

fill a vacancy which the death or advancement of a senior has created.

There are many points of difference between a Queen's Counsel and a barrister. The latter is allowed to "settle," as it is termed, the drafts of all the legal documents—indorsement of writs, statement of claim or defence, etc.—required in commencing or defending an action. He can prepare the drafts of wills, settlements, deeds, and other papers required in carrying on the ordinary business of life, and he is also allowed to appear in court as an advocate.

The Queen's Counsel is not permitted to prepare any drafts of pleadings, deeds, or documents of any kind. He may advise upon points of law or equity submitted to him in "a case," that is, a written statement of facts; or he may give an opinion or settle a draft in consultation with a junior counsel; and he can appear in court on behalf of anyone who chooses (through a solicitor) to hand him a brief, except that he must not be employed in any cause against the sovereign without special license, and therefore cannot plead in court for the defendant in a criminal prosecution without the leave of the Crown.

On the other hand, a junior counsel can defend as many prisoners as he pleases, without leave or licence from anyone. And last, but not least, in the estimation of many people, the Q.C. is entitled to wear a gown of silk, and has precedence of all barristers who have not received a patent of precedence dated before the patent of the Q.C.; while the barrister has to rest contented with a robe of "stuff," and has literally to take a back seat, having to sit behind "the bar," as the wooden partition is termed which separates the seats used by the Queen's, or senior counsel, from those occupied by the juniors.

A barrister may desire to become one of Her Majesty's Counsel for various reasons. His health may be declining from over-work; he may have an idea that promotion will materially increase his income; or he may be anxious (being sufficiently wealthy) to add a couple of letters to his name before retiring from the profession. He is, however, generally induced to move in the matter by receiving notice that another

barrister, his junior at the bar, is about to make application for promotion.

Having made up his mind to become one of Her Majesty's Counsel, the barrister addresses a letter to the Lord Chancellor to that effect. He must next, according to strict legal etiquette, inform by letter all those barristers who, according to the date of their call to the bar, are senior to himself, of his having made the application; and this is done in order to give such seniors an opportunity of applying on their own behalf, and so retaining their seniority.

When it becomes generally known that applications are being made for "silk," as it is professionally termed, there is considerable joy in the ranks of the remaining juniors, each of whom hopes to obtain a share of the "chamber work," as it is called, about to be thrown up by those who are desirous of elevation.

The application to the Lord Chancellor having been made, there ensues a week or two of great anxiety to the applicants. They are about to take a leap in the dark. They have each thrown up a business, producing, perhaps, an income represented by four figures, and will have to commence again in another grade of the profession, which may return them little or nothing; it not being, by any means, a matter of course that a man successful in one branch will be equally fortunate in the other.

A flutter of excitement in the legal hive announces that the appointments have been made. The letter which informs the recipients of the interesting fact is generally couched in the following style:—

"Sir,—I am directed by the Lord Chancellor to inform you that Her Majesty has been pleased to approve of your appointment as one of her Counsel learned in the law. And I am to request you to place yourself in communication with the Clerk of the Crown, and to furnish him with such information as he may require for the preparation of your patent.—I am, sir, your obedient servant,

(Signed) X. Y. Z.,
Principal Secretary."

The information required is the name of the applicant in full, and the date of his call