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A GENERAL VIEW  
OF THE  
CRIMINAL LAW OF ENGLAND.



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CRIMINAL LAW OF ENGLAND

BY  
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## PREFACE.

THE first edition of this book was published in the year 1863, and I was asked for a second edition as far back as 1874; but on beginning to prepare it I found myself met at every step by the difficulty that I was unable to refer to any work in which the contents of the Criminal Law as it is, were shortly stated. This first suggested to me the scheme of writing such a work, and I accordingly wrote my *Digest of the Criminal Law, Crimes and Punishments*, which was published in 1877. In consequence of this work I proposed to the then Government to prepare a Code of Criminal Law and Procedure, and upon this I was engaged from 1877 to early in 1879, first as an independent draftsman, and afterwards as a member of the Criminal Code Commission of 1878. The Bill drawn by me, and settled by the Commission of which I was a member, has been more than once under the consideration of Parliament, but time has never been found for its full discussion. In 1883 I published a *History of the Criminal Law*, and, with the assistance of my eldest son, a *Digest of the Law of Criminal Procedure*. Of these works I think I may fairly say that collectively they constitute a pretty complete account both of the actual contents of the Criminal Law of England, and of the various circumstances which led to its assumption of its present form.

The *History* is, however, too long and elaborate for general purposes, and in particular for the purpose of an introduction to the two *Digests*; and I have been informed that my first work, the *General View of the Law of England*, is still in request, as a first book on Criminal Law, amongst students at the Universities and elsewhere, although it has become so rare as to be in practice unobtainable. I have accordingly re-written it, giving an account of the subject, which contains in a very moderate compass the essence of what I have learnt during a long and greatly varied experience of thirty-six years as a barrister, a member of the Indian Council, an author, a draftsman, and a judge.

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