

LAW REFORM.

There is a general consensus of opinion that the courts, or the practice of the law, should be so altered or amended as to avoid so many tedious and costly appeals. The principle of itemized charges sanctioned by the courts, has been carried to the extreme limit, and would be ludicrous, if not so costly. From the item for "instruction to sue" to the final charge for "rendering the account," the characteristic feature is a multiplication of work, for which there is the corresponding charge. The principle, in my opinion, should be reversed, and a policy adopted that would fix a bulk sum, and lessen rather than increase the work, and do away with the interminable list of items, so aggravating in a lawyer's account. There seems to be some force in the view that litigants should pay the expense of the whole of the legal procedure. While the Criminal Code must of necessity be conducted at the general expense, in cases where the criminals cannot pay the costs, it is difficult to understand upon what principle the public at large should be compelled to pay for and keep up expensive legal machinery to enable individuals to settle their personal differences. I would suggest that judges should be empowered to compel plaintiffs under certain circumstances to secure the costs of action when instituting proceedings. Cases are becoming too numerous where the plaintiff's only hope is that he may find a case through an examination for discovery, or where there is a manifest attempt at extortion. In all such cases where the plaintiff fails, the defendant should be protected against injury by the payment of his costs by the plaintiff. The practice of securing expensive counsel for comparatively unimportant cases is also being largely abused, and should be regulated by the counsel being paid by the party who employed him. The whole process and procedure in law should be cheapened, expedited and simplified.

PREFERENTIAL TRADE.

This Board was the first organized body to give public expression of approval of the principle of preferential trade within the British Empire. It is, therefore, a matter of gratification to find the Motherland and the colonies so cordially uniting in the various projects calculated to bind more closely the commercial tie. The "cut the Painter" policy of many of the leading British statesmen some years ago, did much to destroy the confidence of the colonies, and had it not been reversed, would soon have wrought disaster.

The British Empire embraces one-fourth of the globe, and contains one-fourth of its population. It embraces every variety of climate, and furnishes a diversity of products as great as the world yields. With all unnecessary restrictions from within removed, and a reasonable preference as against the rest of the world, the commerce of these vast territories would necessarily expand with great rapidity. Even war could not disturb this commerce while we remain mistress of the sea. This would insure the continuous occupation of the industrial classes of the empire, a feature too seldom