

demurrer, but must be by a writ of *feri facias*. Baron Pollock, however, asked very pertinently whether the plaintiff contended that, if the letters are good on the face of the grant, no objection can be taken on demurrer—a question which obviously should not be answered in the negative. In the Court of Appeal, which consisted of the Master of the Rolls and Lords Justices James and Thesiger, the question was treated rather as one of novelty than difficulty. "This," said the Master of the Rolls, "is really a mere experiment. From the time of the passing of the statute of James I. to the present time, no one, as far as I know, has contended before in a court of law, much less has any court of law allowed the validity of such a contention, that a communication made in England by one British subject to another British subject can be patented by the receiver of the communication, so as to make the receiver the true and first inventor within the meaning of the patent laws." To the argument that before the time of James I. such patents were valid and allowed, and that the statute merely restricted the duration of the patent and did not destroy the right, his Lordship observed that, "even supposing that it were so, the cases define who are to be considered worthy recipients of the grant of such a monopoly, and the definition so given has been followed ever since." Lord Justice Cotton admitted the case to be one of hardship, but agreed with the other Lords Justices in allowing the demurrer. In our opinion, this case points to a defect in our patent laws. Judges, of course, have nothing to do with consequences; they have merely to administer the law as they find it. The question may nevertheless be raised whether it is expedient that plaintiffs in a case like the present should be without any remedy. If a communication made by a foreigner abroad to a British subject entitles the latter to a grant of letters, there are equally good reasons for granting them to the widow or personal representatives of an inventor. The object of the act was to encourage new devices. Can it be said that they have been encouraged in this instance? Doubtless the invention would have been lost altogether had the widow known that she could obtain no valid grant. Members of Parliament who wish to undertake a useful work will find the object of such a search in an

endeavor to consolidate and amend the Patent Laws.—London *Law Times*.

## CURRENT EVENTS.

### CANADA.

ADDRESS TO THE GOVERNOR GENERAL.—On the 30th November, the Montreal Section of the bar presented the following address to the newly appointed Governor General of Canada:—

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:—

The members of the Montreal section of the Bar of Lower Canada beg to approach Your Excellency with the expression of their heartfelt loyalty to Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen.

They hail the appointment of your Excellency to the Governor-Generalship of the Dominion as a token of Her Majesty's solicitude for the welfare of the Canadian people; and they now recognize in the presence of Her Royal Highness the Princess Louise, the most gratifying proof of Her Majesty's confidence in Her subjects of this side of the Atlantic, conferring upon them the highest honor,

They beg to congratulate Your Excellency on your safe arrival, and to give utterance to the hope that your sojourn and that of Her Royal Highness in Canada, will be productive of pleasure to you both, as it cannot fail to be of benefit to the Dominion.

W. H. Kerr,  
Batonnier  
P. H. Roy,  
Secretary.

His Excellency replied as follows.—

To the Members of the Montreal Section of the Bar of Lower Canada—

GENTLEMEN,—I am glad to receive from members of the Bar of Montreal this loyal address, and am confident that in giving a welcome to me, you express your attachment to [the principles which govern the Monarchy, and the spokesmen of feelings which animate those who follow the profession of the law throughout the Provinces of Canada. No one is more gratified to appreciate our ancient laws than the members of the legal profession whose office it is to advocate their operation or to enforce their decrees. I rejoice to receive from such a body of gentlemen the assurance of their satisfaction with the appointment made to my high office by her Majesty, and I ask you to accept my thanks.

LORNE.

Montreal, 30th November, 1878.

### GENERAL NOTES.

It is related of Judge Walter T. Colquitt, an old-time justice of the Georgia Supreme Court, that he once condemned a man to be hanged, preached a sermon, reviewed the militia, married two couples at night, and then conducted a prayer meeting—all in one day.