

can. I give the honorable Speaker that one instance; I could give him fifty others. What says he again? "The law practice of our courts forms a complicated and an artificial system." Sir, I believe it, and there is the more reason for combined exertion to render it simple, intelligible, and easy of access. A great part of this "million of facts," of which he speaks, would be altogether swept away, and the remainder revised and rendered intelligible, were new minds to be let in who would not venerate an old system merely because it was handed down to us from our ancestors. But we have lawyers here, many of them; does the knowledge of this million of facts raise them so very far above the laymen of the House? We may as well, then, have a taste of these sweets; surely we cannot fall much below some of them; perhaps we may in time even venture to compete with the most talented.

But it was denied that lawyers retained the money of their clients; let me give an instance worth all their arguments. I will relate one: It is scarcely a month since a poor fellow walked into my office; the expression of his countenance was familiar to me, but I could not recollect his name or where I knew him. He proved to be an acquaintance of my schoolboy days, whom I had not seen for twenty years. He had come to ask my advice as to the course he should take with reference to the following transaction. He had sold some property, and taken the buyer's note for the payment of the price. When it became due he was obliged to put it into the hands of a lawyer for collection. For five years was this poor man kept, by one excuse or another, following after this lawyer's heels for his money, until he at length employed another lawyer to collect it. It was then discovered that the first legal gentleman had collected the debt five years before, and would not pay it over. All I could say to this poor fellow was not very consoling. I could not go into court and tell his simple story. If I had had the power, there is not a judge in Nova Scotia who could have allowed him to remain an hour without his money, or that lawyer to have worn his gown. The man has gone home. Whether he got his money before he went, God only knows! but I know, that if I had had the power to go into the supreme court and state his case, he would have got it, and the gentleman who retained it would have been taught a lesson that would have corrected his practice in all time to come.

The next in order is the honorable and learned member for King's. He told us that this bill was to take away the common-law right possessed at present by the people of this country to plead for themselves in our courts of law. The people may in theory possess that right; in practice it is a nullity. How was this bill received when first introduced?