

THE BENCHERS AND THE LAW SOCIETY.

DIARY FOR JANUARY.

1. Sat. ... *Circumcision*. Taxes to be computed from this date.
2. SUN. *2nd Sunday after Christmas*.
3. Mon. Municipal Elections. Heir and Devisee Court begins. County Court Term begins.
5. Wed. *Epiphany*.
8. Sat. ... County Court Term ends. Last day for Township, Village and Town Clerk to make return to County Clerk.
9. SUN. *1st Sunday after Epiphany*.
10. Mon. Election of Police Trustees in Police Villages.
12. Wed. Election of School Trustees.
15. Sat. ... Treasurer and Cham. of Municipalities to make returns to Board of Auditors of School Rep. to be made to Local Superintendent.
16. SUN. *2nd Sunday after Epiphany*.
17. Mon. Members of Municipal Councils (except Counties) and Trustees of Police Villages to hold 1st meeting.
22. Sat. ... Articles, &c., to be left with Sec. Law Society.
23. SUN. *3rd Sunday after Epiphany*.
25. Tues. *Conversion of St. Paul*. 1st Meeting of County Councils.
28. Sat. ... School Finance Report to Board of Auditors. Last day for Non-Residents to give list of their lands.
30. SUN. *4th Sunday after Epiphany*.

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A petition was circulated last year amongst the profession, asking for a change in the mode of appointing the Benchers of the Law Society, by making their appointment depend on the general vote of the Bar of Ontario. A bill was introduced in accordance with the views of the petitioners.

The sections which it is important to refer to at present are the following:—

"2. The Benchers of the Law Society shall be thirty in number, exclusive of the Attorney-General, for the time being, and retired Judge or Judges of the Superior Courts of Law or Equity for Ontario, who shall respectively, *ex officio*, be Benchers of the Law Society.

3. For the purpose of the election of the Benchers of the Law Society, this Province shall be deemed to be divided into the five districts following:—

One.—Comprising the Counties of Essex, Kent, Lambton, Middlesex, Elgin, Oxford, Huron, Perth, and Bruce.

Two.—Comprising the Counties of Wellington, Waterloo, Brant, Norfolk, Haldimand, Monck, Welland, Lincoln, Wentworth and Halton.

Three.—Comprising the Counties of Grey, Simcoe, Peel, York, Ontario, and the Districts of Algoma and Muskoka.

Four.—Comprising the Counties of Victoria, Durham, Peterboro', Northumberland, Hastings and Prince Edward.

Five.—Comprising the Counties of Frontenac, Lennox, Addington, Renfrew, Leeds, Lanark, Grenville, Dundas, Stormont, Glengarry, Prescott, Russell and Carleton; and the Districts may be termed respectively London, Hamilton, Toronto, Cobourg and Kingston.

4. For each of the said Districts, other than Toronto, there shall be elected by the members of the Bar usually resident and practising in the said Districts respectively, five members of the Bar, of at least [seven] years standing, and whether resident or practising in said respective districts or not, to be Benchers of the Law Society, and for the Toronto District there shall be similarly elected as Benchers ten members, members of the Bar in like standing.

11. The election of Benchers under this Act shall take place during the first week of the month of October, and the next subsequent election in the first week of October in the fifth year after the said first election, and so on."

This bill was thrown out last session on a technical ground, but as no opinion was expressed on the merits, it is likely that it will be again introduced, either in its present, or in a modified shape. It is therefore not out of place to refer to the measure as introduced last session, for upon the making of any such sweeping change as some contemplate, and upon the principle of the scheme some advocate depend consequences whether of good or evil to that Society to which we belong, and therein to the future injury or benefit of the profession, and incidentally and consequentially to the advantage or disadvantage of the public at large.

It was rumoured that the origin of the whole scheme was a personal matter, arising from want of temper on the part of some of the persons concerned, but of this we know nothing beyond the current report, nor do we desire to know anything more about it; the simple enquiry now is, not as to the motives which first prompted the desire for a change, (though perhaps, this might have considerable weight with many in inducing them to reject the scheme, or at least, make them more cautious in considering it)—but as to whether any such change as that proposed is in itself desirable.

It is a true saying that men in general are given to change, even for the very sake of