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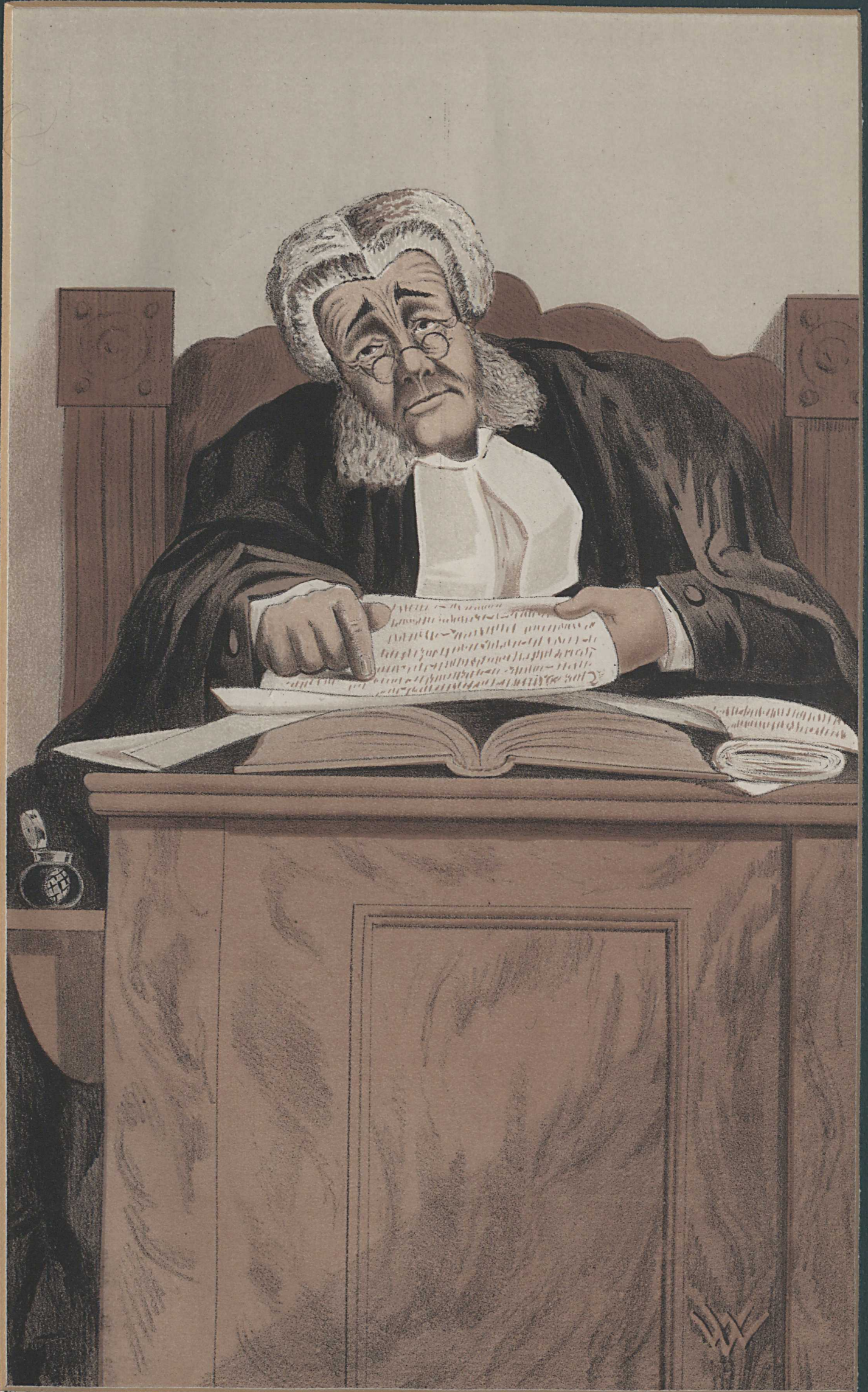
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VANITY FAIR.

LONDON, FEBRUARY 8, 1873.

JUDGES.—No. V.

THE HON. SIR JAMES BACON, VICE-CHANCELLOR AND CHIEF JUDGE IN BANKRUPTCY.

