whether the defective or invalid acknowledgment of the Deed of the 29th of November 1866, by Benjamin Todd and Ruth his wife, has been so far aided and cured by the Act of the Legislature of 1867 Chapter 160, as to render the Deed valid and effectual as against the wife to bar her right and claim to Dower in the land attempted to be conveyed; and if such has been the effect of the Act of 1867,

Secondly, Whether the wife Ruth was induced to sign or execute the Deed under such Circumstances of fraud and Circumvention as will entitle her to relief from its operation

The Deed purports to convey a Farm of about 131 8 acres of Land in Frederick County to Benjamin H. Todd and Jesse R. Todd children of Jesse Todd deceased the illegitimate son of Benjamin Todd, the Grantor. The Consideration expressed in the Deed was the Love and affection which the Grantor Benjamin Todd bore to the Grantees, whom he called his grand children. The wife Ruth bore no blood relation whatever to these children. The Deed which it purposes to have been Executed and acknowledged in Frederick County before a Justice of the Peace of that County was in fact executed and acknowledged in Carroll County where the Grantor and his wife at the time resided before a Justice of the Peace of Frederick County. Benjamin Todd the Grantor died intestate in December 1866 and his widow One of the Appellants intermarried with Grove the other Appellant sometime in the Summer of 1867. The bill is filed by the Appellants to have the Deed declared a nullity and for the assignment of Dower in the land attempted to be Conveyed. A large mass of proof has been introduced reflecting upon the question of fraud, but from the view we have of the case it will become unnecessary to determine whether the allegations of fraud be fully sustained or not.

1. As to the question of the Defective or invalid acknowledgment of the Deed. That the Deed is wholly inoperative and void, as against the wife without the aid of the Act of the Legislature of 1867, chapter 160, has not been denied, or in any manner controverted, but it is insisted by the Appellees that the Act first referred to has effectually cured and made valid the otherwise void acknowledgment and that the Deed by means of the curative act operates to extinguish all right of Dower in the Land mentioned

The language of the relied on is certainly broad and comprehensive. It declares, "That all Deeds executed and acknowledged by the grantors since the first day of November 1864, in the County in this State in which the grantors then resided before any Justice of the Peace of any other County in this State duly Commissioned and Qualified, shall be as valid to all intents and purposes as if acknowledged in the County where the lands in whole or in part are situate before a Justice of said County, or as if acknowledged before a Justice of the Peace of the County in which or which the Grantors resided" Before the passage of this Act, Benjamin Todd had died and by that event the Widow's right to Dower in the Lands mentioned in the Deed had become vested and absolute and she is now entitled to have that Dower assigned unless her right is barred by the Deed of the 29th of November 1866.

By the Common Law a feme Covert could not release or convey her inchoate right of Dower in her Husband's lands by Deed, but only by fine or common recovery. In this State however she is enabled by Statute to release her Dower, either by joining in the Deed of her Husband or by separate deed, accompanied in either case by proper acknowledgments as the Law directs, Code Art. 45, Sec. 11. This acknowledgment is