

mentary disposition could be much simpler. The will is the shortest a judge has ever been known to make. The occupant of the Bench who most closely approached Sir James Stephen in his testamentary conciseness was Lord Mansfield, who wrote his will on half a sheet of note paper. This economy of labour and space was all the more remarkable because the testator disposed of property of the value of half a million pounds. Having provided for a few specific legacies to friends, he gave the residue of his possessions to his nephew in these unusual terms: 'Those who are dearest and nearest to me best know how to manage and improve, and ultimately, in their turn, to divide and subdivide the good things of this world, which I commit to their care, according to events and contingencies which it is impossible for me to foresee or trace through all the mazy labyrinths of time and chance.' In striking contrast to the shortness and directness of Sir James Stephen's testament are the prolixity and eloquence of a judge who enjoyed a large measure of fame in the seventeenth century. This is the rhetorical fashion in which the Earl of Dorset, who succeeded Lord Burleigh in the office of Lord Treasurer, gave a very simple gift to his wife: 'I bequeath to Cecilie, Countess of Dorset, my most virtuous, faithful, and dearly-loved wife, not as any recompense of her infinite merit towards me, who for incomparable love, zeal, and hearty affection ever showed unto me, and for those her so rare, reverent, and many virtues of charity, modesty, fidelity, humility, secrecy, wisdom, patience, and a mind replete with all piety and goodness, which evermore shall and do abound in her, deserveth to be honoured, loved, and esteemed above all the transitory wealth and treasure of this world, and therefore by no price of earthly riches can by me be valued, recompensed, or requited; to her, therefore, my most virtuous, faithful, and entirely loved wife—not, as I say, as a recompense, but as a true token and testimony of my unspeakable love, affection, estimation, and reverence, long since fixed and settled in my heart and soul towards her, I give, etc.' Such manifestations of personal feeling, in which it was once the custom of testators to indulge, have now almost disappeared from wills. They are occasionally to be found in the testamentary productions of persons who dispense with professional assistance; but, as a rule, even home-made wills consist of what those who make them are pleased to regard as business-like statements of their wishes. Judges rarely draw their own wills. They