

after learned ease and retirement. On one occasion, while Mr. McGEE held the office of Minister of Agriculture, the conversation turned upon Goldsmith. Mr. McGEE was eloquent in his praises of the author of the *Deserted Village*, and after several apt quotations, exclaimed: "I would rather be known as the author of a good tale or a good poem, than fill any office in Canada. But," he added somewhat sadly, "I am in the ring now, and cannot help myself." The little poems, which appeared from time to time in Canadian journals, at first over a *nom de plume*, and subsequently over his initials, were the children of his leisure hours, and are the truest reflection of his own character. His last literary effort was a touching tribute in verse, to the memory of his friend, Mr. DEVANY, which, followed so speedily by his own sudden death, will always be read with melancholy interest.

ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE IN THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC.

If the violent agitation respecting the mal-administration of justice which prevailed about a month ago results in some definite reform and permanent benefit to the country, the pain and injustice inflicted upon several members of the bench by that public discussion may be to some extent compensated. But much of what was said and written upon the subject was too vague to be useful. The writers too often displayed their entire ignorance of the facts, and, by indiscriminate abuse of the judges, excited a feeling of disgust in those acquainted with the truth. The real grounds of complaint have been already pointed out by us on several occasions, and all the discussion of last month threw no new light upon the subject. One of the most serious defects is well indicated by what transpired in the House of Commons on the 26th of March, when Mr. WORKMAN, the member for Montreal Centre, inquired "whether it was the intention of Government, at as early a day as possible, to appoint a fifth judge in the Court of Queen's Bench for the Province of Que-

bec, and thereby remedy the great inconvenience and loss now suffered by suitors." Mr. CARTIER replied that there was no actual vacancy in the Queen's Bench. One of the judges had tendered his resignation, but it was accompanied by a demand for retiring allowance, and the matter was then under the consideration of Government. In other words, owing to some ill-judged parsimony in the settlement of pensions, the highest tribunal in the country was left incomplete, and one of the judges who deserved most from the State was left month after month in an embarrassing position.

The debate in the House of Commons on the 30th March was almost necessarily of such a painful and personal character, that we feel much reluctance in adverting to it. The discussion substantially confirms what has been already stated. As Mr. ABBOTT, Q. C., very clearly pointed out in the course of the debate, the difficulty in Montreal has not arisen from the incapacity or immorality of the judges, but from want of a sufficient number to carry on the work. We all know how heavily the judges of the Superior Court at Montreal have been, and are taxed, in consequence of the absence of Mr. Justice SMITH. It is not fair to make these gentlemen responsible for delays beyond their control. Nor is it fair to describe the judges generally as infirm and immoral, because, in the first place, the want of an adequate pension fund, and, in the next place, the absence of a sufficiently powerful public opinion, has permitted several persons to retain seats on the bench to whom the epithets infirm or immoral may without injustice be applied. Mr. CARTIER, in defence of his appointments, referred to some of the judges in terms in which we heartily concur. "In the matter of industry and ability," said he, "no honest lawyer could complain of Mr. Justice MONDELET. If there was upon the bench any judge desirous and capable of discharging his duties faithfully and impartially, it was Mr. Justice BERTHELOT. Judge MONK was an ornament to his profession. He had recom-