

tions, and for his uniform kindness and courtesy in all his intercourse with the bench and the bar. He edited several English law works, in all about forty volumes, in which he introduced notices of American decisions, and made other improvements.

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NOTICES OF NEW BOOKS.

Digest of the Decisions of the Supreme Court of the State of Illinois. By Elliot Anthony, Esq. Philadelphia: T. & J. W. Johnson. 1855.

With the great multiplication of Books of Reports of late years, a corresponding change in the function and use of Digests appears to have taken place. Once the latter were considered as a mere convenient adjunct to a lawyer's library, an aid to his memory, or a guide to his hand, in the search for decisions which he was supposed to know beforehand, perfectly; but never to supply the want of such knowledge. This was the view of the black-letter student, in those happy days when a wheelbarrow contained all the books of his art. But now such a stretch of supposition is impossible. Even in his own State, what lawyer can run over the hundred volumes, and tell you, page by page, subject by subject, their contents. A digest now-a-days, therefore, when well made, necessarily involves something more than a mere stringing together of reporters' head-notes, upon a thread of careless analysis. To be useful, it must be accurate and philosophic in its plan; conscientious and original in its condensation of the reported cases. These are qualities, to be sure, which resemble much those of a well ordered text book. And, indeed, the better digests now, differ but little from any other law books, except in the fact that they are not welded into one homogeneous mass, by the easy use of conjunctive and disjunctive particles. They differ from text books, only as the earthenware pot differs from china, in the glazing; and are often quite as useful.

Mr. Anthony's Digest of Illinois Reports appears to be carefully prepared, and to possess the qualifications we have specified as those upon which the merit of such a work must now depend. The points decided are clearly, and we have no doubt, accurately stated; and the analysis is highly satisfactory. It is a book which will be valuable, not only in Illinois, but elsewhere.