

THE RETROSPECT AND THE PROSPECT.

When something new appears a juvenile philosopher may be expected to ask (1) What is it anyway? (2) Where did it come from? and (3) What is it for?

The answer to the first question for present purpose, involves an application of the Biblical truth that there is nothing new under the sun. The apparently new thing we speak of is a legal journal called the CANADIAN BAR REVIEW. I must crave a little space to answer the second and third questions as follows:—

Once upon a time, just seventy years ago, there was given to the legal fraternity and certain judicial officers of that time a journal, the purpose of which sufficiently appears in its title: *The Upper Canada Law Journal and Local Courts Gazette*. It was published in the town of Barrie, Lake Simcoe.

This was a bold venture in those days, but those Argonauts, let us so call them, were men of vision and energy and also lawyers of note. It will be of historic interest to name them:—James Patton, Q.C., afterwards a member of the government of his day; James R. Gowan, the County Judge of Simcoe, Chairman of the Board of County Judges, and afterwards a Senator and K.C.M.G., one of the best lawyers and ablest men of his day; Hewitt Bernard, Q.C., afterwards Deputy Minister of Justice, and lastly W. D. Ardagh, afterwards County Judge at Winnipeg. This journal served its intended purpose excellently well; the statute book of its time containing much valuable legislation due to articles contributed by its editors.

The *Canada Law Journal* was a continuation or a new series of this publication, but was devoted more exclusively to the needs of the legal profession.

If it be true, as Bacon says, that every professional man owes a duty to his class, it may most surely be said that those who provided material for the readers of the journal spoken of did their duty. Their work moreover has helped in a marked degree to keep alive the high standard of professional ethics handed down to us by great and good men of the past.

At the request of Sir James Aikins, K.C., who now graces the highest position in the gift of his fellow-members of the Bar, namely, the office of President of the Canadian Bar Association, the *Canada Law Journal* with its high aims and traditions was appropriately

merged in the CANADIAN BAR REVIEW. It may therefore be said that the latter is really not a new thing but rather a continuation of the former, or, in other words, is its heir-at-law. The editorial management, as we all gladly know, has been entrusted to one, who by his contributions to the *Canada Law Journal* and elsewhere has proved his fitness for his present position, and as such is entitled to, and we are sure will receive, the cordial support and countenance of us all. His literary ability has enabled him to give us something in addition to legal lore. The bane of the ordinary law periodical is its general dullness. It is mostly read of necessity; hardly ever by choice. And perhaps if the *Canada Law Journal* had not started in to develop the literary side of the law in this country, we might not have, as we do now in the REVIEW, a feature which not only appeals to our own taste, but which is recognized as interesting to readers in the mother country; for it provides an intellectual bill of fare for the leisure hour of the lawyer which helps him to remember that his profession is a learned one in the general field of literature. No lawyer to-day can afford to be a man of one book. He must read generally, and read as much as he can. And here I must snatch space to impress upon the rising generation the splendid words of Lord Bowen, which ought to be written in letters of gold. He said: "Instruction ladled out in a hurry is not education; in ancient times when duty to the State was the keynote of civilisation, education was that culture of mind and body which tended to turn out the ideal citizen." And this means that there can be no good lawyer who is not also a good citizen; using, of course, the word "good" in its proper, old Saxon sense.

What all true lovers of this young country of ours—still the "child of nations"—desire, is that the noble profession to which we belong as well as all its other loyal citizens, should look back with a humble but comforting sense of satisfaction on what has been done by the brave men of the past; and then as we look forward, let the older ones among us, realising the responsibility which age and experience lays upon us, remind those now crowding into our ranks of the honourable sphere of service they have entered upon, and that it is for them, when front rank men fall or are promoted to positions of greater responsibility and eminence, to fill the gaps; well-trained for their new position, and having a strong sense of their duties not only to their clients but something still more worthy, their duty to their country, as honest God-fearing citizens, anxious for its welfare at the present as well as for its high standing among nations in the future. And here may I be permitted to warn them

that the outlook for the world around us is not as bright as some seem to think. Lawlessness and crime are confessedly rampant and increasing; and, despite present hopes of peace from the scourge of international strife, dark clouds are seen on the social horizon of many countries, suggestive of even more terrible struggles in the future.

Finally, as Lord Buckmaster tell us, "We have a great inheritance in that we, as lawyers, are servants in the administration of justice." And, therefore, let us live up to, and do our duties; let us live in the light of the best traditions of a profession so honoured by our forbears in the past; and, scorning anything lower than the historic high standing of the Bench and Bar of Canada, seek to follow in their footsteps.

HENRY O'BRIEN.

Toronto.
