

ACTS OF LAST SESSION—THE ANTWERP CONFERENCE.

the Elections of Members of the House of Commons.

An Act to amend the Law relating to Stamps on Promissory Notes and Bills of Exchange.

An Act for the better prevention of crimes of violence in certain parts of Canada, until the end of the next Session of Parliament, which has since been declared in force in Montreal.

An Act to provide that persons charged with common assault shall be competent as witnesses.

An Act respecting persons imprisoned in default of giving securities to keep the peace.

The provisions of chap. 18, which is already in force are as follows :

1. On the summary or other trial of any person upon any complaint, information or indictment for common assault, the defendant shall be a competent witness for the prosecution or on his own behalf.

2. On any such trial the wife or husband of the defendant shall be a competent witness on behalf of the defendant.

3. Where another crime is charged and the Court having power to try the same is of opinion at the close of the evidence for the prosecution that the only case apparently made out is one for common assault, the defendant shall be a competent witness for the prosecution or on his own behalf, and his wife, or her husband if the defendant be a woman, shall be a competent witness on behalf of the defendant in respect of the charge of common assault : Provided, that this section shall only apply to cases tried without the intervention of a jury.

4. Except as in the next preceding section mentioned, this Act shall not apply to any prosecution where any other crime than common assault is charged in the information or indictment.

We have not space to publish chap. 10 as to Stamps on Bills and Notes ; it will however be found in a supplement to the *Canada Gazette*, together with some other Acts of general interest.

Of the Law bills that did *not* pass,

the principal were, Bill to amend the Supreme Court Act, which was lost in the Senate ; Bill to make better provision for the trial of Controverted Elections, which was withdrawn for further consideration ; Bill to amend the Law of Evidence in cases of misdemeanor, which was lost in the Senate ; Bills respecting registration of titles, &c., and to declare the rule of decision in the North-West Territories, which were withdrawn as time did not obtain to pass them this Session. It is a pity that a system of registration which can only be completely satisfactory which begins at the beginning of a title is not already in full force in these new countries. We have not examined the first of these North-West bills, but the second seems to have been carefully prepared, and bears internal evidence that the learned and veteran Law Clerk of the House, Mr. Wicksteed, Q.C., has had a good deal to say to it.

Four Bills were reserved for the signification of Her Majesty's pleasure thereon ; three of them private bills, and the fourth an Act to repeal sec. 23 of the Merchant Shipping Act, which would seem to be *ultra vires*.

THE ANTWERP CONFERENCE.

The fifth Annual Conference for the Reform and Codification of the Law of Nations was held at Antwerp, from the 30th August to the 3rd September of last year (1877), and we have before us a pamphlet containing a report of the proceedings published for the use of members.

It may perhaps be desirable before noticing the proceedings of this particular meeting of the Association to give some slight sketch of the Association itself, its history and objects. It had its origin in America, springing at first