

The Legal News.

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The official reports, to be published by the General Council of the Bar of this province, are to begin with the year 1892. The resolution adopted by the General Council states: "Les rapports auront le format des MONTREAL LAW REPORTS. Ils formeront trois volumes par année d'environ six cents pages." The MONTREAL LAW REPORTS, therefore, will be brought to a close with the end of the current year, *i. e.* with the termination of Vol. VII of each series. It is proposed to issue a full and complete index to the fourteen volumes.

It has been well known for some time that, in England, business has been driven away from the law courts, and suitors have resorted to private arbitrations to avoid the delay and expense attending an appeal to the ordinary tribunals. Recently an effort has been made to attract commercial causes by resuming the old-time sittings at Guildhall. Those who hoped to see business disposed of once more by the old methods will not find much encouragement in the speech of Lord Chief Justice Coleridge to the new Lord Mayor. "It may be," said his lordship, "the men of London may prefer to have their causes settled quietly and inexpensively by some sensible and honourable man, who knows the nature of the business and may be trusted, to the enormous expenditure and endless delay which often follow the litigation of questions in Courts of law: and I must say that I think a man must have a most uncommon devotion to the 'science of the law' if he prefers that questions which Lord Mansfield and Lord Ellenborough left unsettled should be settled at his expense at a cost of hundreds or thousands of pounds, when his own individual case, which of course interests him beyond all other cases, may be decided by some mercantile arbitrator in whom he has faith and confidence." "Such language from the Lord Chief Justice,

sixteen years after the great reform in our system which was supposed to have been effected by the Judicature Act," observes the *Law Journal*, "implies the existence of a grave scandal. Bentham held, and it is said that so conservative a mind as Lord Langdale's shared the opinion, that the administration of justice should be gratuitous. It is difficult to see how that result could be achieved without bringing even greater evils than expensive law, as there would be a temptation to magnify every trivial difference into an occasion of litigation."

If sentiment were allowed to affect the administration of justice the result could hardly be satisfactory. But it would be difficult to imagine a less edifying example than that found in the State of Massachusetts, where it is the practice, each Thanksgiving Day, to present two life-convicts with pardons. Those who do not commit an offence sufficiently atrocious to merit a life sentence have apparently no chance in this singular award of Thanksgiving bounties.

The Hon. John Garver, a prominent attorney practising in Illinois, has paid rather dearly for his initiation into a secret society known as "the Knights of the Globe." The nature of the initiation ceremonies is not made public, but a good deal of physical force must be used in them, for Mr. Garver had one of his legs so seriously injured that he has been laid up for two months, and prevented from attending to business. It is singular that societies which practise such barbarous and disgusting mysteries should be able to attract any one possessing common sense. The *Chicago Legal News* states that some societies even use the skeletons of the dead to terrify the living. The skeleton of one of the sons of John Brown, who lost his life at Harper's Ferry, was used by the Knights of Pythias in Indiana, to impress candidates with a sense of their danger if they revealed the secrets of the order. The skeleton of deceased was rescued from the knights, and buried by his brother by the side of his father.