

"PHASES OF QUEBEC LAW," AGAIN.

When we published the very readable sketch called "Phases of Quebec Law," in our issue for October 1st, we stated that the picture was not overdrawn, knowing well that just such cases as portrayed by "Victim" were easily possible under the barbarous laws governing mortgages, sales, etc. As we anticipated, the coterie of sharpers who mainly profit by the existence of these laws are trying hard to break the force of the revelations above referred to. It seems scarcely in keeping, however, for a law journal which is supposed to represent justice and dignity, and to be at least in the interest of nineteenth century methods and fair play generally, to come out, as the *Legal News* has done, in an attempt to apologize for and to defend the law, and to criticise "Victim's" disclosures, as quoted in the *Sherbrooke Examiner* of October 3. The article referred to, however, virtually admits that the provisions of the law are as stated, but gets off the old chestnut about oversight and ignorance of the law on the part of the victims. The author of "Phases of Quebec Law," who is Mr. Lindsay B. Lawford of Sherbrooke, makes a convincing and vigorous reply to the critics, which is printed in the *Sherbrooke Examiner*, of the date above named, side by side with the *Legal News* article. We cannot do better than to reproduce that portion of Mr. Lawford's article which refers to the authenticity of his former representations. He says:—

A few words more. I have been accused in other quarters of stating a number of imaginary cases, none of which have been known to occur. In rebuttal of this charge let me cite chapter and verse.

I may refer first to a well-known case, in which an elderly gentleman, since deceased, lost a mortgage through the property being sold by the sheriff without his knowledge. Secondly, to a case in which an educational corporation, with which we are all acquainted, lost a mortgage under precisely the circumstances stated in my fourth illustration, viz., an adverse title being obtained under a ten years' possession. Both these cases are comparatively recent and are familiar to every lawyer of any standing in this city. Thirdly, to a case which many of the older residents in the townships will remember, where a gentleman, now deceased, bought a large tract of land in the neighborhood of Lake Megantic, at sale for taxes, for \$180 or thereabouts, and at the end of the second year sold it without warranty of title to a priest for \$5,000. Fourthly, to the fact that to my own personal knowledge within the last four years, a registered land owner lost a lot of land through its being sold by the sheriff without his knowledge, and that too notwithstanding the fact that he had diligently studied the *Official Gazette*. He had carefully noted all sales of lands in the township in which his property was situated. No township however was mentioned in the advertisement. The lot was merely described as being in the *parish* of St.—. Fifthly, to the fact that I am at the present moment personally interested in a mortgage for \$600 against the estate of deceased insolvent, and that the shower of privileged claims has commenced with the presentation of a doctor's little bill for \$183. Sixthly, to the law reports of a case a few months ago, in which the court refused to allow a respectable man to be sworn, because he admitted himself to be an "agnostic."

I claim that there is no exaggeration whatever in my pamphlet, and that it is a description of real and not imaginary evils.

Ever since the world began, reforms of every description, whether social, political or religious, have been bitterly opposed, and perhaps the most difficult of all to obtain is law reform.

A QUAIN LETTER IN RHYME.

An applicant in British Columbia to the Sun Life Assurance Company of this city, for a policy on his life, sends it the following rhyming response to sundry questions propounded by the company. That life assurance is not without its humorous features this effusion testifies.

You wish me explicit on the death of my "pa,"
And likewise my uncle and aunt;
I'll try to oblige you with facts as they are,
For to hide them I possibly can't.

My aunt, to begin with, as I've said before,
Had a cancer upon her left breast,
But meddling with doctors (you know what they are)
She was soon hurried off to her rest.

She suffered, poor creature, as many have done;
'Tis a fact and can't be denied—
Please don't misconstrue me, and think I'm in fun,—
But I'm sure she was glad when she died.

My father, poor soul, I am sorry to say—
But would do so, by jing, were he here—
A very strong man, would have lived out his day
If he'd not been so fond of his beer.

He made the mistake that many have made,
He thought he could tiddle and quit,
But found at the end his last trump was played,
And his life ended up in a fit.

My uncle, I've heard, but can't tell if it's true,
Had coughed many times in his life;
But that shortness of breath was the cause of his death
Is one of the stories that's rife.

Of myself I would say (I'm the one you insure,
And none of the dead other three)
I'm not sick at the present and hunting a cure,
But am healthy as healthy can be.

I don't understand when my folks have been dead
Far back in the past twenty years,
Why, to find how they died and on what they fed
Is going to lessen your fears.

Is it true that their fate is a lesson to me,
Of the death which I too will die?
If this is your notion, then every day life
Stamps the fact plain as can be,—a lie.

P. R. S.

In a sermon to young men, the Rev. Dr. Thain Davidson of Islington, among other good things, said:—"It is meanly selfish for a man, dying in the prime of life, and professing a christian hope, to be perfectly happy while he knows that as he steps into heaven his wife and children will step into the work-house. I say it is abominable. If you have the faintest prospect of having any dependent upon you, you have no business to spend on gratification all your weekly wages or your yearly salary. It is not yours to spend. The first few shillings or the first few pounds belong to them, and should go to pay the premium on a policy that at least will keep them from beggary."