

what do we find?—that the shortening of the English vacation was strenuously opposed because a number of noble and distinguished lawyers and judges (*Can. L. J.*, vol. 10, p. 330) had died of overwork, and that the lengthening of the Ontario midsummer vacation was called for (*Can. L. T.* vol. II. p. 97), "because two months is not a very long time for a partial rest" for—the lawyers. Let the curious read as they will and the main consideration will be found to be "the lawyers"—the lawyers must "sleep between term and term"—but what ideas can be more opposed than "the lawyers" and *saints* (*Mrs. Grundy, Passim*); even St. Michael and St. Hilary, they (the curious) will be further than ever from the object of their search.

It seems to be an accepted matter of history (*Holly's Blackstone*) that for the origin of our term and vacation it is necessary to go back to the *dies fasti* and *nefasti* (business days and holidays) into which the whole Roman year was divided (*Ovid ; Fast.*, vv. 145, *Wharton's L. Lex.* p. 301); an arrangement of the year said to have been instituted by Numa Pompilius. On the *dies fasti* the praetor was allowed to administer justice in the public courts, but *dies nefasti* were holidays, when the court doors remained closed, and litigation was at a stand still. For a long time this custom of the Romans, like many others of the same origin in our early law and observances, held sway, but with the rise of Christianity and a consequent antipathy to Roman superstitions and fasts, this artificial partition of the year was disregarded and the twelve months were given up indiscriminately to litigation.

The Christians themselves having cleared away the older fabric were not long in erecting a new one in its place. The Church interjected a few holy seasons during which litigation was strictly prohibited. Advent and Christmas among these corresponded to the winter vacation, Lent and Easter to the spring vacation, and Pentecost to the third, while—perhaps from having a heavy interest in tithes and other fractional parts of the crop—a separate Church edict