prior to the cession to the United States of the territory in which said lands were included, or where such title was created and perfected during the period while the foreign governments from which it emanated claimed sovereignty over, or had the actual possession of such territory, the person or persons, his, her, or their heirs, devisees, legal representatives or grantees, so claiming such lands, may, at their option, instead of submitting their claim to the officer or officers hereinbefore mentioned, proceed by petition in any district court of the United States within whose jurisdiction the lands or any part of the lands claimed may lie, unless such claim comes within the purview of the third section of this act; to which petition the United States shall be made defendant, and it shall be verified by the oath of the party or parties, and conform to the provisions of section one of this act, and to the practice of such court in chancery, and the attorney of the United States for such district shall defend against the same for the United States; and the court shall decide the claim valid or invalid according to the principles established in this act, and decree accordingly. If the decree be against the United States, an appeal shall be entered to the Supreme Court of the United States; and if it be against the claimant or claimants, he or they may take an appeal directly to that court, as of right and course, without affidavit or security other than for costs; and the same shall be adjudged *de novo* in the Supreme Court as in other cases of appeals thereto in chancery, and as equity and justice and the principles aforesaid may require; which decision shall be final, and patent shall thereupon issue, if the claim be adjudged valid, for so much of the lands claimed as remain unsold; and for so much as may have been sold, the provisions of section six of this act shall apply and be in force.

Petition to federal district court.

Proceedings thereon.

Act, how long to remain in force.

Sec. 12. *And be it further enacted*, That this act shall be and remain in force during the term of five years, unless sooner repealed by Congress; and all claims presented or sued upon, according to the provisions of this act, within the said term of five years, may be prosecuted to final determination and decision, notwithstanding the said term of five years may have expired before such final determination and decision.

Approved, June 22, 1860.

June 22, 1860.

Chap. CLXXXIX.—*An Act in Relation to Mission Claims at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan.*

Missionary claims to be confirmed as claims of individuals.

1850, ch. 71, § 4. Vol. ix. p. 470.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the missionary claims referred to in the fourth section of the act of twenty-sixth September, eighteen hundred and fifty, entitled "An act providing for the examination and settlement of claims for land at the Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan," and reported upon by the register and receiver at Sault Ste. Marie, pursuant to said act, shall be entitled to recognition and confirmation in the same manner and on the same terms as claims of individuals therein provided for; and upon the final approval of the said claims, as provided in the eighth section of the act aforesaid, patents shall be issued therefor.

Approved, June 22, 1860.

June 22, 1860.

Chap. CXC.—*An Act in Relation to malicious Injuries to, and Trespasses upon, public and private Property, within the District of Columbia.*

Wilful, &c., injury to trees, fences, works of art, &c., how punished.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That every person who shall wilfully and maliciously, or wantonly, and without cause, in the District of Columbia, cut down or destroy, or by girdling, lopping, or otherwise injure any fruit or other tree, not his own, standing or growing for shade, ornament, or other useful purpose, or shall maliciously destroy, mutilate, or otherwise injure any statuary, monument, or other work of art, stand-

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