

there was a time within living memory in which the excellence of our criminal procedure was by no means conspicuous. Mr. Purcell tells us that his early experiences of a trial conveyed the idea that it was a formal preliminary to passing sentence upon the accused, who had the effrontery to plead not guilty. No doubt was entertained of his guilt, but it was necessary to make the jury realise it, and their untrained minds required guidance. The prisoner's counsel, often treated with scant courtesy and little consideration, was endeavouring to defeat justice, and his endeavour must be promptly checked; any point that he might make in the accused's favour must instantly have its baselessness exposed. Sir Peter Edlin, who was Judge in the metropolitan county Courts for more than twenty years, is said to have regarded an acquittal as a personal insult, and to have been in the habit of interposing to displace anything favouring the defence which had been elicited in the cross-examination. At the present day, we are assured, while there is much less difficulty in obtaining an acquittal, there is much more difficulty in obtaining a conviction. This improvement in the administration of criminal justice would seem to be due to the influence of particular Judges rather than to differences in the course of business at assizes and sessions. Americans who are interested in the reform of criminal procedure may be encouraged by the fact that in nearly all the States the bench is respectable in point of character and is occasionally adorned by men of the highest eminence.—*Solicitors' Journal*.

A good story is current at Osgoode Hall in reference to the late Chancellor Boyd's handwriting, which, as all who are familiar with it, know was of a peculiarly crabbed character, and generally illegible to any but experts in calligraphy, it is this:—A party of Judges were at luncheon one day when the conversation turned on the subject of handwriting, and that of the Chancellor not unnaturally came in for rather free criticism. The Chancellor, who was present, remarked that it would probably surprise his critics to know that he had once taken a prize for handwriting, whereupon the late Mr. Justice Ferguson replied that he thought that it must have been for Arabic. Those who are familiar with Arabic and the late Chancellor's writing will appreciate the appropriateness of the remark. The curious twists and turns in which the late Chancellor's writing abounded have puzzled many a reader, but there was at least one official at Osgoode Hall who