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It was this state of affairs that continued in India even during the Hindu and the Muslim periods. Of course the king delegated the judicial powers to someone of his council of advisors, a wise minister, though the king himself remained the chief arbiter and dispenser. With the advent of the British rule law began to blossom into a regular and independent profession.

It is the British system of jurisprudence we now have in India, their system of courts and their ways of counseling and dispensation. Instead of the Privy Council, we have now the Supreme Court, stationed at the capital. One of the pillars on which our democratic structure stands is the Judiciary. While the Legislature makes the laws that should govern the country, the Executive enforces them and the Judiciary interprets and prevents their misuse. Thus its task is no less important than the making or the enforcing of the laws.

It is this august body that safeguards and guarantees the rights of its citizens, protects them from the hand of tyranny and offers them a sense of security. Like the doctor or the engineer, the lawyer is therefore indispensable, for it is he that opens the door to justice. Law was once, till the dawn of independence, a highly respected profession.

Without exception all the great political leaders of the day began their career as lawyers or barristers; Mahatma Gandhi, Motilal Nehru, Vallabhai Patel, K. M. Munshi, Prakasam Pantulu, and Rejagopalachari, to mention a few. It was because of these great luminaries that law enjoyed so much of prestige and popularity. Not that we are men like Nani Palkiwaliah; but they more or less, confine themselves to legal profession.

It is not because of lack of eminent lawyers that it has gone down in popularity, but because, like politics, all and sundry covet to become lawyers. They do not have either talents or perseverance. The field is highly competitive and infinite patience and hard work should go in before one might make a mark. It may take even decades before one can build up a reputation and all these years there cannot be much money to make. Those that do not have ready money and financial resources to fall back during this period of preparation cannot hope to succeed in their career as lawyers.

The plight of a brief less lawyer is pitiable indeed. Without name or money he spends anxious hours waiting for someone that might redeem him from hunger and humiliation. It is not merely one's staying capacity or perseverance or financial resource that is at the root of one's success. Not even a thorough grasp of the subject will do. No doubt he needs all these and much more than these too. It is his worldly wisdom and fund of common sense-a mind that can see deep into men and matters and arrive at the truth with the speed of lightning. It is this that stands in good stead to make one a really great lawyer.

It is this that stands in good stead to make one a really great lawyer. It is this that Shakespeare talks about in his Merchant of Venice. Portia was neither a practicing lawyer nor had expert legal knowledge. What she had was only an abundant fund of common sense. With ease, she could twist the whole matter and give it a new sense that gave new lease of life to Antonio.

It is this intrinsic capacity of the lawyer to twist matters that had earned him the name of a liar. People believe that a lawyer has no scruples, that he will

try to resurrect even the devil from the nether world and that he will go to any extent- fudge, falsify create and recreate-in order to win his client's case. It is true that a lawyer will always try to protect the interests of his client. But nobody can build a solid structure without basis or foundation, much less a lawyer on lies and false hood. It is the wounded and the wronged that seek the hand of justice for protection and redress. It should be the duty of the lawyer to bring hope and cheer into their lives and if he is capable of doing it he is doubly rewarded.

Apart from the material success it can bring him, he will feel a sense of fulfillment. But even when he tries to plead for a suspected criminal, he will be free from the pricks of his conscience as long as he follows the book. An ideal lawyer knows not only his duty but also his obligations. He also knows that it is better to acquit a dozen suspected assassins than to send one innocent to the gallows and yet in this world where the wicked and the evil triumph, the meek and the innocent need to be assured that there is something called poetic justice. Like a conscious writer, a conscious lawyer can never lose sight of his duty and obligations to the society.

He may try to save a suspected criminal; mitigate the suffering of a confirmed criminal and combine mercy with justice for it is the attribute to God Himself, but he will never try to attest the stamp of legitimacy to the illegitimate and uphold injustice as justice. Usually we try to get a good name and pass for decent and well mannered people; nobody likes to be dubbed as an evil man and takes to violence for the love of it. If, in spite of this fact, one behaves contrarily, there must be sufficient reason for that. Punishment can be a deterrent to others but not the criminal. What he needs

is a corrective measure. If one is made to pine all throughout his life within the four walls of a prison cell, for what he had done in a moment of anger and madness, could it be justice? Are we not all sinners ourselves and don't we repent and ask for god's forgiveness? Then, what right has we to extract tooth for tooth and eye for eye? These are lofty sentiments indeed to which he would like to come back and reflect upon, at the end of his long and successful career. For now, he is more worried about his career-his briefs and the stiff competition.

He must first pick up file, create a reputation. Till then, these things can wait. He knows he has none to serve, none to be afraid of whatever others might say, his is one of the noblest professions.

If there are black sheep, well, where aren't they?