

years, at least, has been predominantly agricultural. In the provincial period the judicial offices, as well as others, were filled by leading figures in the population, who took pride in their positions and made the court sessions serious and dignified proceedings. The conditions of life were not changed by the Revolution, and through a large part of the nineteenth century, too, the judges were in the main country gentlemen who continued to be officers of dignity and distinction in their jurisdictions. In Baltimore City, where there have been influences tending more strongly to weaken old conceptions and attitudes, and the greater business and earnings of the profession have long been outside of the courts, the relative position of judges may be not the same, but in the counties today the judges occupy the highest positions in the eyes of the people. And inheritance of this older view may have been a considerable factor in the present sentiment in the state. But whatever the reason for it, the sentiment has been and still is strong in judges and attorneys, and in laymen, too, and the resulting conventions of judicature in the state have been exacting; and they are controlling.

It is commonly assumed<sup>14</sup> by thoughtful men that under a system of choosing judges by popular election there must be a falling off in quality of those chosen, and consequently in respect for the courts and the law which the judges administer; but whatever variation in ability there may have been, there seems to

14. See James Bryce, *Macmillan's Mag.* XXI, 425 (1872); *American Commonwealth*, Chap. XLII; *Modern Democracies*, II, 86.