

cultivate the qualities to which I have referred. I served my articles some thirty years ago in a large well-known office in London, to the much respected senior partner, long since deceased. He never pretended that he had gone minutely into the technicalities of the law, but he was a splendid organizer, and could control everything and almost everybody, and carry on a successful business far better than those who were brimful of abstract legal qualifications. He was one of the best tacticians I ever came across, and, if it were possible to get around his adversary at all, he was the man to do it. I took some hints from him, and in the earlier part of my career I used to reflect on the mode in which the gentleman referred to managed his fellow-men. There is one thing about our profession which is a matter of great satisfaction, and that is the high tone which it has attained of recent years. At one time, as I said in an earlier stage of my observations, a solicitor was nobody at all; now he stands side by side with the bar—in fact, he is so much mixed up with the bar by family and other ties that it is quite ridiculous for anyone to suppose that there is any distinction between the two branches, except that the one is an advocate and the other is the man of business, and, although I do not want to trench upon another subject to-night, I wish to say that I hope it will long continue so. I am opposed to the amalgamation of the two branches of the profession, and think that we should remain as we are. All I want to observe upon that point is, that the bar are trammelled by some old and antiquated rules which work unfavourably, especially in the case of juniors. I am bound to say that I do not see a very encouraging prospect for students who are going to the bar unless they are exceptionally eloquent, or have professional connections who can be of value to them. I think that the chances are certainly less than they have been for a long time past, but I believe that if there was a better arrangement between the solicitor branch and the bar, by which they could more conveniently communicate with each other in matters of business, there would be work brought to the bar which does not now get there at all. I

should be glad to see some system by which the barrister and the solicitor could better carry on their business side by side, so to speak, removing the present artificial line of demarcation, which only gets broken down by some of us who happen to have outside opportunities of becoming more natural to each other. This, however, is a matter for our barrister friends to deal with. We have members of the society who are already attaining recognized positions at the bar, and who at some time or other will perhaps address us from their point of view. There is only one other matter upon which I need detain you. It is most important for the law student that he should be a member of a debating society. It is a strange thing that in this country there is such a very small number out of millions of men who in an emergency can get up and defend themselves, much less defend anyone else. It is not part of our school education to teach men to speak; I wish it were. On the other side of the Channel one sees even an artisan conduct a little case before the judge with marked ability, and he evidently also cultivates the art of listening. I wish our boys were taught much earlier the practice of debate; anyway, every law student should certainly attend a discussion society. I myself derived very great advantage from being a member of this society. Many of my early friends here are occupying high places at the present time, heads of important London firms of solicitors or on the bench. No doubt there are some in this room-like those to whom I refer, who do not know it now, but who may occupy equally high positions hereafter. I say this, not with a view of complimenting anybody in particular, but to show that it is an advantage to be a member of the Law Students' Debating Society. One not only acquires the art of speaking, but makes acquaintances in the legal profession. I believe, so far as solicitors are concerned, that law and tact and everything else is of minor importance on certain occasions compared to being well acquainted with the other side, and knowing whether he is an honourable opponent or otherwise. To conclude, let me say that I feel that very much greater care will have to be shown in the