VICE-CHANCELLOR BACON is a striking instance of the blessed results of party government. Many years ago he was a young man. He had inherited the staunchest Tory principles, choice and chance had made him a barrister, and Nature had denied to him the gift of persuasive speech. So dreary, dull, and unimpassioned a kind of oratory did he display that it was suspected that he always knew more of his case than could be said in words. No gibe could move or joke allure him from the even tenour of his journies through wildernesses of facts and authorities. He had his duty to do by his clients, and would do it though the Court of Chancery should endeavour to escape and the Chancery Bar should yawn. "Bacon," said Justice Knight - Bruce, "talks like an unpunctuated book bound in calf." And so he did. But he talked withal to considerable purpose, for his success was great enough to make his clients forgive his eloquence, and he was known as one of the most painstaking and trustworthy of Chancery barristers. He was the kind of man who makes a considerable reputation in a considerable time. But when the considerable time had elapsed, when he had won a leading and lucrative practice and was at the zenith of his professional fame, it so happened that the Tory party had no chance of recognising the merits of their own side. And so Mr. Bacon, who had been made a Q.C. before the Corn Laws were abolished, remained a Q.C. and nothing more till the last Conservative Ministry in a final agonising shower of places started him on a judicial career. It was not a great start certainly that he then got. He was seventy-one years of age, and had seen many younger men grow up at the Chancery Bar whose reputation had eclipsed his—so that he might have expected a special recognition of his merits. But it was only

possible to make him a Commissioner of Bankruptcy and to give him with that a promise of the Chief Judgeship of the Bankruptcy Court if such an office should be created by a new Act. Men thought and said at the time that the new Commissioner had not been at all well treated or adequately requited for his many years of fidelity to a hopeless party. This was in 1868; but little more than a year afterwards the office of Chief Judge in Bankruptcy was created and he was appointed to it, in another seven months he was made a Vice-Chancellor, and it is barely a year since the finishing-touch was put to his tardy honours by his being made a Knight.

Putting aside therefore the duties of knighthood, Sir James Bacon is expected to fill in his own person two offices, each of which demands the whole powers of one man. The Bankruptcy Court is of an importance and has an amount of work to do which afford a gratifying proof of the commercial pre-eminence of England. Its jurisdiction is both primary and appellate with respect to that inability to pay his way which is the glory and crown of the modern merchant. And yet the chief judge who presides over its decisions has to divide himself between those and the business of Equity. He cannot be in two places at once, and it is not unnatural that he should give the greater share of his time to Chancery, leaving Bankruptcy mainly to the Registrars. There is a saving of £5000 a-year effected, but there is a considerable loss of weight in the bankruptcy decisions, and an injury to their authority such as, if brought about by a private person, would run the risk of being considered a contempt of Court. This is all the more lamentable since Sir James Bacon, who was not an eloquent advocate, is yet an excellent judge. He satisfies the profession, which is something; he abstains from moralising or sermonising; he talks little of the principles of the Court in which he most often presides; and his decisions, based upon the applicable cases, are received with respect and confidence.

JEHU JUNIOR.

JOHN TRUMAN'S DIARY.

MONDAY, February 3, 1873.—There is a sweet advertisement in the morning and evening papers. Subscribers to "the Tichborne Defence Fund" are informed that "If desired the names of the donors will not be disclosed." Has the time arrived when we unblushingly publish that it is dangerous in any way to become identified with the opinion that a man should not be condemned without a trial, because certain self-willed persons insist that he may be?

By the way I was startled to hear yesterday from "one who knows" that "Arthur Orton was a passenger by the last Overland Mail from Australia, and that he is now at Malta." There will be nevertheless, I understand, or may be, a dispute as to his identity, for he also has changed considerably during a twenty years' residence in Australia. It seems that the last (come-at-able) person who saw Arthur Orton alive in the flesh was Dr. Massey Wheeler, M.D. He first knew him in 1859, then in 1864, and lastly in 1869 at Brisbane. Dr. Wheeler states that Arthur Orton was already so wonderfully altered in 1869 from what he was in 1864 that he (Dr. Wheeler) hardly recognised him, and if Dr. Wheeler could hardly recognise him in 1869 it will be still more difficult to recognise him now. Dr. Wheeler, moreover, is gone on a trip to the West Indies, but is soon expected home, and must be an important witness at the trial.

