

OUR ENGLISH LETTER.

decision of a judge, and Mr. Cramp, Q.C., whose successes have, judging from the papers, been almost phenomenal. Totally unlike Lord Halsbury in manner, he has the same versatility. When the registration appeals were being heard his name was a standing dish. He has been known to appear in Equity cases, he appears in the Divorce Court—in fact he seems to be equally at home everywhere. Now, it is not often that a man called within the Bar achieves success with such rapidity as has been described, and for this reason one may have to look for some external causes. In the first place, it is obvious that there must have been an opening of tolerable width. How came it? Partly, no doubt, from the invincible repugnance of the late Lord Chancellor towards the creation of "silks," which prevented the inner Bar from being recruited at the ordinary rate. Then, the present Lord Chancellor's promotion to office sent much work loose about the Temple. Lately, again, Mr. Justice Wills has been raised from a large practice to the Bench, and last, but by no means least, Mr. Charles Russell, Q.C., has broken down temporarily. When one of the most hard-worked men at the Bar gives up his long vacation to a criminal case, and follows this weary work with a violent electioneering campaign, he must expect to pay the penalty by wintering in the South of France.

There have been changes also upon the Bench. Lord Justice Baggallay, who had long been ailing, retired from the Court of Appeal last week, and his place was taken by Sir Henry Lopes. The appointment is neither popular nor unpopular. As a lawyer Sir Henry Lopes was not qualified for promotion, and he was not chosen for his legal capacities. On the other hand the Queen's Bench Division is not strong in genuinely learned judges. Failing, therefore, an appointment direct from the Bar;

the choice might just as well fall upon Sir Henry Lopes as any one else. Moreover, his political claims were strong, and he is one of the pleasantest of the Judges in manner. The experience of late years has shown, however, that appointments directly from the Bar are successful. Thesiger and Holker, L.J.J., left great reputations behind them, though their careers were short, and Bowen, L.J., is an extraordinarily good Judge of Appeal. All three were promoted directly from the Bar. Meanwhile Sir Henry Lopes leaves a vacancy for a new judge and speculation is rife. Rumour first fixed the honour upon Sir John Eldon Gorst, Q.C., who is a lawyer of the purely political type. Your correspondent has known the Courts for more years than he cares to reckon, yet never saw he Sir J. E. Gorst, Q.C., appear in any case until he became Solicitor-General, nor does he ever remember a law officer with less work than Sir J. E. Gorst, Q.C. His place is in Parliament, and not upon the Bench and, according to the latest rumours, he himself is aware of the fact, and has refused the proffered honour. If so the choicelies between Mr. Grantham, Q.C., and Mr. Edward Clark, Q.C. Now the latter has been shelved once, which bodes ill for his chances; the former, on the other hand, has deserved exceedingly well of his party, and has a perfectly safe seat at Wandsworth, a consideration which is likely to have considerable weight, especially having regard to the fact that since Mr. Clark was elected at Plymouth the *Times* has published a damning exposure of the proceedings of the Conservative Association of that town. From what has been written your readers will see that men and their ambitions are the leading topics of the day in legal circles. In another fortnight, however, we shall settle down into the old and steady grooves.

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