

DIVISION COURT JURISDICTION.

his late partner, Dr. McMichael. He received his silk on the 27th of March, 1863, but declined to become a Benchler of the Law Society until the election was thrown open to the profession. Mr. Cameron was sworn in as a Judge of the Queen's Bench, on the 27th of November, 1878.

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Pressure has been brought to bear upon the Attorney-General in favour of an increase in the jurisdiction of Division Courts, and he has sent circulars to the Judges, and to many in the profession, and others, asking their opinion on various points. It can be stated without fear of contradiction, that the sentiment of the profession, so far as that is concerned, is unanimously and strongly against a change. A resolution adopted at Peterborough, by the Bar in that neighbourhood, and the answer of the Kingston Bar to the circular of the Attorney-General, which we make room for, are some of the evidences we might adduce in proof of this. The letter from the Kingston Bar sets forth a formidable indictment against some of the abuses of the Division Court system, and contains many powerful arguments against doing that which, in the opinion of all thoughtful men, must be most injurious to a procedure admirably adapted in its simplicity to the end originally intended by its founders. We venture to assert, also, that not half-a-dozen Judges, either of the Superior Courts or County Courts are in favour of a change.

Only two classes could possibly benefit by an increase, and these are either (1) the "poor debtors" or (2) Division Court officers. As to the first, it is too absurd to suppose that any one is agitating for a change in the expectation that he may get into debt and may

be sued and, if so, would have to pay a trifle less in the way of costs.

As to the second class we have so much sympathy with that intelligent and sometimes badly paid body of men, Division Court clerks, that we regret to have to say anything which might be construed into a desire to militate against their supposed interests. There is, however, a view of the matter which may not have occurred to them. The value of these Courts is not that they cheapen law in the abstract, but that they are essentially Courts for the poor man. To increase their jurisdiction would mar their usefulness, spoil their character and destroy their equilibrium. It would throw into them a number of important cases which would gorge the present simple machinery, and so largely increase the emoluments of some of the officers, as to cause an outcry against the whole body, which would seriously react to their disadvantage. It is only a short time since one of the most intelligent mercantile men in the country, and a prominent member of the Board of Trade, publicly expressed his opinion that there should be no legal process for collecting any debt under \$100, and there are many who take the same view. Whilst we are not prepared to go this length, the final result of a movement which has its origin in anything but the general wish of the community may very possibly be to apply the lancet to the extent of doing away with all suits for debt under, say, \$50.

The letter from the Kingston Bar would seem to suggest something like antagonism between professional men and Division Court officers. We hardly think that this is the case to any great extent, except perhaps in certain localities. On the whole, they get on reasonably well together, and we should be sorry to see hostility evoked between them. Professional men, however, cannot be expected