

STATUTES OF QUEBEC — HIGHLIGHTS OF 1956

During the past twelve months the Provincial legislators of Quebec have passed a profusion of statutes dealing with a diversity of subjects. Of this multiplicity, the following are among the most consequential.

Section twenty-two of *The Courts of Justice Act*¹ has been amended, by 4-5 Eliz. 2, c. 19, so as to enable the Lieutenant-Governor in Council to increase to the extent of four the number of puisne judges of the Superior Court of the Province of Quebec. Henceforth, the Superior Court, which is a court of record, shall be composed of fifty judges, that is to say, a Chief Justice, an Associate Chief Justice, and forty-eight puisne judges. This will somewhat alleviate the present strain on our overburdened judiciary.

In the previous state of *The Workmen's Compensation Act*,² no indemnity was paid if the disability caused by an accident did not last more than seven days. Under Bill No. 7, 4-5 Eliz. 2, c. 7, an indemnity will be paid if the disability lasts more than five days. In addition, upon the death of a workman, or in the case of a permanent disability, whether total or partial, this provision increases the compensation payable to seventy-five per centum of the salary of the person involved, instead of the prior seventy per centum.

Under Article 1024 of the Code of Civil Procedure, when the Government, on a petition of right, was adjudged to pay a sum of money, the Minister of Finance of the Province had to pay it out of the money in his hands for that purpose or, if there were none or if it was insufficient, out of the money which might have been thereafter voted by the legislature for that purpose. The amendment, 4-5 Eliz. 2, c. 14, of the said article, will facilitate and accelerate the payment of these sums. In similar circumstances, the Minister of Finance is now authorized to meet the judgment out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

*The Act to Protect the Dairy Industry in the Province of Quebec*³ is revised so that it is now prohibited to sell, offer for sale, or to possess any food product, whatever may be the name by which it is called, which is used or prepared for use for any of the purposes which butter may serve, and which is not a butter substitute,⁴ but the colour of which has been altered by any

¹R.S.Q. 1941, c. 15; amended 11 Geo. 6, c. 24, s. 1; 12 Geo. 6, c. 16, s. 1; 14 Geo. 6, c. 50, s. 2; 14-15 Geo. 6, c. 55, s. 1.

²1 Geo. 5, c. 100; R.S.Q. 1941, c. 160; amended 5 Geo. 6, c. 64; 7 Geo. 6, c. 27; 7 Geo. 6, c. 28; 8 Geo. 6, c. 29; 9 Geo. 6, c. 42; 9 Geo. 6, c. 43; 10 Geo. 6, c. 35; 11 Geo. 6, c. 51; 13 Geo. 6, c. 53; 15-16 Geo. 6, c. 34; 15-16 Geo. 6, c. 35; 3-4 Eliz. 2, c. 8, 3-4 Eliz. 2, c. 37.

³2-3 Eliz. 2, c. 6.

⁴Section 1(g) of the Act defines "substitute" as any food product prepared for use or used for any of the purposes which a dairy product may serve and in the manufacturing of which vegetable oils or fats are employed; such term means particularly, but not

colouring matter, or with which any colouring matter for the purpose of artificially colouring this product is delivered to the purchaser. This is an augmentation to the existing restriction on manufacturing, selling or offering for sale, and possession of any substitute for a dairy product, as well as the limitation against the presence in dairy products and appurtenances of any matter that may be used for the making of substitutes of dairy products. The new enactment is an extension of the subsisting legislation and may prove to have infinite consequences on the future of the many spreads or shortenings now found on the commercial market.

An entirely new venture in the field of legislation is Bill 28, *An Act Respecting the Sale and Distribution in the Province of Newsprint made from Wood derived from the Public Domain of the Province*.⁵ By regulating the cost of paper, and by guaranteeing publishers their required supply, this law is designed primarily to safeguard newspapers⁶ against recent increases in the price of newsprint. But Bill 28 is purely permissive in character, and those magazines and journals not wanting to apply for this protection need not do so. Among the other notable features of this statute is that from and after the first of September 1955, and until the first of March 1957, no producer or supplier shall exact, directly or indirectly, from one or more consumers, for his newsprint, a higher price than that in force on the first of September, 1955. In addition, no producer or supplier after the first of March, 1957, shall increase such price without the authorization of a Newsprint Board, which is constituted by the Act. As for the present, no appointments have been made to this regulatory body, but a number of major constitutional questions may be raised, in the future, concerning the Board's functions, as well as the wider scope and intent of the Act itself.

We therefore find that among the legislative enactments sanctioned in the past year, a few are sufficiently significant to merit our consideration. The ultimate impact of their provisions is a matter of conjecture, and the final consequences will be anxiously awaited for many years.

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restrictively, margarine, oleomargarine, and any similar product, whatever may be the name which it is called.

⁵4-5 Eliz. 2, c. 26.

⁶Section 1(d) of the Act defines "newspaper" as any newspaper, review or magazine published and printed in the Province.

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