

EXAMINATIONS FOR CALL TO THE BAR.

on vested or contingent devises and bequests, from Hawkins on the Construction of Wills, a bit of one chapter of Dart's Vendors and Purchasers, and one of Tudor's Leading Cases in Real Property and Conveyancing, viz., *Morley v. Bird*.

The last two subjects are a complete mystery. We are utterly unable to conceive what object the Council of Legal Education had in view when they selected the heterogeneous collection of authors grouped under these two branches. The reader on jurisprudence, civil, and international law has to examine in—what? One would naturally suppose jurisprudence, for one thing. Not at all. The aforesaid council utterly ignore jurisprudence. "Austin" is evidently to them a sealed book, unworthy or unfitted for the perusal of future lawyers and legislators. But, of course, they make up for the omission by requiring an intimate acquaintance with Roman law and French law—with that system so often styled perfection, and with the famed Code of our neighbours—and so enabling the student to deduce for himself the principles of jurisprudence. The half of one of the four books of the Institute, and less than an eighth of the Code Civil—not a section from either of the other codes—is all the knowledge of ancient and modern legal systems demanded from a barrister. And his acquaintance with international law is limited to Part II., ch. 2, of Wheaton—i.e., to about one-eighth of the whole volume, and that the least important part. A solitary chapter from Maine's Ancient Law, and Part III. of that schoolboy's book, Lord Mackenzie's Studies on Roman Law, make up the jurisprudence section.

But what shall we say of the Common Law branch? It is an ingenious production, evidently elaborated with much care, and bears on the face of it the marks of many men, the *diversa concilia mentium diversarum*. Seven authors or divisions are included under this subject; the Council of Legal Education is composed of eight members; shall we be very far wrong in assuming that one of them was absent when the common law part of the examination came on for consideration, and that each of the others contributed a portion? "'Smith' was a good book when I was a youngster; put it down," observes one. "Not the whole of it," objects another. "It's on contracts; we must give them something on torts;" and, anxious not to burden the students, he suggests the five shortest of the "Leading Cases" on torts. A third says, "We can't very well omit action at law, though there won't be any necessity for the Reader to trouble them much on that score;" and a fourth adds, "We had anyhow better give something on evidence; I don't suppose, however, they will look at it." A fifth reminds his colleagues that "even in this most moral and civilised age crimes are occasionally committed." We ought, perhaps, slightly to direct their attention to this head.

They may find the knowledge they acquire, slight as it will be with most, of some service to them in after life, if not to defend the clients they will never get, at least to protect the characters they now have." And so "The law as to simple larceny" is set down. "They ought to look at some of the statutes," adds a sixth; "we took some trouble over the 24 & 25 Vict.—does anyone object?" and, silent all, a dozen sections are chosen haphazard from 24 & 25 Vict. c. 96 and 100. But a chorus of disapprobation arises when a learned gentleman remarks, with something very like a growl, "The old reports are never read now; it was only the other day that my junior could not comprehend the meaning of 'Cro. Eliz.'" "I have never read Coke, or Rolle, or Croke," say three or four. "I never but once opened the Year Books," ejaculates another; "Heaven save me from venturing on the experiment again." But the old gentleman is obstinate, though he compromises the matter by limiting his demand to four cases taken from Coke.

In what terms shall we comment upon the above as an examination qualifying those who pass it for the Bar? If we style it an utter farce we shall be speaking within bounds. Practice is utterly ignored. Alike in conveyancing, in equity, in common law, a man innocent as a child of practice may be blazoned forth to all the world as a thorough student, and not a mere hey-dey barrister, his *imprimatur*, attested by the conjoint wisdom of the Inns of Court, his certificate signed by the greatest of living lawyers?—*Law Times*.

A point taken in the course of the debate on Sir Roundell Palmer's resolutions deserves more consideration than it received. Admission into the Professions, and particularly to the Bar, taxes the pecuniary resources of candidates too much, and their mental resources too little. Up to the end of last year the question of going to the Bar was simply one of money. It is now equally a question of money, but also a question of brains. The tax imposed by the revenue upon candidates for admission to practise the law is very heavy—much heavier in the case of an attorney than in the case of a barrister. The majority of youths from college will find it difficult to pass the examination without preparation with private tutors, and this is expensive. The same observation has long been applicable to attorneys. These duties which the revenue demands ought to be considerably reduced or altogether removed, the attorneys' certificate duty going with them. We do not attach much weight to the argument that if the stamp duties were abolished many of the public would become members of the Inns of Court, and thus learn some law; but it is much to the interest of the Profession that the Revenue should have as little as possible to do with it.—*Law Times*.