

It is a great honour to have been asked to deliver a lecture which bears so distinguished a name. And it is that name, I am bound to admit, which has caused me to look forward to this evening with no little trepidation. I, who am in no position to lay any real claim to legal scholarship, find the shadow cast by so great a figure rather daunting. Sufficiently daunting that, mindful of the fact that on the last occasion on which I had addressed an academic audience, an unhappy diary juxtaposition between a lecture in New York and a second at the University of Munich had seen me arriving at the podium in Bavaria two minutes before I was due to speak, I arranged to be here last night to ensure that no such issue arose on this occasion. But I had not reckoned with the 'rains in Spain' and competition from Real Madrid.

Public speaking is invariably something of a tightrope walk. One of the funniest accounts in the English language of the perils to be faced is to be found in a work of comic genius by P.G.Wodehouse, entitled 'Right Ho, Jeeves'. I will allow any of you inclined to research further the treat of reading the relevant passage in full, although I would advise you not to do so on public transport, unless you do not mind being reduced openly to helpless laughter in the course of some 15 pages, but let me give you something of the flavour from the introductory paragraphs:

"The Grammar School at Market Snodsbury had, I understood, been built somewhere in the year 1416, and, as with so many of these ancient foundations,