

and passed the bar, his father died, leaving to the son the care of his widowed mother, and enjoining him with his last breath that whatever befell to live as an honest man.

Edwin Vance had entered on the profession of the law from choice, conceiving it to be the noblest pursuit to which a man could devote his life. Holding the chivalric idea, that as a member of this noble profession, he would become a righter of the wrongs of the oppressed, an aid to justice, and an advocate of the truth and the right, he had entered on the studies which he fondly hoped would yield him a career of usefulness, of honour and of benefit to his fellow creatures.

The instinctive feeling or perception, whichever it may be, of all right-thinking men, that the general intentions of mankind are more directed towards the good than the evil, was with him carried to the highest point. Hence he never imputed the evil motive, or suspected an action, upon whose basis by any reasoning a more charitable construction could be raised.

Thus the study of Law, which is, or ought to be, the exact science of Justice and of Right to all, was to him a delightful one, and probably no young man, fresh from his college honours, ever commenced the practice of his profession in a more enthusiastic spirit than did Mr. Edwin Vance.

It needed, however, but a very few months of its practice to convince him that there lay a great difference between the Law itself and its administration.

That an engine, as nearly approaching perfection as human intellect and foresight could bring it, should be perverted through its necessary formalities, its requisite safeguards, and unavoidably complex machinery, by the misused ingenuity of but too many of his professional brethren, to the delay of the righteous cause, the advantage of the wrong, or to the gaining of their own selfish ends, was to him a dreadful thing.

The maxim, not perhaps openly acknowledged, but so commonly put into practice among legal men as to become strictly