was not high enough to get up. We backed the boat out, and all laid down to sleep until the tide rose. When I had slept some time I rose up ; and seeing the position he was in, and knowing for what purpose I had taken him into the boat, nerved myself the third time, and thus the deed, as previously narrated, was now effectually committed.” In the history of this painful tragedy, and the career of these criminals, who have now forfeited their lives on the scaffold, we learn many useful and valuable, practical, moral lessons ; that the beginning of smaller sins often leads on to more heinous ones ; and that our present system of prison discipline is utterly, and even woefully useless as a means of reforming the lives of many criminals. There’s a something, evidently, more effectually needed in the way of reforming criminals or the sup-

pression of crime, than merely confining their bodies in cells surrounded by iron-barred windows, and iron-clad doors in monotonous, dreary prison-houses. Taking a rational view of such systems of punishment compared with the state of morals or mind leading to the commission of many of these offences, and the prisoners therein confined—in place of mercy and justice guiding and trying to reform the guilty and fallen—prison discipline that now is, is more like driving the crimes deeper, and making them more incurable and inveterate. In short, multiplying ignorance and barbarism rather than redeeming or reclaiming the lives of prisoners from unlawful habits, and sinful ways. Incarcerating them in dungeons, and mustering at the clergyman's routine visit, and automaton religious service once a week, is not exactly the kind of way to bring fallen men back to the light of reason, truth, or God. If moral reformation is ever to be satisfactorily begun, it must take root and origin in more congenial places, and at earlier periods in life, than waiting till it reaches police offices, criminal courts, or prison dungeons, ship Vernon, and such like reformatories. Let the moralist—the Christian—or sincere reformer only pause to patiently and minutely study the career of these men's sad lives, and how much are we indebted to law for their original downfall, or its cruel system of discipline, which may, perhaps, have hastened them on to their last final doom? Repeatedly found guilty for other minor offences, sentences mitigated through good prison conduct, and on the recommendation of members of Parliament and magistrates; but did law, or its useless punishment, tend any the better to strengthen or even purify their minds so that they were enabled to again return in peace to society, or with the will to shake off the indelible felon's brand it had left behind? Or did it prepare them to expect any better or more permanent source of livelihood than what they had, seemingly, formerly met with when their sentences had expired, and they had again obtained their liberty? These are all grave and momentous matters of importance, (to some they may, of course, seem questionable, and already, perhaps, sufficiently perfect for all purposes), whether a barbarous system of prison life, and expensive law and criminal tribunals, from the petty street patroller up to the Judge on the dais, are in themselves sufficiently free from defectiveness, vice, and corruption, either to effectually control and subdue crime, dispense sanctity, or to neutralise evil in others? The fountain of evil has a far wider and deeper root than this, and law, I fear, when not directed to the exact morbid spot, is far more likely to be instrumental in aiding and abetting, than subduing or diminishing crime. When law and its expensive paraphernalia increases, it seems as if crime, in a similar and proportionate rate, would also increase. It would, I believe, do far more moral good were the money, which is now annually expended on keeping up a rotten system of law and prisons, to be distributed to pious clergymen to disseminate the never-dying moral truths of the Bible and religion. Civil or criminal law, in my honest belief, ignores and stultifies too much the fact of that

existence of practical religion, or the virtue and power of the moral law. And thus one reason, perhaps, why crime of every grade and dye increases, while the force and correcting rod, and influence of true religion on the other hand seems to be diminishing. The customary belief is, I think, patent and palpably inclining and yielding itself up more and more every day to civil and criminal codes of law, in place of following and recognising the one only true rule and standard of life—viz., pure religion, and the moral law. Many people, doubtless, think that it's enough to conform to civil rule and government, but it's just on this very point alone where sad mistakes oft begin, and which then lead, as we have more than once experienced, to many a dreadful crime, and an untimely, sorrowful end. Making man's law rule in place of God's—making matter rule in place of mind, spirit, or moral truths. God and His laws first, man second; in place of which, civil law, &c., tries to perversely making man first, and then God second. I say, and say it fearlessly, too, that our clergymen should be up and diligently doing to prevent religion's rights from being overthrown by civil. The Church should maintain its holy ground against all such perverted notions of the power and virtue of law to heal and cure the mind of criminals: if not, then Church degeneration but becomes the key to crime, police courts, and prisons. It's not enough to teach and preach once a week, to visit the sick, or console with the dying, to help the afflicted, the widow, and orphan; but Churches should control their members and hearers by their own strict code of moral laws, and not leave their sacred and professed functions to be entirely usurped by civil tribunals, jurisdiction, and authorities. Religion does a grave and serious injury to general society by allowing the debased shelter within, and concealing offences under the deep cloak of deceit and hypocrisy. The Church should be able alike to speak of criminals before as after sentence. Nay, I'll go a step further and insist on more general government and control of its members, its own tribunals, its own inspections, censures, or dismissals, &c. The members belonging to such a Church, so regulated and ruled, should receive preference in all transactions of life, and by this means would then become a surer guide to the well-being of society, in place of waiting till law has once inflicted its blow, and only now called in to console with, or to heal the pangs and sorrows of a sufferer's stripes. Enticing innocent, perhaps ignorant people, with a useless and cumbersome amount and multiplicity of statute laws, merely to break them, then afterwards punishing while thus ensnared, and stuffing them, like caged birds or wild animals, with mock discipline and involuntary doses of religion, to try to bring them back again to a sense of right and duty. Making, as I have already said, civil law the ruler of man in place of religion. Teaching law first, and religion next, in place of sound religion first; then men would not so often wrong their fellow-men, or need anything else but God's inflexible laws as their only true rule and guide through this life.

