

FRANK ORREN LOWDEN.

Attorney.

I have no doubt but that, as a general proposition, the young man's chances are better than ever before in the history of the world. The chief concern of those who manage every industry of which I know is to discover bright young men capable of performing the most important work.

I doubt, however, if the young man's chances in the legal profession have improved. I am quite certain that the general practitioner of the law has materially suffered from the evolution which is going on in the industrial world. That there will be full compensation for this in special employment I cannot believe. It is too early to say in just what relation to society the legal profession will emerge, but it is clear to



FRANK ORREN LOWDEN.

my mind that it is undergoing a rapid change.

There are two causes for this. First, the concentrating trend of capital in each line of business activity reduces the occasion for differences which in their settlement require the services of a lawyer. For instance, for a thousand independent retail merchants we now have the great department store; for a score of independent manufacturing enterprises we now have the great combination. So in the banking business and in all others the tendency towards concentration is readily apparent. This means the diminution of disputes over legal rights and thus a diminishing demand for the lawyer's services.

As an incident to this tendency, has come the formation of different kinds of insurance companies to indemnify against risks which in former years afforded a considerable field for the lawyer. To illustrate: A quarter of a century ago a man decided to go into the manufacturing business. After selecting the site, he was compelled to employ

a lawyer to examine the title. That is now done, in a large measure, by title guarantee companies which issue policies guaranteeing the title. After his manufactory was started, perhaps he was unfortunate enough to have an accident to some of his employees. It was necessary for him again to employ a lawyer to protect his rights. Today an insurance company looks after his interests.

The second cause of the change in the status of the legal profession is to be found in the constantly lessening disposition to vindicate personal wrongs, as such. This is due to the modern spirit of commercialism and is not, I take it, limited to America, but is a well-nigh general condition. A quarter of a century ago men, at great expense, resisted any attempt to deprive them of a personal legal right. Witness the great slander and libel trials. Recall the great forensic struggles in which the pecuniary amount involved was but a bagatelle. That time has largely gone. Today men litigate as a rule only when it is profitable. And every lawyer will confess that litigation rarely ever pays pecuniarily—except to the lawyer. Though this present spirit is criticised, it may be that it is only another step in the direction of a more perfect humanity. Just as the duello yielded to the lawsuit, so possibly the lawsuit is yielding to something better. Not long ago we desired to meet our adversary with pistols; later we desired to meet him in the court-room; now, when we see him we take the other side of the street and try to forget his existence.

Of course, nothing above negatives the need of the lawyer, but he will be found more and more in the law department of the great corporation and less and less in general practice, and there will be fewer of him needed.

It must be admitted that evolution in the industrial world is bearing hard upon the lawyer—harder, in my opinion, than upon any one else in the business world, except possibly the commercial traveler. There will always be room in the higher ranks for both, but I advise any young man who thinks of entering either occupation to first reflect that evolution is against us.

Chicago, July 5, 1901.

W. C. BROWN.

Vice-President and General Manager, Lake Shore & Michigan Southern Ry. Co.

Taking the field of human effort as a whole, professional, clerical, labor skilled and unskilled, the impartial student of history must arrive at the conclusion that from the time the bread supply was conditioned upon the sweat of man's brow, no generation has been so favored as the present.

More can be earned in a less number of hours with less hardship and exposure

to danger, and a dollar now will procure more of the necessities or luxuries of life than ever before.

In almost every department of business the opportunity for securing work is as five to one when compared with a quarter of a century ago, and with faithful, intelligent, persevering service, advancement is absolutely sure and more rapid than ever before.

Thirty years ago a young man in an official position on a railroad was the exception, and too frequently the most potent recommendation in securing employment and promotion was relationship to some prominent share-holder or director. In those days, railroads were widely separated, and the sharp, strenuous, competitive, conditions which now obtain were unknown. Rates were high and the necessity for the most rigid economy and the highest possible standard of operating efficiency (with-



W. C. BROWN.

out which no railroad can now live) was not felt.

Present conditions demand the very best material obtainable, and the son of the section man has the call, and is selected in place of the son of the director or the large share-holder if the former possesses these elements in larger measure than the latter, and he can come pretty near dictating his own terms of employment.

The marvelous development of electricity as a producer of light, heat and power, has opened up to the young man of the present, a field almost as wide and promising in itself, as the entire field of opportunity, which awaited the graduate of the high school or college thirty years ago.

Conditions surrounding the young man starting out in life, and especially in railroad service, are better, almost beyond belief.

Thirty years ago the only doors open to the young man, fresh from the home on the farm, or in the village, were those of the saloon or the cheap boarding-house; drinking, profanity and all that