

Rembrandt's father had the surname Gerretz, but the son, when his tastes broadened and his hand gained in cunning, changed it to Van Ryn on account of its greater dignity.

A predecessor of Honoré de Balzac was born at Guez, which means beggar, and grew to manhood under that surname. When he became conscious of his powers as a writer he did not wish his works to be published under that humble name, so he selected the surname Balzac from an estate that he owned. He made the name famous, and the later Balzac made it immortal.

Voltaire, Molière, Dante, Petrarch, Richelieu, Loyola, Erasmus and Linnaeus were assumed names. Napoleon Bonaparte changed his name after his amazing victories had lured him toward a crown, and he wanted a grander name to aid his daring aspirations. The Duke of Wellington was not by blood a Wellesley, but a Colley, his grandfather, Richard Colley, having assumed the name of a relative named Wesley, which was afterwards expanded to Wellesley.—*Green Bag*.

The third annual meeting of the New York Bar Association, held in Rochester, in January last, was as usual very interesting. Some of the papers read were: The necessity for a Court of Criminal Appeal; The dishonesty of sovereignties in reference to meeting their obligations on contract and tort as required of private corporations and individuals; The Employers Liability Act, etc. The committee on the commitment and discharge of the criminally insane was submitted and discussed. This report draws attention to the misuse of the right of habeas corpus whereby persons detained as insane in public institutions can obtain repeated hearings on an issue of regained sanity, unhampered by prior adverse adjudications. This evil has been so acute that the suggestion is made that insanity or other mental deficiencies should no longer be a defence against a charge of crime, nor should it prevent a trial of the accused, unless his mental condition is such as to satisfy the court, upon its own enquiry, that he is unable by reason thereof to make proper preparation for his defence. This is a somewhat drastic and ill-considered suggestion, and not likely to go into force without considerable discussion and amendments, but the evil exists, and Thaw cases are all too common.