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PARLIAMENTARY LAW AFFECTING LAWYERS IN PARLIAMENT.

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LAWYERS, for the great and good service of the Commonwealth,' says Sir Edward Coke, 'have been eligible for members of Parliament.' And although English Parliamentary history shows that some of the members of the long robe became the unscrupulous defenders of unconstitutional sovereigns, it also shows that others distinguished themselves as the able and patriotic advocates of the liberties of the people, and, 'for the great and good service of the Commonwealth,' led to successful issues those great contests between the House of Commons and the Crown, which resulted in the establishment of Parliamentary government, and of those constitutional rules by which the boundaries of Parliamentary privilege and Prerogative right are clearly defined and limited.

The training of the lawyer and his mastery of the principles of the Common Law, which are the foundations of our jurisprudence, fitted him for the

legislative work of Parliament; and therefore we can well understand how the presence of lawyers in Parliament was recognised from early times. In 1300, when Edward I. summoned a Parliament to consider of his right to Scotland, the writs issued for the election of members recited the King's desire to have 'conference and treaty' with men learned in the law (*jurisperitis*), and others, upon his ancient right and dominion over Scotland (a). The University of Oxford was directed to elect four or five, and the University of Cambridge to elect two or three 'of their most discreet and learned lawyers' (b) (*de discretioribus et in jure scripto magis expertis*). And though it is alleged that the rule and intention of the early constitution of Parliament was that the constituencies should elect members from amongst their re-

(a) Luder's Parliaments, 63.

(b) *Ibid.* 266.