The Legal News.

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The appeal list at Montreal has crept up steadily until the January Term opened with 105 cases inscribed, an increase of 21 since the corresponding date of last year. The reduction effected by the extraordinary terms held two or three years ago has disappeared, and the list is now as full as it was in 1883. A roll of 105 cases, at the present rate of progress, means about a year's delay to every case from the Montreal Division passing through this Court.

A Legal Reform Committee, consisting of twenty-two members of the Incorporated Law Society for Ireland, has reported, with only three dissentients, that it is undesirable to amalgamate the professions of barrister and solicitor. The report, however, favours the enactment of a regulation giving an absolute right on the part of each member of both professions of not less than five years' standing, to an immediate transfer from one profession to another, the applicant to pass an examination showing adequate knowledge.

In the course of their investigation of the subject, the Committee obtained some interesting information from various countries. In Victoria the professions are distinct, but in the county courts barristers may practise as attorneys. In Queensland an Act was passed, in 1881, abolishing the distinction between barristers and solicitors, and amalgamating the two professions. In South Australia there is no distinction, while in New South Wales the professions remain distinct. In Bavaria the professions are united, but each lawyer is attached to a certain court or set of courts. So, if a is case is taken to appeal, it passes into the hands of another lawyer. In Denmark also the professions are united. The same is the case in Germany and in Holland. In Portugal the title of solicitor is unknown, and any lawyer can conduct a case in all its stages. In Spain the two branches are united, and the same person can practise at the same time as barrister and solicitor. In Sweden the legal system is very peculiar. There is no bar, nor any body of trained lawyers. Any one can plead his case before the courts in person, or he may employ anybody else he pleases to plead for him. Among those who appear in court as lawyers are literary men, non-commissioned officers, and even artisans and farmers. The judges are appointed from persons who have passed law examinations at the university. The fees paid by the client to the person he employs depend entirely on mutual agreement.

INACCESSIBLE LAW.

It is a singular fact that while it has been a rule of the common law from time immemorial that "every one is bound to know the law," no means were taken for a long time in England to make the knowledge of the law accessible to the people. Quite the contrary, indeed, for not only were reports composed in a court language substantially obsolete, that is the Norman French, but the reporters resorted to technical abbreviations, making them difficult to be deciphered, and really open only to the legal profession of that day, who were specially familiar with the language. And yet the so-called Year Books, coming well down towards the close of the reign of Henry VIII. (A.D. 1536), are replete with legal information, and highly worthy of the attention of all students of law from a historical point of view, as well as greatly useful to inquirers into topics of English constitutional history. It is only of late years that the English government has shown an interest in making these legal antiquities accessible to the public. The distinguished judicial officer called the Master of the Rolls, on January 26, 1857, submitted to the government a proposal for the publication of materials for the history of England from the invasion of the Romans until the reign of Henry VIII. This proposal was adopted, and the publication is now going on.

The Year Books of some of the earlier years have already been translated and published in an accessible and readable form. The great early law writer, Bracton, can also be read to advantage in English, owing to