God surely never made laws so insufficient or imperfect as to

need man to supplement them with any of his blundering works of handicraft. The less money that is spent in the way of inculcating sound principles of religion in early life, the more, I believe, will afterwards be required for the suppression of crime, and the maintenance of law and justice, (as it is called), prisons, and prison discipline; but the more money that goes to assist in the dispensation and teaching of religion, the less, I firmly believe, will then be needed to keep up law, justice, courts, gaols, prisons, &c. The early neglect to receive religious instruction is but the first means of fostering and feeding law; but reverse matters, and circumstances then become as they were first ordained for man's rule and guide in life, viz., religion first, law second; mind, spirit, soul, first; matter, second. Let law, however, once usurp, as I believe it is now fast doing, the real functions of religion, and crime inevitably, then, must also increase. It is the province of religion to keep mind, spirit, or soul pure and upright; but too much law seems to me to make men forget rather the first principle and value of religion, the first attribute of God, and the only real security against all crime, &c. Lord Bacon says:—*"Every man should know enough law to know how to keep himself out of it."* The functions of the clergyman are of late years made more and more to follow, rather than precede, the Judge or judgment. Were the Church or religion to stand firmly to its own inherent and first professed duty of life, it would not stand to be so often dictated to, and jostled out of, its sacred rights and functions by many of our increasing innovations, authorities, civic or civil rules and mockeries. Religion has its foundation in the written and inspired Word of God, and is everlasting; but law is the often selfish and accursed fruits (I won't say devils or grasping evil spirits) of capricious, changeable, perishing man—deifying and subsidising all manner of judges, courts, and justice, in place of faithfully supporting our Churches and principles of religion—honouring man and his frail mortal works, dishonouring God and his life-giving, immortal ones—worshipping civil laws, disobeying moral ones—falling into sin, then calling on God, in place of living first unto God, and banishing sin and law, and its labyrinth of fallacies. Before Nichols could actually commit the woful deed of murder, and for which he has now suffered death, we see that he had first some hard mental struggles to contend against—a strong internal commotion of mind to overcome ere the fatal blow was executed. This commotion or mental struggle was nothing else, no doubt, but the spirit of evil striving to overcome the good or upright reasoning powers of the mind. While reason and moral justice prevailed, Nichols, we read, was wholly unnerved, and unable to carry into effect his odious purpose of doing wrong; but when his reasoning or moral strength at last gave way, the matter, or worldly affairs, viz., the greed of gaining the paltry sum of money he stood at the time in need of, fairly stepped in, and usurped the pure moral functions of an honest mind (thou shalt do no wrong) which is always to guard and protect the body against the approach of sin and temptation, exactly as the sentinel

