

(these were fruitful sources of capital conviction in former times); so that those which had taken place since that time, were all of crimes of violence: murder, rape, robbery, burglary, maliciously stabbing, shooting, and wounding, and offences of similar character.

“The calendar for the present sessions presents the following facts, and had been furnished him by the crown solicitor:

“‘There had been convicted of murder, two; stabbing with intent, &c., shooting at, with intent to kill, cutting and maiming, assault, with intent to do bodily harm, six; manslaughter, two; arson, one; piracy and burglary, eight; house-breaking, ten; highway robbery, seven; receiving, one; forgery, two; larceny on the high seas, one; larceny, four; cattle-stealing, one; piracy only, one; robbery, eight;—total, fifty-four.

“The prisoners in jail on the 18th of November, 1835, untried, were seventy-four, from various causes of delay; they were, however, neither unknown nor unheeded. With respect to the causes of this state of crime, he had formed his own conclusions, and begged them to weigh and examine them, and judge for themselves; he thought the number of capital convictions alone, enough to point his own and their attention to it, as an indication of the state of the country as to crime.

“He did not think it necessary to mention the number of convictions before the Supreme Court, during the same period, for offences not capital. He would, however, briefly refer to them, and to all offences which were tried before the several Courts of Quarter Sessions throughout the colony, in the exercise of their summary jurisdiction, and by juries; the mass of offences which were summarily disposed of by the magistrates; and, added to all those, the numerous undiscovered crimes, which every man who had heard him, and to whom the report of his words should come, would at once admit to have occurred within his own circle of knowledge. There the picture presented to their minds would be one of the most painful reflection. It would appear to one that could look down upon the community, that the main business of us all was the commission of crime, or the punishment of it; as if the whole colony was in motion towards the several courts of justice; and the most painful reflection of all must be that so many capital sentences, and the execution of them, had not had the effect of preventing crime, by way of example.

“In his opinion, one grand cause of such a state of things was the overwhelming defect in the religious principles of the community; a principle, which he considered as the polar star, to guide a man in all his conduct, and without which none other would prevent him from crime.