

## The Legal News.

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In a work recently published in the United States, entitled "Leading Cases on Real Property," the editors refer to twenty-four thousand cases. If the cases on one branch of the law have assumed such enormous proportions, it is not to be wondered at that the lawyers of that country sigh for some alleviation of the burden, or that those who look to codification as the panacea should be eager for a code.

The complaint of profuseness in conferring the distinction of Q.C. is not a new one. The evil seems to have commenced twenty-three years ago, when a great number of appointments were made, twenty-four being in this province. At that time some of the older members of the profession seriously contemplated throwing up the appointment. We find, on looking back, that we referred to this incident in another place (3 L.C. Law Journal, p. 1) as follows:—"The creation in one day of two dozen Queen's Counsel, in the province of Quebec alone, has naturally excited much criticism. Some received the announcement with violent indignation, others with contemptuous indifference; but no one, as far as we have observed, has had a word to say in justification or apology. The precise amount of honour attaching to the letters "Q.C." was previously somewhat vague and uncertain. We knew that the title was frequently conferred as a reward for electioneering services; that it was not uncommonly bestowed on partisans of slight professional repute, while it was withheld from men of sterling worth who meddled not in 'the muddy pool of politics'; but it was still held in some estimation, and the silk gown was not without dignity. Now, however, all ambiguity on the subject has been removed. That which in England is the victor's palm, the prize of a good fight, the reward of a successful career, has here been conferred, in some instances upon gentlemen who have long ceased to practice their profession, and in others, upon political

adherents of dubious antecedents. The rank of Q.C. has fallen to somewhat the same level as that of J.P., or some of the other titles which have been lavishly bestowed, and if there were not another appointment for the next twenty years, the prostrate dignity would hardly recover from the shock." It is matter of history that the subsequent career of some of the two dozen referred to was not particularly brilliant, either morally or intellectually. We hope that the present appointments may be more fortunate.

They do not appear to be well pleased in Ontario at the recent deluge of appointments. The *Canada Law Journal* says "the list has caused surprise to the public and laughter among the profession.... The appointment is now known either as an easy way of paying a compliment to a lawyer for whom there is no substantial *solatium* at the time available; or as an inexpensive mode of pleasing one who is a political supporter by the appointment of some local ally of his in the legal fraternity." The *Canadian Law Times*, whose editor is among the newly-appointed (and the appointment is, we are confident, well-merited), says: "No one can look at the lists of appointments made by the Dominion Government in Ontario without being struck by the fact that the selection, in very many cases, has been due to political friendship, rather than distinction at the bar; and the same remark applies with equal force to the appointments made by the Provincial Government. The cause is unquestionably political rivalry. If one party is unduly favored in making the appointments, the other naturally answers the challenge by heaping the honours on its own adherents—a sprinkling of the opposite party being in each case included in the favours, to show the fairness of the selection."

The immunity of the bar during the epidemic of small pox was matter of remark. The members of the profession have not been so fortunate in resisting the influenza. Exemption from its assaults has been the exception rather than the rule, and several leading counsel as well as judges have been seriously ill.