

OUR TABLE.

MANUAL OF THE OFFICE DUTIES AND LIABILITIES OF A JUSTICE OF THE PEACE, WITH PRACTICAL FORMS FOR THE USE OF MAGISTRATES OUT OF SESSION. BY HUGH TAYLOR, ESQ. ADVOCATE. ARMOUR AND RAMSAY, MONTREAL.

WE hail with the sincerest pleasure the publication of this work, the first of the kind which has appeared among us. It supplies a great desideratum, and will, we are sure, be welcomed, read and studied, not only by the magistrate, professional gentleman, and student of the law, (who have known most the want, and can therefore best appreciate the value of the book,) but by every body, no matter what his calling be, who desires to acquire the most valuable information that the citizen can possess—a correct knowledge of the laws and institutions under which he lives, and to the efficiency of which he owes much of the security and happiness he enjoys.

The object, plan, and uses of the work being very briefly and clearly explained in the Introduction, we give them in the author's own words, premising merely, that not only are the pretensions of the work fully sustained throughout, but, as rarely happens, the author seems to have accomplished more than the preface indicates:—

Impressed with the belief that something explanatory of the office and duties of a Justice of the Peace, in this part of the Province, might prove useful, I have been induced to offer to the public the present manual on that subject, which, although imperfect in many respects, may yet merit some degree of approbation as a first attempt, or stimulate the exertions of others, to something more efficient. In it, I have endeavoured to compress into as small compass as possible, (consistently with perspicuity) what I consider to be most essential for the Justice to know, when acting alone, or out of Session, in the great variety of objects which fall within his jurisdiction, according to the present state of the law in this part of the Province, and to clothe it in language, plain, simple, and unadorned.

The method I have adopted is,—in the first instance, to give a statement of the appointment, office, and duties of a Justice of the Peace, his protection, and liability, in the discharge of those duties, with some general observations and decisions relative thereto. The subsequent part of the work will be arranged in alphabetical order, continuing the different heads of titles of the principal matters and offences which fall under the notice or jurisdiction of the Justice out of Session, on each of which enough of the law has been stated, to show the nature of those offences, and to enable him to judge how far he can interpose his authority to promote the ends of justice, either by punishing the offender, or by securing his trial before a competent jurisdiction. As practical forms are necessary, especially in the numerous instances of summary conviction, which the late alterations in our Criminal Law have introduced, of these forms a sufficient number has been given in various instances, to enable the Justice to draw them up in all cases, as circumstances may require.

It is well observed in another part of the Introduction, that "whatever can tend to instruct or to assist the magistrate in the discharge of his duties, ought to be favourably received, as it not only enables him to act with more confidence and security, but must, in some measure, serve to promote a more general knowledge of our criminal law, in which, as it affects our best rights and privileges, every man ought to feel himself more or less interested." We cannot doubt, therefore, but that every magistrate, professional gentleman and student-at-law, whose business it is to be thoroughly and practically acquainted with its contents, will be eager to possess himself of a copy of the work, and trust that the public generally will evince such interest in the publication, and afford it such encouragement, as may induce the author at no distant day not only to present a second edition, but to direct his attention to other branches of the law, with which he seems so well qualified to deal.

We know of no compilation or code, as yet, to which unprofessional men can have recourse, for the purpose of obtaining a general knowledge of the principles of our laws, without which no man can be said to be properly qualified for transacting ordinary business, with confidence, safety and success—and this is certainly one of the greatest wants that can exist in a civilized, law-governed community. In no country in the world is the want of a good legal *Vade-mecum* more felt than among ourselves. Such treatises are of inestimable value, and we cannot imagine that a short, comprehensive, popular, and well executed work of the kind could fail of success.

If the principal object and intention of education be to fit and qualify our youth for discharging the business of life with credit to themselves and advantage to the country, it seems strange indeed, that the acquirement of a correct knowledge of the institutions under which we live, and of the principles of the laws by which we are governed, and to which our daily business bears constant reference, should be so little thought of and so much neglected. But in this, as in many other things, the most evident and greatest improvements will probably be the last adopted. Once introduced, however, and their benefits experienced, we begin to wonder why they did not earlier receive attention. For our own part, we shall not consider the academical course of our youth complete, until a knowledge of the laws and institutions of the country has been superadded to the other branches in which they are usually, but certainly not more usefully, instructed. On this head, indeed, we ought not to be satisfied until, in all the principal seminaries or colleges of the country, a "Chair"