

THE HON. WILLIAM HUME BLAKE—ROYAL MARRIAGE ACTS.

“Most truly did Mr. Blake say that it was inexpressibly painful to him to leave the bench. I remember well the long, the oft-repeated and painful struggle that preceded his resignation. It was from no love of ease that he retired. It was, on the contrary, a forced withdrawal from active duty, which he was most anxious to continue to discharge; the compulsory inactivity of a most active mind. I have read to you the correspondence that took place on the occasion. The writer of the first letter is now dead. The learned and estimable man to whom it was addressed is also dead, and a twelve-month ago we followed to the grave the kind-hearted and able man who was our second Chancellor. Thus three of the Judges of this Court have passed away. They were all of them men of whom this Court may well feel proud, and I am sure that their memory will be held in high respect by the Court, and by the country that they ably and faithfully served.”

Mr. Blake was a warm politician of the Liberal school; and in those days when politics ran high, he was never accused of being lukewarm in his adherence to his party. In fact his ardent, impulsive temperament and high spirit made him enter upon all he undertook—whether we speak of him in the heat of a political contest, in the halls of the legislature, or as an advocate identifying himself with the cause of his client—with a vehement energy which, though it sometimes made him enemies, gained even from them a grudging respect, and made him a reputation which outlives the troublous times when he was best known to the public.

Whilst Sir Edmund Head was Governor General, Mr. Blake was appointed Chancellor of the University, and zealously and earnestly devoted himself to the task of raising the University to the honorable position which it now occupies. All who were brought in contact with him will bear testimony to the conscientious and thorough manner in which the already overworked Chancellor discharged the duties of this office. The magnificent building now occupied by the University was erected mainly through his influence, energy and zeal. He was constrained however by failing health, and the pressing engagements of his judicial life to resign the Chancellorship of the University, when he was succeeded by the late Mr. Justice Burns.

In 1862, ill-health compelled the Chancellor to resign his seat on the Bench; but though he was afterwards appointed one of the judges

of the Court of Appeal, he was never able to undertake any judicial duties. He sought relief from the painful disease (gout) which afflicted him by a journey to a milder climate, from which he returned only a few months before his death.

Though the Law Society desired that the remains of one so eminent in the profession should be paid the highest marks of respect by them as a body, the funeral was, at the earnest wish of the bereaved members of his family, quite private, though numerous attended.

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We follow the example of a legal cotemporary in England in referring to the legislation which affects the approaching marriage of the Princess Louise to the Marquis of Lorne. It may be that it is not a matter which touches us very closely, but we are glad to feel that the time has not yet come when we can look with indifference upon a ceremony which, though it is to take place so many thousand miles away, is still of much significance in itself and of interest to the subjects of a hereditary limited monarchy.

Much has been said and written about the evils of the law which, as is generally supposed, has prevented a member of the royal family from marrying a subject, but there is much misapprehension as to the effect of the statutes on the point; nor can it be denied that the practice which has prevailed for so many years has some points to recommend it, although productive of some evil; and it may truly be said that in nothing except in the sound of the title is the English nobleman inferior to the petty German princes who have been taken as husbands for the princesses of England.

But we must not wander from the point. The English *Law Journal* gives the following sketch of the legislation affecting Royal Marriages:—

“It was not till the reign of Henry VI. that any legislation took place with the view of controlling marriages contracted by members of the royal family; but the occasion of the marriage of Katherine, mother to Henry VI., with Owen Tudor, a private gentleman, the statute 6 Henry VI. was passed. That statute prohibited the marriage of a Queen Dowager without the consent of the King for the time being, the reason quaintly assigned being ‘because the disparage-