

wich. Such an institution is still a desideratum in England; for, with splendid exceptions, it must be admitted that English barristers, though very clever practitioners, are not such able jurists as are to be found in other countries where law is systematically studied as a science.

On Wolsey's fall his administration of justice was strictly overhauled; but no complaint was made against him of bribery or corruption, and the charges were merely that he had examined many matters in Chancery after judgment given at common law;—that he had unduly granted injunctions;—and that when his injunctions were disregarded by the Judges, he had sent for those venerable magistrates and sharply reprimanded them for their obstinacy. He is celebrated for vigor with which he repressed perjury and chicanery in his Court, and he certainly enjoyed the reputation of having conducted himself as Chancellor with fidelity and ability,—although it was not till a later age that the foundation was laid of that well-defined system of equity now established, which is so well adapted to all the wants of a wealthy and refined society, and, leaving little discretion to the Judge, disposes satisfactorily of all the varying cases within the wide scope of its jurisdiction.

I am afraid I cannot properly conclude this sketch of the Life of Wolsey without mentioning that "of his own body he was ill, and gave the clergy ill example." He had a natural son, named Winter, who was promoted to be Dean of Wells, and for whom he procured a grant of "arms" from the Heralds' College. The 38th article of his impeachment shows that he had for his mistress a lady of the name of Lark, by whom he had two other children: there were various amours in which he was suspected of having indulged,—and his health had suffered from his dissolute life. But we must not suppose that the scandal arising from such irregularities was such as would be occasioned by them at the present day. A very different standard of morality then prevailed: churchmen debarred from marriage, were often licensed to keep concubines, and as the Popes themselves were in this respect by no means infallible, the frailties of a Cardinal were not considered any insuperable bar either to secular or spiritual preferment.¹

¹ Many gibes, however, seem to have been current against the licentious