

The Legal News.

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STAMPS ON PROMISSORY NOTES.

In December last (5 L. N. 425), we noticed a decision *Bradley v. Bradley* by a County Court Judge in Ontario, which held, in effect, that the right which could be exercised formerly in certain cases, of double stamping a promissory note and thereby rendering it valid, had been taken away by the Act abolishing stamp duties (45 Vict., cap. 1). This decision, if it were well founded, appeared to disclose a very unfortunate oversight on the part of the Legislature. We are glad, however, to find that the law is not viewed in this light by a Judge of a Superior Court. In *Dickison v. Normandeau*, which is noted in the present issue, Mr. Justice Tasche-reau decides that the right to affix the required stamps is not interfered with by 45 Vict., cap. 1. His Honor remarked that even if there had been no reserve in the Act of existing rights, the general principles of our jurisprudence would have guided the Court to the same conclusion; but in the Act in question there is a special reserve of acquired rights in these words: "Provided always, that all Acts or enactments repealed by the said Act shall remain repealed, and that all things lawfully done, and all rights acquired under the said Act or any Act repealed by it, shall remain valid," etc. It is satisfactory to find the judgment of a Superior Court of law coinciding with the equity of the case, and carrying out the obvious intention of the legislature.

THE LATE SIR GEORGE JESSEL.

The late Master of the Rolls has received unusual attention from the press, and the notices of his career have been more than commonly enthusiastic. The reflection suggests itself: if the first judicial appointment from among the Jews has been such an extraordinary success, what may not the country have lost by the omission to make such appointments in the past? The Attorney General declared in the House of Commons: "I believe no Judge ever sat upon the Bench who combined great know-

ledge, ability, mental power, and an earnest desire to administer justice to every suitor to a greater extent than the late Master of the Rolls. Of late years he has been the very centre of the judicial Bench. The public always sought his judgments and were content with them; and although the word irreparable in connection with the loss of any man ought not to be lightly used, yet I am sure this loss to the public service cannot be over-estimated or easily repaired."

The professional journals have been even more eulogistic. The *London Law Journal* says:—

"The performance by Sir George Jessel of his daily work in the now deserted Rolls Court was an exhibition of power seldom witnessed. The lawyer hardly knew which most to admire—his minute knowledge of case-law, the breadth of his acquaintance with legal principles, or the amazing rapidity with which he took in the facts of his cases. Sir George Jessel seemed to devour an affidavit as soon as it was put into his hand. There was a superstition that nature had physically endowed him above other men with the capacity of acquiring knowledge, and that he could read one line with one eye, and the next line with the other. It is certain that hardly any subject came to the surface in his court without his displaying a knowledge of it which astonished experts. Large drafts were made on these gifts in patent cases, and the Master of the Rolls was equally at home in mechanical complications and in chemical mysteries. Something has necessarily been said of his fault of manner on the bench; but it lay merely in the manner. His mind was eminently judicial, and the most skillful advocate that practised before him probably never discovered that he had any prejudices. Least of all had he any favor for those of his own race, although he was the first of his blood who attained the English bench. * * * There was no section of the community which did not look to him for the most uncompromising justice. This was due to the belief, not only that he had a practical knowledge of most of the affairs of life, and was a learned lawyer, but that his mind was absolutely free from cant. His rapidity was so great, and his reputation so high, that the Rolls Court became during his reign the most important