

## THE HONOUR OF THE PROFESSION.

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One of the chief objects of the Canadian Bar Association is set forth in the first article of the Constitution, namely:—"to up-hold the honour of the Profession." Perhaps it would be interesting to view this question from a standpoint somewhat apart from the line of the usual addresses delivered on such subjects as,—“The Bench and the Bar” and other similar topics, the treatment of which has become more or less commonplace. I shall, therefore, eliminate all consideration of the individual and the details which go to make up the daily round of professional life, except matters arising by way of illustration. I think the discussion of the question should be on a broader and higher plane than mere personal qualification, and should involve a consideration of matters pertinent to the profession as a whole. It is easy to lay down general principles which govern, and it is easier still to point out many of the principles which should govern and do not. But the subject is somewhat complex. The Bar as a whole is a most important element of the social, business and political life of Canada. The lawyer in towns, and even in large cities, occupies a somewhat individual position. He is admittedly an educated man, and is supposed, at any rate, to be a gentleman by Act of Parliament, and, therefore, the profession of law, according to the conduct of its members, must add to or detract from the social plane of the immediate community. The legal profession has also necessarily much to do with business relations. The lawyer is the guide and adviser in all matters of doubt and conflict. To a very considerable extent, his wisdom preserves the integrity of the business client, or his lack of probity or want of high moral sense may degrade the business of his clients to a mere matter of money, and perhaps to methods of sharp practice as regards creditors, and others incidentally interested. In the political world, lawyers have ever taken a very strong and important position. The men who do the really hard work of a campaign