So far as yet appears to the public, those in charge of law reform are contenting themselves with nibbling at costs. We admit that litigation is too expensive; that suitors may justly complain both of court costs and of solicitors' charges. And yet the solicitor does not profit by the system. The proportion of disbursements, including counsel fees, to total bill was never greater than it is to-day. There is something wrong, when merchants sooner forego just demands than seek the courts for relief. It is also a sign of the times when solicitors are averse to undertaking suits. With perhaps the exception of administration, and winding up proceedings, where costs are given upon a liberal scale out of the attenuated estate, proceedings calling for court work are not very welcome in solicitors' offices. This state of things is not singular to Ontario. In England, in order to attract the business of the mercantile community, a commercial court is about to be tried. It is a misfortune when the expense of justice becomes so great that suitors are deterred from using the national tribunals.

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Do the measures proposed for relief go far enough? The system of party and party costs is to be retained; a few of the suckers only are to be lopped off. The unsuccessful litigant has still to suffer a large penalty for his mistaken view of his rights. In addition to his own costs, he has the burden of his opponent's costs to bear. The two chief items of this extra burden have been the ordinary disbursements, including special examinations, and counsel fees. It is proposed to give some relief from the former outlay. Special examiners' fees are to be abolished, and the court is to provide the oil for the machinery of a reference, the number of appeals is to be lessened, and the first expense of getting to the Court of Appeal cut down. These reforms are all useful in their way, but do they go far enough?

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A MENTAL enumeration of the army of officials, directly or indirectly dependent upon suitors for their existence, is convincing that lasting relief is unattainable without radical changes in the practice, accompanied by equally radical changes in the organization of legal offices. For example, Division Court costs are out of all proportion to the amounts involved. This is directly due to the stipendiary force of clerks and bailiffs, who, under the present system, must be used in order to bring the debtor before the court. What necessity is there to employ a Division Court bailiff to serve an ordinary summons in a case for the collection of a small debt, when a suitor in a High Court, for the larger debt, may personally serve the defendant? This is but one illustration of the unnecessary burdens cast upon litigants.

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IT was not to be expected that leading counsel, who are advising with the Government upon reforms, should deal with counsel fees—the second heavy item of the penalty imposed upon unsuccessful litigants. To saddle costs upon the other side is, in many cases, the true bone of contention. Failure and success, without costs, are alike ruinous. Therefore, the services of leading counsel are more and more in