

promise between Parliamentary divorce and a Divorce Court; the reference was to a Court, but one composed not of Judges but of the chief parliamentary dignitaries of the Province; as divorce never became an acute problem, there the matter rested until caught by Confederation. New Brunswick and Nova Scotia adopted similar arrangements; but, with the example of England before them, altered to real Divorce Courts before 1867; the situation has of course remained unaltered since the B.N.A. Act. The western Provinces, at a time after 1857, had adopted for them by the Dominion Parliament (except British Columbia, which did the legislating itself). British legislation; their population prior to Confederation was almost non-existent; and where such a situation exists, it is obvious that divorce is never a pressing problem. The absence of a Divorce Court in Quebec is hardly to be wondered at, when it is remembered that the Province is inhabited largely by adherents of the Roman Catholic Church, which has always been firm in its stand against divorce under any circumstances—Italy, Spain, and Ireland have no divorce courts. "In Quebec, by virtue of the Quebec Act of 1774, the laws of Canada were made the laws of the Province as to all matters of controversy respecting property and civil rights. The laws of Canada had their basis in the old French law which prevailed in Canada during the French regime; but with the grant of the rights of self government, the former Province of Canada acquired the right to make laws for itself, among other things, within certain limitations, on the subject of marriage; and the Provincial Law of Quebec on the subject of marriage is now to be found in the Code Civil and Provincial Statutes passed since 1774 up to 1867." (Holmsted). The laws of England in regard to property and civil rights as existing in 1792 were adopted in Upper Canada, and on the subsequent institution of the Courts of Common Law and Chancery their jurisdiction was limited to that possessed by the corresponding Courts in England, which at that time did not include divorces. Prior to the Act of Union in 1840, there was apparently very little need for the consideration in Upper Canada of the question of divorce, owing to the small population. This idea is supported by the fact that until 1837 there was no equity jurisdiction—e.g., in regard to trusts, specific performance, and foreclosure—that it took 10 years to get this equity jurisdiction established, a dispatch from the Secretary of State for the colonies drawing attention to the increase in the population and