

to seize and understand the points raised by counsel: great learning, to enable him to bring to bear upon the question the light shed by great lawyers upon analogous subjects: sound judgment, to discriminate between the false and the true: patience, to hear calmly tiresome arguments, and to seek out quietly the kernel of truth beneath the worthless husk of words: a blameless life, so that when it becomes his melancholy duty to reprove vice, his words act not as a double-edged sword upon himself and the criminal: and integrity, so that amongst the temptations besetting his path he may turn a deaf ear to any charmer, charm he never so wisely. "Fiat justitia, ruit cœlum," should be his motto: indifferent alike to the clamors of the mob and the threats of the Crown, he must pursue the strait and narrow path pointed out to him by duty.

To the individual members of the community, the excellence of the law and the high character and standing of the judges, are subjects of the very highest importance, demanding their utmost attention and greatest consideration. We live under the daily operation of the law, and no one knows how soon he may become a party to a proceeding before the Courts of Justice, wherein his life and property may be at stake. It surely then is to the interest of every one to satisfy himself as to the probability of his receiving that portion of justice to which he would be entitled were he placed in such an unfortunate position. And yet no one appears, in Lower Canada, to manifest any anxiety whatsoever upon the subject. Whilst all classes admit that murder may be committed with impunity, if the culprit but covers himself with a political or party cloak; and whilst amongst the respectable portion of the community, but one feeling of horror is manifested at the existence of such a miserable parody on justice, no effort worthy of the name is made, to do away with the possibility of its recurrence; and all are content to live on in the hope of not being, themselves, the next victims. Can a state wherein such deeds are done boast of its civilization, of its laws? Can true freedom exist in a country wherein such crimes are committed, and the culprits walk unpunished through the streets of its cities, glorying in their misdeeds? Yet such is Lower Canadian apathy,—an incubus which hangs over us like a pall, deadening our energies, and retarding our progress in the race which we are running with other nations. And on whom rests the blame? Are there any individuals who can be singled out as apathetic *par excellence*? No: we are all guilty parties,—we cannot point to one and say, "Thou art the man!" On the Bench and the Bar, however, rests the chief part of the onus; for from their members might be expected some expression of opinion, some endeavours to point out existing abuses in the Law, some remedy for the ills under which we labour. But no sound has been heard,—they have been content to take things as they found them, to find that they became gradually worse by use, but satisfied that they would last their day, they have allowed them to take their course to ruin.

Is there a country in the civilized world, wherein so few scientific books or pamphlets have appeared, as Lower Canada? Have we a solitary work on any branch of legal science written by a Lower Canadian, worthy of the name of a treatise on Law, and to which reference can be made in Court as of an authority? Have we reliable reports of cases heard and determined by our Judges?*

Degrading as it may be to the members of a so-called liberal profession, it must

* The "*Jurist*" excepted.