is placed to guard and protect the arsenal against foreign invasion, and to give the alarm, when needed, at the proper time. The insatiable passion for the temporary gain, or money, urged him on to the commission of the cold-blooded deed; but he was still totally unable to execute his wicked design while sound truth was master of his mind to deter him from doing wrong. He was sensible enough all along, apparently, of the heinousness of the offence he was about to commit, as was evidently shown by the repeated halts made in the fulfilment of his resolutions; but instead of conquering the vile thought that kept springing uppermost in his troubled mind, and sparing the life of his victim, he clung rather, apparently, to the phantom thought of the sordid gains which kept haunting him, in place of seeking strength and refuge in prayer to God to help him to desist, and thus have preserved reason on the throne of truth, uprightness, justice, and mercy, without calling on God for help; reason, however, at last gave way under the burning moments of murderous pilfer and greed, showing, too truly, that matter in this instance was more powerful than mind, and the temporal gains of more importance to him than the eternal. When the horrid and fatal blow was struck, and the death or eternal sound had just proceeded from the pistol to his innocent victim, remorse, like the previous mental struggles, at once struck or recoiled back into his burning yet sensible perverted brain and reason, adding but another pang of sorrow to his former burdensome miseries, and another nail to his rapidly approaching end and coffin; for as soon as he had done the murderous act, he then exclaimed, as the words in his confession inform us, "As soon as I had done it, I felt as though *my heart had leaped* into my brain, and said, '*My God! my God! I am a murderer! Let him go, I have done enough.*'" These are his very words, unmistakeably showing the state in which his feelings were at the time he committed the grave and dreadful offence against the life of an innocent fellow-creature and All-wise Omniscient God. Another illustration of the awful doom which sooner or later awaits those who strive to make evil overthrow the good, or when the power of matter rules a never-changing mind, soul, or eternity. Nichols' own words are but another corroboration of facts which have occurred in similar cases from the beginning of the world, as plainly told us in Scripture records, the invariable fate of matter where matter rules instead of mind, reason, or moral truth. Eve ate of the forbidden fruit because it looked fair and good to the sight. Before she did so she was naked, but apparently did not know of it, for we read, that after the transgression of the law she only then discovered her state of nakedness, and therefore tried to hide herself from the presence of the Lord among the trees in the garden of Eden. So did Nichols (and every other murderer or transgressor of the law) try afterwards to conceal his crimes; but the same God, and the same laws of justice and truth reign and rule supreme still as ruled when our first parents offended against the first law of nature and God—that *mind or soul* will ever continue to rule matter.

Both Adam and Nichols, &c., knew well at the time of their respective offences, that they had done wrong, and were perfectly sensible that they had broken and transgressed the moral law, showing that religion without some thorough, sound, early, moral training is insufficient, if not even useless, to protect mind against the many alluring and powerful devices and captivating snares and sinful temptations of this temporary, wicked world. To gain eternity and happiness, the mind must ever reign supreme, and ponder over eternal things. Who can show us any enduring or everlasting thing on this earth? No, nothing. Everything around us must perish. The sea, the air, the earth, yea, even the very mind of man, must yield up its treasures at that sound which no one ever disobeyed.

In concluding these remarks I shall not attempt to offer any exposition of that equally abstruse part of our subject having reference to the physical state of "*life beyond the grave*." Suffice it to say, it is enough, surely, for our present purpose to know and confine our thoughts simply to the moral or spiritual aspect of the question; for if the spiritual life here below be kept as pure and undefiled as possible, then no one, I think, need fear but what the physical state (whatever it may be, or shall consist of) will afterwards be properly taken care of, and amply provided for without our making any unnecessary inquisition on that score. The appalling cold-blooded murders, for which these men have recently and justly undergone the last penalty of the law, are rendered still more heartrending and disgraceful in the eyes of all professed Christians, (demoralising, as some may choose to have termed it), from the very fact that our authorities, to their shame, were besieged, prior to and on the day of execution, with numerous applications from persons wishing actually to feast their pitiful eyes on the last dying struggles of these unfortunate men. Not even this, but crowds, too, seemingly rushed to and fro to get a glimpse, if possible, of their ghastly, mutilated, distorted, dead bodies, while they were, it is said, in the very act of being transported from the scaffold to the grave! In the face of "*private executions*," and in the midst of our boasted state of enlightenment and civilisation, our spirit-teaching religion, morality, and Christianity, what kind of refinement of taste or sense can scenes and conduct like this be? I suppose it is too desecrating and debasing to be told. Nay, more, how can we reconcile any value to the religious ceremony or habit of administering the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper to criminals about to expiate their lives on the scaffold for cold-blooded deeds of murder, in brutality far outshining the Burke and Hare tragedies in days gone by? Or who can believe in the utility or virtue of any such kind of death-bed, dying repentances? Or is it not carrying religious ceremonies or mockeries to extremes, provoking the Lord to still greater wrath and anger at the crookedness and hardness of men's hearts? Oh, Religion! abstain from playing havoc, or inflicting murder also on poor souls, as it is surely enough to suffer in body, far less to be subject also to torture in mind with, perhaps, false hopes

