

A UNITED STATES circuit court in Wisconsin has held that a merchant is liable for false representation made to a mercantile agency. A merchant named Powers, of that state, represented to Bradstreet's agency that his assets amounted to \$9,500, with liabilities of \$2,400. On the strength of this showing he was supplied with goods; but he shortly after failed, when it appeared that the statement was false. He was subsequently arrested, charged with obtaining goods under fraudulent pretenses. The court held that the merchant was liable for the false representations made to the mercantile agency, whereby others had been defrauded, just the same as if he had falsely represented his financial standing directly to those from whom he obtained credit. The plaintiff therefore recovered judgment in the case. This decision will be especially interesting to those who rely largely upon mercantile agencies in extending credits, and also to retailers generally.

PROHIBITION is a burning question in Newfoundland just now. A strong effort has lately been made in that colony to secure a legal enactment prohibiting the importation, manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors. A local option law has been on the statute books for some years, and has been enforced in several districts, but this seemed only to whet the appetites of the prohibition advocates for more radical enactments. A measure was introduced into the Legislature providing for the taking of the popular vote upon the question of prohibition, but an amendment to the effect that a committee should be appointed to investigate the subject, was carried by the casting vote of the speaker. Rum is the popular beverage in Newfoundland, but the people are shown to be very temperate as a whole, in comparison with other countries, and the temperance sentiment has been gaining ground steadily. For instance in 1857 about 237,000 gallons of rum were imported, or about two gallons per head of population. Last year the returns showed only 59,000 gallons, or at the rate of one-fourth of a gallon per head. As this is almost the only drink used by the working classes, it shows a very light consumption of liquor per capita. The argument which seems to have the strongest force in Newfoundland against prohibition was, that by prohibiting the importation of liquors from such countries as Spain and Portugal, retaliation might be resorted to on the part of these countries by placing a duty on Newfoundland fish. The two countries named are the best customers for fish which the Island Colony has. The vast coast line which would have to be protected from smugglers, was also an important consideration, especially in view of the fact that the neighboring French islands of St Pierre could be made a base from which the illicit trade could be carried on. Other features discussed, such as revenue, etc., were very similar to those influencing a prohibitive movement in this country. The close vote in the Legislature would indicate that public opinion in Newfoundland has been "educated" according to the views of the prohibitionists to a much greater extent than in Canada, and a strong prohibitory enactment may therefore be adopted in the near future.

THE advance announced in the freight rates between Montreal and the Pacific coast and Winnipeg and the Coast did not hold out long. The advance was to go into force at the same time that the Interstate law in the United States was to come into operation, and which would have had the effect of preventing United States roads from competing with the C.P.R. However the railway commissioners decided that the "long and short haul" clause of the act would not be enforced for seventy-five days from the date at which the balance of the act came into operation, and consequently there was nothing left for the C.P.R. Co. but to return to their old freight rates on traffic from Winnipeg and eastern points to Vancouver, on a basis of competition with United States roads. The reduction in rates from Montreal to Vancouver was announced some time ago, and last week new rates were also announced from Winnipeg to Pacific coast points. The latest rates, in comparison with the recently advanced table are as follows:—

#### OLD RATES.

From Winnipeg to Victoria, Vancouver and New Westminster.

Class No.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
	3.64	3.04	2.60	2.15	1.90	1.60	1.41	—	—	1.08

#### NEW RATES.

Class No.	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
	2.14	1.70	1.41	1.27	1.09	.93	.81	—	—	.70

THE opening of the C.P.R. to the Pacific coast has brought this country more closely into relationship with the Pacific coast of the Asiatic continent. It is therefore with more than usual interest that we read in the *Victoria Times*, a letter from a correspondent in Japan, detailing some valuable information about that country. Heretofore there has been very little commercial intercourse between Canada and the Island Kingdom of Asia, with its population of nearly 40,000,000. The correspondent states that last year the tea exports of Japan were over 46,000,000 pounds, almost the entire portion of which went to North America, billed either to San Francisco or to New York, in the latter case via the Suez Canal. The other principal exports of Japan are rice, raw silk, 15,000 bales of which went to the United States last year, silk goods, tobacco, camphor oil, antimony, copper, sulphur, rapeseed, and a great quantity of fancy articles, such as fans, screens, paperware, porcelain, etc. These articles have heretofore come into Canada from the United States, but with the establishment of the line of steamers between Vancouver and Japan, no doubt this trade will be done direct with the producers of the goods. What Canada may send to Japan it is hardly yet known, though lumber and fish are mentioned as articles likely to find a good market in that country. The Japanese have made rapid progress in adopting European civilization, and the *Times* correspondent tells us that European styles of dress are now being generally adopted by the upper and middle classes. As to the latter move, it is a question, if the Japanese are not taking a retrograde step. Their own style of dress is really more in keeping with comfort and the dictates of nature than many of the monstrosities which the people of the "civilized world" are compelled to wear in the name of fashion. Japan is just now enjoy-

ing a season of great industrial development, and new manufacturing enterprises are the order of the day. These lie mainly in the direction of manufacturing railway material and building railways; also in manufacturing textile fabrics, especially such as are required owing to the change in the style of dress.

OUR present Governor General, though not so brilliant an orator as Lord Dufferin, and lacking the characteristic Irish ability to please and flatter which the latter possessed in such a high degree, has nevertheless proved himself a fairly good speaker, and what is better a practical thinker and reasoner. Canada, freed to a great extent from the stifling influences of flunkeyism has perhaps developed in Lord Lansdown a more radical train of thought. The last sentence may do His Excellency an injustice, for he may have been as liberal and practical in his views ere he stepped on Canadian soil and inhaled the free Canadian air. At any rate if he possessed these characteristics in any marked degree previous to his coming to this country in the capacity of Governor General, his residence in Canada could not but have caused progression in the same direction. His late speech before the National Club at Toronto is one which is not only worthy of being read, but read carefully and studiously by every Canadian. It contained many practical thoughts worthy of more than a cursory attention. His words showed clearly that whilst regarding party organization as a necessity, he greatly depreciated that blind attachment which transfers personal allegiance to party instead of to the country. This rabid adhesion to party is the bane and the one great menace to Canadian national life, and His Excellency's remarks showed that he had become aware of this painful fact during his brief sojourn in this country. Referring to the object of the National Club, he said:—"It is, however, not against party government simply, but against the abuse of party; against the postponement of patriotism to party which your club has protested; against the habit of committing our consciences to the custody of others—the habit of first making up our minds that whatever our opponents do must be wrong and then discovering ingenious reasons for justifying our opinion—that habit of deliberately shutting our eyes to what can be said on the side opposed to that upon which we happen to have taken our own stand. \* \* \* The consolidation of the empire may be a very good thing, but he would be blind to what is going on amongst us at this moment who did not see that the consolidation of the Dominion was a subject not less deserving of the attention of those who are concerned for its future welfare." Speaking of Imperial Federation, His Excellency declared that he had not yet seen a scheme formulated and worthy to be called a scheme of Imperial Confederation which would have been likely to work in practice for six months. He thought it better for Canadians to rely upon themselves rather than on "any of those ingenious schemes for the creation of an Imperial Legislature, in which Canadian member would sit by the side of representatives from the antipodes to vote upon questions in which they have no common interest."