

Majesty's council, is a personage of too great importance to require any introduction. The John Duport, Esq., who appears to have performed the more humble, but perhaps not less laborious, task of preparing the laws for publication and collating them with the original records, is a person of less note, whose name has been to a great extent forgotten. We find him, however, forging his way through the pages of Murdoch's second volume; beginning as a justice of the peace appointed in 1749 at an assembly of the Governor and council on board the *Beaufort*, on the 18th of July, O. S., the councillors attending it being Mascarene, Green, Salisbury, Davidson, and Steele. From this comparatively humble beginning, perhaps not so humble as the title would in these days import, we find him cultivating the art which a witty American has termed the art of ultimate arrival, otherwise known as the art of "getting there," with such a degree of success that a few years later—in 1752—he is appointed a judge of the Superior Court of Common Pleas for the county of Halifax. In 1758 he signs himself Secretary of the Council, and in 1766 we find a note in Murdoch of the order for the publication of the volume in hand :—

"On considering the want of a sufficient number of copies of the laws of the province and the great necessity of a correct and complete edition, ordered that Mr. John Duport do prepare such edition, which shall be printed in folio by Mr. Robert Fletcher, he furnishing 200 copies, for which he shall be paid £180."

Of the execution of the work it would be difficult to speak too highly. With no disposition at all, to unduly venerate "things ancient," it must be confessed that, except for the fact that the indices and tables do not cover the full extent of the work, for the reason already referred to, this first publication of the laws of the province is, in all the essentials of a complete and scholarly presentation of the statute law of the country, as far

ahead of the last, as the mechanical art of the present century is in advance of that of the days in which the first publication was put forth. Any one who will take the trouble to examine any important statute in the volume, will be surprised to find, not only a series of side notes comparing favorably in accuracy and point with the obscure and often misleading side notes of our modern statutes, but he will find marginal references to corresponding English statutes, and learned foot notes, referring to such works as Hawkins' "Pleas of the Crown," Coke's "Institutes," Hale's "History of the Pleas of the Crown," Judge Foster's "Discourses," and all the leading authorities then recognized as the master-lights of the profession. A table of such English and British acts as have been enacted in Nova Scotia; a further table of such of the Nova Scotia acts of Assembly as have been enacted from English and British statutes; a table of the respective titles of the perpetual acts, alphabetically arranged; and a table of the principal matters contained in the perpetual acts—which is really a comprehensive index to so much of the volume as it covers—must have rendered the work a most valuable and convenient book of reference for those who had occasion to use it. The very titles of the subjects dealt with are fruitful in suggestion, and must arrest the attention of anyone who is gifted, in the slightest degree, with a historical imagination. Bakers, Biscuits to be Sold by Weight, Bonfires, Bread, Carmen, Carriages, Churchwardens, Clippings, Collers of Fish, Dissenters, Divine Service, Distilling Houses, Dykes, False Tokens, Fore-stallers, French Inhabitants, Gaming, Indians, Papists, Pass to leave the Province, Quakers, Schools and Schoolmasters, Reqrators, Slop Cloathing, Soldiers, Squibs—concluding with Work-House, and Worship, Divine,—how do these titles call up to one's imagination the nascent com-