and faith when within a few paces of the grave, eternity, and an Eternal Judge! What the statute law has just condemned, religion, by the administration of such rights and ceremonies, only appears to me to be again contriving to ignore the justice of the sentence by assuming to issue such passports to Heaven. Better far for religion to away with all such kind of intercessions for mercy, and leave the troubled spiritual mind of poor penitent criminals to the goodness, forgiveness, and mercy of a kind Father, a just, true, and loving God and Lord, slow to anger, and ever ready to forgive. The empty curiosity was greater, no doubt, to look at the last brief, suffering, moments of ebbing life and their physical frame in the first step to decay, than stopping, probably, to deeply ponder over the sad life and career of these unhappy men, whose earthly and sinful lives were soon to terminate; or how they had tended or guarded their mind or soul, so soon to be for ever separated from their tabernacle of clay, and to appear again before Almighty God; and soon also must those be who were there to witness the agonising flight of soul from body, as none need think, while looking and gazing on others, that they can escape the sure and certain pangs of death, or transition of mind—soul—from body to eternity, from earth to heaven. All should in time take warning, and promptly look to the state of their own mind or soul, and be prepared for the coming and unavoidable change. It is not the body, but the mind, that God will soon demand of us to be returned. It is not the body that will have to atone to God for sin and transgressions; it is the spirit or mind, which is only now for a short time entrusted to our care and keeping on this earth. The heavens, the sun, moon, and stars—everything, in fact, on earth will pass away, but God's word endureth for ever and ever, world without end. Mind must not only think, but it must also believe in the Lord to be saved. Mind must not be deluded by false hopes, or by saying, There, I have done this, that, and the other thing; but everything is to be firmly fixed or offered up in sacrifice unto the Lord. We have Christ's death as a visible proof of this. "The first Adam was made a natural, living soul; the last Adam (Christ) was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterwards that which is spiritual. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." Nothing can ever leave this world but mind—the moral spirit or soul of man; this alone is what is to be kept pure and undefiled to win God's mercy and eternal salvation. The dross of the earth can help us nothing, as it is pronounced but a gnawing, cankering worm to both mind, soul, body, and flesh. The world and all that it contains is "vanity and vexation of spirit."

The aim and art of photography is to secure, if possible, correct imprints, or faithful likenesses or images on material substances, but in a moral, spiritual, or mental light, who can estimate the probable or material injury the recent pitiful public disclosure of facts accompanying and surrounding the execution of these murderers, may have, unintentionally and imprudently, inflicted on the general mind of

society, or the kind of impressions or inward photographic images the witnessing of such contumelious sights may have indelibly imprinted on the mind or feelings of the more susceptible individuals who, no doubt, I am sure inadvertently, allowed the noble mind or moral sense (either before or after execution) to pander to the petty thought of gratifying such base, low, idle acts of curiosity and odious scenes of death—sights the most repulsive to men with any pretension to mental sensitiveness, or refinement of human or manly feeling? How happy would not the thought be, could we but be convinced to look as steadfastly into the real state of our own mind or approaching death, as we so narrowly and closely desired to watch and scrutinise the tortured, trembling limbs and muffled groans of these unfortunate men yielding back their neglected souls to the keeping and demand of God! What a sickening thrill of deadly fear and trembling would it not make each of us feel at the state of our own moral condition, our own responsibility of life and death, and at the shortcomings and miserable imperfections of our own mind, and responsibility of soul to God, so soon also to be demanded of all of us in truth and justice, at the bar of an unerring and Almighty Judge! The last stage of the whole horrid affair of the Parramatta River murders furnishes another palpable illustration of the fact, that accomplishments, or mere refinement of taste, or intellectual attainments, or educational capacity, unless it is first duly incorporated with some sound principles of religion and early moral training, is no satisfactory or effectual guarantee against the perpetration of crime, or even apparently of thwarting the minds of many from visiting and beholding the last debasing sights or end of such men who had perpetrated such atrocious, diabolical deeds of murder. There is a training of the will and mind of man assuredly indispensable and necessary to the support of moral life, and a healthy rectitude of every action in life, as a regular discipline of the physical body is essential to the maintenance of a just equilibrium of health; but what great moral lesson is there to be gained, or acquired, by feasting or gloating the eyes on ignominious executions, or even (before or after execution) frantically thirsting to witness either the living or dead bodies of lawfully and righteously condemned murderers? The monster, the tempter, the leavener of all evil, must, indeed, be much more strongly developed in some than others, to account for this strange idiosyncrasy of temperament. Is crime not of the first giving way of the mind by imbibing sinful thoughts, or evil sights? for, assuredly such dreadful scenes must not unfrequently exercise the very opposite effect to that of pleasantness on the spectators' feelings (if they have any) if they do not have a tendency afterwards of subjecting them to painful, cold, dead, thrilling sensations, rushing to and fro through their thinking, fevered minds, when reflecting on sights witnessed on these sad occasions? Mind, as in photography, too truly receives similar kinds of imprints or repulsive images imbibed at many of these unnatural scenes, which are afterwards not so easily again obliterated,

especially in sensitive or susceptible subjects, as some fatuous people so lightly imagine, or readily suppose.

