

OBITER DICTA.—Clients will bring you business, and business will bring you cases, and these you bring into court and the court is hired, to listen to you, even though you talk mostly *obiter dictum*. I have often thought it a wise arrangement that judges and juries were compelled to listen; as the man said, they are compelled to listen by law or they wouldn't by G—. I have had judges look at me when I felt that that man was right. You have all been placed where you were at loss as to what more to say. Whenever you get into that state you had better take your first loss and close out the deal, otherwise you may find yourself in the predicament of the man who had hold of the bear while the latter was ascending the tree, he could hold on but he needed somebody to help him let go. There is a great deal too much of *obiter dictum* in every walk of life, and there is too much at the bar and in the courts. Our pleadings are full of *obiter dictum*. Sometimes, with the exception of the venue and names of the parties, they are all *obiter dictum* for they are beside the question to be tried.—C. E. Kremer in *Chicago Legal News*.

BOOK REVIEW.

THE CANADIAN ANNUAL DIGEST 1896, by Charles H. Masters, Reporter of the Supreme Court of Canada and Charles Morse, LL.B., Reporter of the Exchequer Court of Canada; pp. 371; Toronto, 1897: Canada Law Journal Company, price \$3.50.

A digest of the cases reported for the year 1896 in the Supreme Court of Canada, Exchequer Court, Ontario Appeal and Ontario Reports, Ontario Practice, Quebec Queen's Bench, Quebec Superior, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and New Brunswick Equity, Manitoba and British Columbia Reports.

This is by far the best digest ever published in Canada both in thorough-

ness of the summaries made, and the manner of their arrangement, and the authors deserve congratulation for having successfully carried out an enterprise hitherto unattempted in welding together in digest form the decisions of the federal courts and of all the provinces in Canada. So far as Ontario is concerned, the work is most opportune, for it continues the Ontario series of digests, the last of which is for the years 1891 to 1895 inclusive. In fact the necessity for a provincial digest covering less than a ten year period would seem to be done away with by the present work, which it is announced will be continued from year to year.

The notes of cases are very complete, and not after the style of many digests, little more than an index to the reports; and where the abstract directly relates to two principal subject matters it will be found under both, thus saving much of the reader's time usually expended in looking up the cross references. The classification of subjects and general plan of work closely follows that of Mews' English Annual Digest, that *vade mecum* of the English practitioner, and it can be predicted that no practising Canadian lawyer who carefully examines the Canadian digest, will for twice its price consent to do without it. The compilation of this first annual has entailed more than ordinary labor, for the Quebec civil law cases had to be translated from the French, and classified as far as possible under the corresponding headings of English law, with appropriate cross references from the French subject title. It is much to be hoped that the growing spirit of nationalism in Canada will be fostered amongst lawyers and courts by the attention drawn to it by a work of this character, and, as must inevitably result with the progress of confederation, that more deference will be paid by provincial courts, particularly those of Ontario, to decisions from other provinces.