

THE LORD CHANCELLOR AND LAW REFORM.

Lord Birkenhead has taken the unusual course of unfolding in *The Times* some proposals for law reform, which are of importance to the public and the profession. We have no such august personage in this country—no one, who should, as he does, take a paternal interest in legislation. Perhaps the Canadian Bar Association is the source from which we rather look to for initiations in legislation in this part of the Empire. The Lord Chancellor's action is referred to in an article in the *Law Times*, from which we extract the following:—

"Law reform should be a topic of singular interest to every citizen, but we are afraid that this is far from being the fact—a good example being the way in which the abolition of the right to trial by jury in civil cases passed both Houses of Parliament practically without discussion. Although on some questions we cannot agree with the Lord Chancellor's four exceedingly interesting articles, but subjects discussed are of prime importance not only to the public, but to the profession. They indicate the lines upon which reform should proceed, and demonstrate the extreme difficulty of carrying through the necessary schemes.

At the outset the Lord Chancellor points out that legal reform has passed out of the domain of party politics, and that this fact deprives the reformer "of that momentum which is necessary to place measures upon the statute-book in these days of crowded Parliamentary time." This is only too true, and the drag can only be removed by energy and determination.

Naturally, the Law of Property Bill and Land Transfer were the first matters discussed in the articles. We agree that the simplification of the law of real property and of conveyancing is urgently called for, and we sincerely hope to see the Lord Chancellor successful in carrying these proposals in the coming session. But with regard to the compulsory extension of the provisions of the Land Transfer Act, we do not agree with Lord Birkenhead that "voluntary extension having failed, and the need for extension being shewn, it is now vitally necessary to obtain more effective powers for the compulsory extension of the