

time of Lord Chancellor Sir Thomas More onward shows that all the distinguished Judges who have helped to fashion the fabric of our jurisprudence, acquired their knowledge of law within the four walls of their libraries rather than in the contentious and narrowing sphere of the forum. We think this is eminently true of Lord Bacon. We are aware that owing chiefly to the envious detraction of the man who did more than any one else to bring the Common Law into disrepute with the great jurists of Europe, Sir Edward Coke, Bacon's legal acquirements were, until lately, not regarded as profound. But the recent revival of legal learning in England has dissipated this in common with other fictions sedulously propagated by Coke, and has also vindicated the justice of Bacon's claim in submitting his proposition to the King to codify the laws of England: "I do assure Your Majesty, and am in good hope, that when Sir Edward Coke's reports and my rules and decisions shall come to posterity, there will be, whatsoever is now thought, no question who was the greater lawyer." Then take the case of the Judge to whom English and Canadian lawyers of to-day owe more than to any other man who ever sat on the Bench: Sir William Blackstone. He had never but a modicum of success at the Bar, and shortly before the time of his acceptance of the Vinerian Professorship he contemplated retiring from practice altogether. But this is what Foss says of him as a Judge: "Whoever reads the reports of the period during which he sat upon the Bench must acknowledge that he was equally distinguished as a Judge as he had been as a Commentator. Some of the judgments that he pronounced are remarkable for the learning they display, and for the clearness with which he supports his arguments; and in the few cases in which he differs from his colleagues, his opinion was, in general, found to be right." Space will not permit us to mention more than one instance in our own generation of a lawyer of small practice making an excellent Judge, and that one is the case of Lord Blackburn. His abilities were so little known at the time of his appointment to the Bench by Lord Chancellor Camp-