

employés en cours de route n'était nullement dégagee par l'article précité; et que dans l'espèce le chien avait été égaré dans le transbordement d'un wagon à un autre; que la Compagnie n'avait pas fait la preuve du mauvais état de la laisse et au surplus qu'il lui appartenait de l'examiner au départ et de prendre les précautions nécessaires.

La valeur du chien ayant été estimée trois cents francs, la Compagnie du Nord a été condamnée au paiement de cette somme et aux dépens.—(Du JOURNAL DE PARIS, rapport de Maître Louis Albert.)

(J. J. H.)

LIBEL SUITS AGAINST NEWSPAPERS.

Mr. Labouchère having triumphantly put his latest assailant in a libel suit under his feet, naturally enough falls to criticising the libel laws of England. He shows successfully not only that he ought to have been acquitted as he was acquitted of libelling Lambri, but that he ought never to have been subjected to the annoyance and expense of defending himself against Lambri, since it was perfectly clear that in stating the truth about Lambri as he stated it he was rendering the community an important service. Mr. Labouchère's point strikes directly at a mischievous notion to which American judges cling as if it were a necessity of social existence. Mr. Labouchère says that the English law recognizes no distinction as between the publication in good faith or in bad faith of a false statement, and that the English law allows a jury to mulct a journalist or a private letter-writer in discretionary damages, no matter whether such journalist or such writer wrote in good or in bad faith. In other words the law assumes that every false statement must be a malicious statement, and equally malicious whether made with good or with bad intent. Fresh from a thorough exposition of the law of libel made by eminent Queen's counsel and a Lord Chief Justice, Mr. Labouchère thus puts his case: "Surely criminal law should make a distinction between good faith and bad faith in regard to published matter. In the former case there can be no moral criminality, and nothing is more obnoxious to justice than to

make a legal distinction between what is morally and what is legally criminal. Supposing that a person was to poison an entire family in South America, and having been tried and condemned to death for the crime, were to escape and come over to England. Were I to know of his having become an inmate of an English family and that he had with him a carefully assorted selection of potent poisons, I might be criminally prosecuted were I to warn the family by letter. And at the trial it would not suffice for me to prove that he had been condemned to death for murder in South America, but I should have to prove that he actually did murder, otherwise I should be liable to fine and imprisonment." We doubt if any judge would commit for contempt a juror who should determine for himself that in no circumstances would he ever convict or mulct a writer who could be proved to have written in good faith and without malice what he had reason to believe to be true. In this city not long ago a journal was mulcted in \$1,500 damages for making a statement which was admitted to be true as to a person named we will say Smith, and innocently applying the statement to another person named Smith, living in immediate proximity with the first Smith, though the second Smith was not shown to have been injured by the misapplication. Moreover, the appellate judges upheld the damages and laid down the doctrine that the law should make no difference between good or bad faith in such a matter.—*N. Y. World.*

GENERAL NOTES.

The Act passed last month by the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, "to prevent the Immigration of Chinese," has been disallowed by the Dominion Government.

The sudden death of Earl Cairns was reported by cable, April 2. Deceased was born in 1819; called to the bar in 1844; appointed one of Her Majesty's counsel in 1856; solicitor-general in 1858, and attorney-general in 1866. The same year he succeeded Lord Justice Knight Bruce in the Court of Appeal. In February, 1868, he became Lord Chancellor in Mr. Disraeli's Ministry, but left office in December of that year on the resignation of the Government. He became Lord Chancellor a second time in 1874, and held office until 1880.