The Legal News.

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An especially hard case of a man being ruined and made bankrupt by a law suit, though he was successful before the highest Court, is that of Mr. T. G. Dixon, a justice of peace for Flintshire, and late owner of the Nant Hall Estate, near Rhyl, and of a small estate in Cheshire. At the close of the examination in bankruptcy, the bankrupt said that in 1847 he held certain shares in an agricultural insurance company started in Edinburgh. That company was eventually amalgamated with a London company, and he was strongly advised to withdraw from it, which he did by paying the balance due on his shares. Twenty-three years afterwards, he received notice to appear in London to show cause why he should not be a contributory to this very thing. The upshot was, the case went into Court before the Chief Clerk, who gave his decision against Mr. Dixon. The bankrupt then went before the Master of the Rolls, who decided clearly in his favour. The other party then took the matter before the Lords Justices of Appeal, and their lordships, while acknowledging it to be the hardest case they had ever tried, said in strict law they must give their decision against him. The matter being a very serious one, and involving a very considerable sum of money, Mr. Dixon decided to appeal to the House of Lords. They gave a decision in his favour on every point, with costs, but notwithstanding this final success, the litigation had cost him just £5,000.

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The law with regard to public meetings is stated as follows in the *Law Journal* (London): "In the first place, the idea that a proclamation not made under the special powers of a statute has any legal effect whatever must be placed out of sight once for all. Nothing is clearer than that the executive cannot make law by putting it in the mouth of a town crier or placarding walls with it. If the law they proclaim is bad law, or if the action taken upon the proclamation is illegal, every person concerned in enforcing it is liable to legal proceedings. In regard to criminal proceedings, the executive may, under circumstances which can justify it to the Attorney-General's conscience, maintain their own law by entering a *nolle prosequi*; but no such counter-move is open to them in civil proceedings, and civil proceedings are sufficient for the protection of the law-abiding subject when a meeting is proclaimed. He has only to proceed to the place of meeting accompanied by one or two of the more discreet of his fellows, and if he finds it occupied by a body of police to assert his right, protest, and go the nearest way to his lawyer's. Upon an action brought the defendants would have to prove that the object of the meeting was unlawful, or that it was likely to lead to a breach of the peace. They would not be bound, as Sir W. Harcourt supposed, to prove that the avowed object was unlawful; it would be enough if the real object was unlawful. As to the reporter, he has neither more nor less right to be present than anyone else; but if as a Government reporter he is obnoxious to the majority, the police, are entitled to assert his right to be present, using no more force than is necessary, just as private persons might assert their right to be present if it was purposely obstructed."

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## SUPERIOR COURT.

St. Johns, dist. d'Iberville, May 14, 1887.

*Coram* Loranger, J.

Lavallee v. Surprenant.

*Compensation—Délit of wife—C. C.* 1294.

*To an action of damages brought by the plaintiff personally as well as being head of the community, alleging that the defendant had slandered plaintiff's wife, the defendant pleaded in compensation that the plaintiff's wife had slandered defendant, without specifying the occasion, or alleging that the plaintiff was present or had approved of the words uttered.*

Held:—*That the plaintiff not being responsible for slander committed by his wife without his knowledge or approval, such slander could not be pleaded in compensation.*