

opponents; I hope I may say with truth, there are no more considerate critics, than the lawyers of Canada with whom some who practise in England from time to time come in contact. And when I think of this great association and all that it represents, all that it stands for today and all that I am convinced it is going to do for Canada, for peace, for good government and for the profession of the law in times to come, it seems appropriate in addressing this assembly to choose as my subject the Vocation of an Advocate.

So much, ladies and gentlemen, in the comfortable language of mutual praise. (Laughter.) But this is the Palace of Truth and we may as well begin by admitting that, whatever be the explanation, there is in some quarters a painful prejudice against Lawyers. (Laughter.) I think many of my Canadian colleagues must feel, as so many of us feel at home, whether in our professional sphere, our strictly professional sphere, or whether in the public work which lawyers have in time of crisis so often undertaken, that we are a misunderstood class. We are denounced for vices which we never practise, and, what is even more surprising, we are acclaimed for virtues which we seldom attain. (Laughter.) By novelists, for example, and by dramatists, and, I suspect, by a large part of the general public too, a lawyer at his worst is an unprincipled wretch who is constantly and deliberately engaged in the unscrupulous distortion of truth, by methods entirely discreditable, and for rewards grotesquely exaggerated. (Laughter.) Even at his best, a lawyer in the minds of many people is marked only by a supernatural coolness and an almost infernal cunning, by means of which he discovers at the last moment an argument which nobody has thought of, or produce a witness from some forgotten corner as a conjurer produces a white rabbit from the tails of his evening coat and thereby, when all seems lost, overthrows the obstinate and rescues the innocent.

Speaking to my brother lawyers and here in the Temple of Truth, don't you agree with me that both those pictures are exaggerations? (Laughter.) It is not true that a lawyer spends his life in the dishonest and unprincipled pursuits of distorting fact and colouring truth; and it is not true either that by waving some rhetorical wand in