

CHIEF JUSTICE HARRISON.

OUR CANADIAN PORTRAIT GALLERY
No. 256.

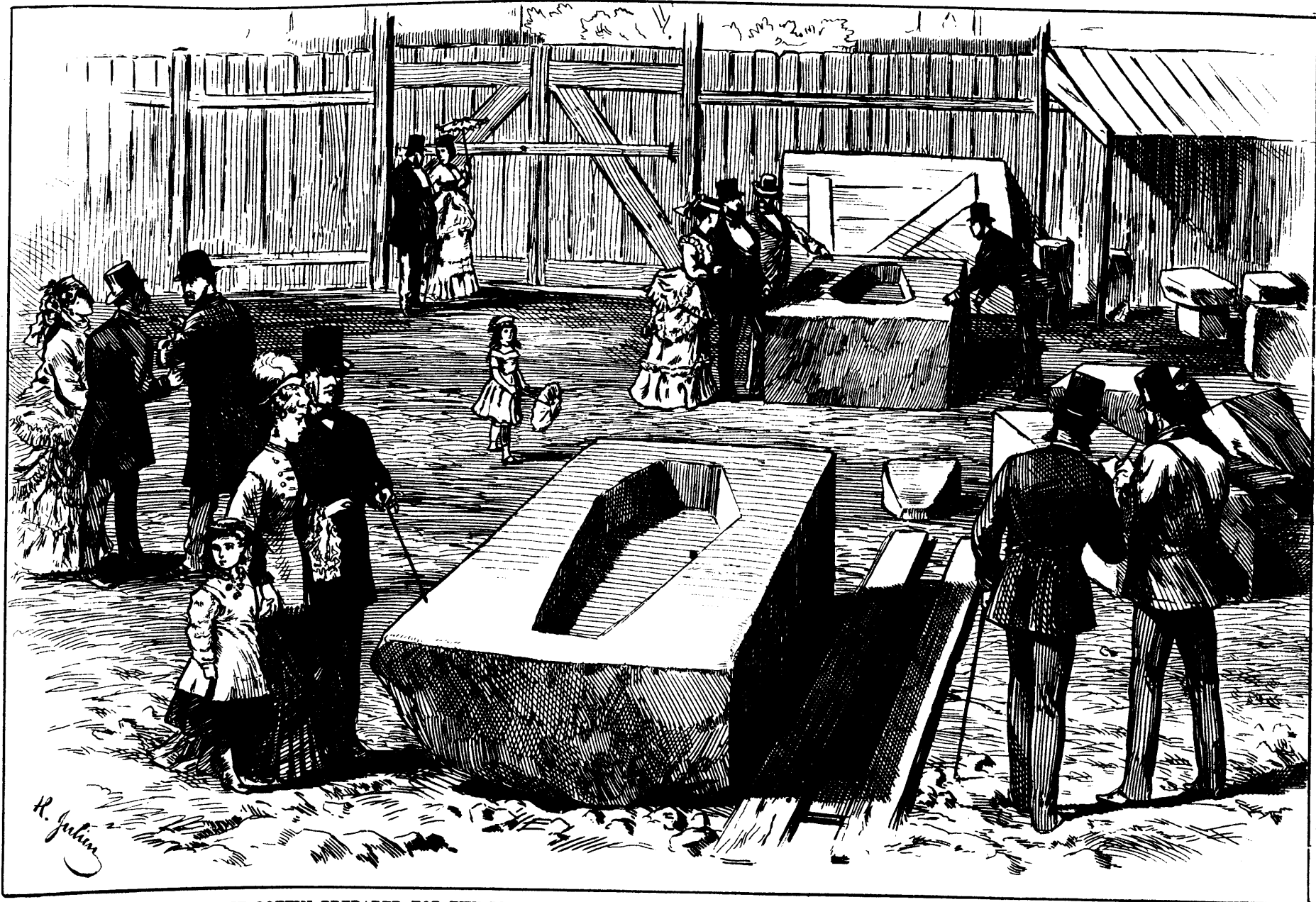
The Honorable Robert Alexander Harrison, was born in the city of Montreal on the 3rd August, 1833. His parents were both from the North of Ireland, and in the same year that he was born removed from Montreal to Markham, near Toronto, but subsequently became inhabitants of that city. Educated at Upper Canada College, the nursery of a majority of Ontario's great men, Mr. Harrison, at the early age of sixteen, entered the office of Messrs. Robinson and Allan as a law student. When about eighteen years of age, and two years a student, he commenced the compilation of his first law work: it was a digest of all cases determined in the Queen's Bench and practice Courts of Upper Canada, from 1843 to 1851, inclusive. He was about a year in writing the book, and nearly as long in passing it through the press. Being a young law student and unknown to the profession the work was published under the supervision of Mr. (now) Sir James Lukin Robinsen, who was then the authorized reporter of the Queen's Bench. The work was published in the joint names of "Robinson & Harrison." It was most successful, and received the approval of the profession. It brought Mr. Harrison's name widely and favourably before the legal profession. This was the only legal work he wrote during the time he was a law student. During the years of his study he was a prominent member of the Toronto Literary and Debating Society, and of the Osgoode Club of Toronto. For a long period he was president of the Literary Society, though in years junior to many of its members. Of the Osgoode Club, while the Hon. Justice Burns was president, he was one of its vice presidents, and a most active member. In 1853, Mr. Harrison became a law student in the office of Messrs. Crawford & Hagarty, then the leading law firm of Upper Canada, the members of which were the late Lieut. Governor of Ontario, and the present Chief Justice of the Common Pleas. In 1854, he joined the crown law department for Upper Canada, as chief clerk, or deputy to the Attorney General. Although then only a law student, his selection was made by the late Hon. John Ross, on account of the favourable opinion given of Mr. Harrison by many leading men of the profession. Though the government, of which Mr. Ross was a member, was defeated during the time that Mr. Harrison was on his way to Quebec, yet Sir John A. Macdonald, who in the mean time had taken Mr. Ross's place, confirmed the appointment. Prior to his departure for Quebec, Mr. Harrison received addresses from the literary and other associations with which he was connected, all bearing the most fervent expressions for his welfare. In 1855, the year in which the Government removed to Toronto, Mr.



