

sent money at 9,920,000 francs. He made a will leaving this property to his relatives in France. These persons, however, could not be ascertained, and meanwhile the fund and accruing interest continued to remain for over a century in the custody of the Venetian Republic. In 1791 the Constituent Assembly of France remitted the question of heirship to the Tribunal of the Seine. In 1796, Bonaparte, commending the French troops in Italy, was instructed by the Directory to demand the millions of the Thiéry succession from the Venetian government, and to apply them—temporarily, it is supposed—to replenishing his military chest. Before the demand was complied with, the French troops took possession of Venice and abolished its ancient constitution. They also, it needly hardly be said, took possession of the public funds. On June 6, 1797, an official letter was sent by the Directory to Bonaparte recapitulating their letter of the previous year and adding: ‘Tous ces fonds sont entre nos mains, l’Arsenal et la Banque sont en notre pouvoir; et la République Française est en droit d’en disposer selon sa volonté et ses intérêts.’

Although the Republic of St. Mark had vanished, the undaunted claimants to the property of the *de cujus* of 1676 remained, and now proceeded against the French Republic, as possessors of the Thiéry fund reclaimed from Venice. The decision of August, 1891, it is to be supposed, has ended this historic litigation. It is held by the Conseil d’État that the annexation of the Venetian Republic and the seizure of its public funds was an Act of State, giving rise to no recourse by private individuals against the supreme authority of France. ‘Ce fait de guerre ne saurait donner ouverture contre l’État française à aucun retour ou action de la part des créanciers des dites caisses.’ This, no doubt, is the French way of saying that the Republic can do no wrong.

And so, for Dame Roussel, no debtor no debt. Venice and its liabilities have vanished together. Even lawyers cannot fail to be impressed with a sense of disproportion when they see applied to the once glorious Queen of the Adriatic and bulwark of Europe the every day maxim of the civil law applicable to private mortals, ‘Actio personalis moritur cum personâ.’—*Law Journal (London.)*