

creation of more Queen's Counsel. Perhaps this was the right view to take; and if it was, matters have not materially changed since last November. A generation or two ago the number of Queen's Counsel might be almost counted on one's fingers. They were men of unquestioned eminence; their reception of official rank merely ratified an opinion which their profession had already pronounced. Few thought of applying for the honor without carefully counting the risk of losing the business which they had acquired as juniors, and examining carefully into what vacancy they might step. It was the unwritten law that there should be no creation until the death or elevation to the bench of a leader in a Vice-Chancellor's court, or on circuit, made it desirable to fill up a gap. But under more than one Chancellor, and for many years, there has been a policy of profusion, and the names of Queen's Counsel now fill two and a half pages of the law list. Patents have been given not only to those who have succeeded in their profession, but to those who, having failed, wish to make a dignified exit from it. The title has long since ceased to be significant of anything. To suitors it is no guide to fitness; and often it would be equally hard for the donor and the recipient to explain why the gift was ever bestowed. We took occasion some months ago to question the value, in a public point of view, of the retention of a distinction which often dooms a barrister, who has made a mistake in taking silk, to do nothing, or try vainly to do that for which he is unfit. But Queen's Counsel are not likely to go the way of serjeants for many a day to come, and in the meantime nearly a dozen new 'silks' are appointed to keep up the order."

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