

settled by a business man familiar with the course of trade in the particular branch affected, in a few hours, often occupy days, or even weeks, when left to a legal arbitrator.

By the scheme to be adopted in London, the parties may have their choice of three different methods of arbitration, namely, by one or by three arbitrators, or by two arbitrators and an umpire. These arbitrators are to be selected as occasion may require, or may be appointed for that purpose from the various trades by the joint committee above mentioned. The parties are to have the right, if they so desire, to call in the aid of a legal assessor. Mr. Philbrick, Q.C., has been appointed registrar of the court, and will, if so desired, act as assessor; and to him is given charge, generally, of the proceedings of the new court. It has been decided to have the sittings private, reporters being only allowed to be present at the special request of all parties interested. This is a step in the right direction. The retailing in the daily press of everybody's private business is becoming a nuisance. The facts are generally incorrectly or only half stated, so that injustice is done, the parties are subjected to annoyance and irritation, and no one benefited, except, perhaps, the newspaper proprietor, who, by thus pandering to a vicious taste, sells a few more papers than he otherwise would.

This tribunal is to be available not only as a voluntary reference, but also for cases referred thereto by the judges of the High Court. Litigants are to have the right, if they so desire, to the benefit of counsel, in this respect differing from arbitration before our Board of Trade, where parties have to conduct their own cases. The proceedings of this court and the development of this mode of adjudication will be watched with much interest.

That the registrar of the court should be a lawyer in good standing in his profession is a fact which appears to have been duly appreciated in England by the appointment of Mr. Philbrick. Greater powers than those usually assigned to a registrar of a court ought to be given him. It seems to us that if the constitution of this new court or chamber of mercantile men had provided that in all matters pertaining to the admissibility of evidence and the decision of purely legal questions the registrar should be the sole judge, and that in these questions the court should be governed by his rulings, much difficulty and litigation would be avoided. It is not to be expected that commercial men can be versed in legal lore. Let them deal exclusively with the facts, leaving all legal points to be decided for them by the registrar, and there would be a court so competent to deal with business matters in a business way that one is unable to suggest any improvement in regard to this radical and desirable step for a speedy and inexpensive mode of settling mercantile disputes. This suggestion, if carried out, would not increase the cost of trial, as the officer in question would necessarily require to be in attendance in any event.

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