

An Ode to Law Reform

With apologies to Alfred Lord Tennyson

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Break, Break, Break
the legal system down, oh wind
of change again!
The cry goes forth –
the intensified refrain.

We need new law, new rules
for all
the present, and the past
as one, without divide
has pushed us from the shore aside.

The shore of paradise thus lost
so often near yet then so far away.
The white broad seas
so angry with us all,
moved us, and heaven
away from wherewithal.

The lament goes on –
equality for all!
a drawn out resolution, the costs
of the dispute and
one-eyed justice may no longer
blindfold the child of Roman law.

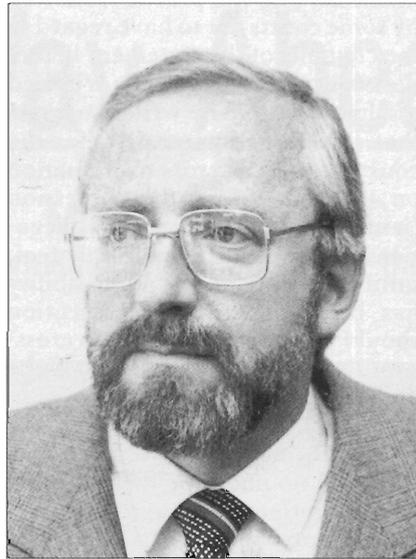
Its best we take this child of old
as others before have done
across the bar of the great divide
where no more harm is sung
to aspirations of the order new
and where prejudice is cast aside.

Unequal laws onto a gentle race
were doled
the hinges of the doors of
justice creaked
Old footsteps trod the Upper Floors
where young and new ideas
to all and equal should be told.

What use is Water law refined
where water does not flow
in barren landscapes so distant from
the golden city – Egori! grow
and exchange us bring
and let no laws our freedom fling
onto the days that are no more.

What is it all that is so wrong?
since black gewolt was
stopped by Roland's song
so near to Charlemagne the great
yet far enough to meet his fate
upon the 'heathen' axe so long.

In Labour law the worker finds
no work no pay
the colour signs –
the white above the black below
the pay unequal, but the wealth



to show, is white man's justice –
the black to scrape and hoe below.

The Company law: profound it is
to those who know no English
Division of the joint estate is fine
but useless where estates are
often on the bread and butter line.

Voet, Justinian and Latin I
The ululating has begun!
Of Masters old and deep in thought
while Shaka Zulu havoc wrought
yet what it means to these
so near, to earth and mines
and full of fear of being
in the system caught.

The criminal process biased
for so long
to those who cannot but
find wrong
the Court so lily white
the gowns so silk
the clever snide remark aside –
what does it mean to those
whose ilk is far from white and silk.

Equality lies only in the drop
black on black murder will not stop
until white justice
sweet for all to see,
arrests, condemns and finds guilty
the different custom the different
thought
can all be under the section brought!

The Advocates, the clever Bar
they help us so, they've come so far!

they've learned the law, the process due
the thoughts of us, the black law too!
yet understanding few and far between
to them its best if we're not seen
the portals hallow, the brief so sheen
with fees so marked with
hand so clean.

The cry is up, by LHR
the black judge day is not so far
then peace and justice will befall
swift, cheap and easy on us all.
The word is strong, the call is clear
but education, is it near!
the black judge cannot say the word
until the voice of Voet be heard
in portals far, expensive too,
these old refrains are nothing new.

The liberal loud voice is heard
the academic too must shout
of 'new law', 'no obligation' sad
'rights for all', no counter balance bad
the statutes and the writings out –
we will do the quick-about.

Hateful is the clear blue sky
the sport and happy sigh
of people who no sanctions need
and do not care how masses feed.
the dreadful past we will cast out
with ease
now that we find you bring the liberties
to all concerned, and even those
whose racial anger brought chaos.

Why should all life all labour be
we need all rights and freedom see
without the balances from infancy,
of United Nations Resolutions
that we have at last embraced
that even cynic is now chaste.

Let the bell be tolled at last
the moment of truth has
caught up with the past
let's bellow victory not bellow doom
the voice of freedom in each
lawyer's room
until they too reform, do cry
and no more ask 'reform? now why?'

But serious, my friends out there
you work your work and I mine
Some work of noble note may yet be
done.

Its not too late to seek a newer world
if all we strive to seek and find
the inevitable finger has not yet signed
the word is not yet on the wall
to common duties I all call
the love for law all to all will find.