



fig 34

lawyer is holding forth. Sometimes the lawyers do indeed seem insensitive and oblivious to the suffering of their clients and the human tragedies they face. Again Cavellat is spot on, capturing the defendant's distress by colouring his face red with anger as he fails to recognise his case in the words of the lawyer. In a drawing (fig 34) of an experienced lawyer briefing his client, Cavellat has overheard him saying: 'you have been sentenced to drunkenness 15 times' to which the client remarks defensively 'but I am in treatment!' The judge realises that this will be the defendant's line of defence. All the while the young inexperienced lawyer below him is rapturously listening to his senior and learning a lesson. But judge Cavellat sees

beyond the sad persona of the accused, wrecked by alcohol. Observing the people in the courtroom he realises how many of them have not been abstinent including the defence lawyer who all have red faces from drink. In another drawing, Cavellat cannot fail to notice that the lawyer, who had instructed the defendant to express regret for the pain he had caused, as the text insert suggests, is obviously pleased with himself, holding his right arm in a triumphant position (fig 35). The lawyer is holding his other hand near his mouth, from where the words of the accused have probably originated. He depicts the consensus between the two by making lawyer and client into one unit, 'in line' with each other. But Cavellat is not only listening to the words of the accused, he is also observing the man, who has committed a serious offence (as is suggested by the presence of a guard in the dock), who unlike similar offenders seems hardly perturbed, keeping his hand

fig 35



nonchalantly in his pocket. Is that why he bestows him with a dark shadow? Pierre Cavellat's texts are almost always ironical, if not sometimes cynical. Here the text only stresses the fact that the judge does not believe the man who claims repentance.

In a drawing in which the accused is sitting directly in front of his defence lawyer, completely in line with him, Cavellat notes that the lawyer's hair is standing on end (fig 36). He is holding one hand over his mouth in horror or disappointment, while his other hand is gripping the table, probably because the entirely credible witness sitting in the foreground of the picture has compromised the case of the accused. Cavellat notices that the lawyer realises this and knows that the book of law close to him will be to no avail. Is this why he is hiding behind his client, who is trembling because he too understands that he has been found to have

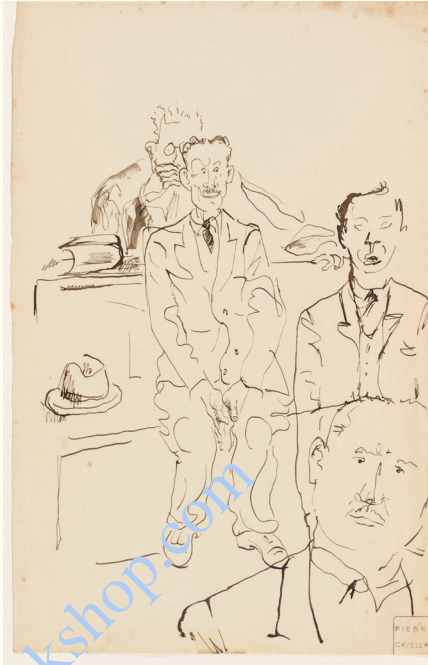


fig 36



committed the offence? He has lost the dignity with which he first entered the court in his suit and tie, now crumpled, and the hat that is now removed and placed on the bench.

Still, Cavellat's severe view of the lawyers is perhaps less cynical than that of Daumier. Looking at them, Cavellat recognises himself. He is privy to their legal as well as their rhetorical abilities, deficiencies and weaknesses, and often also to their personal secrets. This finds expression in a drawing of a lawyer whom he catches deeply immersed in dreams of his pretty client, who wears a low-cut dress (fig 37). And again, on a different occasion, he catches the same

fig 37