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DECISIONS IN COMMERCIAL LAW.

ROBINSON, KING & Co. v. LYNES.—A married woman is liable at common law for a debt contracted before her marriage. The Married Woman's Property Act leaves that liability untouched, and judgment can therefore be obtained against her personally.**REID v. WILSON AND WARD; REID v. WILSON AND KING.**—A person who acts merely as the agent for the owner of a hall let for the delivery of lectures on Sunday is not the "keeper" of such hall within 21 Geo. 3, c. 49 (which Act is in force in Ontario), although he sanctions the terms on which the hall is let, and is the person to whom the license for such hall from the local authorities is granted, according to Mathew, J. A person who acts merely as chairman at a lecture delivered in a hall on Sunday to which the public are admitted on payment of small sums, and who had no control over the lecturer or the subject of the lecture, and whose sole authority is derived from the audience, is not liable, under 21 Geo. 3, c. 49, as the "person managing or conducting such entertainment or amusement." Nor is he liable as "master of ceremonies," that term being inapplicable to an entertainment in the form of a lecture. Nor is he liable as chairman, as the words in the section relating to a chairman refer only to the chairman of a meeting for public debate, which a lecture is not.**SMURTHWAITE v. HANNAY.**—Where in a shipment of cotton some of the bales become unidentifiable, the several owners of the cotton become, in point of law, owners in common of the bales in proportion to their respective interests, and in an action by a single owner the shipowner can only attribute such proportion in answer to a claim for non-delivery, according to the English Court of Appeal.**SMITH & SERVICE v. ROSARIO NITRATE Co.**—When a ship is chartered to load at a particular port, the charter-party is taken to have reference to the customary mode of loading at that port; and where, by the custom of the port, the mode of loading minerals is by bringing them from the mines by rail direct to the ship's side, as the bringing of the cargo from the mines is part of the loading, any exceptions in the charter-party to the charterer's liability for demurrage will commence to be applicable as soon as the cargo has left the mines, according to the English Court of Appeal.

UNIQUE SENTENCES.

An original sentence was given lately by a magistrate in Missouri. A man who did not know how to read and write, convicted for a slight offence, was sentenced to imprisonment until he had learned to read. Another offender, who had a good education, was sentenced to keep him company until he had taught him to read. After a short time they were discharged, as they had fulfilled their task to the full satisfaction of the magistrate.—*Detroit Free Press.*

WHAT CONSTITUTES A VALID WILL?

Identification of the testator's signature and clear evidence as to his intentions, is all that is really necessary to constitute a valid will, as is well exemplified in the subjoined document by John Morris, who died in Philadelphia recently, leaving an estate valued at \$2,800. This will was admitted to probate after proper identification;

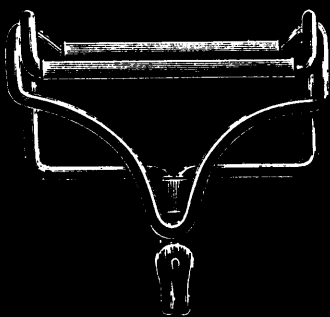
"Philadelphia, Aug. 16, 1894.

"This shall be found, Sallie, when I am gone; and, Mamma, I shall leave all to you, and you, Mamma, shall be a Jardean over Annie, and if the boys help you through at your death, let what is left be equal divided among them. It won't be long before they will miss me.

JOHN MORRIS."

—*The Albany Law Journal.*

COPYRIGHT SUITS.

In order to test the legality of English publishers sending over to Canada printed matter for sale here, Mr. R. T. Lancefield, librarian of the Hamilton Public Library, has, through his solicitors, issued writs against Frederick Warne & Co., of London, Eng., and the Anglo-Canadian Music Publishers' Association of Toronto, for alleged violations of the Copyright Act. The action against Warne & Co. is for selling Max O'Rell's "John Bull," and that against the Music Publishers' Association is for the well-known song, "The Man that Broke the Bank at Monte Carlo." In both cases, the publications are printed abroad, imported, and stamped to imply that they are copyrighted in Canada. But Mr. Lancefield holds they are violations of the Act, as it states that such works, to be copyright in Canada, must be printed here. Mr. Lancefield hopes, by the actions entered, to have English publishers understand that they must observe the Canadian copyright laws.—*Canadian Bookseller.*—Reports compiled by the *Manufacturers' Record* show that the Southern States this year produced more than one-third of the total corn crop of the United States.

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