

less than 1,000f. (£40), or where property is concerned involving a rent of less than 60f. There is a civil tribunal of First Instance in every arrondissement, and there are 362 arrondissements in France. Thus each arrondissement, with the exception of two in the neighborhood of Paris, possesses a Court with unlimited jurisdiction in all matters, whatever the issue, in its own area. There are tribunals of commerce in the 213 towns which are of sufficient trade importance to warrant the existence of a special tribunal. Where there is no tribunal of commerce, the civil tribunal exercises commercial jurisdiction in its stead. Below the civil tribunals of First Instance there is a Court which is composed of a single stipendiary, *juge de paix* (not to be confounded with the English J.P.), a tribunal with jurisdiction up to 1,500 francs, and without appeal under 100 francs, and below the tribunals of commerce the *Conseils de Prud'hommes*. The latter are Courts composed of masters and workmen in equal numbers, for the settlement of disputes between employers and employed, with jurisdiction which is final in matters involving less than 200 francs, and subject to appeal to the tribunal of commerce of the district in matters involving a larger amount. There is a *Juge de Paix* Court in each of the 2,868 cantons in France; but neither these Courts nor the *Conseils de Prud'hommes* much concern lawyers, for the parties usually appear in person, and the recognized legal profession has little to do with them. Only the larger civil tribunals of first instance have a bar. The *avoués* attached to them, like the *agréés* in the tribunals of commerce, which have adopted the institution of *agréés*, do the work of barrister and solicitor in the same way as solicitors in England do the bulk of the County Court work. The result of this decentralisation is strongly marked in Paris. In London we have 5,000 solicitors and 3,000 barristers—in all some 8,000 persons—practising the law, whereas in Paris the recognized practitioners doing solicitors' work number only 550, and barristers' work 800—i.e. 1,350, or about one-sixth of the number in London; so that, even adding the supposed number of unrecognized practitioners, the total (allowing

for the difference in population) is still a long way from that in London. The decentralisation of justice in France affects the social position of the bar, for, with the exception of that of Paris, it is much behind the English bar. In England, as the only avenue to great judicial office, the bar enjoys a prestige far beyond the Paris bar, the French bench being recruited without reference to distinction at the bar. The office in France of public procurator (usually, but erroneously, called in England 'public prosecutor') is the keystone of the administration of criminal justice in France. There is nobody analogous to this official in England, except, in some respects, the Queen's Proctor in the Divorce Court. The English Public Prosecutor or the Scotch Procurator-Fiscal performs only a small portion of the functions exercised (as the name '*ministère public*' indicates) by the French public procurator. In criminal matters he is the only prosecutor. The repression of crimes is a public interest, and in France private persons can only lodge their denunciation or complaint with the procurator. It is in his discretion to decide whether a criminal offence has been committed, and, if it has been committed, to bring the offender to justice. Complainants can prefer a civil claim, and thus actively support the prosecution in Court; and on civil claims being joined with the criminal issues, the same judgment deals with both. In civil matters the public procurator holds a sort of watching brief in the public interest. Owing to the active and individual nature of his office, he has constant opportunities of bringing his abilities under notice, and he is eligible for every judicial office. In France they have a Minister of Justice, who more than represents our Lord Chancellor. After him comes the Procurator-General of the Supreme Court of Appeal, whose deputies are the advocates-general of that Court. Lastly, in the civil tribunals of first instance there are a procurator-general and his substitutes. Every deputy of the procurator of the Republic must have passed the bar examinations and have spent two years in chambers before he becomes eligible for appointment. This, however, is all the connection with the bar he need have. From these substitutes