

A T R I B U T E T O J U D G E Y O N L E Y

A n E l e q u e n t P a n e g y r i c o n n a n H o n e s t
a n d A b l e M a n.

The Resolutions Presented at the Opening of the County Court yesterday.

This morning upon the opening of the County Court, Hon. T. J. O'Donnell, who had been appointed to present the bar resolutions to the County Court, arose and addressed the body as follows:
May it please the court:

One of the brethren, whose character and attainments had endeared him to all, has lately passed away from the realm of life to the realm of hope.

It has become a custom with us that when one whose life work has added dignity and honor to our profession, goes into the future--- that future which we so dimly perceive, but in which we all have an abiding faith ---- to pay tribute in speech to that which he was, to that which he did, to set forth for example and emulation of others the things of his life which gained our esteem, our approbation, our love. We bring in words, our wreaths, our roses and forget-me-nots, and breathe aloud the incense of our hearts upon his tomb.

At a meeting of the bar of this city, held in the District Court Room on the 11th. day of June, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted:

T H E R E S O L U T I O N S .

WHEREAS, By the decree of our loving Father, our beloved brother, T. D. W. Yonley has preceeded us to the future life, and with referent submission it is

R e s o l v e d, That while by his departure we have lost his active co-operation for good, the influence of his life here will remain with us as an incentive to emulate his course.

R e s o l v e d, That in his departure the bar has lost one of its ablest advocates; one deeply learned in his profession; incorruptible, generous, one ever ready to aid the cause of the weak and the oppressed, and solitious to bestow out of his abundant experience the good counsel so often needed by his younger brothers.

R e s o l v e d, That by his death we have had removed from among us a true and generous friend, a kind and sympathizing neighbor and a worthy citizen.

R e s o l v e d, That to his son, who has been so recently bereft of both a loving father and mother, we extend our deepest sympathy in these days of his loneliness and affliction.

R e s o l v e d, That a copy of these resolutions be presented to the Supreme Court of this State, the United States Circuit Court and the other Courts of record in the county of Arapahoe, with the request that they be spread upon the records, and also that a copy be presented to the son of our deceased brother.

MR. O'DONNELL'S ADDRESS

I was appointed by the bar to the honorable duty of presenting these resolutions to this court.

'I take with awe the task assigned;

It may be that my friend would miss

In his new sphere of heart and mind

Some token from my hand in this.'

It has been well said by another that silence is the true eloquence of grief. Certainly no language of which I am capable can express the sense of personal sorrow and bereavement which I feel at

the loss of Judge Yonley.

We came to this bar about the same time. He with a mind ripened by the experience of years, in the forum and on the bench, that almost equalled the total span of mine---he with a reputation established in other fields of labor, that preceded and heralded him, assuring him that success he so well deserved; I a stranger, without passport or prestige. Our acquaintance grew with the years and ripened into an intimacy which did not stop at our offices, or end with our professional meetings; it continued to our homes; thus I knew him well.

Whatever may be the average character of our profession in the public estimation, however many unworthy members it may contain, however far we may, individually, fall below the true standard, our ideal lawyer can be ascertained from the character of the man before whose ashes we pause, upon whose urn we weep.

THE HONOR OF THE BAR.

Among us no man long deceives his brethren; there is, there can be no truer estimate of a man than that put upon him by his fellows; however shyster or charlatan may hoodwink client or public he cannot deceive his associates at the bar, and no aptness in trickery, no plaudits of the mob, no mere financial success, can ever make up for the lack of respect, can weaken the sting of contempt which the bar visits upon its unworthy members.

Judge Yonley loved his profession with an old-time ardor and for itself. His mistress had no cause for jealousy.

He had drunk deeply at the Pierian spring, but his thirst for knowledge was never quenched.

Reared in a time and country where life was a constant battle, with primeval forces and adverse circumstances, his frame, his mind and

character were all formed in a heroic, stern, uncompromising mold, and rugged honesty and energy were ever-present virtues. How well these stood him in stead is told when we know that, holding high judicial position, at a time and in a place, under circumstances of great excitement and the bitterest partisan, class and sectional hatred, he held the confidence of friends and foe alike, and coming to a new country late in life and engaging in the rough and tumble of our Western practice, he, in a few short years, hewed his path to the very topmost place in our professional honors.

THE SUBLIMITY OF LAW.

With him law was not a mere money-making scheme, but a grand science devoted to the discovery of truth, the doing of justice, the prevention of injustice, the protection of the innocent, the punishment of the guilty. He was no mere legal cart-horse who could be harnessed to any and every cause for a price. He hated the mere money-changers of the profession, and had no affiliation with the firm of Quirk, Gammon & Snap. He hated the oppression of the powerful when they ground the faces of the weak; he hated the Shylocks who clamor for the pound of flesh in the name of the law; he hated oppression in every form, but more than all when it came under the forms of law.

In these days when the ethics of our noble profession, once the bulwark and shield of professional honor, have fallen into said decay, and are considered more a reminiscence and field of investigation for the curious student than living rules of conduct, the elevating example of such a character as we here praise, such a life as the close of which we now mourn, cannot be over-estimated. Our bar is better for having known Judge Yonley; the influence and impress of his presence

will continue after we, who knew and loved him, shall have followed on the road which, to learn, each one must travel.

Your Honor, ^{will} remembers that the last important professional labor of Judge Vonley was performed in this forum. In the months of that long and exciting contest, in which I was his humble associate, how luminous his mind, how magnificent his learning! Confronted from day to day with novel and perplexing questions, involving the dearest rights of citizenship, grave constitutional problems, how readily he grasped, how lucidly he explained, how learnedly he discussed them!

A GRAND ARGUMENT.

We who heard it can never forget that closing argument in which the glories of the common law, product, by evolution of the wisdom of the ages, were pictured and contrasted with the hand-me-down code, and short-cut to justice debouched from the brain of some legal Jupiter, a modern Minerva, with nothing to learn from the past. Surely his light burned brightest just before extinction.

In his last effort, he himself predicted his early dissolution. We treated it lightly then, but who knows what whisper, borne on angel's wings, had reached him from the unknown realm beyond the stars?.

I have tried, in my feeble way, to testify my esteem, and that of my brethren, for Judge Vonley's character as a lawyer. As a citizen he was without blame, and his domestic life was like a page from some old romance or ancient idyl. The love that pervaded his household, the unity in which it moved, was notable in this day, when the fragments of the wedding feast too often furnish the divorce luncheon. His life's partner was a beautiful, graceful, intellectual woman, he was her lord, she his queen; when she passed to the beyond, the sunshine of his life was gone, his pathway thereafter lay through clouds.

I do not believe he cared to travel it alone. ' He lived, he loved, he was loved, the longest life contains no more; this fills the cup of joy.'

And so, may it please the Court, we bring our humble tribute to a busy, an honorable and useful life; useful in what it accomplished; useful in what it spurned; useful as a lawyer; useful as a citizen; useful by precept and example, and, in testimony that he whom we mourn was faithful in all those relations, we ask that these resolutions may be spread on your records.

(From Denver 'Republican' of Wednesday morning, Sept. 5th. 1888)