

about 4000 cases in the year, two-thirds of them relating to wages. The judgments seldom exceed one hundred annually, and appeals are rare.

COURT OF ACCOUNTS.

The next court is the Court of Accounts. It is a court of exchequer, before which come matters relating to the public expenditures, all fiscal matters, claims against government, the administration of poor-houses, hospitals, public charities, &c. It has a first president, three presidents, eighteen counsellors, or masters of account, and eighty referees, divided into two classes, a registrar and deputies and three chambers, each of which has separate duties. The appeal from this court is to the Council of State.

COURT OF CASSATION.

The last and highest of the permanent courts of France, is the Court of Cassation. It is composed of fifty judges, called counsellors, and is divided into three chambers, one of request (matters arising upon petition), one civil, and one criminal and police. It has a first president and three presidents of chambers.

It is the final appellate court from all intermediate tribunals of last resort, such as the Courts of Appeal.

An appeal to it must be brought within three months after the judgment appealed from was rendered.

It does not, as the Courts of Appeal do, review the merits, but as its name imports, breaks the judgment, if the forms of procedure have been violated, or the judgment is founded upon an erroneous interpretation of the law, and sends the case back for another hearing, usually to a different tribunal, but one of the same rank, as the one that first decided it. The court to which it is sent, is not, as our inferior courts are, bound by the interpretation given to the law by the higher tribunal, but may make the same decision as the former tribunal, if it thinks that the decision of the Court of Cassation was erroneous, though, of course, great deference is paid to the opinion of the higher tribunal. Instances have occurred in which three different courts of appeal rendered the same judgment notwithstanding it had been twice declared by the Court of Cassation to be erroneous. Where such is the case, the question is no longer agitated, but the government (the Corps Legislatif), with the sanction of the emperor, makes a decree declaratory of the law, which is binding thereafter upon all judicial tribunals.

The applicant must deposit 250 francs (\$30), which he forfeits to the other party if he fails, and is sentenced in addition to pay 300 francs (\$60), to the state.

No chamber of the Court of Cassation can give judgment unless it is composed of seven judges, including the president.

Each chamber appoints its own president, and five members go out of each chamber every six months, but not until they have fini-

shed all the matters heard before them. The Civil Chambers sit every week day except during the months of September and October; the Criminal continuously throughout the year, and the session is four hours a day.

In great or very important cases, the three chambers are called together by the first president of his own motion or upon the request of one of the chambers. The judges are robed in scarlet upon the occasion, and when they come together it is the most imposing and dignified judicial body in the world.

The judges of the Court of Cassation are appointed for life, and are retired in the same manner as the judges of the Courts of Appeal.

HIGH COURTS OF JUSTICE.

The highest court in France is the High Court of Justice, which assembles only when an imperial decree is issued for its convocation for the trial of offences against the life of the sovereign or the safety of the state. It is composed of five judges and five supplementary judges, chosen from the judges of the Court of Cassation, and of a jury of thirty-six chosen from the members of the councils general of the departments. The judges and the jury are appointed annually by the sovereign.

The foregoing is a concise but accurate and full statement of the whole judicial organization of France. It does not however embrace any changes that may have been made during the past ten years, as the writer has not had facilities for ascertaining what laws or decrees have been enacted within that period. It may be added that the civil judicial organization of France is regarded as very perfect, and that the jurists of no country have done more to advance the science of jurisprudence.
—C. P. D.—*The American Law Register.*

THE NEW DEBTORS ACT.

On Saturday the first prisoner under the Debtors Act was lodged in Whitecross Street prison. He was committed by Mr. Justice Montague Smith for one month, in pursuance of the following provision in the new act (32 & 33 Vic. c. 62):—"When the plaintiff in any action in any of Her Majesty's superior courts of law at Westminster, in which, if brought before the commencement of this act, the defendant would have been liable to arrest, proves at any time before final judgment, by evidence on oath, to the satisfaction of a judge of any of those courts, that the plaintiff has good cause of action against the defendant to the amount of £50 or upwards, and that there is probable cause for believing that the defendant is about to quit England unless he is apprehended, and that the absence of the defendant will materially prejudice the plaintiff in the prosecution of his action, such judge may, in the prescribed manner, order such defendant to be arrested and imprisoned for a period not exceeding six months, unless and until he has sooner given the prescribed security, not exceeding the amount claimed in the action, that he will not go out of England with-