

SIR WILLIAM BLACKSTONE, KT.,

COMMENTARIES ON THE LAWS OF ENGLAND

CHAPTER THE FOURTH.

OF THE PUBLIC COURTS OF COMMON LAW AND EQUITY.

§ 43. Early judicial systems.—The policy of our ancient constitution, as regulated and established by the great Alfred, was to bring justice home to every man's door, by constituting as many courts of judicature as there are manors and townships in the kingdom; wherein injuries were redressed in an easy and expeditious manner, by the suffrage of neighbors and friends. These little courts, however, communicated with others of a larger jurisdiction, and those with others of a still greater power; ascending gradually from the lowest to the supreme courts, which were respectively constituted to correct the errors of the inferior ones, and to determine such causes as by reason of their weight and difficulty demanded a more solemn discussion.