The probability is, were we more conversant and familiar with the lives and career of many murderers, their state of conception, procreation, or entrance into this world, we might then find, that much of the crime which now unfortunately stains the history of our fair land is, in some degree or other, not unlikely, in the first instance, attributable to the want of some proper care over the moral feelings or mind in being corrupted while witnessing some such sad, repulsive sights, or, perhaps, some minor or similar unrevealed or concealed tragedies, leaving the mind, perhaps, impregnated with haunting imprints, which it is again unable either to destroy or eradicate—Cain's blood and brand, in short, descending to posterity. Once give way to one evil thought or deed, however trivial, and the regular normal action of moral feeling, or mind, may ever afterwards jar and torment one through life, and it is impossible to tell how the simplest transgression may, under favourable circumstances, afterwards end, or what other evils it may again lead and bring us to.

It is not enough to educate the mind with accomplishments, or the mere art of teaching every person to read and write, that will diminish crime; but it's upon some sounder and better system of early moral training, or religious instruction, whereby man can ever become perfectly fortified and shielded from any of the transgressions of God's laws. It is to be able to resist the tempter, or spirit of doing evil, at the proper time, and in every act of life, however trivial, (*i. e.*, by always endeavouring to keep the faculties of mind in as true and healthy an order and condition as possible), that mind shall ever rule matter, that is, that moral sense and mind should ever and invariably be first appealed to before the performance of any act of life, be it great or small, is rashly undertaken. When the moral sense of the mind accedes to the act to be done, then the act must be right; but when acts are done without first obtaining the moral sanction of its justness and justice, then the act must indeed be wrong; for mind alone rules in truth and justice, and not the changeable laws of matter. It is not, simply, enough to know where people go who tell lies, but it should rather be, "where do people go who speak the truth?" Lying is a secondary law, but truth is for ever primary—lying is matter, but truth is mind—lying is worldly, but truth is holy and heavenly—lying is of the devil, or perverted, wrong, evil spirit, but truth is of God, justice, mercy, and righteousness—lying is perishable, but truth is everlasting, eternal, and abideth for ever. True religion, then, should only be made to teach us the simple love of God, and not intimidation, or the fear of the devil. Love to God is the first great law of Nature, the fear of the devil is but the second. It's a wrong religion entirely to first preach the fear of the devil, and then teach the love of God as second. Man, and man's duty, should be to preach according to moral, and not the statute law. The moral law is of God, but the statute, or changeable, perishable

law, is of man. God's always first ; evil, or devil's, second. The first law is of God, the second law is of man. God, positive—the devil, sin, temptation, negative.

Heaven positive, the world negative. This is the order of law we are by Scripture commanded to obey. What does civil or statute law, however, profess or endeavour to teach, but to commit sin and crime first ; then seek God's love and forgiveness, through religion, second. Stealing sheep, horses, cattle, or bullocks, is made one of its primary maxims or laws, but the sin itself, of stealing, is merely accounted in a secondary place, or, indeed, considered as a very inferior matter of importance. Rigidly enough punished, of course, for the value of the sheep, the horse, or bullock, depriving the rich man of his property ; but, oh no, it would be too preposterous for criminal law ever to think of inflicting punishment for the bare sin alone of stealing. Men are sent to gaol, not for the naked sin of stealing, but rather for depriving or robbing the rich of their riches, and enabling them, from carrying on an unmolested wholesale practice of pilfery and barefaced robbery, from the covering which covers our back and nakedness to the food we consume, and which is often scarcely sufficient to satisfy the natural cravings of hunger, or to keep death from the door of many a truly honest, half-starved, struggling, pious family, who (many of them) would rather die of want and sheer starvation, than forsake their true principles, or neglect their moral duties to their God. Making the petty worth of the article stolen govern the sin, in place of sin governing the article. Making moral law a farce while civil and criminal laws are adored as an indispensable earthly deity. Making man, in fact, undergo, as it were, a double, in place of a single punishment, for the one same offence, viz., a statute punishment on earth, and a moral punishment in Heaven. Nay, I'll go a step further, and, without fear of contradiction, assert that it's often not the crime, but rather the man that's punished. Men are, I am fully convinced, often hunted and fairly run down to crime, to an undeserved punishment, and to an untimely end. I abhor crime as deeply as any man, but one cannot always readily shut the ears of truth to what we every now and again occasionally hear, may be from unbiassed, prejudiced, or truthful lips, but it may yet be a very difficult matter, indeed, for many a long year to come, to for ever silence the tongue in regard to the career, life, and end of Ben Hall (his body riddled with bullets), and his notorious clique of bushrangers. Crime must, like everything else, I presume, have its regular periodic cycles of good and evil, and but for bad men, where, probably, would our good ones come from, and what would be done with our clever, able, learned, infallible Judges, our forensic pleaders, and hair-point splitters of law ; our M.P.s, or law framers ; the grandiloquent eloquence of our J.P.s ; our testimonial-receiving constables, gaolers, sheriffs, coroners, turnkeys, hangmen, police magistrates ; our C.P.S.'s ; our Attorney and Solicitor Generals, *et hoc genus omne*, and our messengers ; our faith-

