

Brehon schoolmaster was a literary foster-father to his pupil, whom he taught gratuitously; but having thus taught him gratuitously, the law—Irish-like—gave him a claim upon the student's property through life (Early History of Institutions, p. 242).

The chapter on "Assault" shows that the lawyers were most decidedly respecters of persons, and that they took cognizance of preparations to do as well as the deeds themselves. The penalty for an assault, by a man of superior caste and of superior abilities, upon another varies greatly from that inflicted for an exactly similar assault by a man of equal caste and of equal abilities, or by one of an inferior caste and of inferior abilities, or by one of an inferior caste and of superior abilities, or of equal caste with superior abilities, or of superior caste and equal abilities. In such cases the man of the superior caste got off with the lightest penalty. It was quite the contrary in Scotland, when Mary Stuart was Queen, and her parliament was trying to repress the using "of abominable oaths and detestable execrations"; there the baron was fined twelvepence—the craftsman or servant only one penny. (1 Feb., 1551.) The pundits discriminated between assaults below the waistband, and assaults between that and the neck, and those above the neck. Little was left to the discretion of the magistrate as to the fine to be imposed; almost every imaginable contingency is provided for; for instance, if two persons, being of equal caste, are mutually prepared to strike each other with their fists, the magistrate shall fine each of them ten puns of cowries; if they strike each other, the fine is to be twenty puns. But, if two persons of equal caste are mutually prepared to kick each other, the magistrate shall fine each of them twenty puns of cowries; if they do kick, he shall fine each forty puns. It was deemed an assault for a man of an inferior caste proudly to affect an equality with a man of superior caste and travel by his side on the road, or sit or sleep upon the same carpet with him. The magistrates were respected in those days, for if a criminal, on his crime being discovered, should beat or ill-use the justice, the offender was thrust through with an iron spit and roasted at the fire. These provisions as to assault are akin to those in force in Siam. We read in the Kathu Phra Aijakan, "A man who strikes another with a blank book shall be fined as though he struck him with his hand; but if the assault is committed with a book of the classics, the offender shall be