

ONTARIO.

GRAND JURIES.—The movement for the abolition of grand juries, says the *Toronto Evening Telegram*, lost one of its best friends when Chief Justice Harrison died. Whether the grand jury system should be abolished or curtailed may be a question; but it is no question that as at present constituted it is expensive, cumbersome, and at times unsatisfactory. The duties which now devolve upon the grand jury could be quite as well discharged by a Public Prosecutor, whose duty it would be to determine whether the evidence taken at the preliminary investigation was sufficient to send the accused to trial upon. Such a change in the system would result in a great saving of valuable time to business men. Besides, the interests of justice would be served fully as well by being entrusted to the hands of an official versed in the law, as they possibly can be by being entrusted to a number of men to whom the law is a sealed book.

QUEBEC.

DISTRICT MAGISTRATES.—The Hon. Judge Loranger, in his address to the late Grand Jury of the District of Richelieu, referred to the abolition of district magistrates, lately brought about by the Quebec Legislature. He argued that the district magistracy had been very useful, and that the saving to the country by the system was immense. In the Richelieu District the number of cases tried by the district magistrate during the last five and a half years was 1,106, of which 193 were felonies which without a district magistrate would have had to be tried by jury. The expense of each case if tried by jury would have been at the very least \$100, or an aggregate sum of \$19,300, out of the public treasury, whereas the salary of the district magistrate for that period was only \$7,000, making by the change a clear gain of \$12,300 for the people.

IRELAND.

CRIME IN IRELAND.—A remarkable fact, says a Dublin correspondent, is stated in the volume of Judicial and Criminal Statistics for 1877-78, issued lately in Dublin, that of the whole number of crimes in Ireland, 6,328, not disposed of summarily, 3,292, or more than half, occurred in the Dublin metropolitan district. Agrarian

crime shows an increase up to the 30th of June of the present year, but a slight one, and chiefly in intimidation by threatening letters. They trace thirty-three cases of intimidatory crimes to the murder of Lord Leitrim.

EXTRAORDINARY SPECULATION.—The Master of the Rolls in Dublin recently made some strong observations upon the case of the widow of an iron merchant named Vincent, who, having been granted limited letters in administration on her husband dying intestate, had applied £30,000 to her own use and to the loss of her children, selling shares in a variety of companies for the purpose of stock-broking ventures, which companies agreed to the sale at her instance, although informed of her having only a title in certain cases to the receipt of dividends. Mrs. Vincent offered her creditors 5s. in the pound, and bills remained unpaid of tradesmen of every class, and also to a stock-broking firm for balances in respect to Stock Exchange transactions. The Master of the Rolls said "nothing in fiction was wilder or more deplorable. The splendid fortune of the minors had been scattered to the winds. He added that every pound of the money should be traced. On that he was determined. He hoped the companies would restore the property."

SCOTLAND.

THE GLASGOW BANK AND THE LIABILITY OF TRUSTEES.—A question of very great importance, not only to the parties immediately concerned, but also to the public generally, is likely soon to be raised, says the *Statist*, in connection with the Glasgow Bank failure. It is whether trustees who are holders of shares in the bank are to be held personally liable, like other shareholders, or whether their liability is to be limited to the amounts of the trust estates which they represent. There is no doubt whatever that at English law the liability of trustees is not subject to any such limitation. The Scotch law on the subject, however, is by no means so clear.

FRANCE.

JUDICIAL SEPARATIONS.—From 1846 to 1850 there was an average of 1,080 judicial separations in France, which in 1876 had increased to 3,251. Only fourteen separations in the hundred are asked for by the husband.