

The Legal News.

Vol. I. NOVEMBER 16, 1878. No. 46.

ENGLISH BANKRUPTCY CASES.

Creditors in England do not seem to be much more fortunate than those in a similar position elsewhere. A correspondent communicates to *Truth*, an English journal, a printed list of the results of twenty-four bankruptcies, which, he says, "are in no way exceptional." If not exceptional, they are nevertheless not a little remarkable. Altogether the estates in these cases realized £56,917 10s. 9d. Out of this the "trustees" managed to appropriate £15,586 17s. 4½d; £11,415 3s. 3d. went to the creditors, while £2,763 10s. 2d. represented the balance, probably never to be distributed, remaining in the hands of the trustees at the time of the last audit. "The facts of one of the twenty-four cases," says the writer, "are peculiarly instructive. In it the committee of inspection was a firm of London solicitors, the trustee an accountant having offices in the same building, and the only assets were sold by an auctioneer, whose charges for so doing were £90 3s. 1d. The sale realized £599 15s. 7d., which was thus divided: The committee of inspection voted the solicitors of the trustee (themselves, doubtless) £173 2s. 5d., and awarded the trustees £172 17s. 9d.; but the creditors did not get a single farthing, the rest of the funds being pocketed for incidental expenses. In another case the trustee was a solicitor and the registrar of a county court, and knowing that his official position prevented him charging extravagantly, he did next to nothing and took £39 17s. 6d. for his services; but he so managed that his solicitor's costs amounted to £1293 18s. 7d. The creditors only got £839 8s. 9d. between them."

STENOGRAPHERS' FEES.

An order has been made by the Superior Court at Montreal, fixing the rate to be allowed in future to stenographers taking notes of evidence in the Court, at twenty cents per hun-

dred words, and the prothonotary has been instructed not to employ any who do not consent to accept this rate. It is hardly within our province to discuss the question of fees here. It may be observed, however, that the duty of taking a correct note of evidence is a responsible and onerous one, and the work, if stenographers were paid by a salary, ought at least to be as well remunerated as that of a deputy prothonotary. It is obvious, where accuracy is essential, that incompetent or careless writers ought to be excluded, and that the scale of remuneration should be sufficient to secure the best men. We have some doubt whether the new rule will do this. For instance, stenographers engaged by Parliamentary committees, are paid thirty cents per hundred words, and five dollars additional for attendance at each sitting of a committee—in some instances, ten dollars a day for a morning and afternoon sitting. Even at these rates it has been found difficult at times to secure a sufficient number of competent writers. It is also a fact that the *Hansard* contractors, themselves short hand writers and fully acquainted with the value of the work, find it necessary to offer from three to four hundred dollars per month for competent assistants. While the employment of stenographers under the present system, in consequence of the needless redundancy of evidence, involves enormous charges on suitors, it is extremely problematical, in view of the above facts, whether the system will give greater satisfaction when the fees are cut down to a point which may lead competent stenographers to betake themselves elsewhere.

THE INNS OF COURT.

Around these famous edifices are gathered associations which possess more than mere professional interest. In a learned Inn, wrote Thackeray, "men are contented to sleep in dingy closets, and to pay for sitting-room and the cupboard, which is their dormitory, the price of a good villa and garden in the suburbs, or of a roomy house in the neglected square of the town. Nevertheless those venerable Inns which have the lamb and flag and the winged horse for their signs, have attraction for the persons who inhabit them, and a share of rough comfort and freedom, which men always rem-