

opinion can have risen to the eminence which he now has the honour to enjoy."

#### LAWYERS IN FICTION.

Allusion was recently made in these notes to the conduct of a certain novelist who by causing real men and women, under a thin disguise, to figure in his pages came perilously near an action for libel. But which of our great writers has not drawn his pictures, or some of them, from life? Without pausing to give a complete answer to this question let us consider the case against Charles Dickens.

To establish the charge it is only necessary to study one chapter in one of his books, namely, that which contains the report of the case of "*Bardell v. Pickwick*." The word "charge" is only used in a Pickwickian sense; for Dickens wrote nothing that could give offence to anyone. Like a true artist, however, the man who involved Mr. Pickwick in a lawsuit obeyed the precept of Wordsworth when he wrote:

Unto the solid ground  
Of Nature builds the mind that builds for aye.

#### BARDELL V. PICKWICK.

To begin with the judge who tried the case. He is called *Stardleigh*. Was it a mere coincidence that Mr. Justice *Gaselee* was then an ornament of the English bench? As for Serjeant Buzfuz, his speech for the plaintiff was modelled on the style of Charles Phillips who was counsel for the plaintiff in the case of *Guthrie v. Sterne*, an Irish case printed in 1822. But certain episodes in the Serjeant's speech are founded on fact:

#### CHOPS AND TOMATO SAUCE.

In the summer of 1836 a *crim. con.* action was brought by one Norton, the husband of one of the most beautiful of the Sheridan sisters, against Lord Melbourne who was then Prime Minister. Sir William Follett, who was of counsel for the plaintiff, offered certain letters in evidence against Lord Melbourne. One was in the following terms: "How are you? I shall not be able to call to-day, but probably shall to-morrow.—Yours, &c., Melbourne."