

## The Legal News.

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### CHIEF JUSTICE MEREDITH.

It is with much regret the bar have learned that the state of Chief Justice Meredith's health renders a period of repose imperative. When it was first announced that the learned Chief Justice was desirous of retiring from the bench, it was stated that the Government had requested him to withhold his resignation, and to accept a few months' leave of absence, it being hoped that a season of rest would render retirement unnecessary. It is understood, however, that the Chief Justice has pressed his resignation on the Government, advancing years having constrained him to seek the repose to which his long and eminent services so justly entitle him.

### A PHASE OF EQUITY.

The *Law Journal* (London) says:—"By the retirement of Mr. Glasse, Q.C., from the bar, there passes into history the most prominent figure of what may be called the domestic era of the administration of equity, when each judge not only had his own bar into which outsiders seldom intruded, but each bar had a Queen's counsel notoriously possessing the ear of the judge. The relation between Vice-Chancellor Malins and Mr. Glasse was less that of judge and advocate than of judge and trusted friend and adviser. Mr. Glasse would mention a date on which some event in the cause happened—say August 15. 'I don't know where you were, Mr. Glasse, on that day,' the Vice-Chancellor would say, 'but I was at that pretty little place Odde, at the end of the fjord in Norway, and enjoying myself very much.' Then Mr. Glasse would recollect where he was, and notes would be compared, until at last the conversation glided back to the affairs of the litigants. Under that system a counsel was valued not more for power of advocacy and knowledge of law—although Mr. Glasse and other leaders as happily situated had both—than as a friend at Court, especially in the numerous matters which lie entirely within the discretion of the Chancery judge. Nowadays common law counsel invade the Chan-

cery Courts, and the leaders of the bars of the various Chancery judges more frequently encroach upon one another's domains, so that the judge does not see day after day the same counsel before him, and the proceedings, though more stiff and formal, are more business-like and more suitable to the cold atmosphere of a court of law."

### ADMINISTRATION OF THE LAW IN ENGLAND.

Our readers are aware that considerable dissatisfaction exists in England in consequence of the block of business before the Courts. One of the remedies which has been suggested is the limitation of the right of appeal—a suggestion which seems to be based on the notion that instead of the Courts being made for suitors, the latter should be reduced so as to suit the convenience of the Courts. In a letter signed "W.B.," which appeared in the *Times* of Aug. 21, the subject of the administration of the law is discussed in a very able manner, and the defects of decentralization, most of which have been experienced in a marked manner in this Province, are clearly pointed out. The writer says:—

"The first question seems to me to be whether the law, civil and criminal, or either of those divisions of it, should be administered by a central judicial body or by separate independent judicial bodies. Authority, great authority, is in favour of the former. For several hundred years, when journeying was difficult and absence from London therefore long, our forefathers persevered in collecting in London as the judicial body the most skilled members of the law, and in sending a certain number of that body at settled intervals to administer the law in every county in England. It seems at first sight strange, though it may nevertheless be right, that the time selected to advocate an entire reversal of this system is the time when travelling has become easy and rapid, and when, therefore, the period of absence from London is immensely shortened. The following reasons seem to me to be in favour of the old system. To alter it you must have a local tribunal in each county, or a local tribunal for certain united counties, or a partial system giving local tribunals to some places and administering the law in the rest of England, as now, by Judges from London. As to the first, you must overwhelm the County Court and introduce into it business of a far higher kind than the existing County Court Judges