

## The Legal News.

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The long vacant Chief Justiceship of the Superior Court has been filled by the appointment of Mr. Justice Stuart, of Quebec, to the position resigned by Chief Justice Meredith. Mr. Justice Stuart is, we believe, next in seniority, to the ex-chief. Mr. F. W. Andrews, of the Quebec bar, has been elevated to the Superior Court bench in the room of Mr. Justice Stuart.

In the year 1884, according to *Whitaker's Almanac*, fifty-eight appeals were entered to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. Thirteen were dismissed for non-prosecution. In nineteen the previous judgments were reversed, and in four varied. Of the last hundred and fifteen appeals, thirty-five were from India, seventy-eight from the colonies, and two from the Channel Islands and Isle of Man.

Even-handed justice is administered in the Isle of Man. At a Petty Sessions Court held at Douglas on the 14th February, Deemster Gell, Her Majesty's second judge, the Speaker of the House of Keys, the governor's secretary, the high bailiff of Peel, and four members of the Manx bar, were fined 6d. each, without costs, for being on licensed premises after 11 o'clock at night, on December 19. Deemster Gell, on that evening, entertained the governor and island officials and advocates, at the Castle Mona Hotel, to dinner, to celebrate his elevation to the bench, and the manager, who had neglected to obtain an "extension of time" license, had been fined 6d. a fortnight previously.

The correspondent of the *Daily Chronicle*, writing from Gubat, in the Soudan, notes a proceeding of the Mahdi which will give rise to an interesting question as to the rights of *bond fide* holders. He says: "The Mahdi, when Khartoum fell, secured the whole of General Gordon's papers, together with a

large number of bank notes issued by the gallant defender of Khartoum. These, we are informed, he is now taking steps to negotiate, and obtain much-needed ready cash by discounting them. As Gen. Gordon pledged England's word to redeem them, it will require some ingenuity to defeat the Mahdi's object. Indeed, it will be next to impossible to detect the notes which the Mahdi has seized and those which have been circulated *bond fide* by Gen. Gordon himself, especially as all documents are in the False Prophet's hands."

*A propos* of the Woman Franchise Bill an opinion may be quoted from the life of "George Eliot," just published. "George Eliot," herself one of the most gifted women of the century, had not a very elevated opinion of the sex, for she says:—"A notable book just come out is Wharton's 'Summary of the Laws relating to women.' 'Enfranchisement of women,' only makes creeping progress; and that is best, for woman does not yet deserve a much better lot than man gives her." But it should be added that things are considerably changed, even during the quarter of a century since the above was written; and the writer herself, in a letter of subsequent date, says, more seriously, "on the whole I am inclined to hope for much good from the serious presentation of women's claims before Parliament."

That benevolence should be its own reward is an axiom inculcated afresh in a recent decision by Mr. Commissioner Kerr. A valuable dog having followed a stranger, he not only gave it board and lodging but advertised for its owner, who was thus enabled to recover it. The owner refused, however, to pay anything for its keep, or even to defray the cost of the advertisement, and was consequently sued. He contended that it was the duty of the plaintiff to take the dog to the nearest police-station. The judge disputed this view, but decided against the plaintiff, who, however kindly he had behaved, could not legally claim compensation for doing voluntarily what he was not obliged to do. On this the defendant actually asked for costs, but was refused them with a judicial expression of