

of public importance and responsibility, was one who of necessity should have his little ways about him, evidently thought the judge. He was not satisfied with having it perfectly understood that the Probate Court had for its Judge no less a personage than himself, but he would fain have had it understood also that the Probate Judge of Pembina County was an old gentleman beside whom the Governor of the State was altogether of secondary importance. The consequence of this was that the Judge in time became a very objectionable character in public estimation, and the party with which he had become allied took the first opportunity of quietly but very effectively ousting the old man from office and leaving him entirely upon his own bottom.

The Judge was a man who had crossed the seventieth milestone in life. In personal appearance he was as straight as a ramrod, with long, flowing white beard, and a pair of eyes that shone out through his gold-rimmed spectacles like balls of fire. He had long since abandoned that fastidious habit of wearing collars or neckties, and since his retirement from office his clothes commenced to show unmistakable signs of decay. In temperament the old man was of a decidedly aggressive turn, and in debate it was absolutely necessary to acknowledge the Judge your master unless you wished to run the risk of having his cane brought down with a crash upon your head. The Judge was not a man who would sit quietly about in the bar room of the hotel and listen to any pessimistic discourse without letting you know that he was there,