# The Legal News.

VOL. XII. MARCH 30, 1889. No. 13.


The exclusive jurisdiction conferred on the Minister of Agriculture, or his deputy, in questions affecting the validity of patents, is so abnormal that notwithstanding the positive terms of the statute, the existence of the authority has been challenged in almost every case of importance. This great power, we presume, was conferred under the impression that cases of this class should be entrusted to an officer conversant with the points likely to be raised, and who could devote the time necessary for their trial and investigation. The work appears to have been well and carefully done, and no complaint is urged so far as the ability or conscientiousness of the officers performing it is concerned. Nevertheless, the feeling exists that interests which are often of the greatest magnitude and importance, should not be left to the final disposal of a single arbiter who has not even power to compel the attendance of witnesses, or the production of documents. The law has carefully guarded the rights of suitors in other matters, by providing for an appeal from Court to Court. For example, a recent case touching the removal of an executor, has passed through four courts, and been examined by at least a dozen judges. Why should the question of forfeiture of a patent, involving perhaps hundreds of thousands of dollars, be finally disposed of by an officer sitting alone? The demand for some mode of revising these decisions seems perfectly natural and well founded.

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The business of the Court of Exchequer is assuming large proportions, and many of the questions coming before it are of general interest. It seems desirable that the provision made by order of Council for placing early notes of the decisions of the Supreme Court before the profession, should be applied also to the Exchequer cases; and in the interest of the bar throughout Canada we would suggest that the extension be made at an early date.

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The Government of Canada was put upon its defence for not disallowing the Jesuits' Estates Settlement Act, 51-52 Vict. (Q.) ch. 13, but the votes in favour of disapproval—13 out of 201—make a very insignificant figure compared with the vehemence of the attack. The discussion seems to have had a good effect upon the whole, for it has resulted in almost perfect unanimity of judgment by the lawyers of both sides of the house, that the Government acted wisely in not interferring with the bill. Much, in fact, that was urged against the bill might have been conceded without bringing its opponents any nearer to success in their effort to establish that the measure was not within provincial rights.

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## COUR DE CIRCUIT.

*Coram* JETTÉ, J.

MONTRÉAL, 19 février 1889.

MALLETTE V. LATULIPPE.

*Aliments—Belle-fille.*

JUGÉ:—*Que la dette alimentaire ne peut être réclamée de la belle-fille, après le décès de son mari, sans enfants, alors même que cette dette avait pris naissance et été réglée par contrat du vivant du mari.*

La défenderesse avait épousé Victor Brégau, fils de la demanderesse. Cette dernière étant pauvre et dans le besoin, poursuivit son fils pour pension alimentaire. Sans attendre un jugement sur cette poursuite, le fils s'oblige à payer à sa mère $2 par mois.

Le 26 avril 1888, le fils est décédé, sans enfants, instituant par testament, la défenderesse, sa femme, légataire universelle.

La mère, demanderesse, poursuit maintenant sa belle-fille, en vertu de l'écrit que lui a consenti son fils, et soutient que la dette alimentaire étant née du vivant du fils, elle est passée à la défenderesse, son héritière.

JETTÉ, J.—Bien que la prétention de la demanderesse ait été soutenue par un certain nombre de jurisconsultes, entre autres:—1 Mourlon, No. 752; 1 Marcadé, No. 718; 6 Aubry & Rau, p. 100, Note 10; le senti-