

OUR LAWS AND LAWYERS.

yet, behold the germ of a long and virtuous existence. It will seek discovery with patient diligence, only equalled by Newton. Then with its charges, which, if not at first full enough, are aided by others in red ink and in blue, and, supported by final replication, it will scold and scrawl like an epistle of Diogenes, with postscript by Zantippe, and, finally, after seeking all manner of aid, it will end by craving such further and other relief as may, by the genius and ability of judges and other officers, be discovered and given—not forgetting costs.

Such, then, is the little mental offspring in its simple dress of black and white, trimmed with blue and fastened with red, which the practitioner with fond hopes may to-day entrust to the Registrar. Nurse it with care past defendants' attacks, nor let it be sacrificed to rude Masters' reports. Though at the first hearing the Chancellor may say 'cruel things, yet, if on 'further consideration' he speak kindly of your offspring, thereafter all will be happiness—dismissal will be impossible. The only cheques to be received will be from the Registrar for costs; and thus the child of many cares and tender nurture may become the support and companion in declining years, and may, peradventure, provide an heirloom after your own last cause is heard."

After speaking of the different courts and officers he gives us some statistics as to the profession and the Society of which we are members. Thus:—

"The number of barristers in actual practice is about 500, but of attornies, among whom most of this half thousand are included, there are 750. Last term there were twelve barristers called, thirty attornies admitted to practice, and fourteen students entered on the roll. By the *U. C. Law Journal* it appears that in Hilary, Easter and Michaelmas terms of last year, there were thirty-seven calls to the bar and forty-two admissions of attornies.

The Act introduced by Mr. Blake, and passed last session, which imposes additional examination, more reading and less lounging at "terms" will, doubtless, be a boon to the student, and tend to raise the standard.

Each barrister and student has his number in the society's roll; that of the last barrister called is 1,057; that of the last student of the law is 2,062. Remembering that the initiative stage takes generally five years, and making due allowance for the young gentlemen now entering as students and forming part of the above 2,062, and for many whom death may have cut off in their career (and I fear the proportion of those gay and pleasure-seeking fellows so called away is

large), there still remains between the number of the latest student and the latest barrister a very large margin. May this not be thus in part accounted for? The ambition which in boyhood fired many an aspirant, who thought it a fine thing to be a lawyer, and 'fagged up' (to use the common term) enough of Horace and Euclid to 'pass Gwynne,' so called because of the important and dread part which that learned gentleman takes in the preliminary examinations, has gradually evaporated as he learned more of the sterner labours and duties before him, or he more exactly weighed and appreciated his mental qualifications, and wisely turned his attention to some of the other many useful and honorable callings always open to the willing and deserving in our happy Province.

Many of those who have actually passed the final stages—been 'called' or 'admitted'—have disappeared from the active ranks, and for like reasons.

The cry so common, as to overstocking of the profession, is probably, however, well founded; especially now that other business is prosperous in a much greater proportion than this. The same remark is often—and probably as justly—made of the medical profession. The evil or, rather, the inconvenience, has its own cure. The supply will lessen, or the surplus—the lighter material—will rise and flow over. Young men, naturally and by circumstances qualified for entering on this profession should not thus be disheartened, but remember the words of Daniel Webster—'Gentlemen, there is plenty of room in the upper stories.'

Having spoken of the professional roll, we may here, perhaps, consider some other facts of interest. The bar of Upper Canada had, it seems, formed themselves into a Society before 1797. In that year, the Statute 37 Geo. III, cap. 13, incorporated themselves under the title of "The Law Society of U. C." This is that "close corporation" of which we hear so much, who, by its benchers, presided over by a chief, called the Treasurer, govern the affairs of the profession. The six senior members of the bar, with the attorney and solicitor-general, and such other members of the bar as they (and the ruling body of the society generally so constituted) thought proper to appoint were, by the above Act, created the first benchers. There were at this time (1797) on the roll fifteen persons, some of whose names are well known in our history, but all of them have long since been enrolled by the sexton. They were John White, attorney-general, Robert Isaac Dey Gray, solicitor-general, Walter Roe, Angus McDonell, James Clark,