

LAWYERS' WIGS—NATURALIZATION.

gences from the appearances of everyday life. That contrivance, though once familiar to many quasi-religious tribunals, is at once too inconvenient and too theatrical for our own time or for habitual use; but its effect, though differing in degree, would be identical in kind with that of the exceptional clothes worn in English courts of law—would, that is, bring home to all present the fact that they were in an atmosphere different from that of everyday life, an atmosphere in which truth was more indispensable, fairness more certain, justice more swift, than in the street or the home. Why should the strong though temporary concentration of mind produced by such an atmosphere debase instead of ennobling? As a matter of fact, we know that it does not, that, for example, although there is much lying in English courts of justice—frightfully much, especially when the object is to make of moral legal evidence—still, witnesses are more truthful, more conscious that they ought to be truthful in a court than in the street. It may be said, that is all the fear of punishment; but we would ask any honourable man who means to speak truth always, whether he did not become in court more exact, more literal, in fact, though not in intention, more truthful than when he was out of it. He would be so in any court, whether the judge were robbed or not? Doubtless, because the aspect of every court, the mere fact that the assembly is a court, makes him so; but the effect will be all the more rapid and complete for any violent divergence from the associations of everyday life, and the easiest of such divergencies is a change of costume.

It may be said that this argument would justify any amount of official bedizenment, any absurdity in special costume; but that is a mere assertion, to be tested by the effect of the clothes. In some cases the effect of divergence is distinctly bad, as, for example, when it produces any kind of reverence for the clothes themselves, as must happen whenever they increase the prominence and visibleness of an unreal or bad idea. That would be the case, for example, if mere differences of rank were marked in the modern world by sumptuary laws. Or the clothes themselves may be objectionable, not because they are meaningless so much as because they awake some false or grotesque association. That is the case with English Court dress because it is so like a footman's, with the Windsor uniform for almost the same reason, and with one form of episcopal dress because it is so nearly that of another sex. The ordinary English clergyman's robe of office wakes no such feeling, but on the contrary warns the audience that the speaker is about to address them on subjects higher than those of a public meeting, helps to put them in a frame of mind more instead of less receptive of the ideas he has to communicate. We might as well argue that gesture is no part of oratory, melody no part of poetry, form no part of substance, as that

dress can lend nothing to solemnity of ceremonial except an emotion which is either a surplusage or a baseness. It is neither, if our view is correct, but an aid, tending to concentrate, and therefore, to strengthen, the impulses and faculties we all desire to call out.—*Law Times*.

NATURALISATION.

The Congress of the United States has passed a Bill nominally for the protection of its own naturalised subjects, but, in fact, dictating to other countries how they shall deal with their own citizens.

The allegiance of every man is due to the country of his birth. Of that allegiance he cannot divest himself, save in the manner prescribed by the laws of *his own* country. Manifestly no other country has a right to determine on what conditions the subjects of another State shall be released from their allegiance.

For instance, the Legislature of the Dominion would have no right to make a law declaring that a citizen of the United States by crossing the frontier into Canada shall be discharged from his allegiance to the United States. But they could, and it is all they could, enact that a stranger should become naturalised in Canada by residing there for a week or a day, that a residence under such a law should make the visitor a Canadian subject, but it would not unmake him a subject of the United States.

This is, however, the form which the new law has taken in America. It does not say in so many words that a British subject shall cease to be such by complying with the conditions of naturalisation in the States, for even more than Yankee audacity would be required for such a clause. But it does the same thing in effect, for it says that, the law of his own country notwithstanding, any foreigner, becoming naturalised according to the law of America, is to enjoy all the privileges of Americans by birth, and one of these privileges is that in his own native country that man is not to be amenable to the law from whose obligations he has not been discharged.

We may endeavour to disguise what it is inconvenient to acknowledge, but the truth is that this law is levelled at England, and is designed to assist the Fenian conspiracy. It recognises as American subjects many thousands of traitors whom the British law still recognises as British subjects, and it can scarcely fail to cause some dangerous complications. There can be no desire on the part of this country to keep the allegiance of the Fenians; England would willingly make a present of them to America, and would consent to the shortest possible residence in the States as the condition of being quit of them. But then many other consequences follow. If they choose to leave us, we must alter the terms on which they are to be allowed to return. With their allegiance, they must forfeit all right of succession to property, or to hold property—in short they must cease to be British subjects