

have known to be written of any human learning." But Hottoman (who was Hottoman?) criticises it thus:—"Libellum ita inconditè, absurdè, et inconcinnè scriptum, ut facilè appareat verissimum esse, quod Polydorus Vergilius testatus est, stultitiam in eo libro, cum malitiâ et calumniandi studio, certare." Even to one not familiar with Latin, Hottoman and Polydorus Vergilius would appear to differ somewhat from Coke in his estimate of the Tenures.

"The body of our author is honorably interred in the cathedral church of Worcester, under a fair tomb of marble, with his statue or portraiture upon it; . . . and out of the mouth of his statue proceedeth his prayer *Fili Dei miserere mei*, which he himself caused to be made and finished in his lifetime."—*Soule's Legal Bibliography*.

#### THE LEARNED AND LABORIOUS COKE.

Sir Edward Coke (Cook the name was probably pronounced, for so his second wife and others of his acquaintance used to spell it, after the phonetic fashion of those days) was born somewhere about 1550, and lived until 1634—a good old age. How he lived and what he did—from the diverting circumstances of his birth to his dramatic colloquies with King James—may be found set forth at length in Campbell's *Lives of Chief Justices*, and elsewhere. The salient historical points of his life are well known; but it may point a moral to recall some of the trivial circumstances which illustrate his character.

In the first place, he set the bad example of rising too early and studying too hard. Every morning he rose at *three*. He read Bracton, Littleton, the Year Books, and the folio Abridgments of the Law, till the courts met at eight. He then went to Westminster and heard cases argued till twelve. After a short repast he attended readings or lectures, then resumed his private studies till supper time. Then he attended the moots, and afterwards shut himself up in his chamber and worked at his commonplace book until nine, when he went to bed. Evidently, he was not an eight-hour man.

He had a keen eye for the almighty dollar.

He married twice, and each time "married money." He speculated largely and shrewdly in real estate. Besides his private practice, his fees, etc., as Attorney-General amounted to over \$35,000 a year. His twelve children were therefore "well fixed" in this world's goods.

He ventured slowly and cautiously into legal authorship. He began taking notes in 1580, but did not bring out the first volume of his Reports until twenty years later. Eleven parts of the Reports appeared between 1600 and 1615; the twelfth and thirteenth were found in manuscript among his papers, and were published long after his death, as were also the Second, Third and Fourth Institutes. The First Institute (Coke on Littleton) was published in 1628.

He was an enthusiast in his profession—as witness the Preface to his Reports. Either he draws the long bow, or the Bar of his generation was more select than it is now; for he says, "I never saw any man of a loose and lawless life attain to any sound and perfect knowledge of the laws; and, on the other side, I never saw any man of excellent judgment in the laws but was honest, faithful, and virtuous."

His personal appearance was prepossessing. "His features were regular, and their expression engaging. His frame was vigorous and well proportioned; his air and manner, grave and full of dignity. In his habits of life he was temperate, laborious, and exact; neat in his dress, and studious of the cleanliness of his person."

An agreeable tinge of gossip may be given to this brief notice, by concluding with an extract from Sir Francis Bacon's "Expostulation," addressed to Coke on his removal from the chief-justiceship, in 1616:—

"First, therefore, behold your errors. In discourse you delight to speak too much, not to hear other men. . . . Secondly, you cloy your auditory when you should be observed; speech should be either sweet or short. . . . Thirdly, you converse with books, not men; and have no excellent choice with men, who are the best books. . . . You are wont to praise or disgrace upon slight grounds, and that sometimes untruly. You will jest at any man in public, without respect of the person's dignity or your own. You make the law to lean too much to your opinion, whereby you show yourself to be a legal tyrant. . . . Your too much love of the world is too much seen, when, having the living of a thousand, you relieve few or none: the hand that has taken so much, can it give so little?"—*Ibid*.