

hommes de distinction en dépit du système, c'est ce que nous ne prétendons pas nier, mais là s'arrête ce raisonnement. Quiconque ouvre le livre de Lord Campbell, "*The life of the Chancellors*," y voit que la plupart de ces hommes distingués doivent en grande partie l'acquisition de leurs connaissances et leur avancement, à un système de lectures, d'associations et d'exercices qui existaient alors, époque d'illustration qui n'a duré qu'autant que le système d'où elle originait. L'on verra dans le troisième *rapport* de sir Edward Coke, quelle était la pratique de son temps.(1).

Il faut avouer avec regret que, sous le rapport du talent et des connaissances, le barreau Irlandais est beaucoup déchu de son ancienne splendeur. Interrogez les plus anciens de la profession, et ils vous diront, à part leurs préjugés du temps passé, ce qui n'est que trop vrai, combien les prati-

(1.) Now for the degrees of law, as there be in the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford divers degrees, as general sophisters, bachelors, masters, doctors, — of whom be chosen for eminent and judicial places, both in the church and the ecclesiastical courts ; so in the profession of law there are most men, which are those that argue readers cases in causes of chancery, both in terms and grand vacations. Of most men after eight years' study, or thereabouts, are chosen utter barristers ; of them are chosen readers in Inns of Chancery ; of utter barristers, after they have been twelve years of that degree at least, are chosen benchers or ancients, of which one that is of the pusine sort reads yearly, in summer vacation, and is called a single reader, and one of the ancients, that had formerly read, reads in Lent vacation, and is called a double reader ; and commonly it is between his first and second readings about nine or ten years ; and out of those the king makes choice of his attorney and Solicitor-general, &c. ; and of those readers are sergeants elected by the king ; and out of these the king electeth one, two, or three, as please him, to be his sergeants, which are called the king's sergeants, of sergeants are also constituted by the king the honorable and reverend sages and judges of the law.

" Each of the houses of court consists of readers, above twenty ; of utter barristers above thrice so many ; of young gentlemen about the number of eight or nine score who there spend their time in the study of the law, and in commendable exercises fit for gentlemen, the judges of the law, and sergeants being commonly above the number of twenty, are equally distinguished into the higher and more eminent houses, called sergeant's Inn. All these are not far distant from each other, altogether do make the most famous university in profession of the law only, or for any one that science is in the world ; in which houses of court and chancery, the readings and other exercises of the laws therein continually used are most excellent and behoofful for attaining to the knowledge of these laws."