

The man who made "untidy" speeches when at the Bar is more likely to deliver a slipshod judgment from the Bench—unless, of course, he has taken the trouble to write it out beforehand. A newly-appointed judge once told me that he had made up his mind always to deliver his judgment *ex tempore* whenever possible. But I cannot say that the end has justified the proceedings. I recall an anecdote of the late Archbishop Temple, who was paying a week end visit to a country vicarage. At morning service the rector did very well: he read his sermon. He then heard to his dismay that the Prelate was going to attend church in the afternoon. To disarm criticism the rector announced beforehand that he had made a vow always to preach *ex tempore* in the afternoon. After the service Dr. Temple (so the story runs) made the rector kneel before him in the vestry. Placing both hands upon his head he said: "I dispense your vow!" When listening to the learned judge above referred to I have often wished that he, too, could have a dispensation.

OLD LAW BOOKS.

With the possible exception of the three volume novel, there is no class of work which so soon gets out of date as legal text books. Even if it is but six months old, a recent decision may have rudely displaced the learning which is to be found in its pages. The result is that some of the volumes in a lawyer's library are seldom taken from the shelves on which they accumulate the dust; and if, in a fit of economy, their proprietor attempts to dispose of them, he will get but a fraction of the price which was paid for them. To the rule that old law text books—as distinct, of course, from reports forming part of a series—undergo a steady depreciation in value there is one very notable exception. There is one text book—nay, one edition of one text book—which has steadily gone up in value, so much so that the lawyer who has it on his bookshelf considers himself a lucky man. I refer to the 3rd edition of Bullen and Leake's *Precedents of Pleading*, which was published in 1868. I do not know what the published price was; but I considered myself lucky the other day when I picked up a well thumbed copy for £2 2s. 0d. Messrs. Stevens & Sons in their latest catalogue offer a copy at £3 15s. 0d.