

Correspondence.

To the Editor of THE CANADA LAW JOURNAL: •

SIR,—There is a distinct violation of good taste creeping into the public press. I refer to the calling of a member of the legal profession "Lawyer So-and-So." Like many a short cut in language, it offends against custom, euphony, and the dignity of the profession. Fancy calling one of the much-admired leaders of the Bar, "Lawyer Robinson!" It smacks too much of Texan freedom for my taste. What do you think, Mr. Editor?

Peterborough, April 25.

J. H. B.

Notes on Exchanges and Legal Scrap Book.

THE ENGLISH CEREMONIAL ON "TAKING SILK."—It will be interesting to many members of the profession, and especially to those who are now Queen's Counsel, and to all who expect to "take silk," to read the following letter of Mr. Locock Webb, Q.C., to Mr. Hodgins, Q.C., on the English ceremonial observed on a barrister becoming a Queen's Counsel. Mr. Webb is a Queen's Counsel of eminence, and one of the leaders of the English Bar, and a Bencher of the Middle Temple, and is well-known as the author of a work on the "Practice of the Supreme Court, and on Appeals to the House of Lords." The letter, which we publish by the permission of Mr. Hodgins, was written in reply to one from that gentleman to Mr. Webb, requesting information concerning the oath taken by Queen's Counsel, and other matters which are fully explained in Mr. Webb's most interesting letter. We have made inquiries from old members of the Bar, and have also examined the old Term Books of the Court as to whether the Queen's Counsel's oath was ever administered in this country, but our inquiries and searches have resulted in a negative.

Some years ago we published an article written for this Journal by Mr. Hodgins, on the "Right of Queen's Counsel to defend Prisoners," (17 CANADA LAW JOURNAL, 74), in which the duty imposed by the office on Queen's Counsel not to take cases against the Crown, was fully explained and illustrated from precedents in the English Courts. A barrister accepting the office of Queen's Counsel is supposed to accept a standing retainer from the Crown, and it is therefore inconsistent with that retainer to take a brief against the Crown without the consent of the executive. The point may be illustrated by the practice and rule which prevent the standing counsel of any of our great railway or other corporations taking briefs against the corporation without the consent of the directors.

The following valuable letter of Mr. Locock Webb's will be read with great interest by all members of the legal profession in Canada:—

4 Elm Court Temple, 27th March, 1890.

DEAR SIR,—You are quite right, the practice of swearing in the Queen's Counsel here continues. But I could meet with the form of the oath nowhere, until I turned up the Oaths Com-