



11-1-1925

Character of a Lawyer

Joseph Scott

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarship.law.nd.edu/ndlr>



Part of the [Law Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Joseph Scott, *Character of a Lawyer*, 1 Notre Dame L. Rev. 9 (1925).

Available at: <https://scholarship.law.nd.edu/ndlr/vol1/iss1/2>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Notre Dame Law Review at NDLScholarship. It has been accepted for inclusion in Notre Dame Law Review by an authorized editor of NDLScholarship. For more information, please contact lawdr@nd.edu.

THE CHARACTER OF A LAWYER

By JOSEPH SCOTT

My cordial greetings to "The Notre Dame Lawyer", and my best wishes to the undergraduates who may find in its pages encouragement in their professional ideals.

Speaking as a member of the legal fraternity, immersed in the hard driving practice of the profession, if I might venture a word of advice to the future lawyers of Notre Dame, it would be to develop character, even if it is at the expense of technical knowledge.

True it is that in most Bar Examinations of today the test for admission is very largely an intellectual one. Without being hypercritical with Boards of Examiners, I cannot refrain from expressing my regret that so much is dependent upon the mere "case" knowledge of the prospective lawyer, rather than upon those fundamental principles without which we can never maintain that professional standard which has made our calling one of the noblest of all vocations.

More than ever today the wide awake lawyer, particularly engaged as I happen to be in trial work, is looking around for young, cleancut, highminded, courageous lawyers. To those youngsters of Notre Dame who are in sympathy with such ideals, I urge upon them to stand fast to these standards.

The mere "bookworms" who will stay in libraries and "dig" into books to find precedents for their opinion, or for their particular side of the controversy, are too numerous, in my observation. After all, the higher vocation is to be an advocate, to stand with your clients behind you, and face even the wrath of a self-opinionated judge, or a bulldozing adversary, or the wild shrieks of popular clamor, or the ruthless attacks of the press, and still find your heart beating regularly and undaunted and unafraid when the odds are against you.

The mercenary side of the business world today is reaching into the professional ranks of the Bar and beclouding the vision of the men whose educational equipment ought to make them proof against such temptations. It must rest with such in-

stitutions as Notre Dame to bring to us of the legal profession a realization of the life of sacrifice and service, and you who graduate from Notre Dame and who accept its teachings, are getting the finest foundation for ethical conduct which will not make you apologetic for asserting your views in any forum, or before any tribunal.

Go out men, into this world of controversy and difficulty and perplexity with the spirit of Notre Dame in your heart, and with such courage and perseverance in every fiber of your system, and with such advantages, the opportunities are before you and success is assured.

ENCOURAGEMENT AND ADVICE

From NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER

The undertaking to publish a new Law Journal under the direction of the students of the College of Law of Notre Dame University is one to be heartily commended. Experience proves the great value of a publication of this kind as part of the training of student of law. Participation in the editing of such a journal assists the student to make his knowledge precise and to give it application to specific and definite issues.

The greatest need at the moment is perhaps that students of law should be given insight into the distinction between law and laws. Too many students and practitioners of law utterly confound the two. A grasp on the fundamental principles upon which law rests, and has long rested, is an essential part of the equipment of one who would really be a scholarly student and practitioner of law. Personally, I greatly regret that it is no longer the fashion for law students to read the classic work of Blackstone. That book of itself gives a liberal education in the law.