THE HON. ROBERT ALEXANDER HARRISON, CHIEF JUSTICE OF ONTARIO.
FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY NOTMAN AND FRASER.

Harrison was called to the bar "with honors." He was the first so called under the new rules then just in operation, and was warmly congratulated by the late Mr. Robert Baldwin, then treasurer of the Law Society, and shortly afterwards had conferred upon him the degree of B.C.L., by the University of Trinity College. Subsequently he received the degree of D.C.L., from that institution. About this time he was a constant contributor to the *Daily Colonist*, then one of the leading papers of Toronto; his articles were often reproduced by the country press with much effect. Becoming too much involved in politics, to the neglect of his profession, he, in 1855, cut short his connection with the political press. This year he commenced his work on the Common Law Procedure act. The undertaking, although a great one, was accomplished in twelve months. It was received with even greater favour than his first attempt, and the press loudly commended it. The London legal press placed him in the front rank of those who had written about the subject of which he had treated.

His next work, which appeared in 1857, was "The Statutes of Practical Utility in the Civil Administration of Justice in Upper Canada, from the First Act passed in Upper Canada to the Common Law Procedure Acts of 1856." This was intended as a companion to his former work, and fully answered its purpose. In July, of the same year, he became joint editor of the *Upper Canada Law Journal*, in which capacity he continued to serve until forced by a vast legal business to abandon the labour to other hands. The *Journal* was previously published at Barrie, and not much in favour with the profession, but when Mr. Harrison became connected with it, it was brought to Toronto, and from that time has steadily progressed; it is now much read and valued, not only by the profession, but a great number of the people of Upper Canada. During 1857, he also brought out "A Manual of Costs in County Courts, containing besides the tariff of costs some general points of practice; and shortly afterwards wrote "A Sketch of the Growth and Present Importance of the Legal Profession in Upper Canada," which concluded his literary labours of a legal character for that year. In 1858, he produced two other law works, one being the "Rules, Orders and Regulations as to Practice and Pleading in the Courts of Queen's Bench and Common Pleas in Upper Canada, with notes explanatory and practical," the other a corresponding work in regard to County Courts of Upper Canada; these were both well received, and fully bore out the reputation he had gained for accuracy, industry and ability. In 1859, appeared his last and most popular legal work, "The Municipal Manual of Upper Canada," which had a tremendous sale.



THE STONE COFFIN PREPARED FOR THE BURIAL OF JOSEPH GUIBORD, AS IT NOW LIES IN THE YARD OF MR. REID, SCULPTOR,
ST. CATHERINE STREET, MONTREAL.