

relative to criminal law? More numerous and more important acts upon this branch of the law were placed on the Statute Book last session than during any previous session within our memory. These Acts are not less than ten in number. The right of appeal given to persons convicted of treason, felony, or misdemeanor, is in principle an extension of the liberty of the subject—(cap. 61.) Though we cordially endorse the principles of the act, yet we frankly confess that some of its details, not now necessary to be mentioned, do not meet with our approbation. The act for the appointment of County Attornies to attend to the local administration of justice, we conceive to be a step in the right direction—(sec. 59.) We have more than once in the columns of this Journal advocated views closely identical with those contained in the provisions of this act. The acts which have as their object the removal of delays in the administration of criminal justice, are deserving of un-mixed praise. The swearing of witnesses before grand juries, instead of in open Court, will greatly conduce to the speedy despatch of criminal business in those counties where a large amount of business comes before the Courts—(cap. 4.) So the act declaring that there shall be no postponement by traverse or otherwise, unless upon good cause, of trials for misdemeanors—(cap. 62.) By these acts the time not only of witnesses but of jurors, will be much economized. Of the same character as the preceding is the act which enables Magistrates in certain cases to dispose of charges of larceny in a summary manner—(cap. 2.) Provision is also made for the more speedy trial of juvenile offenders—(cap. 29.) And for such offenders there are to be Reformation prisons, in lieu of schools of infamy—our common gaols—(cap. 29.) There are certain offences which, though hitherto not criminal, are now made so. Thus, cruelty to animals—(cap. 31.); and forging foreign coin—(cap. 31.) So provision is made for the holding of inquests upon the origin of fires, when there is reasonable ground of suspicion—(cap. 36.)

We cannot, for want of space, now say more upon the subject of the Acts of last Session. There are several of them about which we could give much useful information, but are compelled to defer doing so until a future time.

#### ADMISSION OF ATTORNEYS.

An attorney is an agent authorised to conduct litigation in Courts of Justice. Besides being an agent in the common acceptation of the term, he is an officer of the Courts, having rights and privileges, and subject to duties and liabilities. An attorney at law represents a class, some of whom every man, woman and child may at some time or other find it necessary to employ—into whose ears are daily poured tales of distress and wrong, perhaps breathed to no other mortal—a class upon whose judgment and integrity depend the welfare of thousands, nay, the happiness of thousands of homes; in a word, a class whose duties are arduous, often painful—whose position is honourable, often unpleasant.

Many qualifications are essential to the due performance of these duties; there must be integrity and learning, judgment and honour.

There exists no tribunal empowered to endorse any man as upright, discreet and honourable, save that of the public; to this tribunal all men, no matter of what calling or profession, must appeal: but, however competent to deal with these very necessary qualifications in a good attorney, the tribunal of the public is wholly incapable of deciding upon a man's learning, and least of all learning so abstruse as that required in the profession of the law; for this a tribunal, likely to be competent, composed of lawyers of known standing and tried ability—the Law Society of Upper Canada—is constituted. The public, if obliged to take an attorney upon trust in every case, might by a sad, slow and expensive process, be driven to form an estimate by no means flattering, of his fitness. There is sometimes little time for inquiry, and often when inquiry is made, little confidence to be placed in the result. In this strait the Law Society comes to the relief of the public, by saying, we recommend this man to you as *learned*, because we have examined him and found him so, and we recommend him to you as *honest* and *honourable*, for if he were not we should deprive him of his right to practice. The man who desires to serve his fellow-men, either as a barrister or as attorney, or in both capacities, must now in Upper Canada first satisfy the Law Society as to "fitness and capacity. This is not as it has been: hitherto to