

cases in which the largest amount is at issue consists of only four members, and I say that, for cases of \$400 or less, a Court of Appeals consisting of three judges constituting an independent tribunal is sufficient.

Appeal from the Court of Review.

When the judgment of the Court of Review sitting in appeal from a judgment of a District Court is not unanimous, an appeal may be taken from the Court of Review to the Court of Queen's Bench. I admit that I had some hesitation in introducing this amendment. I am not yet decided to state—I am not yet sufficiently convinced to be able to say—that this is a wise provision, because I am of the opinion of many authors who have written on this subject, and who say that the number of appeals and the number of the degrees of appeal should be reduced. But that is a question on which there may be a difference of opinion, a question on which something may be said both for and against; it is a question which I submit for the serious consideration of those who will have to study the bill. I say that, not only in virtue of the bill which I have just explained will the appeals from the District Court render a service to suitors, but the law will have the effect of greatly reducing the number of appeals now taken before the Court of Queen's Bench, and will give greater efficiency to the Court of Queen's Bench, and will allow it to better fill the role which it is called upon to fill in the judicial organization of this province.

District Judges in Criminal Matters.

Now there is, in the constitution of the District Court, another very important matter to which I specially call the attention of the members of this House. According to section 47 of the bill the District judges have jurisdiction throughout the whole Province of Quebec, but exercise their ordinary judicial functions in the districts assigned to them by their commissions; and they further have all the powers and exercise all the functions mentioned in articles 2465 to 2544 inclusively of the Revised Statutes of the Province of Quebec. If you refer to section 107 you will see this: "As district judges are appointed in the different districts, the judges of the sessions of the peace, district magistrates and stipendiary magistrates shall cease to exercise their functions." That is to say, sir, that I give the district judges all the powers of district magistrates in criminal matters and all the powers of judges of the sessions of the peace, in Quebec and Montreal. A considerable economy will result from this. At present the expenses of the province for district magistrates, travelling expenses, etc., for the salaries of judges of the sessions of the peace, amount to \$30,000. But what happens? Every day I receive petitions and letters asking me to establish magistrates' courts, asking me even to appoint other magistrates for regions distant from the *chef lieu*, like those I mentioned just now, and I have no hesitation in saying that if the present system continues, in three or four years we will be obliged to appoint other district magistrates, and to give them further powers, to meet the ever increasing wants of the public; and the expenditure under