ful jurymen, curiosity hunters, and news mongers ; our gossipers and court idlers ; our prisons, prisoner-servants, lawyers, and clerks ; to cut it short, I may, briefly, say the endless ladder or chain of guardians which now stand between us and the two H's., and all living to feast and fatten on crime, the sins, miseries, and wickedness of mankind ? Am I my brother's keeper ? Yea, are these not our brothers' keepers ? Miserable platitudes, tyrannical law, cruel reform ! That God should have created man, with an immortal soul, to need any such keepers, and to be tended, guarded, and watched, like a parcel of wild beasts ! Divorce Bills, indeed ! and their facetious and argumentative cart-loads of clap-trap and dross, while we stand in more need of a "*Royal Divorce Bill*," to for ever separate the moral from the statute law, or God's laws from man's.

In place of true religion, the accomplished scholar, the divine, or the educated, refined, and learned, teaching men, by their example, how to worship God, and to love and adore His laws, it is more and more every day becoming rather a too truly painful and palpable or patent fact, that "*man, or hero worship*," is more frequently the only guiding principle of our lives than God-worshippers, practical followers of religion, or believers in eternity. Nichols in vain tried to conceal his crime by tying a stone to the dead body, and then sinking it into the river ; but matter and sin were unable to conceal the truth, for we read that the body, some little time afterwards, again rose, and floated on the surface, as if to show, however cunningly concealed, "*that murder will out in time*," and so it will be with those who tie false religion to their neck, in hopes to conceal their errors. God assuredly, in due time, will make all falsehood and hypocrisy to float on the surface, and come to judgment, as surely and certainly as the murdered body of Bridger was made to float on the river. Hypocrisy and concealment is but a period of time in the one case as in all others. Like the history of the preservation of the life of Noah and his family, during the period of the flood, this "*earth*," by an all-wise, merciful Providence, is no doubt made and become like unto the one only resting domicile, or "*ark*," whereby man now floats up and down on the mighty abyss of many turbulent scenes, quicksands, and currents of life, until our perturbations and probationship here below shall have abated, been completed, or else called upon to settle on Mount Happiness, in Heaven above. Man must be his own ship or life builder, pilot, captain, and preserver ; and with Christ as his compass, and the Bible as his helm, none need have any fear or difficulty in safely steering onwards through the many fierce billows of life's rugged ocean, till sure, safe, and certain anchorage is reached in yonder port, or Heaven, which stands looming off conspicuously in the distance, bidding welcome to thousands and tens of thousands to come and enter therein, and finally rest in peace, safety, and sure eternal happiness.

A kind and blessed law, thankful criminals and happy prisoners ! When convicts have once undergone all the pains and penalties which

man or his pliable sentences of law can inflict, surely it's not intended, by this legal interpretation of Scripture doctrine, that criminals are again to suffer for the same offence in another world? If it be so, then man becomes an object and sufferer of a double-edged cruelty, torment, and punishment, making criminal and civil law worse than a farce or a mockery? I am not now wishing, by any means, to make man both Judge and God; but I desire rather to, if possible, establish the irresistible fact, that all punishments should be based after some more rational and graduated moral scale of justice, than on the mere worth and value of a few paltry, earthly goods and chattels. Men nowadays are sentenced to five, ten, and fifteen years' imprisonment in gaol, or to hard labour on the roads or other public works, for stealing a sheep, horse, or bullock, of the value of from a few shillings to a few pounds; but the heinous and villainous sin of perjury (the heart of England, of late, has been kept almost in a perfect ferment, or state of revolution, and shocked to its core with the trial and history of such an extraordinary case) is often actually winked at, and is even frequently allowed to escape with a petty sentence of a few months in gaol! Forgery, fraudulent insolvency, gambling, horse-racing, speculations, Sabbath desecration, and many other matters, are treated as affairs of very minor or indifferent importance. The punishment, apparently, is not for offending against any rule of moral law, but meted out simply, seemingly, only to suit particular conveniences, circumstances, or according to the extent the offender has either transgressed against worldly things, the goods and chattels of the rich, and value of riches. In giving judgment, it is quite as easy to open the jaws to say ten years as it is to say ten months; but wherein rests there a comparison (and unequal comparisons) between the crime committed and the punishment inflicted, or the punishment and the crime? Crime has no reliable or comparable distinction between its oft-unequal sentences, and never will, probably, be so, while we are content to remain under its fluctuating, oscillating, changeable, fickle-minded influence, in place of being guided by some properly regulated scale of punishment, based on the moral law. Two men, for the very same identical offence, frequently receive very dissimilar, opposite sentences; and the command of interest, influence, or money, is a matter not at times to be too lightly despised in many of these cases. Man can, with impunity almost, transgress and ignore any or all of his altar vows, baptism, sacrament, marriage, &c., but once let him commit even the veriest petty breach of statute law, and you may be sure the culprit is very soon lodged in the felon's cell, and under lock and key. Not that I have any ambitious desire to give either assent, poignancy, or colouring to these remarks, or seek to make people moral by Act of Parliament, but rather that Acts of Parliament, I do think, should be more generally, consistently, and closely framed, to suit many or these cases, after religion and the moral law, and be the means, therefore, of entirely abolishing much of its present ambiguity, and anomalous

