it is undeniable that many persons not members of the House are far better qualified to discharge the duties that would be expected of such a committee than any committee composed exclusively of the members of the House would be. Our opinion is that the committee should partake more of the character of the committee now sitting to revise the statutes; their functions would not be legislative, but purely deliberative, and it would be far more economical to pay the members of such a committee a reasonable sum for their services than to waste it in paying for the annual attendance of a horde of men who do no practical good by their attendance.

The idea of a legislative committee is by no means novel. Fifty years ago, in his answer to the Real Property Commissioners, Mr. James Humphreys, an eminent lawyer of that day, said that he was a great advocate for an institution in the nature of a committee of justice, or some such body to report upon defective justice, and to make periodical revision of the law. The same idea is reiterated by M. Laurent, Professor of the University of Gand, in a preface prefixed to Doutre and Lareau's "Histoire Generale du Droit Canadien." M. Laurent's proposal is that a Council of State should be formed, to which the most distinguished magistrates, advocates and professors should be summoned; that they should deliberate during ten years on all projects for amendment of the law; that they should communicate them to the Superior Courts of Justice, and deliberate anew upon the observations presented by the magistrates; that they should invite public discussion and criticism, and at the end of every ten years present to the legislative body the modifications in the law they deem necessary. He concedes that the Legislature should have the power of amendment; but any amendment, he thinks, should be first submitted to a new discussion by the Council of State before its being finally passed. Were some such system of law-making to prevail, many curious incongruities which we see in statute law might be avoided, and certainly English law, instead of presenting the appearance of a vast system of patchwork, would in ime constitute a congruous and harmonious system of jurisprudence.

We have not far to look for defects in the present English method of law making. Only the other day a case came before the Privy Council from South Africa, in which the construction of a statute was involved, which was so worded that if its literal wording had been followed, the whole scope and object of the statute would have been defeated. (See *Salmon* v. *Duncombe*, 11 App. Cas. 627, *ante* p. 45.) Even the English Parliament itself is sometimes found napping. For instance, the Intestates' Estates Act, 1884 (47 & 48 Vict. c. 71, s. 4), provides that when a person dies without an heir and intestate in respect of any real estate . . . *whether devised or not devised to trustees by the will of such person*, etc., the law of Escheat shall apply.

To come nearer home, we might take the recent Devolution of Estates Act as an illustration. The Act aims at working a radical change in the law of property. The interests it affects are vast and important. The subject was one fitted to demand the most careful attention, not only with regard to the principle on which the Act is based, but also with regard to its effect on the previously existing law. But so far from the statute bearing evidence of any such broad and comprehensive consideration, it has all the appearance of a "hand to mouth" piece of legislation; a crude attempt to blend two utterly irreconcilable principles of law. In fact this statute reminds us very much of the man at the circus who dazzles the vulgar by essaying to ride two steeds