

## The Legal News.

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### LEGAL BUSINESS.

Several of our contemporaries, both in the United States and in England, have referred lately to a falling off in the volume of legal business. So far as England is concerned the decline, if it exists at all, has not affected the cause lists, for the *Law Journal*, of Oct. 25, says:—"The Cause Lists for the forthcoming sittings show an increase as compared with those of Michaelmas, 1883, in all business except divorce, which shows a slight decrease. The Court of Appeal has 422 entries, as against 399 last year, and 248 the year before. The Chancery Division has 842 entries, as against 809 last year, and 778 the year before. The Middlesex Nisi Prius causes are 1,118, as against 886 last year, and 600 the year before. Of these, 586 are for trial without juries, as against 146 last year. The Divisional Court business shows 247 entries, as against 214 last year. The Divorce List has 206 entries, as against 214 last year, and 170 the year before." And yet the *Law Times* of June 21 said: "The number of barristers who earn a decent living appears every year to diminish, and at the present moment it may be safely said that the dearth of new business is unprecedented. On the other hand, the number of 'distressed members' increases."

### COLONIAL DEPENDENCE.

The symbols of royalty, in the eyes of our esteemed neighbour, the *American Law Review*, are as red rags to a bull. Every reminder that the British empire holds sway over a portion of this continent elicits a fresh outburst of mingled amazement, indignation and contempt. We accept, of course, the warmth displayed by our contemporary as a flattering indication of his friendly interest in our welfare, and we shall not even be guilty of the impertinence of suggesting, that as independence and annexation to the United States are not live questions here, are not espoused by any political party

amongst us, the columns of a law journal are occupied to little purpose in recommending them. The curious feature of the *Review's* article is that what are assumed to be Canadian grievances, are about the last things of which Canadians are disposed to complain. "It will be a cold day in England" when any of the British colonies gives to England a Lord Chancellor, or even a "Colonel of Dragoons." A colony did give to England not long ago a very prominent minister, and Canadians are not unknown in the Imperial military service. But the fact is that Canadian ambition does not tend very strongly in that direction. Canadians are probably much prouder of having given a champion oarsman to the old country and to the world than they would be of giving a general to the British army. But if they wished to become Colonels of Dragoons we don't know what obstacle lies in the way.

The *Review* repeats a misstatement to which we think we referred some time ago; that the "best places in Canada" are "filled by Englishmen foisted upon the Canadians by Imperial influence." This is a misapprehension. The Canadians appoint their own judges, their own bishops, their representatives in Parliament. Ministers only hold office by the will of the majority elected by the people. The professional classes are exclusively Canadians. Where, then, are the best places that are monopolized by Englishmen? The office of Governor-General, it is true, is filled by Imperial appointment, but so long as England has men like Lord Dufferin, Lord Lorne and Lord Lansdowne to send us, we think that will hardly be counted a grievance. Our contemporary proceeds to make what, we fear, must be regarded as a rash promise. "If Canada were free, she would in course of time, and by a natural movement, become a member of the American confederation. The Canadian provinces would add four States to the American Union; the highest offices within the gift of the republic would be opened to Canadians; Americans would delight to honor themselves by making such a statesman as Sir John A. Macdonald their President; and the conservative influence of Canada in American politics would be