

Queen's Bench, Montreal.
MR. JUSTICE WÜRTELE'S
Charge to the Grand Jury,

Monday, 2nd November, 1891.

GENTLEMEN OF THE GRAND JURY:

Courts of criminal jurisdiction are instituted for the purpose of bringing wrong-doers to punishment; and the certainty that justice is firmly administered has the effect of deterring others by the dread of punishment from committing crimes, and is a guarantee to the community of tranquility and of security for person and property. But while wrong-doers must be brought to punishment, every care has to be taken that innocent persons should not be lightly accused and subjected to the odium of a trial and the expense of a defence. While, therefore, the law of the land makes provision for the trial and punishment of offenders, it at the same time affords every protection to the innocent when falsely accused. No man can be put upon his trial for a crime laid to his charge until twelve good, true and loyal men of the country, acting as grand jurors, have represented to the court that there is good ground of accusation against him; and no one can be punished for a crime of which he is accused until he has been found guilty by the unanimous verdict of a petty jury, composed of twelve of his fellows.

The grand jury is an appendage of the court and it assists in the administration of criminal justice by presenting offenders for trial. It is the accusing body, but at the same time it stands as a barrier against the injustice of unfounded