

many as he charged so nobly to the fray. Words which became the watchword of all Europe for years after. How the entire people were electrified by these words, "Let no guilty man escape," coming as they did at a time when shame and mortification seemed nearly to overwhelm us,—when bribery and fraud filled not alone the lower stations of our country's service, but their ghastly forms might be found even with those who occupied some of the highest positions. "Let no guilty man escape," was as a beacon out of the darkness, and we felt that the one who stood at the helm had determined that "*Justitia fiat: cæcum occidit.*"

But the expression found at the head of this article has a meaning of no small importance to each of us, when we consider the crisis which called it forth, the time at which and the place where they were uttered. Old age with his hoary locks ever ought to be entitled to some respect though his hands may be stained with crime. In the year 1877, at the National Capitol of the American people, down in one of the low, damp rooms where the water dropped from the walls, an old man, over whose head some sixty summers had come and gone, was incarcerated. So cruel were his sufferings; so deep were the indignities heaped upon him that he was driven to exclaim to his tormentors, "Am I a vassal or peer?" I am not writing this to justify either party. The 45th Congress, with its record of good and evil, has become a part of our country's history, and the name of David A. Wells will soon be forgotten. My purpose only is to draw a few homely lessons from those words.

The American people claim to be among the most enlightened of civilized races. They boast a good deal of their opportunities and privileges. Here we have drilled into us the idea that anybody can become President if he will only try. No one ever thinks to add, if he have brains enough. We boast of our churches, of our means of acquiring an educa-

tion, of our newspapers and other advantages, and yet what do they all amount to when one's citizenship does not protect him. Recall the cruel murder of Cluslhome and others where neither law nor humanity could be evoked for their protection, nor for the punishment of the murderers. There was a time in the early days of Rome, when to be a Roman citizen was greater than to be a king, and those who possessed that right were justly honored. When the question, "Is it lawful for thee to scourge a man that is a Roman and uncondemned?" struck terror to the waiting soldiers and caused them to flee to the Chief Captain with the caution, "Take heed what thou doest." We may be a progressive people. Progressed to such an extent that in this country more murders are committed and the murderers go unpunished; more stealings, more robberies, and more forgeries are done, more counterfeiting, and more ways discovered for getting money dishonorably and unlawfully, than in any other. The more a man steals the smarter we think him to be, but if he steals because he is starving, we send him where he can get board and lodging free.

Am I a vassal or peer in mind? Do I read, think and judge for myself? Do the creeds and theories of the day remain unquestioned by me? But rather, am I willing to follow wherever Truth shall lead, and abide the results. Then comes the true test of peerage or vassalage.

One can doubt his own existence, believe any creed under the sun. We speak of Free Thought and Free Thinkers, and yet, what a strange anomaly we find here. Some Free Thought is the most bigoted, and some Free Thinkers the most uncharitable of people. But that is the thinking and that is the thought, which enable us to act well our part; to trust our fellow-man as though we did not think he was a rascal and fear he would harm us; to do everything with earnest heart and hand, unmindful whether the world may flatter or praise. It requires too little compunc-