

was in opposition, and he was specially requested to conduct it through the House, which he did, though introduced in the name of the Government. This measure gave, in its principles, satisfaction to the country. In 1868, Mr. Abbott obtained the appointment of an important commission to consider its management and the possibility of its improvement, the result of which was an elaborate report based upon returns from most of the constituencies of the Dominion. On this report was based the Insolvent Act of 1869, which retained the principles and the leading features of the Act of 1864, altering some few of its details. It has been admitted that this Act has been the most successful effort yet made towards the establishment of an insolvent system in the Dominion. Subsequent amendments were not found to improve the operation of the Act, but the reverse. They exaggerated many of the difficulties, more especially in the matter of official assignees, and finally, in 1879, the law was repealed, and the commercial and financial community are now calling for the re-introduction of an insolvency system. Much benefit is expected from Mr. Abbott's experience in legislation of this description.

For many years, Mr. Abbott exercised unusual influence in the conduct of the work of legislation in the House of Commons. His proficiency in all branches of commercial law and in the law of private corporations made his assiduous attendance at the great standing committees on railways, canals and telegraphs, and on banking and commerce, of inestimable value. And in the latter committee he acted as chairman for a number of years with the high appreciation of its members and of the House of Commons. In the intervals of attendance upon Parliament, Mr. Abbott continued his practice as an advocate in Montreal, and was engaged in most of the important cases of the day. Among others, the St-Albans case attracted much attention at the time. This arose from the action of a party of about twenty-five men, who were soldiers of the Southern army, escaped or exchanged, and headed by Captain Bennett Young of that army. They managed to make their way to St-Albans in plain clothes, by different routes, and, by concerted action, met on the morning of a day in autumn in the public square of that town. With extraordinary audacity, they seized the principal officials, and confined them in the market square. They then proceeded to rifle various banks, and endeavoured to set fire to the town, but with little success, and they