

P R E F A C E .

This volume requires a few words of explanation. As intimated in the last one, it was not at that time the intention to add to the number of the volumes, but as soon as it should be considered advisable to continue the work, to recast and consolidate the whole into one. Circumstances, however, appeared to be against this.

The first volume has recently been reprinted, to some extent, at considerable expense to the publisher, and the cost of a new and consolidated work would be so great that it could only be undertaken, at present, subject to an almost certain risk of loss. At the same time there appeared to be a pretty general demand for the continuance of the work, and it has been decided, after much hesitation, to break through former resolutions and issue another supplementary volume.

Volume IV covers a period of five years (namely from the beginning of 1885 to the beginning of 1890), and a part of the sixth year; and the labor involved in it extends over some thirty-two volumes of reports. I say "the labor involved in it," because both the number of volumes, and the work required to digest them, have increased somewhat out of proportion to the natural growth of the jurisprudence, and considerably beyond the necessities of the case. All that is valuable in the thirty-two volumes, under anything like an organized system of reporting, could have been easily contained in fifteen. Many of the cases are reported word for word in two, some of them in three, and a few in as many as four different series of reports. To make a Digest properly all these have to be gone through as many times as reported, but only one version can, or ought to be used. If a case is found in four different reports it has to be prepared four different times, the references preserved, and all but one discarded. This not only increases very largely the manual labor necessarily involved in making a Digest, but also the care and vigilance required to avoid repetitions of the same case. And it is to be feared that with all the care and watchfulness I have tried to give to it, the same holding will be found repeated in a few instances, though not many.

Under the present independent system of reporting, also, the Members of the Bar, or all those of them who take more than one series of reports, pay for the same matter very often, twice or three times, as the case may be. It is therefore a subject of congratulation all round that an effort is being made at last to place the law reporting of the Province on something like an organized and official basis. This is the system I suggested in a letter to the Council of the Bar over ten years ago, but which it was found