

law makes murders," replied the matron, "the law should be hanged for them ; or if they would hang up a lawyer instead, the country would find nae faut." All the twenty-five ascertained murders to which we have referred, and the at least equally great number of concealed ones, were crimes of the law's making,—murders which as certainly originated in the law, and which, if the law did not exist, would as certainly not have been, as the supposed crimes of our illustration under the anti-red-hair, anti-six-feet-high statutes. No murders arise out of the killing of seals and sea-gulls : why should there arise any murders out of the killing of hares and pheasants ? Simply because there is a pabulum of law in the one case, out of which the transgression springs, and no producing pabulum of law in the other. There can be nothing more perilous to the morals of the people than stringent laws, that, instead of attaching their penalties to actual crime, and having, in consequence, like the laws against the housebreaker and the highwayman, the whole weight of the popular conscience on their side, create the crime which they punish, and have thus the moral sense of the country certainly not for, mayhap against them. They become invariably, in all such cases, a sort of machinery for converting useful subjects and honest men into rogues and public pests. Lacking the moral sanction, their penalties are neither more nor less than a certain amount of peril, which bold spirits do not hesitate to encounter, just as a keen sportsman does not hesitate to encounter the modicum of risk which he runs from the gun that he carries. It may burst and kill him ; or, in drawing it through a hedge, a sprig may catch the trigger, and lodge its contents in his body ; or it may hang fire, and send its charge through his head half a minute after he has withdrawn it from his shoulder. Accidents of the kind happen in sporting countries almost every month,—for such is the natural law of accident in the case ; but there is no