

EDITORIAL ITEMS.

States Senate, and has been for the last two years Attorney General. He has a high, though not the highest reputation, at the bar.

The English Solicitors are moving to secure an amendment of the law in a matter so obviously demanding amendment as to render it somewhat astonishing that the desired result has not long ago been achieved in England and in Canada. The various law societies there are about forming a scale of charges for payment of conveyancing work by commission on the value of the property in question, with a view to secure its general adoption and its ultimate sanction by statute. The profession in Ontario should unite to secure a similar result, and should not cease from their exertions till unlicensed practitioners are prohibited from drawing instruments relating to the transfer of lands. This would be a boon not only to the profession, but to the public. It is a matter of frequent remark from the bench that many expensive law-suits have originated in the blunders of rustic conveyancers, whose knowledge of legal drafting has come to them by nature. If that man be a fool who has himself for a client, certainly he does not much mend his folly by taking his lay-neighbour as his solicitor. It is now full time that the profession should assert its rights and protect the public from themselves in this matter of irresponsible conveyancing.

We trust we shall not shock the sense of propriety of members of the profession by devoting some space in our columns to the lighter and more entertaining part of legal literature. We shall occasionally mingle with the purely legal what has been called the "literary legal;" in other words that which aims at entertaining more than instructing, in the belief that the dignity of the law does not necessarily mean dullness of the law. In this de-

partment we promise that the same severe meditation and conscientious labour will be employed as is spent upon our profoundest articles, and we hope that the severest criticism will see nothing to offend a refined taste, or to wound the feelings of the most susceptible.

We dare to say that, although dryness is supposed to be the special attribute of law, in no association of men is there more wit and humour displayed than in the courts of law. The *jeux d'esprit* of the bench and bar in other countries are carefully recorded, and a most interesting and characteristic collection of witty sayings is thus preserved. Is our legal community deficient in a sense of humour? Are "good things," which are worth preserving, never said in our courts? On the contrary, we confidently affirm that in our own courts the tedium of a trial or argument is constantly enlivened by some *bon mot* or playful sally, from bench or bar, which is worthy of record—the brilliant wit and clever repartee of at least one distinguished present member of the bench (not to speak of many of those who have heretofore meted out justice in Osgoode Hall) has seldom been excelled by the most ready of his brethren in Great Britain. Thinking then, with Sterne, "that every time a man smiles—but much more so when he laughs—it adds something to this fragment of life," we invite our friends to note carefully everything that bears a semblance to a joke in relation to legal matters, and send it to us. It will be received with thanks, and if we recognize therein anything valuable in the line of humour, we shall give it to the world, and we feel sure that the world will be none the worse for reading it.

The following observations of President Grant in his recent message touching the repeal of the bankrupt laws are worthy of being placed on record in our pages, at this juncture, having regard to the agita-