duction of ill-drawn amendments, which too often ignore altogether the prior law, and make our statutes more and more a congeries of fragmentary enactments—"a mighty maze, and all without a plan."

In 1873 a bill was introduced by Mr. McLeod, M.P.P. for West Durham, which required that every amending statute should re-enact the whole law upon the subject to be dealt with, but the proposal was not received with favour, and the bill never reached a second reading.

At length, however, the Government, having already ventured upon consolidations of the School and Municipal Acts, have undertaken a task which could not long be postponed; and the Commission recently appointed for consolidating the Statutes applicable to Ontario, have had assigned to them the pleasing duty of determining that oft-mooted question, "What the Legislature really *did* mean?"

In the first report of the Commission, which was presented to the Legislature a few weeks ago, and printed *in extenso* in our last number, we find some observations so thoroughly in accord with our article of four years ago, that we cannot forbear quoting them at length :—

> The mode of procedure which seems to be necessary in all parliamentary legislation has always constituted a fertile source of difficulties—subsequent Acts repeat sections of former Acts upon the same subject, repeal portions or contain provisions more or less at variance with the prior enactments without expressly repealing them, and many instances are to be found of repealing statutes having been themselves repealed without the use of any words indicating an intention to prevent the revival of the original Act; but embarrassment and delay proceeding from this source have chiefly arisen from the employment of repealing clauses in the form "so much of any Acts heretofore passed as relates to" a particular subject, or "all Acts or parts of Acts inconsistent with this Act, are hereby repealed"—forms which are as troublesome to the interpreter of an Act as they are convenient to the draftsman, and have necessitated such a minute examination of many of the longest Acts as very seriously to retard the progress of the Commissioners."

It must have been due to the judicial habit of moderation in language that stronger terms were not employed by the Commissioners to characterize this careless and slovenly mode of legislation. Arising, no doubt, from the natural craving of our legislators after statutory immortality, it results, like amateur conveyancing and "justicing" in sad perplexity and vexation of spirit, in litigation too often costly and protracted, and in amendments which, like 33 Vict., c. 7, s. 8 (O); 34 Vict., c. 12, s. 14 (O); cap. 15, s. 3 (O); c. 28 (O); 35 Vict., cap. 34 (D); 36 Vict., cap. 15, s. 1 (D); 37 Vict., c. 4, s. 4 (D) and others, are melancholy mementos of carelessness and incapacity. Perhaps the true remedy for this unfortunate state of affairs is to be sought, not in a second chamber representing no new "estate of the realm," (though the "Lords" claim especial credit in preventing hasty legislation as to private bills,) but in a vigilant supervision on the part of the Government and the legal staff of the House over bills introduced by private members, and a firm determination on the part of the Legislature itself not to be wearied or hurried into crude and hasty legislation.

But another, and perhaps even a greater source of danger than the one above referred to, arises from the manner in which "the transcendent power of Parliament" is exercised in the passing of Private Bills.

Sir William Blackstone long ago observed that "Private Acts of Parliament are of late years become a very common mode of assurance;" but if the prince of law lecturers could examine the last three or four volumes of Ontario Statutes he would probably use much stronger language, echoing perhaps the words of His Majesty, Charles II. on the close of