

## P R E F A C E.

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THE Supreme Court, at its late session, met in the beginning of December, and was engaged in the discharge of its duties till towards the closing part of May; a recess in the month of March having been more, perhaps, a suspension of actual sitting than any remission from judicial labor. Two hundred and fourteen cases were disposed of; including the Southern cases, which had not till now, since 1860, been called. It is probable that no so considerable number of cases has been disposed of at any one term since the court was organized. And the importance of some of the adjudications was not less remarkable than the number of decisions given.

The Thirty-ninth Congress, in view of the facts just referred to, provided for the publication of two volumes of reports. Similar provision had been made in 1850, 1851, 1853, 1854, and 1860, in all which years, as in 1830 and perhaps previously, a second volume was found necessary and was issued.

One purpose of Congress, in its enactment, as understood by the reporter, was that the great constitutional questions in which opinions had been given at the late term—questions on which professional, public, and even judicial opinion, as was known, had been much divided—should be reported with more than usual fulness. They are accordingly here so given. For his ability to present the argument in some of them as fully as he has done—though substance alone is what he has sought to offer—he must acknowledge his great obligation to D. F. MURPHY, Esquire, of the Senate corps of reporters; who, unit-

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ing a professional education to the highest skill in phonography, has given to him the means of enlarging and improving from perfect transcripts his own imperfect notes.

The remaining volume of the term will appear so soon as the reporter's ability allows him to prepare and print it. But the labor of getting two large volumes through the press is not a small one; and he must beg excuse from his professional brethren if they should fancy that there is a slight delay.

PHILADELPHIA, June 12th, 1867.