

The Legal News.

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An interesting and important work is said to be in preparation by Lord Justice Bowen. It is a history of the English law during the fifty years of the Queen's reign. Mr. Block, his lordship's clerk, has also published a table of the Judges of England during the same period.

In a communication to the *London Times* on the subject of inquests on fires, Sir Sherston Baker states that, "until the year 1860, coroners frequently held inquests on fires, although the same were unattended by loss of life. In that year this desirable practice was stayed by the decision of the Court of Queen's Bench in *Regina v. Herford*, prohibiting a coroner from making inquiry into fire when unattended by loss of life—a question which I have investigated at some length in the columns of the last May number of the *Law Magazine and Review*. The Coroners Bill now in the House of Lords affords, in my humble judgment, a very excellent opportunity for repairing the evil effects of the result of the decision in *Regina v. Herford*. Section 48 of the above bill provides that coroners 'shall not hold inquests of felonies except felonies on inquisitions of death.' Therefore no inquests can be held by a coroner in a case of arson unaccompanied by death. I submit that the words 'and except in cases of suspected arson or of fire from an unknown cause,' or words to that effect, should be added to the above sentence. The colony of New South Wales have already provided for such cases by passing an Act, immediately after the decision in *Regina v. Herford*, enabling the coroner of the place where any property is 'damaged by fire to make an inquisition into the cause of the same. The costs of a fire inquest in England, would, in the absence of further legislation, be payable as heretofore—namely, by the person requesting the coroner to hold the inquiry."

Mr. Justice Lawson, of the Irish Queen's Bench Division, who died Aug. 10, was born in 1817. He took his degree at Trinity College, Dublin, in 1838. In 1840 he was called to the Irish Bar. Subsequently, he was appointed to the Whately Professorship of Political Economy in Dublin University, as successor to the late Isaac Butt. He soon obtained a large practice in the Courts of Equity, and was made Q.C. in 1857. Subsequently he held the office of Solicitor-General in 1859, and of Attorney-General in 1865. In 1868, he was appointed a Judge of the Common Pleas, and in 1882 was transferred to the Queen's Bench Division. In November of that year an attempt was made upon his life by a man named Delany, who was mixed up in the Phoenix Park murders. The *Law Journal* says:—"With most of the good qualities which belong to cultivated Irishmen, warmth of heart, wit, a liberal tincture of literature, and the power of speech, he was a learned lawyer, free from the fault of some of his countrymen, over whom rhetoric and imagination are apt to have too great a command."

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

DICKSON ON THE LAW OF EVIDENCE IN SCOTLAND, recast, adapted to the present state of the law, and in part re-written, by P. J. H. Grierson, B.A., Advocate. Edinburgh, T. & T. Clark. Toronto, Carswell & Co.

This is a new edition of a standard work. Mr. Dickson published his treatise on the law of evidence in Scotland in 1855. A second edition was issued in 1864 under the superintendence of Mr. Skelton, in which the original text was retained. The present edition aims to express accurately the law as it is to-day. All that is obsolete, or that is of purely historic interest is omitted. The work treats first of the admissibility and effect of evidence, and under this (1) of the primary rules of evidence, (2) of the secondary rules of evidence, (3) of primary and secondary evidence, and (4) of restrictions of the mode of proof. The second book relates to instruments of evidence, and herein is treated (1) of written evidence, (2)