

strength. If in these united circuits courts were held at the county towns in rotation, no injustice would be done considering the volume of business transacted. Speaking of Toronto, there are only three jury sittings in a year, and much injustice is worked by the inability of the profession to secure in advance an order determining the mode of trial. Hence jury notices serve the purpose of delay, although when the cases are heard they may never be tried by a jury. The method adopted for non-jury work is productive of much inconvenience to the profession, and the public, and it is well that the latter should understand that the fault does not lie wholly with the legal profession. Three weeks' notice of trial is given, but when that time elapses, the case may either be put at once on the peremptory list or may find thirty or forty cases interposed, which have priority, and no one can rely upon any particular week or even any particular month for trial.

In the business activity which now prevails, it is a hard matter to get together witnesses on both sides. More than half the cases are not wholly local, and while the profession are frequently reprimanded for not being ready with non-jury cases the fact is that the system is to blame and lacks certainty and convenience. These difficulties are aggravated by the constant change of judges in the Divisional Court which makes it impossible for counsel to arrange their engagements from week to week with any degree of finality. Both the judges, the public and we ourselves would be better off if it were left to the clerk of assize to prepare for every day a list of cases that wanted to be heard.

It is not generally known that we are collecting fees by way of law stamps for the Government in payment of imaginary debentures, long since paid off by the transfer of valuable property to the province worth probably six times the amount of the debentures. This ought to be changed as these fees rest upon no real basis, and are collected from the clients as though they were part of the solicitor's bill. If some of these matters were remedied our life would be an easier one.

In conclusion, I wish you a very prosperous year, and thank you for the honour which you did me more than a year ago by electing me president of the Association.