

MANY LAW SCHOOLS.

BY R. V. R.

THE *Toronto Mail* lately remarked that the want of proper instruction to the students-at-law is the crying disgrace of our system of legal education; and Mr. Gorham pointed out, in the February number of the *CANADIAN MONTHLY*, the difficulties to be encountered by law students as they try to find their way—unguided save by their own erring minds—through the dark and tangled mazes to be threaded by all who would attain the degrees of barrister and attorney-at-law. Every one who knows anything of the subject is aware that the active practitioner, engrossed with the cares of business, cannot, or at least does not, furnish the students, who place themselves in his charge, and bind themselves to do so much for him, the attention and assistance essential to give a correct direction to their reading and to teach them how to apply it usefully and aptly in their subsequent professional life. The reading of a student in a law office is, practically, the study of an intricate science by himself, and he seldom even acquires that familiarity with books, and that facility of reference, which are of the greatest advantage to the practitioner. In fact, nine out of ten students-at-law are but hewers of wood and drawers of water to the gentlemen to whom they are articulated, and oft-times are they blamed for not making bricks for their task-masters, although unsupplied with the straw of knowledge or experience. The con-

sequence of this mode of training our future lawyers is obvious.

The *Albany Law Journal* (the leading legal periodical of the neighbouring Republic) lately said, while referring to the necessity of Law Schools: "we feel that there is no class of professional men who are, on their entry upon professional life, so poorly taught as our own. It is a wonder to us, after a considerable experience, how any young man ever learns the law except at the expense of his clients."

A would-be divine does not become qualified for ordination by merely sitting in a parson's study, clearing up the litter, and copying sermons out of books for his spiritual master, and then passing an examination or two. Nor is a medico launched upon the world after a few years spent in washing bottles in a surgery, and having passed his Intermediate and Final. The one is trained in his profession by attending lectures and walking hospitals and practising upon poor people who cannot pay: the other attends college, and imitates, at a distance, the licensed preacher, by teaching in Sunday school, and acting as catechist or lay reader. The law student should be taught in a similar manner by lectures, recitations, exercises in drafting pleadings, frequenting moot courts, and discussing legal questions. For who will not admit that the law, in its way, is as important as either physic or divinity? Lord