

"Testamentary Law," be and the same is hereby amended by adding thereto a new section, under the sub-title "Orphans' Court," to be numbered 234, to follow immediately after section 233, and to read as follows:

234. The court shall have full power to take probate of wills, grant letters testamentary and of administration, direct the conduct and accounting of executors and administrators, superintend the distribution of estates of intestates, secure the rights of orphans and legatees and administer justice in all matters relating to the affairs of deceased persons, also of persons supposed to be dead, under the following conditions: (a) Whenever letters testamentary or of administration are applied for on the estate of any person supposed to be dead on account of uninterrupted absence for above seven years from the place of last domicile within the State and having been for such time unheard of, the court, if satisfied that the person applying therefor, or presenting a will or codicil of the supposed decedent for probate, would be entitled to such letters or to such probate if the decedent were dead, shall cause to be advertised in a newspaper published in the county, or the city of Baltimore, as the case may be, once a week for four successive weeks, the fact of such application together with notice that on a day certain, at least two weeks after the last advertisement, the court will hear evidence concerning the alleged absence of the supposed decedent and the circumstances and duration thereof. (b) At the hearing the court shall take evidence for the purpose of ascertaining whether the presumption of death is established, and, if satisfied thereof, shall pass an order so adjudging and forthwith cause notice thereof to be inserted for two successive weeks in a newspaper published in the county or city of Baltimore, as the case may be, and also, when practicable, in a newspaper published at or near the place beyond the State where, when last heard from, the supposed decedent had his residence. The notice shall require the supposed decedent, if alive, or any other person for him, to produce to the court within twelve weeks from the date of its last insertion, satisfactory evidence of his continuance of life. (c) If, within said period of twelve weeks, evidence satisfactory to the court of such continuance in life be not forthcoming, the court shall direct probate and letters testamentary or of administration, as the case may require, to issue, and such grant shall be as valid as if the supposed decedent were actually dead. (d) The court may revoke such letters at any time on due and satisfactory proof that the supposed decedent is in fact alive, after which revocation all powers of the executor or administrator shall cease, but all receipts or disbursements