

## The Legal News.

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### THE JUDICIAL OFFICE.

As one is apt in these times to hear overmuch of the faults and frailties of judges, and of judicial blindness (with or without cause and consideration therefor), it may be useful to quote some observations uttered from the judge's standpoint. Chief Justice Ryan, in a recent address to the law class of the University of Wisconsin, said:—

"On the bench, lawyers are charged with a higher grade of function, little more important than their duty at the bar. The bench necessarily depends much upon the bar. A good bar is an essential of a good court. The problems of justice can rarely be safely solved in solitary study. Forensic conflicts give security to the judgment of the law. The world sometimes scolds at the delay and uncertainty of the administration of justice. These are evils essential to our civilization, perhaps to any attainable civilization. But summary judgment is judicial despotism. Impulsive judgment is judicial injustice. The bench symbolizes on earth the throne of divine justice. The judge sitting in judgment on it is the representative of divine justice, has the most direct subrogation on earth of an attribute of God. In other places in life, the light of intelligence, purity of truth, love of right, firmness of integrity, singleness of purpose, candor of judgment, are relatively essential to high beauty of character. On the bench they are the absolute condition of duty; the condition which only can redeem judges from moral leprosy. When I was younger, I could declaim against the enormity of judicial corruption. I could not now. I have no heart for it. The mere words seem to have a deeper ignominy than the wisest brain and the most fluent tongue could put into other language. The judge who falters with justice, who is swayed by fear, favor, affection, or the hope of reward, by personal influence or public opinion, prostitutes the attribute of God, and sells the favor of his maker as atrociously and blasphemously as Judas did. But the light of God's eternal

truth and justice shines on the head of the just judge, and makes it visibly glorious."

Chief Justice Ryan is particularly severe upon a specimen of lawyer for whom, indeed, no one has a kind word—the lawyer who is supposed to have access to the private ear of a judge, or, as the Chief Justice dubs him, the "professional adventurer who trades in judicial favor." The following portrait is too vivid not to be sketched from life:—

"He is almost always a dunce, a fellow of low intellect and vitality; of meagre life; of mean and selfish instincts and tastes, dull of head and cold of heart; of little passion and no impulse; so cold and clammy, that he might have been a fish; a creature whose lean brain and thin blood, cautious egotism and selfish greed, would fit him, as far as they go, for store or bank or factory, conducted on purely economic principles; but could fill no honest place in a lawyer's office. A quick-tempered or warm-hearted rogue could never fill the favorite's place. It requires a fellow of no pity to mitigate his thrift, and of no temper to betray his confederacy. So you find him a grave, quiet, sedate sharper; guarded, formal, presuming, dogmatic, with as little taste for fun as talent for honor. In his intercourse of business, he rarely speaks of his uncle, or father, or cousin, the judge; but he utters no words to client or adversary, in which the judicial influence is not implied, like the verb sometimes in grammar, which gives significance to the whole sentence. He is indignant at the slightest reference to the nepotism. But he is virtuous about expression only, the thing he wishes always understood. It is his stock in trade, his family estate."

### SOLICITORS' LETTERS.

The *Solicitors' Journal* (London) has the following on this subject:—

"In letters written by one solicitor to another on ordinary business matters, nothing more appears to be necessary than clearness and conciseness, and a courteous assumption of the technical knowledge of the correspondent. The letter is to be read by a busy man; hence the meaning of the writer should be expressed in as few words as is consistent with perfect clearness. The writer must, first of all, be