

EDITORIAL ITEMS—HUMOROUS PHASES OF THE LAW.

the bench, nearly a hundred cases remained to be argued.

CONTEMPT OF COURT.

THE judgment of the Court of Queen's Bench in the case of *The Queen v. Wilkinson* has been the innocent cause of probably the most atrocious and uncalled for libel on the Bench that has ever disgraced Canadian journalism. Foul abuse has been heaped upon a most impartial, upright, and painstaking Judge, and that with a cowardice and reckless disregard of decency which would make even the most bitter partizan cry shame. And not only has this been done, but an attempt has been made to prejudice the public mind in reference to a cause still in litigation. On both grounds, the article in the *Globe* newspaper was utterly indefensible. Events follow each other so rapidly now-a-days, and are so fully and so immediately discussed, that it would be a waste of words to detail the legal bearings of a matter with which our readers are already familiar; but a Bar which, as well as the public, is justly proud of its Bench, cannot and ought not to overlook this wanton and shameful attack upon Mr. Justice Wilson. It is not likely that the libeller will be prosecuted. The punishment for his scandalous contempt of Court will be the unqualified contempt of the public, in lieu of fine or imprisonment. But if this sort of thing is to continue (and we have had too much of it lately on all sides, as we recently pointed out) it will become a serious question whether an example should not be made, and the dignity of the Bench, which means Law and Order, vindicated and upheld. If allowed to go on, people will get so used to it that they will think there is no harm in it, and irreparable injury will have been done to the due administration of justice in this country.

HUMOROUS PHASES OF THE LAW.

The dog-days are over, but something light in the way of legal literature may still be appreciated by the wearied practitioner whom adverse fate has chained to his desk during vacation. If so let him peruse "Humorous Phases of the Law,"* the first of a series of "Legal Observations" issued by an enterprising firm in the Golden State of the neighbouring Republic. It is a neatly bound little volume, with clear type, on good paper, and well deserves its name. A baker's dozen of sketchy articles, which originally appeared in the *Albany Law Journal*, are here grouped together, and form a volume most enjoyable. Especially to a Canadian lawyer do some of the American decisions and cases, herein referred to, appear as beautifully cool and refreshing as a draught from an Arctic soda water fountain.

We know not what higher praise we can give the work than the acknowledgment that in October, 1870, we republished in our paper the whole of the first chapter, on "The Conduct of the Courts;" a graphic and amusing account of the "doings and goings on" in an ordinary court room; and, in July of the following year (so much was the first article appreciated), we reproduced the interesting paper on "Ecclesiastical Law."

The second chapter deals with the Law of Sunday. The laws on this point in Connecticut and Massachusetts, as well as in the other New England States, savour strongly of the strictness of the Mosaic dispensation, and depend more upon the peculiar legislation and customs of the States than upon any general

* HUMOROUS PHASES OF THE LAW. By Irving Browne. San Francisco: Summer, Whitney & Co. 1876.