

presided over by the King, if there is one. The record or 'code' (which, originally, means nothing more than a scroll or tablet) is, naturally, connected in people's minds with the King under whose auspices it is drawn up; and so we get such expressions as 'Ethelbirht's Laws' and 'Alfred's Laws.' But it does not profess to be 'made,' i.e. created or invented, by him, but only ascertained, settled, or drawn up by him.

THE 'COMMON LAW'

A large part of English law, even at the present day, viz. that part known as the 'common law' in the strict sense, has never even been recorded in any formal manner; for the codes of Ethelbirht and Alfred were mere local customs, and the story of a code drawn up by Edward the Confessor has long been shown to be false. Even the masterful Norman Kings, despite the 'Conquest' of 1066, made no attempt to root out this ancient English customary law; in fact, they expressly guaranteed it, and this is, perhaps, the most conclusive proof that England, since it became England, has never been really conquered. All that the Norman Kings and their judges did was, to bring into agreement the various local customs, combine them into one 'common law,' and expand and enforce that common law in their own Courts.

ROYAL COMMANDS

But, of course, long before that time, the English Kings, as host-leaders and maintainers of order, had issued *commands*, often of a wide character, such as the famous 'curfew' ordinance of William the Conqueror, which required all fires to be extinguished by a certain hour, or the order of the same King forbidding the acknowledgement of a new Pope without the King's consent. These commands, though often spoken of as 'laws,' are, obviously, of a different character from the