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*THE KENTUCKY TRAGEDY.*

Kentucky has furnished a most extraordinary incident of judicial life in a land where it would be flattery to say that the law is duly respected. Judge Reid, of the Superior Court, had rendered a decision against a lawyer named John S. Corneilson. The latter publicly assaulted and 'cowhided' the Judge, and the Judge's wife, it is said, urged her husband to go forth and slay his assailant. The Judge felt keenly that this mode of vindicating his honor was ill-suited to his office. He resisted the promptings of his wife, which were echoed by two-thirds of the community; but in the end, he felt unequal to the burden of his position, and committed suicide. The strangest part of the affair is, that when Judge Reid had been treated as above described, there was no law to reach the offender—that is to say, no one seems to have thought that the matter could be settled by the punishment of the ruffian in the ordinary course of justice. The *Kentucky Law Journal* laments this condition of things. "There seems the oddest disposition in this community," it says, "to leave the settlement of such affairs to the prowess of the individuals concerned. Any appeal to the law for reparation is considered as a confession of weakness. It is true that the indignity to which Judge Reid has been subjected cannot be over-estimated, but for this very reason the magnitude of the offence demands reparation from the law. Yet one will hear it said, the outrage is too great a matter to be left to the law. The sufferer must right himself. The law is not strong enough. His own greater powers are called for. Could there be greater presumption, or a sentiment more characteristic of a barbarous people, where law is weak and individuals strong?" This was written before the suicide, but Judge Reid seems to have imagined that he had been condemned by public opinion because he would not murder his assailant: even his wife lost respect for him, and life under such a cloud became intolerable. The whole affair

is strange, and utterly discreditable. If the trained intellect of a Judge discharging his functions in a Superior Court succumbs to the influence of his surroundings, we need not wonder that tragic occurrences in other classes of society are so frequent.

*LAW REFORM IN ENGLAND.*

Mr. Justice Manisty does not feel happy under the order of things introduced by the Judicature Acts, and at the opening of the Summer Assizes for the County of Northumberland, July 9, he took occasion to indulge in a long lament over the general uprooting of the good old institutions. The cost of litigation was supposed to be too great, but now, exclaimed the learned Judge, "the cost was simply double what it was." They had done away with two Chief Justices, and had but one chief over the whole fifteen of the Queen's Bench Division. They had two men to do the work of four. "What was the consequence? Judges were but men. They differed often, and then there was one to one. That was the tribunal that was held up as certain to work right. So far did it go that three judges were never to sit together if it could be avoided. What was the result at the present moment? A Court of Appeal burdened with work, with appeals at the rate of four to one. Thus we had the number quadrupled and the cost doubled. That was one of the effects of the Judicature Acts and the grand system by which everything was to go right. They had been experimenting for years, and he could not see that they were getting a bit further forward. He looked forward with very great doubt as to the effect of all those changes;" and so on for more than a newspaper column. The learned Judge wound up by describing the little petty changes and economies as "nibblings at institutions," and he declared that "such nibblings did not seem right according to his way of thinking." Surprise was expressed in some quarters recently because one of our Judges ventured to criticise legislative and executive changes, and it was said that in England this would be considered an impropriety. But here we find an English Judge handling the subject of legislative and executive reforms in anything but a meek and reverent spirit.