

Correspondence.

SURROGATE COURT FEES.

To the Editor, CANADA LAW JOURNAL.

Dear Sir:—

The attention of those in authority in this Province should be drawn to the present position of the Tariff of Fees payable to Solicitors, Surrogate Clerks and Surrogate Judges. Lawyers get but little sympathy from Judges in respect to fees. They would be glad to know what the Attorney-General can do for us in relation to the matter I now venture to speak of.

The tariff of fees which has been in existence for years, and apparently not amended as it should have been in view of the high cost of living, etc., is at present so absurd that the profession apparently are beginning to hope that the Department of the Attorney-General may step in and make some reasonable changes.

1. In view of the increased salaries to County Judges (who do the Surrogate business) partly because fees going to them under the old Surrogate Court system have been, as we are told done away with, the question arises: "Are these Courts supported now by the fees collected from estates through solicitors and in that respect differing from other Courts administering justice in the Province?" And what is being done about the objectionable system of paying Judges and officials by fees?

2. The present tariff allows solicitors less than half the sum paid to officials. Why is this? Solicitors do comparatively all the work and have to prepare the forms, and as to these the writer remembers Mr. Christopher Robinson styling them as silly, meaningless and cumbersome, and difficult to understand or fill in.

3. Solicitors who have been at great expense in their legal education receive less than real estate agents who have almost doubled their commission on sales. These agents receive a commission on the sale of a \$20,000 property of \$700; a professional man taking out administration or probate on an estate for that amount receives about \$30 and is as a tax collector for the Government, compelled to collect the sum of \$63 for Surrogate fees.

4. We would also call attention to the fact that the preparing of the necessary papers and inventories collecting information as to the value of the property, etc., is a very laborious and time-taking work. The amount received for these services by a professional man is simply absurd.

May not the profession, which is represented by the Attorney-General so far as the Government is concerned, claim his attention on this matter, so that justice may be done in the premises?

SOLICITOR.