

THE LEGAL PROFESSION IN ONTARIO
AND
THE LAW SOCIETY OF UPPER CANADA."

By

THE HONOURABLE WILLIAM BENWICK RIDDELL, LL. D., F. R.
HIST. SOC., ETC., JUDGE OF THE SUPREME COURT OF ONTARIO.

(Memo. At the request of the Chicago Society of Advocates," Mr. Justice Riddell addressed them on "The Legal Profession in Ontario" at their inaugural meeting, November 9, 1918. The following contains the substance of his address with some additions, and has been prepared by Mr. Justice Riddell at the instance of the president of the Society.)

So long as Canada remained a French possession there was no distinction in the legal profession. The same person might and often did exercise the function of Advocate or Barrister, Notaire (notary) and even Arpenteur (land surveyor).

No change was made in that respect by the victors on the Conquest in 1759-60, or by the Royal Proclamation of October 7, 1763, which introduced into Canada the English Law, Civil and Criminal. This Proclamation also established a "Province of Quebec" which included in its area not only what is now the Province of Quebec, but also what was afterwards the Province of Upper Canada and is now the Province of Ontario. When the Quebec Act was passed (1774), 14 George III, c. 83¹, it was not considered advisable to modify the existing practice.

¹In Ontario, as in England, it is the custom to cite Statutes, not as of the year *Nostris Domini*, but as of the year of the reign of the regnant monarch when they were passed. A very convenient practice has however sprung up of prefixing the year of our Lord.