I said, what many people feel, that my faith had been shaken in consequence of the changes of solicitors. "One who knows" answered, "Hopkins, Tichborne's first solicitor, swore he was the rightful heir on his death bed. John Holmes, although he does not now act for Sir Roger, was with him all through the trial, and is now trying in every possible way to help him. He has in the same degree preserved the confidence of Mr. Moojen and of Messrs. Baxter, Rose, and Norton. The dispute with Mr. Gorton arose simply out of that gentleman's bill of costs." Mr. Buckley Mathew, our minister at Rio, and the British Vice-Consul there have given some important evidence in the Claimant's favour. "Superhuman efforts are being made to dispose of him," added "one who knows"; "more is at stake in this ugly case than a trumpery baronetcy and a few thousands a-year."

As to the fining and imprisonment of Mr. Skipworth I find the general opinion is that if a judge is able to inflict such a sentence without the intervention of a jury, it is an extremely unsafe state of things. To be sure it was a court of four judges, and not one only; but I do not like this sort of proceeding. It was all very well for Chief Justice Gascoigne to commit a Prince of Wales for contempt in the reign of Henry IV., but to compare that case with Mr. Skipworth's case, as some newspapers have done, is simply nonsense. Then it was the assertion of the right and majesty of the Law against Might; but the Queen's Bench discomfiting and overthrowing Mr. Skipworth looks rather like Might—riches and Mrs. Grundy—bidding Right eat humble pie and go to the deuce! I have not much pity for Mr. Onslow and Mr. Whalley, for I have a very high regard for both gentlemen, and I think the part they have taken will secure their re-election to the House of Commons as long as they choose to sit there, and also that it *ought* to do so as long as there is any admiration for civil courage left in Britain.

For the rest, the chatter of the clubs is very painful, unless one laughs at it. Nobody seems to see that we are passing through an awkward and singularly complicated crisis; that liberty and individuality are in danger just now of being smothered by black coats, stupidity, and the conventional laws of an artificial state of society. I should smile away my own fears if they were not shared by such a man as John Stuart Mill.

TUESDAY, February 4.—All the judges complaining of "bungling legislation." Mr. Justice Mellor remarked "it was impossible for human skill to find words more calculated to puzzle anybody" than those of an Act of Parliament. The Lord Chief Justice said "he had never in the whole course of his life seen a more confused and puzzling Act. It was utterly bewildering. It was the most complicated complication he had ever met with. The Legislature must have had some intention, but what it was he (the Lord Chief Justice) was unable to discover." Mr. Justice Blackburn agreed. In short, it was a most amusing conversation, and especially pleasing and reassuring for us laymen who are always told that we are "bound to know the law."

WEDNESDAY, February 5.—Judgment delivered by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in favour of Major-General Forester, M.P., after only thirty-seven years' delay. He may consider himself fortunate. Lord Cottenham has a claim on the State for money due very nearly two hundred years old. Who is it—I mean who are the parties—who have opposed General Forester's just claim for nearly half a century? Do please let us know their names, dear dull Mr. Gladstone.

An "ilgant jntleman" is Mr. Worship Knox of Marlborough Street, with a proper respect for the peerage. He has imposed a fine on the Honourable Arthur Chichester with "two-and-sixpence costs" for kicking a brace of constables; and he informed the policemen that "had they retaliated they would have been dismissed the force." Does Mr. Knox remember the case of Mr. Davis, a Devonshire squire, whom he sent to prison for one month without the option of a fine not long ago? Why did not Mr. Knox send the Honourable Arthur to prison? Truly a merry old gentleman!

A. Anson publishes that "the Military Authorities have decided that soldiers of all ranks, on putting on uniform, are at once deprived of civil rights," and in fact become outlaws. Tell us something new, A. Anson. The "Authorities" have decided that every servant of the Crown is an outlaw, and the Barons of the Exchequer confirmed their decision on Saturday last. Names of Authorities, Messrs. Barnacle and Company, Commission Agents. Now a Barnacle is a species of goose, and formerly a strange notion prevailed that this bird grew out of wood. Really it grows out of corruption.

