

An interesting Case. An interesting law suit has just been concluded in the Supreme Court, at St. Johns', Newfoundland. The Merchants' Bank of Halifax sued Messrs. T. & M. Winter, merchants at St. Johns', for \$500 and damages. The allegation of the Bank was that the defendants authorized one Wickham to draw a bill of exchange on them for \$500. The authority from the defendants to Wickham was contained in the following telegraphic message:

St. Johns', N. F.

"To J. J. Wickham, Charlottetown, P. E. I.

"May draw to extent of \$500, if necessary.

"T. & M. Winter."

Wickham produced the telegram to plaintiffs, who, on the faith thereof and by reason of the undertaking and representation therein, were induced to discount the bill of exchange drawn by Wickham for \$500, but the defendants, on due presentation thereof, refused to accept the same.

In the course of the exceedingly long and interesting judgment delivered by Mr. Justice Emerson, a large number of cases were cited to show that a letter or telegram such as that sent by the defendants in this case to Wickham was sent or wired for the express purpose of being exhibited to all the world, and that all the world was, therefore, invited to trust the representations of the persons who thus wrote or telegraphed, and, therefore, these persons were held bound. In closing, the Judge said:—

"On the whole then we have to give a judgment for the plaintiff Bank, upon the authorities and principles laid down—principles, which, to use the words of Mr. Justice Story, "are founded on a wholesome, nay, necessary justice, to prevent gross fraud, and manifest and irretrievable mischief, in the intercourse of the commercial world."

Let judgment be entered for the plaintiff Bank for \$500 and costs of protest, and interest to date, and interest to date of payment, together with the costs of this action."

An English Joke. It is some time since the late Sheppard Homans quitted forever the scene of his actuarial labors, yet an advertisement in the New York *Spectator* informs us that he may still be consulted on insurance matters at his office in New York. We very much doubt whether any respectable spiritualistic medium would consent to establish communication on so prosaic a subject.—*Insurance Observer*, London.

A contemporary published the above item under the heading of "an English Joke," and proceeds to ask what are evidently intended to be the following funny questions:

"Then how do Crosse & Blackwell in your town still make pickles, Thomas Holloway make ointment and a few pills, Day & Martin make blacking, and Madam Taussaud run the wax 'figger' show at Baker street?"

The cases of insurance and pickles are not parallel. We join the *Insurance Observer* of London in very properly expressed doubts as to the possibility of es-

tablishing communication with the spiritualistic shade of Sheppard Homans, the celebrated actuary, and we question the business morality of advertising him as being at an office in New York for consultation.

But the pickles named we have always with us, the pills are never failing in supply or effect, the blacking still shines like the sun, and the wax "figgers" of Baker street have not yet melted, but still delight the young and curious. No one can object to the names of successful men being used to perpetuate their business.

Consultation with the late Mr. Homans is not possible; but we are able to relish the pickles of Messrs. Crosse & Blackwell which still bear their name as evidence of excellence.

Under a Neutral Flag. On the street, in the office, at the home fireside, we frequently hear this question asked: "what effect would war between the United States and Spain have upon Canada?" Although no right-thinking Canadian desires to profit by the sorrows and misfortunes of other nations, there can be no harm in predicting that war between the powers named would probably stimulate and increase the trade of Canada in a very marked degree. A neutral flag covers an enemy's goods, with the exception of contraband of war. The possibility of a blockade of any of the great seaports of the States by Spanish ships would doubtless induce a large number of shippers of grain and produce to seek safety under a neutral flag and in a foreign port. In this way many cargoes hitherto dispatched via Portland, New York and other outlets to the Atlantic ocean would doubtless start by the overland route to Montreal, Quebec, Halifax and St. John, for shipment thence to England, or elsewhere, thus assisting in building up the business of the cities named.

Spring Promises. The breaking up of the roads, rivers and lakes is unusually early this year, and the outlook all over the country is promising for business. The reports from trade centres are mostly in keeping with the condition of things revealed by the February statement of the chartered banks, which clearly showed that the improvement in general business noticed last Autumn has been maintained.

With navigation opening earlier than for many years past, and such encouraging news coming in from our manufacturers and merchants, we may reasonably hope for a prosperous year. But the unsettled condition of affairs in the United States is having some influence on the money market, and considerable on stocks. The Banks are reported to be displaying a desire to increase rates and nearly all stocks are declining, presumably owing to the fear of war and the consequent further disturbance of values. But the Spring promises for trade throughout the Dominion are distinctly of a cheerful character.