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AN HISTORICAL ESSAY

ON THE ROMAN LAWS, AS THEY CAME DOWN TO US *In Corpus
Juris Civilis.*

*Read by R. S. M. BOUCHETTE, Esquire, before the Montreal Law
Students Society.*

MR. PRESIDENT & GENTLEMEN,

In responding to your flattering invitation and appearing before you to day in the, to me, unpractised character of a lecturer, I feel that you have conferred upon me an honor which I shall be able but slenderly to requite. My inability to adorn my subject with all those graces of ornament and diction which would impart to it a warm and pleasing interest impresses me at this moment with unfeigned diffidence ; but yielding to a sincere desire of promoting as far as lies in my power the laudable objects and pursuits of your association, I deemed it my duty, as a member of the profession, to which you are all aspiring, to endeavour at least, to contribute something to the Temple of legal science which you are edifying, not for yourselves alone, but for Society at large.

In availing myself of the latitude you were pleased to allow me in the selection of the subject matter of the present lecture, I found the range of topics that fell within the Scope of Jurisprudence in general, so large, that I experienced much hesitation in the choice which it was fittest I should make on the present occasion, not only in relation to what might be most acceptable to yourselves, but with reference to my ability to treat my subject ; for I confess with unaffected humility that in the large sphere assigned to me, there are many abstruse branches of the law, to the exposition of which, with becoming learning and wisdom, I feel unequal, and I therefore, have restricted myself as much as possible within the boundaries of an elementary lecture.

Under these circumstances, I have selected for your consideration