doctrines, which are evidenced by the decisions, and not the decisions themselves. Lord Mansfield expressed the idea thus: "The law does not consist of particular cases, but of general principles, which are illustrated and explained by these cases."* And Tucker, P., in the Virginia Court: "Though we search for precedents, to discover and illustrate principles, the law depends at last upon principles, and not upon the precedent."† This is the view of the law entertained by every successful practitioner. But there are lawyers who deem it erroneous. According to them it is not *law* at all; it is a conglomeration of adjudged cases, by analogies to which succeeding cases are to be decided. These lawyers may be likened to one who should believe it not to be a law that material substances above and upon the earth gravitate towards its centre, and who should spend his days and nights in collecting, and burden his memory with remembering, particular instances in analogy to which he would hope, but not be sure, material things would move hereafter; enquiring specially for those instances in which new-made cheese had dropped to the moon, and leaden bullets had fallen upwards from pavements and killed wild geese flying for more congenial climes. Now, this view of the law may be correct—at least, the present article does not deny it—but those who entertain it have no occasion for tools of the legal trade, because they have nothing to do with which to employ the tools. They may, indeed, so long as no revolution in professional thought occurs, get some work at making digests, or instructing young candidates for honors at the bar, because herein their labours are brought to no practical test by which they can be shown to be abortive. But, assuming their views to be correct,, still they cannot advise a client correctly, or manage well his cause in court; and the reason is that though, as we assume, their views are just, yet, to practice from them, they must know the facts and results of the many hundred thousand cases from which the analogies are to be taken, as the only possible means by which to find the particular case required. Then, should they find the right case and produce it to the judge, they, holding it to be in itself supreme, and rejecting the idea that it is a mere manifestation of a law which exists separate from itself, would have no power of satisfying the court of its application to facts differing in any degree from those involved in it. Nor would there be any fulcrum on which to rest a lever for upsetting a case which had been wrongly decided. Indeed, it could not be said that any decision had been wrong. Again, no lifetime would be sufficient to read the cases; and, supposing them to be read and remembered, no powers could keep pace with the constantly accumulating mass. If a man enters upon this line of study and practice, he is soon overburdened, and his brain becomes broken by the mass piled upon it; he is bewildered, and he loses all capacity to do anything well. Holding, as we assume, to the truth, he becomes a martyr in the cause of truth, but the emoluments of a successful practice can never be his. His home is in Heaven, with the martyrs who have gone before, and the sooner he arrives there the better for him.

[To be Continued.]

* Rex v. Bembridge, 3 Doug. 327, 332.

† Williamson v. Beckham, 8 Leigh, 20, 24.

PERILS OF JUDGES.—The narrow escape of the Master of the Rolls from assassination, by a gentleman whom there is too much reason to believe is irresponsible, revives the recollection of the less deadly attack upon Vice-Chancellor Malins some time ago. Not to quote instances far back in legal history, there have been occasions within the last twenty-five years when the perils of judicial administration have been brought before the public. A prisoner at an assize on the Northern Circuit, on receiving sentence, stooped down and took off his heavily nailed boot, which he hurled at the head of Mr. Justice Cresswell. That stern but eminently just judge for a moment appeared to quail, but in the next instant recovered, and quietly directed the prisoner to be removed. Sir Samuel Martin and Mr. Justice Hawkins have both appeared in inferior courts to obtain protection against persons who had threatened them. The circumstances of the attack upon Sir George Jessel are nearly parallel with that upon the present Solicitor-General when he was Mr. Giffard. At the Old Bailey, about twenty years ago, Mr. Giffard was performing his duty as counsel, when a poor mad gentleman came up to him, and saying, "Remember Cardiff," fired upon him, happily without injury to one destined to take one of the first places at the Bar. It is impossible to guard against any such attacks when they are made by madmen; and, unhappily, the mental worry of litigation is only too surely calculated to develop any incipient or latent tendency to lunacy. The public will rejoice that the most capable, and certainly the most industrious judge we have on the bench has escaped the attack of an assassin. Sir George Jessel does not spare himself, and the example he sets is beyond all price to the public at large.—*Echo.*