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THE INSOLVENT ACT.

The Act to repeal the Acts respecting insolvency in force in Canada received the assent of the Crown on the 1st of April—a date perhaps rather suggestive to the numerous official assignees recently gazetted. As the bill has been somewhat modified since the second reading, we repeat the text of the Act as sanctioned by the Crown:—

“Whereas it is expedient to repeal the Acts hereinafter mentioned subject to the provision hereinafter made: Therefore Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada, enacts as follows:—

“1. “*The Insolvent Act of 1875*,” and the Acts amending it, passed in the thirty-ninth and fortieth years of Her Majesty's Reign, and intitled, respectively: “*An Act to amend the Insolvent Act of 1875*,” and “*An Act to amend the Insolvent Act of 1875, and the Act amending the same*,” shall be and are hereby repealed, and no Act repealed by the said Acts, or either of them, shall be revived: Provided, that all proceedings under “*The Insolvent Act of 1875*,” and the amending Acts aforesaid, in any case where the estate of an insolvent has been vested in an official assignee before the passing of this Act, may be continued and completed thereunder; and the provisions of the said Acts hereby repealed shall continue to apply to such proceedings, and to every insolvent affected thereby, and to his estate and effects, and to all assignees and official assignees appointed or acting in respect thereof in the same manner and with the same effect as if this Act had not been passed.”

CODES.

The draft of the English Criminal Code is still before Parliament, and the recent dissolution may further retard the measure. — Sir James Stephen is not deterred by the charges

of imperfection and omissions brought against it, but urges that in spite of such drawbacks it ought to become law. “Absolute perfection,” he says, “cannot be required of any human undertaking. If Parliament, before accepting a Criminal Code, waits till one is laid before it to which no objection at all can be taken, and which is open to no criticism in any of its details, it may wait for ever.” He thinks that Parliament would make a serious mistake if it were to delay the enactment of a Code, otherwise satisfactory, because it is alleged, even on high authority, to contain mistakes in detail. And he expresses the opinion that “when a sufficient number of judicial decisions have clearly defined a principle, or laid down a rule, an authoritative statutory statement of that principle or rule superseding the cases on which it depends is a great convenience on many well-known grounds, and especially because it abbreviates the law and renders it distinct to an incredible extent.” Sir A. A. Dorion has recently given utterance to a similar opinion with regard to our own Civil Code. “Nonobstant des lacunes assez graves, mais que l'on doit considérer comme inévitables lorsque l'on songe à la tâche difficile que les commissaires avaient à remplir,” says the Chief Justice, “le Code, avec ses imperfections, a été d'un avantage immense en donnant des règles certaines sur un grand nombre de questions, dont la solution était douteuse, sinon impossible, et en faisant disparaître de nos lois un grand nombre de dispositions qui n'étaient plus en harmonie avec les idées maintenant reçues.” (Preface to Mr. De Bellefeuille's Code Civil Annoté.)

LAW OF EVIDENCE.

Mr. Kirkpatrick has introduced a bill at Ottawa, which proposes to amend the law of evidence in certain cases of misdemeanor as follows:—

“1. On the trial of any indictment or in any other criminal proceeding for the non-repair of any public highway or bridge, or for a nuisance to any public highway, river, or bridge, every defendant to such indictment or proceeding, and the wife or husband of any such defendant, shall be admissible witnesses and compellable to give evidence.”