

PREFACE.

Although a good deal of popular interest attaches to the law of defamation, no general exposition of the law in Canada has yet been published. The present treatise forms part of a larger work inconvenient for publication in a single volume. This was designed to embrace both the civil and criminal law of libel, and the law of contempt affecting publications prejudicial to the course of justice in the courts, and publications and proceedings in contempt of our legislatures, their committees and members. Treatises on the criminal division of the subject, and on these branches of the law of contempt, will be ready for the press during the present year. What is now published seeks to embody, in as complete a form as possible, the law of slander and libel in civil cases in Canada—the decisions and opinions of Canadian courts and judges on these branches of legal learning. It contains the substance of the common law of defamation and of the English decisions, a digest and commentary combined of the law peculiar to the several Canadian Provinces, and the libel sections of the Criminal Code which are applicable to the Dominion as a whole. These are supplemented by the chapters on Discussion of Matters of Public Interest, Privilege and Fair Comment, which relate in the main to libel both as a tort and a crime. The Articles in the *Code Civile* of the Province of Quebec, and the decisions of the courts of that Province, are also dealt with, and some references are given to United States decisions. Special attention has been paid to Canadian authorities, and an endeavour has been made to bring the case law of the Provinces down to the time of publication. Every reported decision of any importance has been assigned a place in the text, and, where necessary, in several places. No decision has been treated as being altogether obsolete or useless, and a few cases have been included which are of historic interest as indicating the development of the law.