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LAW LYRICS.*

Remote in its origin, the popular notion that the lawyer who indulges now and then in "literary lapses" is a poor stick at his profession and had better drop out of it, is still going strong.

That it is not founded in fact is known to everyone reasonably familiar with the personal history of the Bar. Blackstone might have been better employed when he lent professional countenance to this delusion in his *Farewell to the Muses*. So far as he was concerned literary talent did more for him in the way of preferment and reputation than any skill in advocacy or judicial endowment he possessed. In the current number of the *Juridical Review*, Mr. Francis Watt has an interesting paper on Samuel Warren, another lawyer whom the muses favoured. In a letter to John Murray in 1835, accompanying the manuscript of his *Introduction to Law Studies*, Warren dolorously complained that his *Diary of a Late Physician* had impaired his chances of success at the Bar. This venture in fiction had, as he puts it, "set afloat the notion that I am not a practical lawyer." Commenting on this, Mr. Watt says: "A remark in this letter voices a tolerably general opinion—if you succeed in letters you must fail in law—in which there is a grain of truth and a whole bushel of chaff. Warren was mistaken as to his own case. Had he never written a single line of fiction I do not think he would have had any the better practice; nay, it is recorded that one solicitor was so much struck with *Ten Thousand and a Year*, presumably from the legal knowledge displayed therein, that he incontinently briefed the learned author. The result fell lamentably short of his expectations." We cannot dwell at length upon this popular fallacy here; suffice it to say that the literary divagations of such mighty men of law as Lord Eldon, Baron Alderson, Sir Thomas Talfourd, Lord Denman and Lord Bowen,

*LAW LYRICS. By E. Douglas Armour, K.C., Toronto. Canada Law Book Company, Limited, 1918.