

winned at times under the searching criticisms of our arguments—criticisms which led us to stand up, as your lordship would have wished us to stand up, against the interlocutory comments, for the moment perhaps adverse to the views which we were expressing on behalf of our clients. But your lordship's comments left no sting behind, and on reflection we felt that your great object was first to ascertain the facts, and then to endeavor to see that justice should be done. My lord, I have but one more word to say. There is one feeling to which expression must be given, and that is the conviction which has rested in the hearts of every member of the Bar of your constant and unswerving loyalty to our profession. My lord, though you were far above us, you still wished to be one of us; you respected our wants and our aspirations; you have shared our joys and our sorrows. My lord, it is this feeling which made it impossible that you should be allowed to retire in silence; it is this feeling which will link you with us in the future as it has in the past; it is this feeling which will make you carry with you a wealth of good wishes of far more value than any feeble words in which I have expressed them; it is this feeling which makes it so difficult for me to say the word which can scarcely be uttered by friends—I mean, farewell.

Lord Esher replied: My dear Attorney-General, and all of you here, I have had some difficulty in coming to a determination as to the character in which I was to address you. I am no longer a judge, and I hardly, for a time, was able to determine what I am. I am still one of you, as I think. I am a serjeant-at-law. I am a barrister of more than ten years' standing. I am capable of being appointed a County Court judge, or to sit as a commissioner to hold an assize. I am therefore now what I have always tried to be, and what I have always tried to make you feel that I was during the whole time I was a judge—namely, one of you, and only one of your equals. It is true that on the Bench, when I was in the position of an officer on the quarter-deck, I had and was obliged to give occasionally words of command; but the moment one leaves the deck one is nothing but a fellow-officer, and I have been nothing but a fellow-barrister with you always. It is in that character, therefore, that I desire to speak to you to-day. Now, next came to my mind what should be the tone which I should adopt—Shall it be the tone of sadness as of a last dying speech and confession, or shall I say that which I feel—that I am as happy as a man can feel under the circumstances in which I now am? I have been a judge assisted by you all, by most of you who are here present, by almost all the profession, for twenty-nine years and some months. I believe myself it is the longest period ever known during which a judge has sat on the Bench as a judge. I believe so, but I am not quite sure. I have ceased to be a judge, and the Queen has given me an unusual mark of approval, and that mark and your presence here to-day, and saying what you have said, have made me not only happy, but as happy as a man can possibly be. You have mentioned