

Shakespeare if in this absurd trial the Court ordered each to pay his own bill of costs.

"Sir, for a quart d'eau he will sell the fee-simple of his salvation, the inheritance of it, and cut the entail from all remainders, and a perpetual succession for it perpetually." (1) It is difficult to see where any technical knowledge of the law would assist one in solving Shakespeare's meaning of the above passage. In fact, one writer has gone so far as to say that a knowledge of law would be more of a hindrance than a help.

The following passage has been cited (2) to show Shakespeare's intimate knowledge of the law of real property, and this commentator goes on to say that Shakespeare exhibits a knowledge not generally possessed, when he says:

"Of what quality was your love, then?

"Like a fair house built on another man's ground:

"So that I have lost my edifice by mistaking the place

"I erected it." (3)

This is a well-known principle of law, known to-day to the average business man of intelligence, and was likewise well known in Shakespeare's days; therefore, it required no great amount of legal knowledge to have written this passage. However, commentators (4) have seen great legal acumen in this passage, and one authority cites the case of the First Parish in Sudbury v. Jones (5) Jones in support of this view. This case,

(1) "All's Well that Ends Well," Act IV., Scene 3.

(2) Lord Campbell: "Shakespeare's Legal Acquirements," 39.

(3) "Merry Wives of Windsor," Act II., Scene 2.

(4) 26 Law Reporter, 2.

(5) 3 Cosh, 184.