

The Legal News.

VOL. VI. DECEMBER 1, 1883. No. 48.

THE COURT OF QUEEN'S BENCH AND ITS SITTINGS—LEGAL ARITHMETIC.

Mr. Geoffrion is reported to have said in answer to a *Gazette* reporter, after approving the four days system and disapproving of the term system: "I am strongly opposed to Judge Ramsay's suggestion, because, even with these two extra terms, we would really have fewer days for the hearing of cases than if the Court sat every day during the present regular terms."

Mr. Justice Cross seems to have communicated the same curious property of figures to a *Gazette* reporter in these words: "The proposition to adjourn for two days in the week will retard rather than facilitate exhausting the roll, because even with the additional two terms which the Government have proclaimed, if we adjourned for two days each week we would have at least four days less for the hearing of cases than with the present regular terms." In making a statement in Court on the 27th November, the Chief Justice said: "There was only one other remark he wished to make, and it was this: The regular terms between the 15th November and the vacation would have given 39 working days. The two additional terms proclaimed would give in all 58 working days. But the suggestion to sit four days in each week would only give 36 days from November to May."

Of course this could not be. But to leave no doubt as to the result of the two extra terms worked on the four days a week plan with the regular terms, here are the dates:

November 15 to 27	11 days of term
December 12 to 22*	10 " " "
In all.....	21 " " "
Subtract at rate of 2 dys per week.....	7 " " "
Leaves.....	14 as against 11

* The author of this luckless proclamation, if he intended to fix terms for December and February next, which is not said, has included a Sunday in express words, the 23rd December, the last day of the new term. Will the Judges be breaking the law of Quebec by keeping the law of Moses and its presumed substitute?

January 15 to 27 11 days.
February 15 to 27 11 "

In all 22 "

Off $\frac{1}{3}$ $7\frac{1}{3}$ $14\frac{2}{3}$ as against 11

Or taking the terms together $28\frac{2}{3}$ as against 22

The result of sitting four days a week during eight months of the year, that is six months in Montreal and two in Quebec, is easily ascertained. For Montreal,

Say 6 months.....	180 days.
Off 26 Sundays.....	26 "
	154
Off $\frac{1}{3}$	$51\frac{1}{3}$ "
	102 $\frac{2}{3}$ "
As against 5 terms of 11 days....	55 "

Or a gain of..... $47\frac{2}{3}$

Of course the result at Quebec will be in proportion,

Say 2 months.....	60 days.
Off 9 Sundays.....	9 "
	51
Off $\frac{1}{3}$	17
	34
As against 4 terms of 7 days.....	28
Or a gain of.....	6

It will be observed nothing is here allowed for holidays in either calculation, as it is evident this cannot alter them materially.

It will also be observed that the number of sitting days at Quebec is very slightly increased while at Montreal it is nearly doubled. The former may become insufficient, but unless there is an unexpected increase of business in Montreal it will not be necessary to have 102 days sittings in Montreal after the arrears have been cleared off, so that it will be the easiest of operations (if any operation is ever easy in the Court of Appeals) to adjust the matter between the two seats of the Court.

It will further be observed that four months are allowed for vacation, whereas three might suffice. It is, however, important that the judges of appeal should have ample vacation, which means leisure not holidays. In so close a programme as that suggested there will be difficult cases, and inflated ones, which cannot