

## CONSOLIDATION OF STATUTE LAW.

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We observe in the estimates of the Local House, for this year, the appropriation of five thousand dollars for consolidation of the statute law. No more useful volumes for Canadian legist or layman were ever compiled than those commonly known as the Consolidated Statutes of Canada—Upper Canada and Lower Canada. It is advisable to prosecute the scheme already so happily begun, and to have a re-consolidation of the law at stated and appropriate intervals. Since 1859, the date of our first consolidation of statute law, a sufficient interval has elapsed to warrant the preparation and issue of another volume of like compendious and comprehensive character. Indeed, a revision and consolidation of the statute law of Ontario in each decennial period would not be amiss, when one considers the vast changes and amendments of the laws which take place in ten years of rapidly progressive colonial life.

At present the consolidated statute book of Upper Canada has been, as it were, completely riddled by Parliamentary shot. Hardly a single chapter has been left untouched. Page after page has been excised, and chapter after chapter has been repealed. Taking a comprehensive glance at the changes thus wrought by subsequent legislation, we find that of the chapters in the statutes the following have been totally repealed:—chapter 5, relating to the registration of deeds and instruments creating debts to the Crown; chapter 14, relating to the Court of Impeachment; chapter 28, respecting the procedure in actions of dower; chapter 36, respecting reporters in the Superior Courts; chapter 38, which relates to the office of Sheriff; chapter 41, respecting Homœopathy; chapter 52, respecting Mutual Insurance Companies; chapter 54, respecting Municipal Institutions; chapter 55, respecting the assessment of

property; chapter 59, respecting the public health; chapter 61, respecting game laws; chapter 69, respecting the property of religious institutions; chap. 86, respecting the partition and sale of real estate; chapter 89, respecting the registration of deeds and other instruments; chapter 96, respecting the apprehension of fugitive offenders from foreign countries; chapter 97, relating to high treason, to tumults and riotous assemblies, and to other offences; chap. 99, to prevent the unlawful use of fire arms (section 3 of this Act is not repealed); chapter 100, relating to the desertion of soldiers or sailors; chapter 101, respecting forgery and perjury in certain cases; chapter 110, to allow to any person indicted a copy of the indictment; chapter 111, respecting amendments at trial; chapter 115, respecting the commuting of sentence of death; chapter 116, respecting corruption of blood, and chapter 124, respecting the return of convictions and fines (section 7 is unrepealed.)

In addition to this, account is to be taken of the immense number of minor changes, short of the repeal of whole chapters; such as the excision of sections and the substitution of other sections, the addition of new clauses, the various modifications and amendments, verbal and otherwise, which the legislation of successive years has ingrafted upon or pruned off from the consolidated statute book. Considerations of this kind at once manifest the necessity for re-consolidation or revision, and the immense benefits which the entire community will derive from such work properly done.

The work itself is of a kind which demands no small critical and legal acumen, while the results appear so much like mere compilation, that proper acknowledgments are seldom made or appropriate thanks given to those who engage in labour so unostentatious, and yet so