

ary till July, 1858. His university honours have been numerous—Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, and Oxford giving him of their best without stint or measure.

Such, in brief outline, has been the public career of the Lord President. But this dry *résumé* of facts conveys to the reader a most imperfect idea of his intellectual quality and of the estimation in which he is held by the people of whose judicial system he is the head.

Lord President Inglis is permanently associated in the mind of every educated lay Scotchman with the trial of Madeline Smith in 1857. He was then Dean of Faculty. He had the reputation, within the walls of the Parliament House, of being the first advocate of the day, and he had already—though only for a short period—been the chief law officer of the Crown. His practice was at once large and select. But such facts as these prove impressive only to the initiated or the interested; and if Inglis had died, or retired from public life, in the beginning of the year 1857, his forensic memory would not have been cherished, as it now is, by the laity of Scotland.

On June 30, 1857, Miss Madeline Hamilton Smith, the daughter of an architect of good position in Glasgow, was brought to trial before three judges of the Edinburgh Court of Justiciary—Lord Justice Clerk Hope, Lord Ivory, and Lord Handyside—on a charge of having poisoned her lover and seducer, Emile L'Angelier, with arsenic. The youth of the prisoner—she was but twenty-one years—her social *status*, her appearance, the mystery of the case, and the cruelty of the murder, if murder were committed, aroused and stimulated public interest to the highest degree. Miss Smith's defence was entrusted to Mr. Inglis, who forthwith became a cynosure for every eye. The wildest rumours circulated—and, if we may anticipate a little, are in circulation still—as to the great advocate's behaviour during the critical interval between the indictment and the trial of the prisoner. 'He was living in the deepest seclusion;' 'none of his relatives dared to address him;' 'he believed Miss Smith to be innocent;' 'he

knew her to be guilty;' such and a hundred other reports were in vogue. One of these tales has displayed a vitality so persistent that it deserves to be recorded. L'Angelier died from arsenical poisoning, and traces of a large dose were found in his stomach and intestines. The line of defence—so the story goes—which Mr. Inglis had at first determined to assume was that arsenic, being a mineral poison, would necessarily have sunk to the bottom of the cup of coffee or cocoa in which it was alleged to have been administered, and could not therefore have been taken in any quantity by the deceased, at least through the medium on which the Crown relied. It is obvious that this contention, if well founded, weakened the case for the prosecution and lent colour to the hypothesis of suicide, suggested by the defence. Mr. Inglis sent for an eminent Edinburgh chemist, and propounded to him the theory which he thought of trying to establish. This gentleman subjected it to a single and a fatal experiment. He took a cup of coffee and poured into it a quantity of arsenic; sure enough the deadly mineral sank to the bottom of the cup. The cloud rose for a moment from the advocate's face. 'But suppose,' said the chemist, 'that we do what is usually done by a young lady who hands to a friend a cup of coffee which she has prepared; *suppose that we stir the contents with the spoon.*' In an instant the arsenic was temporarily suspended in the coffee; and it was clear that the whole might have been swallowed without a suspicion of anything except grounds! 'Good night,' said Mr. Inglis, quietly closing the conference and returning to his papers, 'we shall not need your evidence at the trial.' The prosecution of Madeline Smith was conducted by the Lord Advocate, the Hon. James Moncrief (who afterwards became the Lord Justice Clerk of Scotland), with remarkable ability and moderation. The Dean of Faculty followed with a speech which was at once declared by the press and by the public to be the forensic masterpiece of the century. Delivered under great mental excitement, emphasizing and ennobling the arts of the accomplished advocate, it told upon the jury, and even upon the bench, like an electric