

no doubt, made a great deal of money at the bar, especially when he extended his practice from the Criminal Courts in which he had earned his fame. His talent in the extraction of evidence was utilised in most branches of law, including election petitions and railway cases. His cross-examination of surgical experts, called in cases of compensation for personal injuries to swear up to the 'railway shock,' was always enjoyed by the junior bar and the jury. It was this latter branch of practice which clung to him last, but to his old habits of repugnance to work and inattention to detail, there was at last added a failure of brain power, so that he retired from practice. The money he had made was usually spent as soon, or before. A man who will buy a theatre and make a present of it is not likely to save money. Fortunately, in view of this lavishness, Serjeant Ballantine's son was well provided for, having married the widow of a rich man, Mr. Mitchell, at one time member for Bridport, and his son's well-being was a great consolation to the serjeant's latter days. Great lawyer he never was. He used to boast: 'Thank heaven, I know a little of everything, except law.' Sometimes his cases brought him before the Courts in Banco or even the Exchequer Chamber, where his great adroitness made up for his innocence of law. When very hard pressed and convicted of uttering a startling infraction of elementary law, he would remark blandly, 'Of course, my lord, it is as your lordship says. I had forgotten. There is that case in the Exchequer.' Whilst he was about it, he did not hesitate to vouch the authority of this most technical of the Courts. Of course he frequently gave offence. Cynicism appeared to be a matter of absolute conviction with him, and he could be bitter towards those he did not love. The only occasion on which he was accused of making a long speech was when he unduly occupied the attention of the judges of the Court of Common Pleas while Sir John Coleridge, their Chief Justice elect, was outside in Westminster Hall on a November afternoon, shiveringly awaiting his turn to go through the ceremony of admission as a serjeant. Whatever may be said of the late serjeant, he was intellectually and morally honest. No one

has suggested that he ever took an unfair advantage of an opponent in Court. His trustworthiness with other people's money is shown by his success as treasurer of Serjeant's Inn, which he gave up to go to India, and which was reserved for him till he came back. When the property of the Inn was divided, Serjeant Ballantine was not the man to compromise with his conscience by putting his share of the spoil in a missionary box. He had the full courage of his opinions, and spent it on his own amusements. In his last days he wrote a book of Reminiscences which, although amusing, did not read as the serjeant talked; and his attempt to appear in the United States as a lecturer was a failure. His death removes from conversation much of the bitter flavour which is not uncongential to the lawyer's taste. He was an advocate of consummate skill, and as such added lustre to the bar.—*Law Journal* (London).

THE LAW'S DELAY.

To the Editor of the *Legal News* :

SIR,—Cases inscribed for Enquête and Merits in November have been fixed for hearing some time in March. The February roll was not concluded and part of it had to be continued to March. Cases inscribed in December may have a chance to be heard in April. There are 75 cases fixed for next month, and there are as many more inscriptions filed and standing over. Debtors become aware of these delays and are not slow to profit by them. I have a case now, where the debt is admitted, yet, the knowing defendant pleads and laughs in his sleeve, as he thinks of the three or four months grace he will have before a judgment could be procured against him, giving him ample time to dispose of his assets in the ordinary way.

Great things are expected of our new Government; here is their opportunity. Let them take immediate steps to prevent the administration of justice in Montreal from becoming—what it now nearly is—a farce.

NEMESIS.

Montreal, Feb. 24.