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DECISIONS IN COMMERCIAL LAW.

LA COMPAGNIE POUR L'ECLAIRAGE AU GAZ

DE ST. HYACINTHE V. LA COMPAGNIE DES Pouvoirs Hydrauliques de St. Hyacinthe. -In 1881 a municipal by-law of the city of St. Hyacinthe granted to a company incorporated under a general Act, C.S.C., c. 65, the exclusive privilege for twenty-five years of manufacturing and selling gas in that city, and in 1882 the company obtained a special Act of incorporation, 45 Vic., c. 79, s. 5 of which provided that all the powers and privileges conferred upon the said company as organized under the said general Act, either by the terms of the Act itself or by resolution, by-law or agreement of the said city of St. Hyacinthe, are hereby reaffirmed and confirmed to the company as incorporated under the present Act, including their right to break up, etc., the streets . . . and in addition it shall be lawful for the company, in substitution for gas, or in connection therewith, or in addition thereto, to manufacture, use and sell electric, galvanic or other artificial light . . . with the same privilege, and subject to the same liabilities as are applicable to the manufacture, use and disposal of illuminating gas under the provisions of this Act." The Supreme Court of Canada held, affirming the decision of the Court of Queen's Bench of Quebec, that the above section did not give the company the exclusive right for twenty-five years to manufacture and sell electric light; that it was a private Act notwithstanding it contained a clause declaring it to be a public Act, and the city was not a party and in no way assented to it; that in constructing it the court would treat it as a contract between the promoters and the Legislature, and apply the maxim verba fortius accidiuntur contra trothe maxim verba fortius accipiuntur contra proferentem, especially where exorbitant powers are conferred, that the right to sell and make electric light "with the same privilege" as was applicable to gas, did not confer such monopoly, but gave a new privilege as to electricity, entirely unconnected with the former purposes of the company: and that the word "privilege" there used could be referred to the right to break up streets, and did not necessarily mean the exclusive privilege claimed.

EXTRAVAGANT WIVES' DEBTS.

Another variation of the wearisome theme of husbands' liability for debts incurred by their wives has just been heard in the Doncaster County Court. A traveling draper sued a laborer for £6 7s., due for goods supplied to his wife. The latter admitted having had the goods, and the husband denied liability, on the ground that he knew nothing of the transactions, and gave his wife twenty-two shillings a week for housekeeping purposes. The plea of the woman was like that of Eve on a historic occasion: "The draper tempted me and I did buy." One item in the account was a pair of curtains at £1 3s.; a nice and suitable adornment for a house run on £1 2s. a week. Clearly the creditor was to blame for supplying such articles to such a customer; and probably it was this consideration which induced the judge, in giving judgment against the debtor, to order the payments to be at the rate of one shilling per month. Thus it will be nearly eleven years before the creditor receives the last instalment, and many things may happen in the interval.—Drapery World.

-In dredging the harbor at Port Dover the remains of a ship that has been sunk there 48 years were removed.

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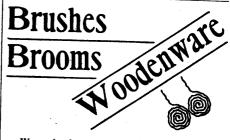
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