me to the verge of a suggestive subject. In the House of Lords there are now engaged in hearing appeals from the Court of Appeal the Lord Chancellor, Lord Herschel and Lord Macnaghten. Between them they possess every variety of experience in forensic practice; yet it may be said, with substantial truth, that none of them are possessed of judicial experience. Nevertheless it would be difficult to find in the world, and impossible to discover in this country, a court of equal competence and courtesy. The judges never interrupt; they give even junior counsel credit for the possession of common sense; they are careful not to disturb the thread of an advocate's argument. The moral appears to be that it is better to be before a man fresh from experience at the bar than to be subjected to the tender mercies of a judge who has forgotten the difficulties of argument. Certain it is that both upon the common law side and upon the equity side there are judges, and plenty of them, to whom an occasional visit to the House of Lords would teach an invaluable lesson in the treatment of counsel. The beauty of the thing is that in the House of Lords there is no waste of time. An advocate lays the whole of his argument before the court in the shape upon which he has deliberately fixed his choice. Secure against irrelevant questions from the Bench, he is never distracted by the discussion of side issues; equally secure against interruptions by his opponent, he is encouraged to state his case with almost judicial precision and completeness, for the Lords will not by any means permit one counsel to interrupt another, and they apply this rule with equal strictness, even when the most eminent of Queen's Counsel is opposed to the most insignificant of juniors.

Profesional topics are scarce just now. Common law judges are for the most part absent upon the circuits which are just drawing to a close, and the circuits are, as usual, the subject of complaint. This time the criticism has taken a new form, the result of which will be, in the immediate future, a fresh reorganization of the circuit system. It has been discovered that the practice of sending single judges round a circuit is inconvenient to everybody, and particularly wasteful as far as the time of the Bar is concerned; it has been discovered also that grouped assizes are more than unpopular in the provinces. What the outcome may be is more than it would be safe to predict. The chances are rather in favour of the old system which, after working fairly well for a great number of years, was altered in unnecessarily precipitate deference to a cry which had no substantial foundation. London suitors, in a frame of mind easily to be understood in the case of the inhabitants of a great capital, assumed that they were entitled to greater facilities than their brethren in the provinces. Hence came an alteration intended to give the advantage to the London suitor. The intention was not realized, for less time still elapses in the country than in London between the writ and the judgment, but in the meanwhile several counties were placed at great inconvenience and expense, especially in relation to the transport of prisoners. The whole truth of the matter is that the staff of judges is inadequate, and that there is no justification for the inadequacy. The law already pays its own expenses, but the delays of the law deter many suitors from seeking redress. More judges would mean increased litigation at greater speed. It used to be said that the object of the legislature ought to be the discouragement of litigation; but before "litigation" we must read "frivolous and unnecessary." It was never the aim of any wise lawgiver to make the machinery of justice so slow that men should be deterred from insisting on their rights.

Temple, Feb. 13.