

many of the recent appointments are merely a link in this "endless chain" of political expediency.

But the remedy proposed by your correspondent to establish in Canada the discarded order of Sergeant-at-Law, abolished years ago in England, would not mend matters, for a very obvious reason—political considerations would enter into the appointment, and unworthy persons would soon creep into the ranks of the Sergeants.

No; the remedy is not to be found by the creation of a new order, but rather by the abolition of the present one, or else a radical change in the method of appointing its future members. The appointment itself must of course still rest with the Government as representing the Queen, but the appointing power should in no case be exercised except at the instance of some learned and independent body, such, for example, as a board whose members are chosen from the Faculties of all the Universities, or by the Judges of the Supreme Court.

If the discussion of this question only leads to a clearer apprehension of the evils of our present governmental system in the matter of patronage and preferment—based as it is on the pernicious doctrine that *every party political service must be rewarded*—it will have done good. The constant application of this doctrine is so demoralizing in its effects that healthy political sentiment, to say nothing of healthy political action, has been all but destroyed.

Independence is practically unknown, and wherever it presents itself the machine politician pronounces it a heresy and the party "organizer" is instructed, if possible to discredit and destroy it, although it is the only remedy for the present deplorable condition of things.

As to whether the people are sufficiently alive to the magnitude of the evil to apply the remedy which is practically in their hands is open to grave doubt.

Yours, etc.,

January 20th, 1890.

ONLOOKER.

WHO MAY SOLEMNIZE MARRIAGE?

To the Editor of THE CANADA LAW JOURNAL:

The case of *Lawless v. Chamberlain*, argued recently before Chancellor Boyd, at Ottawa, and decided by him against the petitioner, exposed an usurpation of powers which has been fostered by carelessness in the draftsmen of our Ontario Statutes, and winked at by people, owing to their proverbial indifference to what is everybody's business.

The action was brought by Mr. Lawless, sr., to annul the marriage of his infant son, on the grounds of minority and the want of parents' consent.

The so-called marriage ceremony was performed by one R. M., in the city of Ottawa. The said R. M., had been admitted as a missionary minister into the Methodist connexion some twenty-five years back. For the purpose of increasing his usefulness and value as a missionary, he obtained the degree of M.D. from an Ontario College, and then set sail for the West Indies. After a short term