

error, in criminal cases as well as in civil cases, but still the writ of error is permitted, as it has been since the simpler method was provided two hundred years before. It is seldom used, however. Its long endurance furnishes a noteworthy instance of persistency in adherence to obsolete methods.

As has already been stated, the old special bar of the court, the group of lawyers who congregated at Annapolis with the judges at each term of court, spent the term there and argued the appeals for the state, may be said to have been entirely a thing of the past within about a decade after 1867. To the end of the century, and even later, there were a few lawyers who went to Annapolis a day or two in advance of their arguments to rest and put themselves in what they considered to be the state of mind desirable for an argument, but those who did this no longer constituted the old special bar. The lawyers who had tried the cases now regularly followed them to Annapolis. The improvement in transportation was, of course, largely responsible for the change. In addition to the railroad which after 1840 reached Annapolis from the junction to the west, a short railroad line from Baltimore City on the north side of the Severn River was opened in 1881; and after that, lawyers from Baltimore, who together had the larger part of the business before the court, came to Annapolis each for only a few hours in a day.

While this change was going on, the place of oral argument in the presentation of a case was undergoing a change. It has been seen that until the middle of the last century, and for some time