

THE lines never fall in very pleasant places to any jurymen, but the scene described in an English contemporary reminds us of magistrates' courts we have seen in the backwoods of frozen Canada. To hear of such things in the metropolis of the world is rather amusing. We are told that "when the curtain rose, the coroner was disclosed seated at his desk, wrapped in a rug, endeavouring to see by the aid of a tin lamp, and with a pot of frozen ink before him. It appeared that the gas had become cut off by the frost, and that it had therefore been found impossible either to heat or to light the building. The patient resignation, however, with which the coroner had settled down to do his duty and catch his death of cold was fortunately not shared by the jury. One of their number declared that he would wear his hat; another announced that he would not remain, whatever might be the consequences. At length the foreman, in the name of the whole body, requested the coroner and a more convenient place for holding the inquest; and ultimately an adjournment was taken to a neighbouring tavern."

*THE DOCTRINE OF EJUSDEM GENERIS AS APPLIED
TO THE CONSTRUCTION OF DOCUMENTS.*

One of the important principles laid down by the courts for the construction of documents is embodied in what is known as the doctrine of *ejusdem generis*. This doctrine is one of considerable antiquity, and instances of its application are to be found very early in the books. While in some of the cases in which it has been applied it may appear to have had the effect of defeating the true intention of the document, and to be a rule based on rather artificial reasoning, yet, on the whole, it would seem from modern cases that when properly applied its object and effect is really to effectuate what, on a reasonable view of the whole instrument, appears to be its true intent.

The doctrine may be shortly defined as being a principle of construction whereby courts of law are accustomed to restrict the meaning of general words occurring in any document, so as to confine them to cases, things, persons, or events, *ejusdem generis* with those therein specifically mentioned or enumerated with which they are associated.

For instance, where a deed contains a specific description of