

In Mr. Joseph the profession loses a most useful member, a man of many friends and without an enemy, a most estimable citizen of high honour and blameless character, in private life kind and courteous. He will be mourned also by many who were the recipients of his unostentatious charity. We are glad to know that Mr. Justice Burton, who was the one of the survivors who sustained the most serious injury, is progressing towards recovery. The accident seems to have been largely the result of a defective system of despatching trains, unintelligently carried out, combined with culpable thoughtlessness on the part of the officials in allowing passengers to remain in the rear car when a train was following them in a blinding snow storm.

WE are glad to see that Lord Herschell, Lord High Chancellor, has stated, in the House of Lords, that there is no truth in the rumour that the Companies' Winding-up business had been transferred by him from Mr. Justice Williams to Mr. Justice Romer with any sinister object. There is no doubt that Williams, J., was sent on circuit, and that the Company business was temporarily transferred to Romer, J., with the sanction of the Lord Chancellor. The reason attributed to the Lord Chancellor for making this change was that Mr. Justice Williams had given annoyance in high quarters by the firm and fearless manner in which he had discharged his duty in the New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency case, and that he would be likely to give trouble to parties in other cases likely to come before him in connection with the winding up of companies. As has been stated in some of the English legal journals, such a proceeding, if based on any such reason on the part of the Lord Chancellor, would have been a deadly blow at the independence of the Bench, and would justify the impeachment of the offender; and we can scarcely imagine that any one holding that high and honourable position would for a moment enter on so perilous a course. It is always a very difficult thing to ascertain what are the motives of any action; and, while it is easy to assign bad motives, it is by no means so easy to make good the charge. We think it is to be regretted that a legal periodical should have started the accusations of bad faith unless it had incontrovertible evidence of its truth.