

proportion to their respective claims. The justice of this is obvious, and yet there are places, as you gentlemen know, where it has not even yet been adopted.

Take another illustration from the law of juries. The Lord Chief Justice of England is even now agitating a reform which was accomplished two centuries ago in one of the New England Colonies. They enacted that juries might consist of *six* or *twelve* persons, according to the importance of the subject to be brought before them, and that the decision of four out of the six, or eight of the twelve, should be conclusive, unless a new trial was granted. By this they sought to avoid that expense, delay, and injury which the demand for absolute unanimity in the minds of twelve men so often produces to all parties concerned.

Besides this, legal forms were simplified. Wise and equal laws were provided for a just distribution of estates among children and heirs, while primogenitures were entirely abolished; and no reform has proved a greater blessing to the country than this. The criminal laws of Europe, at that time truly Draconian, were greatly softened, though doubtless not so much as they ought to have been. Nevertheless, great and much needed reforms were made in the whole system of jurisprudence by the early Colonists. Many of their reforms have already been adopted in other countries as well as incorporated into the constitutions of the States that have since been formed. The world has thus pronounced its verdict as to their wisdom and intelligence in founding States and governing communities.

Much ridicule has been cast upon the founders of the New Haven Colony, on account of the supposed character of what are known as the "Blue Laws of Connecticut." It has often been said and sung that they contain grave enactments against offending beer barrels, and that the austerity of Puritan practice prohibited a young husband from smiling upon his blushing wife, or a mother from kissing her babe on a Sunday. The few who have read these laws, declare that there is nothing in them that is not moderate, wise and