

CURIOSITIES OF LAW AND LAWYERS.

Watson, James
CURIOSITIES

OF

LAW AND LAWYERS

BY

CROAKE JAMES

NEW EDITION, GREATLY ENLARGED

NEW YORK

FUNK & WAGNALLS COMPANY

1899

PREFACE.

ON lately retiring, after half a century's practice of the Law, my companions, in Grand Divan assembled, bound me over to complete for their use a Repertory of Good Things relating to our common profession, which I had long been preparing, and of which they had read and heard snatches. "These presents" contain this fond memorial of departed joys. There are many favourite sayings, standard illustrations, golden sentences, exploits of legal heroes, jests, explanations of curious and memorable doctrines and incidents, which make up the "natural history" of the Lawyer Tribe. I have with great care selected and assorted these, and trust they will be found to amuse, if not edify, Lawyers, as well as their numerous Clients.

C. J.

CONTENTS.

	PAGES
CHAPTER I.	
ABOUT LAWYERS GENERALLY	1, 500
CHAPTER II.	
ABOUT JUDGES	16, 514
CHAPTER III.	
ABOUT THE LAW, LEGAL AUTHORS, AND COURTS	72, 545
CHAPTER IV.	
ABOUT ADVOCATES, PLEADERS, CONVEYANCERS, AND AT- TORNIES	108, 556
CHAPTER V.	
ABOUT COUNSEL, THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL, CIRCUITS, AND INNS OF COURT	158, 566
CHAPTER VI.	
ABOUT THE CHURCH, BISHOPS, AND CLERGY	226, 604
CHAPTER VII.	
ABOUT GOVERNMENT, THE SOVEREIGN, PARLIAMENT, AND PUBLIC RIGHTS	241, 615

	PAGES
CHAPTER VIII.	
ABOUT PUNISHMENTS, PRISONERS, AND JUSTICES OF THE PEACE	294, 636
CHAPTER IX.	
ABOUT RECREATIONS OF JUDGES AND LAWYERS	342, 667
CHAPTER X.	
ABOUT CHANCELLOES AND THE GREAT SEAL	373, 696
CHAPTER XI.	
ABOUT NICE POINTS OF LAW, AND THINGS NOT GENERALLY KNOWN	415, 730
CHAPTER XII.	
ABOUT WITNESSES AND JURYMEN	447, 746
CHAPTER XIII.	
ABOUT THE DEAD AND THEIR WILLS	491, 762

CURIOSITIES OF LAW AND LAWYERS.

CHAPTER I.

ABOUT LAWYERS GENERALLY.

HOW LAWYERS GET TO HEAVEN.

There is a pleasant story of a lawyer, who, being refused entrance into heaven by St. Peter, contrived to throw his hat inside the door; and then, being permitted by the kind saint to go in and fetch it, took advantage of his being fixed to his post as doorkeeper to refuse to come back again.

THE LAWYER'S PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

Adolphus, the criminal lawyer, says that the judges in his time were much impressed with the following table of degrees. The three degrees of comparison in a lawyer's progress are: getting on; getting on-er (honour); getting on-est (honest). The judges, he says, acknowledged there was much sad truth in this jingle.

THE LAWYER'S PATRON SAINT.

St. Evona, or Ives, of Brittany, a famous lawyer in 1300, was lamenting that his profession had not a patron saint to look up to. The physicians had St. Luke; the champions had St. George; the artists each had one; but the lawyers had none. Thinking that the Pope ought to bestow a saint, he went to Rome, and requested his Holiness to give the lawyers of Brittany a patron. The Pope, rather puzzled, proposed to St. Evona that he should go round

the church of St. John de Lateran blindfold, and after he had said so many Ave Marias, the first saint he laid hold of should be his patron; and this solution of the difficulty the good old lawyer willingly undertook. When he had finished his Ave Marias, he stopped short, and laid his hands on the first image he came to, and cried out with joy, "This is our saint—this be our patron." But when the bandage was taken from his eyes, what was his astonishment to find, that, though he had stopped at St. Michael's altar, he had all the while laid hold, not of St. Michael, but of the figure under St. Michael's feet—the devil!

This St. Evona of Brittany, it is said in Carr's account of the Netherlands, 1684, was so dejected at the choice of a patron saint, that in a few months he died, and coming to heaven's gates knocked hard. Whereupon St. Peter asked who it was that knocked so boldly. He replied that he was St. Evona the advocate. "Away, away!" said St. Peter; "here is but one advocate in heaven; here is no room for you lawyers." "Oh, but," said St. Evona, "I am that honest lawyer who never took fees on both sides, nor pleaded in a bad cause; nor did I ever set my neighbours together by the ears, nor lived by the sins of the people." "Well, then," said St. Peter, "come in!" He became the patron saint himself.

This story puts one in mind of Ben Jonson going through a church in Surrey, and seeing poor people weeping over a grave, whereupon he asked one of the women why they wept. "Oh," said she, "we have lost our precious lawyer, Justice Randall. He kept us all in peace, and always was so good as to keep us from going to law—the best man that ever lived." "Well," said Ben Jonson, "I will send you an epitaph to write upon his tomb," which was—

God works wonders now and then :
Here lies a lawyer—an honest man.

WHY LAWYERS TAKE UP BAD CASES.

One of the most famous French advocates, Langlois, was asked by the President of the Parliament of Paris