

opened and reopened; and, from the nature of things, and to answer the purposes of justice, must be kept open and depending for many years. The adjustments under the late Spanish treaty called up, and recently gave rise to much litigation, in cases that had slumbered for nearly *thirty* years; and, in which the parties, or their survivors had been dispersed over half the Union.

The labours of the chancellor are not, like those of a judge of a court of common law, spread out and displayed before the public, by calling in witnesses and jurymen to be present and to partake in them. The whole weight of *his* duties fall upon himself, and upon himself alone. The anomalies and the intricacies in the administration of justice are poured out upon him; and he is left unaided and alone to ascertain the course which justice requires to be pursued, according to the established principles of equity as they arise out of the complicated facts of each case. The chancery is the great *property court* of the State. And a vast proportion of the individual rights to the soil of Maryland are only to be found in that court. Perhaps, it would not be hazarding too bold an assertion to say, that one half of all the titles to lands in Maryland, when traced from the present holder to their origin, will be found to have some one or other of the links, in the chain of title, resting in the court of chancery.(z)

It would be foreign to the constitutional question, now under consideration; and it would be invidious to contrast the duties of the chancellor with those of any common law judge in the State. But, there are those, who mistake the object of the act of November 1809, ch. 181, requiring the number of days each judge of the several courts of law, attends in their respective courts, to be certified annually to the General Assembly; and, under that mistake, they have taken up an opinion, that judicial labour was a sort of *job work*, the value of which might be estimated by the number of days the labourer was employed. To those, it may be satisfactory to learn, that the business of the court of chancery has latterly very much increased, and continues to increase; and, that its records will show, that the present chancellor has, either in the way of a formal session of a court, or otherwise, been called upon about three hundred different days of the last year, to transact business which had been brought before him from almost all the different counties of the State.

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(z) It has been said, that most of the estates in England, once in thirty years, pass through the Court of Chancery.—(16 *Howell's State Tri.* 417.)