

## FLOTSAM AND JETSAM.

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THE *London Standard* thus speaks of the bar in Russia: The bar is to this day far behind in its standard of professional honour and dignity. A system obtains of bargaining direct with the client on the "payment by results" principle. In criminal cases the prisoner will agree to pay his counsel three or four times as much if he secures him an acquittal, and the counsel takes good care to get a large part of this money in advance. A barrister will even descend to frightening his client by exaggerated statements of the danger he is in; and, further, will not scruple to demand, also in advance, payments for "secret purposes"—that is, for bribing influential officials. Indeed, the bar in Russia is mercenary and rapacious; and, as the division of duties recognised in England between the solicitor and the barrister is not known in Russia, sharp counsel are brought face to face with their unhappy clients, and take the measure of their means and ignorant credulity. The barrister regulates his fees in much the same way as an advertising quack doctor would do, and carries on the action or cure in the lowest commercial spirit.

The February number of the *New Zealand Jurist* contains a report of a committal to jail for one month of a barrister practising before the Supreme Court, for contempt of that tribunal. The counsel had objected to the statement of the case made by one of the judges in delivering the judgment of the court. The following conversation ensued: The Chief Justice—It is absolutely impossible to go on with these interruptions. I will not sit here with your interrupting the proceedings, Mr. Barton. Mr. Barton—If your Honour makes decisions which are based upon data contrary to the facts proved in evidence at the trial, I must be allowed to correct the mistakes of the court as to those data. Your decisions should be intelligible to the parties and public, but especially to the parties. The Chief Justice—You must keep your seat and hold your tongue. Mr. Barton—I will assert my right

and my client's right, so long as I am in court. The Chief Justice—I will tell you now to keep your seat and hold your tongue—that is the order of the court. After a few more words the court closed the discussion rather abruptly with another order, this time to the jailor, to hold the barrister for one month in his keeping "without special instructions as to diet or otherwise."

The life of an eminent New York lawyer, Charles O'Connor, shows what diligence and perseverance will accomplish. When eight years old, he was an office boy and a newspaper carrier. His father published a weekly newspaper, and Charles, besides attending in the office, delivered the journal to its subscribers in New York, Brooklyn, and Jersey City. He used a skiff to cross the river, and frequently would be out all Saturday night serving his route. It is said that he never missed a subscriber. When seven years old, he entered a lawyer's office as an errand boy. He borrowed law books, took them home, and read them by the light of a candle, far into the night. Several lawyers, noticing the boy's industry, aided him in his studies. When he was twenty-four years old, he was admitted to the Bar; and even then it was said that young O'Connor's legal opinion was worth more than that of many other lawyers. But success comes slowly to a young lawyer, and it was not until his thirtieth year that clients recognized the legal learning and skill of young O'Connor. He was very poor, but industry and ability were his capital. He worked hard at the smallest case, never slighting any trust, and in time secured the reputation of a man who would do his best for those employing him. To this conscientiousness and industry he owed his success.—*Ex.*

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IN FRANCE.—A bill for the abolition of punishment by death has been laid upon the table of the French Chamber. The proposition bears the signature of Louis Blanc and of 68 other members of the Extreme Left.—*Ex.*