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which was to announce to Professor John White Webster, the dreadful penalty of the law for the crime of which he stood convicted, namely, the murder of Dr. George Parkman, on the 23d of November last, at the Medical College.

The prisoner was brought into the Court Room at five minutes past nine, attended by the Jailor, and officer E. J. Jones. His appearance was that of a man deeply crushed. He seemed to have lost that elasticity of gait which is peculiar to him, and a settled gloom was fixed upon his countenance.

The Court, consisting of the full bench, (five Judges) came in at quarter past nine o'clock.

The Attorney General, J. H. Clifford, Esq., with deep emotion, arose, and after recapitulating the proceedings which had resulted in the conviction of the prisoner, moved that the sentence of the law be now pronounced upon him.

The Clerk, by the direction of the Court, inquired of the prisoner, if he had anything to say why sentence of death should not be pronounced.

Professor Webster arose, bowed, and replied in the negative.

Chief Justice Shaw then addressed the prisoner as follows:—

JOHN W. WEBSTER—In meeting you here for the last time, to pronounce that sentence which the law has affixed to the crime of which you have been found guilty, it is impossible by any language to give utterance to the sense of responsibility which we feel.—

The circumstances under which we approach this duty are peculiarly painful. At all times it is a painful duty to pronounce death upon a human being, but when we consider the circumstances of your past life, and contrast them with your present condition, we are oppressed with grief and anguish; and nothing but an imperative sense of duty, imposed upon us by the law, whose officers and ministers we are, could sustain us under it in pronouncing such a judgment.

Against the crime of wilful murder, of which you stand convicted,—a crime at which humanity shudders,—a crime everywhere, and in all forms of society, regarded with the deepest abhorrence, and which the law has visited with the severest penalties, in these few simple, but solemn and expressive words: "Every person who shall commit the crime of murder, shall suffer the penalty of death for the same."

The manifest object of this law is the protection and security of human life the most important object of a just and paternal government.

It is made the duty of this Court, to declare this penalty against any one who shall be found guilty, in the due course and administration of justice, of having violated this law. It is one of the most solemn acts of judicial power, which an earthly tribunal can be called upon to exercise. It is the high manifestation of the sovereign authority of the law, as well in its stern and inflexible severity, as in its paternal benignity. It punishes the guilty with the severest penalties; that the right to the enjoyment of life—the most precious right of all—may be more effectually secured.

By the record before us it appears that you have been indicted for the crime of murder, the indictment alleging that, on the 23d of November last, you made an assault upon Dr. George Parkman, and by acts of violence deprived him of life, with malice aforethought.—This deed is alleged to have been done in your apartments in the Medical College, in which you were a professor, upon a person of mature age and extensive connections in this community, and one who was a benefactor of that Institution. The intelligence of such a crime created the deepest sensation in the community. You were in due time arraigned before a Court organized for that purpose; able counsel were appointed for your defence; every thing that could be urged in your favor was brought forward; and a jury, almost of your own selection, have brought in a verdict of guilty.

To this verdict, I am constrained to say, upon a careful revision of the whole proceedings, the Court can find no just or legal grounds of exception. GUILTY! How much, under the thrilling circumstances which cluster around the case, and through our memories in the retrospect, does this single word import! The wilful, violent, malicious destruction of the life of a fellow man—one in the midst of life, with bright hopes, warm affections, mutual attachments—making life a blessing to himself and others.

We allude thus to the injury that has been inflicted, not for the purpose of creating an unnecessary pang in a heart already deeply lacerated; but to remind you of the irreparable wrong done to the victim of your cruelty—in sheer justice to him whose voice is now hushed in death, and whose wrongs can be only vindicated by the living action of the law.

If, therefore, at any moment, you may be disposed to complain that your punishment is too severe, or any murmuring word seeks utterance from your lips—think, oh think, of him who was instantly deprived of life by your hand.

Remember that you are to be cut down, not as he was, by unlawful violence, but by the hand of retributive justice; and if you have any compunctious visitings of conscience, you will, perhaps, be led to exclaim, in bitter anguish, "I have sinned against my own soul—against heaven—my punishment is just—God be merciful to me a sinner!"

God grant that your example may afford a solemn warning to all, especially to the young! May it impress deeply upon their minds the salutary lesson which it is intended to teach—to guard against the indulgence of unhallowed and vindictive passions; to resist temptation to any sordid, wicked purpose—a lesson of warning to heed the voice of conscience, and obey the high dictates of duty, while they instinctively shrink with abhorrence from the first thought of assailing the life of another. May they learn to reverence the Divine law, as well as the laws of society, which are designed to secure protection to its members.

We forbear, from obvious considerations, adding such words of advice to you, as we sometimes deem fit and proper on occasions like this. It has commonly been our province, on occasions like the present, to address the illiterate and degraded, whose early life has been cast among the vicious, who have never been blest with any means of moral and religious instruction, and who have never received the benefit of cultivated society. It has been our practice, in such cases, to add a word of advice, which may be a "word fitly spoken," and tend to good.

But, in a case like this, where all these circumstances are reversed, no word of ours could be more efficacious than what your own reflections will suggest.

But we approach this sad, last duty, of pronouncing the sentence, which is indeed the voice of the law and not our own, in giving utterance to which, we cannot do it with feelings of indifference, as a mere formal act. God forbid that we should be prevented from indulging and expressing the irrepressible feelings and interest, and compassion, which arise spontaneously in our hearts.

We do most sincerely deplore the distressing condition to which crime has brought you; and though we have no present words of consolation and hope to offer you in this hour of affliction, yet we do earnestly commend you to the mercy of our Heavenly Father, with whom is abundance of mercy, and from whom we may all hope for pardon and peace.

And now nothing remains but the solemn duty of pronouncing the sentence which the law affixes to the crime of murder, of which you stand convicted; which sentence is, that you, John W. Webster, be removed from this place and detained in close custody, in the prison of this county, and from thence taken, at such time as the Executive Government of this Commonwealth shall, by their warrant, appoint, to the place of execution, and there be HUNG BY THE NECK, UNTIL YOU ARE DEAD! And may God, in his infinite goodness, have mercy upon your soul!