inconsistencies. I don't argue that religion is even altogether in everything immaculate, or infallible, for much of the religion, or the religious dogmas of the present day teach us to worship the devil rather than how to worship God. Why should religion teach man to fear God or devil? We should be taught rather to love God and reverence His laws; and those who devoutly do so, need have little fear of death or devils. Those who really and faithfully love God love death, and those who love death only long for the coming of eternity, and eternal happiness; but those who fear the devil, fear death, and those who fear death, only fear eternity, and the state of their own perverted, neglected, or sinful mind or spirit coming to judgment. When God is with us, who can be against us? By obeying His laws, God is ever with us; but by trusting to matter, we are with the devil, and under the dominion of an evil spirit. God's omnipotence and omniscience exist everywhere; the devil is to be found nowhere except in incarnate dispositions, disobedience, and transgressions. As the parson once said to the sailor, viz., "that the devil was chained up for a thousand years." "If this be so," said the sailor, "then might I ask how long his chain might be?" Parson: "It reaches all over the earth." "Then," replied the sailor, "if that be the case, they might as well let him loose altogether!" And so it is with the religion of a great many professing Christians at the present day; they seek to chain up their love and obedience to God, and allow fear and the devil to roam at large; in place of which they should chain up their fears and devils, and let love and reverence to God have its freedom and liberty. By all means, chain up all evil ways, and then there is no fear of sin, temptations, crimes, or devils ever trying to haunt the mind of man, or to make it fall away from the lofty citadel of truth, love to God, or eternal happiness. There are, no doubt, some few whose lives or footprints are still to be visibly traced far back on the receding sands of time, but, generally speaking, the neglect of the human mind, I fear, makes the mass or great multitude to hie onwards in a state of ignorance and darkness of the real nature and object of life on this earth, or the profound oblivion which is so soon to engulf and encompass all deeds, thoughts, worldly actions, and lives. If mind remains in a state of oblivion here, while in our keeping, how can a soul be expected to live or shine hereafter? or the kind of resurrection that is to be expected of either mind, soul, or body?

Talk of the lamentable increase of crime, insanity, and the disclosures of so many sad and dreadful cases of suicide and murder; but is it anything to be wondered at, while men absolutely allow mind to be subject to so much contemptible neglect, and systems of ill-regulated conduct in the ever-increasing and endless, fantastic, or infatuated puerile pursuits, avenues, and alluring whiles of a greedy, gay, contentious, and jealous world. The Scripture fact is as trite as it is true, "men have eyes, and yet see not; ears, but yet cannot hear; hearts, but cannot feel; and minds, but cannot think." Let us not stop to lament over the vast multiplicity of so many grave and serious

offences, or crimes ; but rather let us rationally and soberly think of the awful amount, or wholesale destruction, of human mind—mind or soul.

Mind claims no special latitude or longitude ; its abode is universal, with God and the Bible as its first meridian. Light is inimical to guilt, for guilt generally makes night and darkness its confidant, guide, and natural shelter ; but innocence and truth love to bask in the vitalising influence of light, and the glittering sunbeams of noon-day. Where truth is, there God is ; and where God is, light is ; but where guilt dwells, there dwells also darkness, fear, the devil, destruction, and death.

“Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed.”

