English Judicature Act should be the Rules and Orders under the British Columbia Judicature Act! The powers that be seem to have got their legal matters into a most lovely tangle, and Justice has not only her eyes bandaged, but her arms (and legs too, for that matter) tied up by a complication of Gordian knots.

## *FLOTSAM AND JETSAM.*

A LAW AGAINST WHISTLING.—In the "Statutes of the Streets," printed in 1598, it is ordered that "no man . . . shall whistle after the hour of nyne of the clock in the night," or "keep any rule whereby any such suddaine outcry be made in the still of the night, as making an affray or beating his wife or servant," etc.

WE have recently seen in one of our exchanges a communication advocating the fuller reporting of the arguments of counsel and the fuller statement of facts and pleadings. This would indeed be a step backward. That which renders some of our law reports abominable and costs lawyers a great deal of unnecessary outlay is this very padding. Law reports are designed to tell the profession what the courts have decided and their reasons for their decisions. They are not designed to instruct lawyers how to plead or argue. Anything more than a synopsis of the arguments, and a bare statement of what the pleadings were, is an imposition on the profession. Why should we be compelled to pay for page on page of tedious common-law pleadings and page on page of evidence? As to the statement of facts, if the court has made it, that is usually enough. If it is not complete, supplement it sufficiently; but do not make it all over again. To read the facts in the head note, then in the reporter's statement, and finally in the opinion of the court, is "damnable iteration," and as senseless as the reading of a hymn and then singing it, in church. By proper compression, the number of our annual reports could be reduced nearly one quarter.—*Albany Law Journal*

SERGEANT ARMSTRONG.—The late Richard Armstrong, Her Majesty's First Sergeant-at-Law, who died on the 26th August, was called to the inner Bar in January, 1854, was appointed Third Sergeant in 1861, and was also, in the latter year, elected a Bencher by the Honourable Society of the King's Inns. In 1866 he was promoted First Sergeant. A Liberal in politics, he was elected Member of Parliament for the Borough of Sligo in 1865, which constituency he continued to represent until the general election of 1868. It is said that Mr. Armstrong's latent talents were first discovered by the following incident: It happened at the Wexford Assizes that a little boy was indicted for the murder of a playfellow, and, being in humble life, his friends were without means of employing counsel for his defence. The proof of his guilt depended on circumstantial evidence, but so clear that there was no hope for the boy. He had the brogues that belonged to the murdered boy; he had a knife that was also his, and a ball with which they played. These articles were found with him directly after the murder. Chief Baron Pennefather assigned young Armstrong as counsel to defend the lad. Having read over the informations, he saw what a slender hope there was of saving the boy's life. So he applied that the trial might be postponed, and the judge assented. During the next assizes in Clonmel, he was one day caught in a shower of rain, and taking refuge in a bootmaker's shop the thought struck him to ask how one pair of boots could be distinguished from another made on the same last, and the bootmaker informed him that identification was impossible, except with regard to the boots on which he was in the habit of putting a private mark. Here was the argument against conviction. Then as to the knife, there were hundreds of the same kind sold by every pedler. When the assizes came round at Wexford he cross-examined the Crown witnesses with telling effect in reference to the identity of the brogues and the knife. But then there was the ball, and the mother of the murdered boy Moore, swore she herself made it, winding it round a piece of crumpled up brown paper. Surely this was conclusive. Young as he was, the little fellow at the bar saw the force of her evidence, and asked to see his counsel. Mr. Armstrong went to the side of the dock and the prisoner whispered in his ear—"I unwound the thread and put it on again on a cork to make the ball hop." At the close of the evidence for the Crown the case seemed proved to demonstration, insomuch that the prosecuting counsel left it in the hands of the judge and jury. But Mr. Armstrong rose, and with great power of analysis sifted the evidence, maintaining that the only real proof was that in reference to the ball—"My client's life hangs on a thread, and if it should happen that the thread is wound on paper, as the unfortunate mother of the youth who was murdered describes, then my case is lost. Let the ball be unwound, and to you, gentlemen of the jury, I commit my client's safety." The end of the thread was handed to the foreman, and amid breathless stillness it was unwound. At last down fell the cork, and a cheer in court proclaimed the safety of the prisoner, if not his innocence.—*Irish Law Times.*