

from melancholia, and not fit to enter into a contract, and that in his opinion she had so suffered for some time. The whole case took but a short part of one day, and there was really no opposition, for though the wife was in court, and elected to go into the witness box, she did not deny any of the statements made, but said that she had no knowledge of some of the things which were proved to have taken place during the time soon following her wedding. Thus, she did not remember, so she said, making an attempt to strangle herself. The judge, Sir J. Hannen, summed up clearly and fairly, and pointed out that the woman did not seem capable of understanding actions free from the influence of delusions, and was therefore incapable of entering into a contract like that of marriage, and he decreed the marriage null. This is the first case of the kind which has been decided, and is not by any means a solitary one, so far as the insanity and marriage are concerned. During the past year several cases have, we believe, been in Bethlem in which marriage was not consummated in consequence of insanity. In one, a man heard a voice telling him he must not touch his wife, and the same patient later heard a voice telling him not to eat. The case decided is a first one, and is incomplete. What line would have been followed if the marriage had been consummated, and, still more, if a child had been begotten? The inability to contract would have been the same, but we fear there might have been greater difficulty to persuade a jury—if a jury had been deciding—that a divorce was justifiable. In murder cases the feeling of many is moved against taking human life, but the life-long misery caused by an unjust marriage, in which one of the contracting parties was insane, is a suffering of the innocent which is unhappily overlooked. Such cases make it all-important that something should be done, and every step such as the one reached in the above decision carefully watched.—*Law Times*, London.

#### ADVERTISEMENTS AS NUISANCES.

The law of nuisance is sometimes put into operation with very beneficial results to the public; in fact, were it not for the resources which that law affords, the public would be left helpless in the face of great inconvenience and

annoyance. Take, for instance, the case of *Reg. v. Lewis*, heard last month before Justices Grove and Lopes. In these days competition is so brisk, and tradesmen find it a work of so much difficulty to gain a leading position, or to maintain it when gained, that resort is had to the most curious expedients to attract the notice of the public. The scene of the events which gave rise to the case to which we are referring, was laid in Manchester, where the defendants were the members of a firm of general dealers, or, as it has become the fashion to style them, universal providers, who were desirous of attracting custom to an extent which the more ordinary features of their establishment had failed to secure. To this end they filled their windows with photographs of well-known characters, so far following a common practice; but the peculiarity of the defendants' photographs was, that they represented the characters they portrayed in a variety of absurd and undignified attitudes, as posturing with Chinese lanterns, and so on. The result was, that they not only attracted the attention of possible purchasers to fully as great an extent as they could have desired, but that considerable crowds, consisting in a large part of idlers and bad characters, who obstructed the pavement and molested the passers-by, were collected. Remonstrances having been made without producing any result, and one of the employés of the firm having been prosecuted to conviction with as little effect, the firm themselves were prosecuted at the instance of the city corporation. A conviction was obtained, and the defendants were sentenced to pay a nominal fine, but were required to enter into their recognizances in a substantial sum not to repeat the nuisance. Healthy competition in trade is laudable in the competitors and calculated to conduce to the general good; but the benefits derivable from such competition are more than counterbalanced when free passage through the public streets is impeded, and persons lawfully traversing them are exposed to annoyance and injury. In taking the steps they did, the Corporation of Manchester set an example which might be imitated with advantage nearer home. The fiasco connected with the notorious Zulu photographs will occur to every one; but that is long since out of date, though not yet forgotten. There are, however, not wanting numerous opportunities for the display of zeal in behalf of the public. No one who has ventured down Fleet street on some summer afternoon, when the news of the result of some one of the great races was expected, can have failed to wonder how it was that such scenes were permitted to occur with impunity. This is one example, but only one of many, in which recourse might be had to the law of nuisance, so beneficially put in force in the Manchester case, for the suppression of hindrances to traffic, and the promotion of the general convenience.—*Law Times*, London.