THURSDAY, February 6.—Dined with Lady Mary Golightly and her husband, who counts for nothing. Her ladyship was

enamelled, and Lord Norton remarked that "she wore rose-coloured mourning for her youth and beauty." It was a birthday dinner, and we wished Lady Mary a happy new year. "Only one?" she asked, laughing. The conversation turned on pretty Mrs. Harman, and somebody said, "She is good, amiable, clever, yet all the ladies turn their backs on her." "Ah!" smiled Lady Mary, languidly, "see what it is to have appearances against one." The Dean of Ripley complained that the name of the Deity was used too frequently in public speaking. "Must we refer to Him," replied Demurrer, dryly, "as the person who shall be nameless, Mr. Dean?"

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

WE now may clearly see through him and it
That men with their mistakes may men commit.

1. A kind of saltatory motion,
You'll find it in a certain potion.
2. A name which for life is assumed,
To carry much weight it's presumed;
'Tis connected also—which its value enhances—
With a plan for the equalisation of chances.
3. Pepper, onions, oil, and meat,
With salt also in this you'll eat.
4. His new belief has roused the Premier's ire,
Who with it set young Liverpool on fire.
5. The undeveloped rudiments of life
In this at first begin their worldly strife.
6. An earthy object which should level be
In heavenly men shows inequality.

CHOKER.

ANSWER TO LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE ACROSTICS.

1. C onra D
2. O rmol U
3. L ayma N
4. L o G
5. I ncens E
6. S i N
7. I odin E
8. O rlean S
9. N arcissu S

—CRIMSON HAIR.

Correct answers received from "Little T. P.," "Anarch Erofthey," "The Runtifoozle," "Riatsila (by telegraph)," "Landaff (by telegraph)," "Wattle Forsath Whimiti Rumen," "Toby and Midge," "Hot Broth," "Mops," "Powder and Shot," "Jemima," "Blue-eyed Begum," "The Mumbblers," "Mothel," "Jumping Jehoshaphat," "La Belle Sauvage," "A Trafalgar Square Fountain," "Kogx Ompax," "Swellfoot," "Goosey Goosey Gander," "Two Grebes," "A Brace of Sils," "Half," "Uly," "Shrew Mouse and Co.," "Pussy Barks," "Neurasthenipponskelerstero," "Brussels Sprouts," "Robin Hood," "Cricklewood," "Tiny," "Spotted Dog," "Welsh Rabbits," "Paul Ferrol," "Scolopendrium (second thoughts)," "Easy All," "White Horse of Kent," "Dear Old Pimlicola," "The Jabberwock and Jub-Jub Bird," "Wak," "Bonnie Blue Flag (from Ireland)," "Zither," "Froufrou," "Double Sculls," "Rusticus," "Wee Montie," "Laddie," "Murray," "Punch," "Luciola," "Tiddy Dingle," "Notts Lambs," "Jabberwocky," "The New Moon," "The Crew of the Harlequin," "Ohio," "A Duffer in the Owl," "Asplenium Marinum," "Beryl," "S.E.A.L.M.," "Jenny," "Idiot," "Secnarf dan Ecarg," "Kentish Fire," "Phegopteris," "The Wags of the Wye," "M. H. the Elder," "Proud Salopians," "A Goose from Devon," "The Cheshire Cat," "Dolly," "Elladoublevet," "Ballaghkeen North," "Frumious Bander-snatch," "Carriglea," "Oakum Pickers," "Ric-rac," "Chesnut," "Two Birds of Paradise," "Two Owls," "D. E. H.," "A Black Slave," "Bobbery," "Zara," "Ruby's Ghost," "Caradoc," "Holderness," "Sensitive," "A Blue in a Brook," No Name (in all ninety correct), and forty-six incorrect.

1. S wa B
2. K iimme L
3. I on A
4. P. P. C
5. W arwic K
6. O r B
7. R ichelie U
8. T ea R
9. H eave N

CHOKER.

Correct answers received from "Little T. P.," "Anarch Erofthey," "The Runtifoozle," "Buttie," "Crimson Hair" (in all 5 correct), and 146 incorrect.

"A Blue in a Brook" is credited with a correct answer for last week.

When two Acrostics are given the answers to both count in accordance with the practice hitherto adopted.