

OBITER DICTA.

It was the wish of the King . . .
Grandly to hold a magnificent Court, and with that intention
One with another he summoned, the small as well as the great ones.

GOETHE: *Reineke Fuchs*.

We think the latter part of the above quotation applies with some significance to the summoning of Mr. Charles J. Darling, Q.C., M.P., to the English Bench, which has brought down upon Lord Chancellor Halsbury's head a storm of abuse quite as violent as that which assailed Lord Campbell when he appointed unpretentious Colin Blackburn to the Queen's Bench in 1859. But we fear that the present Chancellor cannot emulate King Lear and bid the wind blow until it cracks its cheeks with the same firm belief in time justifying his choice that animated Lord Campbell. Perhaps Blackburn was no better known as a practitioner at the Bar than the newly appointed judge, but in the case of the former there was the reassuring fact that he was above all things a bookman, and that he had, moreover, undergone a splendid training in case-law as a reporter of the decisions of the Courts. Mr. Justice Darling has, it is true, dabbled in literature with a legal flavor about it; but that legal flavor is extremely tenuous, and the literature itself not to be called robust. We feel that it would be far safer to predicate the possession of an adequate quantum of the judicial quality on the part of one of the compilers of Ellis and Blackburn's Reports than on the part of the author of "*Scintillæ Juris*." Speaking of the latter upon its merits, we hold to the view that the humorous side of the reason of the law demands a deft and subtle hand in its presentment; and hopelessly fatuous is the effort of him who attempts to exploit it without the needful talent therefor. "*Scintillæ Juris*," we regret to say, has to be classed amongst the most dismal failures in the legal catalogue. We cannot recall that we ever met with anything more absolutely banal in all the literature of the profession than the author's chapters on "Advocacy" and "Maxims." The Machiavelism of the former chapter, however, would be mischievous if it were not silly. *Ruit mole sua.*