No one can readily fault the justice or righteousness of this commandment. The question, or rather the doubt is, *“how it should be done ?”* Whether death by burning, poison, starvation, shooting through the heart, drowning, beheading on the block, stoning to death, the rack, guillotine, nailing to a cross, hanging, garroting, blowing the living bodies of criminals from the mouths of cannon, or the Russian practice of confining the living bodies of criminals in a narrow iron case, and then, at a given signal, allowing a heavy weight, of from five to ten tons, to drop suddenly, so as to crush the bodies to instantaneous death, and many other ways. The object of all such systems of punishment is not simply with the view of putting criminals to death, but it is those who can devise, seemingly, the most barbarous instrument of inflicting torture as well as death. It is enough, surely, for man to simply deprive the criminal of his life, without seeking to torture, and leave the rest of the punishment in the hands of the Almighty. It is no reason, because a murderer has committed a brutal murder, that his death also must be a brutal one. In acknowledging this fact, it only makes man try to usurp the power of a Supreme function, for it is in God's hands alone the period of punishment, judgment, and mercy should entirely rest, and besides, the torturing of criminals won't bring back life again to innocent blood, and it don't even seem to diminish the commission of such grave offences.

But what is law to-day is crime, seemingly, to-morrow ; and what is crime to-morrow may be law again the day following. What right-minded, rational man can either look or think, and not wonder in amazement at the opposite decisions lately given in two almost identical cases, viz., the Hastings election of 1869, with the Orange election of 1872 ? Right in the one instance, and wrong in the other. Can men believe their own eyes ? The end of the world, or the millenium, has already in many people's ideas, I sadly fear, begun and ended long ago ! How preposterous it is for man to presume to interpret God's laws, since he actually fails, or at least cannot seemingly rightly understand or interpret the real nature or true meaning of his own *ignis fatuis* constructions or law-making. Man, God ; God, man ! Is it not enough to make thoughtful minds stagger at the idea of such glaring, anomalous inconsistencies, which is almost

enough to make men curse the day of their birth into such a shifting, uncertain, faithless, and miserable world? Sixteen years' experience of bush life in this colony has taught me that Courts of Petty Session, surveillance, and semi-military police systems have driven, I believe, many a hundred truly honest and upright men to habits of drunkenness, crime, ruin, destruction, if not premature deaths. It is not drunkenness in the strict sense which necessitates the existence of police courts, but it is man's tortuosities of law which, in my fervent belief, is too often the really exciting cause of many cases of drunkenness and other crimes. Two, three, and four hundred thousand pounds expended annually to keep up this system and the support of prisons, and a total population in the colony of only half a million souls, the fourth being only mere children! Is it possible? Yes, and the beginning and birth of nearly all little inland towns in the colony is a police magistrate, court-house, two or three police, a lock-up, and police barracks. This is (in colonial phraseology) what is styled bringing law to every man's door—the pioneers of civilisation; in other words, I presume, teaching people how to quarrel, fight, go to law, destruction, gaol, gallows, and death. Thousands of immigrants from the old country, I am sure, were never in a court-house until they landed in this colony, and now, were the truth known, they are more often and regular there in kissing the Bible and taking oaths than they are, perhaps, to be found in churches chanting hymns or offering up prayers to God. We don't want bush^{men's} homes in Sydney; we want *bush churches in the bush*. Court-houses are often found choked to overflowing with idlers and curiosity seekers, while our few places of worship on Sundays are almost always deserted! Regular enough many are in their attendance at police courts, frequenting wayside inns on Sundays to drink, horse-racing, gambling, kangaroo hunting, fishing, shooting, spinning or rehearsing police yarns, cattle and horse stealing cases, and all manner of Sabbath desecration, and you have a plain illustration of the maxim of colonial or bush life. I, indeed, pity the life and drudgeries of many of our hard-working, inland bush clergymen, who have, I am sure, oft to kick very hard against the pricks.

Sin, crime, misery, war, murders, &c., are not conceived or begotten in the mind of man in an hour, a day, or a week, a month or a year; but they are as regularly and unerringly begotten by the womb of time, as the most healthy, natural, vital action, or any other universal law of creation. It is upon this hypothesis alone whereby, I believe, we are enabled to make an approximate or feasible-like attempt of explanation to account for the regular recurrence or period of cycles of some of our most dreadful murders, and wholesale butchering, bloody wars, and horrible battle-field sights—sights worse, in fact, than the limited, though no less odious and disgusting, depraved scenes pertaining to executions on the scaffold, and where the body has been decapitated, or else the head frequently wrenched from the body by sheer brutal force, or its own weight, as if the thoughts of

such barbarous sights or systems of coercion would ever have the effect of retarding either the perpetration of crime, or bringing men's minds, steeped in diabolical deeds of bloodshed and depravity, back—back to the paths of virtue, faith, happiness, truth, love, eternity, or God—Deut. xxx, 15 and 17.

Molong, New South Wales,
26th June, 1872.

