

sources from whence the law is derived ; what part it plays in the development and maintenance of the social relations of the age, and what part it has played in that development in the past ; and how it is related to the kindred branches of ethics, of political economy, and of metaphysics.

His condition is well expressed by Sir William Blackstone, in his opening lecture, as follows : " A lawyer thus educated to the Bar, in subservience to attorneys and solicitors, will find he has begun at the wrong end. If practice be the whole that he is taught, practice must also be all that he will ever know. If he be uninstructed in the elements and first principles upon which the rule of practice is founded, the least variation from established precedents will totally distract and bewilder him. *Ita lex scripta est* is the utmost his knowledge will arrive at. He must never aspire to form, and seldom expect to comprehend, any arguments drawn *a priori* from the spirit of the laws and natural conditions of justice."

In this respect, both in this country and elsewhere, the law student is at a disadvantage compared with the student of any other profession. The student of medicine and surgery can resort to schools where he can be thoroughly instructed in all the principal branches of his profession, while the student of law enjoys few opportunities of acquiring anything more than he is able to obtain by reading in a lawyer's office. This furnishes very imperfect means either of rendering him a sound, well-read lawyer, a ready or correct practitioner, or a fluent and effective speaker. He usually commences with few, if any, general directions as to his course of reading, and, having no previous ideas with reference to legal principles, he reads with very little benefit. He has no landmarks to guide him ; no fixed points to which he can refer and around which he can arrange his acquisitions. The peculiar, indeterminate, inaccurate, disconnected, unscientific character of English law renders such a course yet more necessary, for it is like a material structure erected upon no settled plan ; begun in a remote age ; put up bit by bit, here a little and there a little ; a wing at one time, a porch at another ;