

PRESENTATION TO JUDGE GOWAN.

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It is with feelings of no ordinary pleasure that we record a very interesting ceremony that took place in Barrie, the County Town of Simcoe, immediately after the opening of the Courts on Tuesday, the 10th instant. We allude to the presentation to His Honor Judge Gowan of an address, by the united Bar and practitioners of the County, as a mark of their respect and esteem for his many eminent and kindly qualities. The address was beautifully engrossed on vellum, and was accompanied by a life-sized portrait in oil of the learned Judge. The words of the address speak for themselves:—

“To His Honour JAMES ROBERT GOWAN, Judge of the County Court of the County of Simcoe.

“YOUR HONOUR—The members of the Legal Profession in the County of Simcoe beg leave to congratulate you on the completion of your quarter of a century on the Bench, and render thanks to the Almighty disposer of events that you are still spared in the full strength and vigor of body and mind to continue, we earnestly hope for many years, to fill the office you have so long adorned.

“We feel that to your wise counsels and example are mainly due the existence of a Bar in this County, which will compare favourably with any in the Dominion, and that this result has been obtained without, in the smallest degree, fostering it at the expense of the public interests.

“As the head of the Legal Profession in the County, we have been gratified at hearing your name mentioned far and wide as occupying the foremost rank among County Judges, feeling that to earn such a position was alike honorable to yourself and creditable to the County and its Bar.

“We believe that to your firm and dignified administration of the Laws is mainly to be attributed the comparative freedom from crime, which we rejoice to know, distinguishes the County of Simcoe, and the respect for law and order which prevades all classes of our community.

“The profession have long felt that some public recognition of your extended and valuable services on the Bench, and your kindly spirit towards themselves, was due to you; and we now beg your acceptance, at our hands, of this life-sized painting of yourself, in your official chair and robes, as a mark of the respect and esteem in which you are held by us; and while making it, as we do, your own private property, we ask the favor that it may for a time be permitted to

hang in the Court Room, so that all may have an opportunity of seeing it, and learning that the profession have paid tribute to your worth.

“Dated at Chambers, 8th December, A. D. 1868.”

With the sentiments expressed in the above we most heartily concur, and congratulate the practitioners of the County of Simcoe that they have such an excellent Judge at their head, and that they know how to appreciate his worth.

We are the more pleased, as this gives us a legitimate opportunity of expressing our own sense of the very many obligations we are under to Judge Gowan for the valuable advice and assistance he has never failed to give us, when appealed to for the purpose, in the conduct of this Journal, advice especially valuable in that department with which he is so peculiarly conversant, and of which (we hope he will excuse our mentioning it,) we have largely availed ourselves. There are others, too, who will not easily forget the sound counsel and kind aid which, in numerous ways, has encouraged them to persevere to the attainment of a certain measure of success in their professional career.

The high stand Judge Gowan has always taken with reference to the dignity of the Bench, and his strict and regular administration of the law, has been remarked beyond the precincts of his own Courts, and would serve as an example for others to imitate. This address, moreover, of those who are best capable of forming an opinion of his merits, may be looked upon in a quarter where the aim would appear, from recent legislation, to be to lower rather than to elevate the tone of the Inferior Court Judiciary, as at least an incident to shew the possibility of destroying by rash changes much that has taken years of toil, endurance, self-control and judgment to build up.

But want of space, and not of inclination, prevents our speaking further on a subject of pleasure and interest to us. The learned Judge, in an impressive and eloquent manner, replied to the address, and concluded thus:—

“It was right that I should endeavor to discharge every duty faithfully and fearlessly: to create confidence in and to secure to suitors the full benefit of the several Courts over which I