

The Legal News.

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Baron Huddleston, at Chelmsford, July 29, in the course of some remarks upon the circuit system of England, criticized the establishment of additional courts of appeal. His lordship observed: "A new Court of Appeal was constituted instead of the old Court of Error in the Exchequer Chamber, and appeals were greatly increased. Whether this was desirable or not, the Legislature so considered. If I were to express my own opinion I should say that it was not favorable to the interests of public justice. It appears to me that to give undue facilities for appeals from Court to Court tends to nurture the spirit of litigation, and to lead to a sort of legal gambling, in which the party who has failed risks his money in a second and a third appeal, and so the case is carried from Court to Court until, perhaps, both the parties are exhausted. At present the litigant, even on a matter of procedure, may appeal from the master to the judge at chambers, and thence to the Divisional Court, and then to the Court of Appeal, and finally to the House of Lords. A great French jurist thought that there ought to be one appeal in order to allow of a rehearing before a different tribunal, but that there should be no further appeal, and in that view I entirely concur."

The Faribault (Minn.) *Democrat* recently contained an announcement of sheriff's sale on execution, wherein it was stated that the sheriff had levied upon the upper set of false teeth belonging to the defendant, and would sell the same to the highest bidder for cash. This might seem at first sight the sale of a necessary, like the debtor's bed or cooking stove. But it appears that there were circumstances of peculiar aggravation in the case. The plaintiff, a dentist, made the teeth to defendant's order. Then the defendant got possession of them by carrying them off from the dentist's office in his absence. Payment of the dentist's bill being

refused, suit to recover was entered, and the Court believing probably that it would be difficult to sell teeth still in the debtor's mouth, made an order supplementary to execution, that the defendant deliver the teeth to the sheriff. The defendant complied with this order, and thereupon the sheriff advertised the teeth for sale.

"Chaos is come again," according to an English writer, because counsel are advised to return fees which they cannot earn. It appears that recently a Queen's counsel who had received a brief was unable to attend the trial. The solicitor who instructed him, at the suggestion of the client, asked for a return of the fee. The learned counsel replied that he would be happy to do so if he could find any precedent. The Attorney-General being consulted, stated that in his opinion the right course was to "return so much of the brief fee as exceeds the amount which would have been proper if the brief had been simply a case for opinion." Even this seems to us too favorable a position for the barrister, for (1) he charges for a service which the client did not require except as a preliminary to advocacy; (2) he sets his own price upon such service. The mere fact of a counsel examining papers does the party no good, if he is afterwards obliged to place the case in the hands of another. However, even the Attorney-General's rule, according to the *Law Journal*, "would have made old-fashioned practitioners stare and gasp," and another authority says "chaos is come again." The only argument we see urged against a return of fees is that counsel will no longer trouble themselves to attend if they wish to be elsewhere, and they can save their conscience by returning the fee. But the withdrawal of counsel at the eleventh hour would often be a matter of such serious moment to the client that the return of fees would be a poor compensation. The obligation to attend is as sacred as ever. The return of fees is simply a matter of honesty, which forbids a lawyer to keep money which he has not earned nor tried to earn, and which the client frequently can ill afford to pay a second time.