

that time there was nothing to prevent me from practising. I also decided that I would take no fees of any kind, nor act on commissions or arbitrations, or directorships of companies, or accept anything that would put me under obligations to anyone. I was sworn in on the 2nd June, 1877, and have continued in the office ever since.

I found out at once how wise it was that I had decided to accept no favours. It had been the custom with my predecessors to continue their law practice, and do any outside work where they could get fees, and to accept passes from railways, steamboats, theatres, etc. Very soon after my appointment I received season passes on the Ontario railways and on steamboat lines, etc. I sent them all back politely explaining that formerly I would have been glad to receive them, but that I had recently been appointed Police Magistrate and could not now accept them.

This policy has been a great satisfaction to me ever since. I am independent of everyone. I am constantly trying cases between the great railway companies, and citizens, thieves, and trespassers, and I am just as independent of the great railway companies, who can and do influence both the Dominion and Provincial Governments, as I am of the poor tramp who is found trespassing on their lines or stealing a ride.

Not long before my appointment the powers of police magistrates had been very much enlarged, and shortly after they were still more increased. With the consent of the accused, I have been able to try all the serious offences, except murder, manslaughter, rape, high treason, and one or two crimes connected with the misuse of explosives, without a jury, and with power in some cases to sentence to imprisonment for life. This wide jurisdiction has made my Court for the last forty years the principal criminal court of Ontario, for up to two or three years ago about ninety per cent. of the indictable offences have, with

the consent of the accused, been tried by me. The last three years about eighty-three per cent.

I soon felt that I might do a good service to the community by giving them honest, even-handed justice, for there was a great opening for that kind of work in the Police Court, with the tremendous powers that had been placed in the hands of police magistrates. This feeling has led me to retain my office for so many years. More than twenty years ago the late Sir John Thompson, who was then Prime Minister of Canada, inquired through my brother, the member for West Toronto, whether I would accept a position on the High Court of Justice. I was much pleased at the offer, but declined it at once (although my salary would have been much larger), because I felt that my position was more important in many ways, and that I might be much more useful to the community where I was.

The question of salary did not weigh with me a particle. I have always felt that the pecuniary side of any question should not be allowed to have undue weight. I fully agree with the saying of the great General (Chinese) Gordon on the question of money. He said:

"If a man cares for wealth, or fears death, he is the slave of others. If he is indifferent to them, he is free, and their master."

Solomon says, "How much better it is to get wisdom than gold."

I refused, as I have said, to act as president or director of any company, and I am pleased to see that of late years provision has been made by statute preventing judges from accepting such offices. Such legislation should not have been necessary, but the practice at one time was a common one. I also decided to take no fees. I have a great aversion to the fee system; in time it is sure to bring the pendulum off the plumb. A man acting in a judicial capacity should have nothing to affect him, pecuniarily or otherwise, in deciding in either way.