

greatly raised the price, sometimes making perhaps not less than the difference between forty and seventy cents a bushel. The American duty is about equal to half the augmentation of the price in Canada resulting from the American demand. The American demand varies in its activity and the price varies accordingly. Latterly the demand has been feeble, and the price has gone down greatly in consequence, fully thirty cents a bushel in a single year. Who pays the duty? Who pays the increased price of the barley in Canada? Sir John is a great economist, and for once Mr. Wiman consented to be his prophet. But between the two they have only managed to give a false general idea of who pays the duty.

#### CRUEL TREATMENT OF THE MUTUAL RESERVE.

The Mutual Reserve Fund Life Association, with true American enterprise, sought to enlighten the old countries of Europe as to how cheap life assurance might be had. Finding what they called "conspiracies" formed to oppose them abroad, by people who did not, any more than thousands in the States, believe in their methods, they made bold to bring a law-suit against a man in Great Britain who had expressed an opinion adverse to the permanent success of the association and to the character of its management. The result was a farthing damages, in the face of a very strong raking fire from the Chief Justice, who tried the case in London.

Another country whose inhabitants it sought to enlighten and to make something out of was the United Kingdom of Sweden and Norway. But the extraordinarily loud professions of the Mutual Reserve attracted so much suspicious criticism that the Government appointed, in September last, a commissioner to ascertain the said company's methods of doing business, its security to policy-holders, &c., it being "the general opinion that the company's agents promise more than they possibly can fulfil."

In October that functionary made his report to his Majesty's Cabinet, declaring that in his opinion "the proper course to follow will be to compel the company to wind up its business in Sweden and Norway, and make restitution to its present policy-holders. The company's assets are so insignificant that not the least guarantee is given the people who invest their money." In consequence, the Minister of the Interior prepared a bill to be passed by the Rigsdag.

The suit they brought in England was to recover damages for slander from Mr. Wm. Reid, who is inspector of agents for the Westminster and General Life. A Covent Garden fruit merchant named Hiatt, who wanted to surrender a policy he had in the Westminster and take one out in the Mutual Reserve, had spoken to Reid about the matter, and received the advice from Reid to do nothing so foolish as to leave a company which was sound and well known and go into this new concern because it was cheaper. "You will lose your money," he added, "and your wife and representatives will get nothing

when you are dead." To this he added some more abusive things as to the *personnel* of the agents or managers.

The case came on in the Queen's Bench Division, in London, last month before the Lord Chief Justice and a special jury. Mr. Wm. Henry Hayward, general manager of the plaintiff company, declared that the Mutual Reserve had deposited £20,000 with the Board of Trade, and gave some evidence as to its printed by-laws. The Chief Justice said that what struck him as the oppressive part of the policy was that it made the existing by-laws, or any changed by-law, which the man might never have seen, binding, up to forfeiture. Mr. Reid admitted that he had formed the opinion from reading life insurance literature that the system on which plaintiff company was conducted was radically unsound, that it could not meet its engagements, and he had heard besides that the Mutual Reserve had a very bad character for disputing its policies on the death of its members.

The London Daily Standard of November 1st, which reports the case, gives the judge's remarks:—

The Lord Chief Justice, in summing up, mildly censured the defendant's language as having exceeded the limits of the occasion. But on the question of damage he stated, that having read through the policies and considered the way the plaintiffs carried on their business, "compared with English companies it seems extremely different. A bargain is a bargain; but nothing can be more full of pitfalls for the unwary than the documents now before us. For instance, the medical man, who is the agent of the assured, is asked to state if the proposed client has ever had any nervous or muscular trouble. Has anybody been so well that he has not had nervous and muscular trouble? (Laughter.) But if a man overworks himself for a week or two and has to go away, and it is not stated, his policy is gone. Again, the doctor is asked to state whether the man is predisposed to coughing or expectoration. (Here the plaintiff's counsel intervened to say that such a statement as this was the doctor's statement, not that of the man.)

The Chief Justice said:—It is a statement made by the agent of the assured. A medical man is made by the terms of the contract the agent of the assured for answering medical questions, and if any statement was wrong the policy was vitiated. \* \* Then there is the statement the man himself has to make; he has to give the age and cause of death of his father's father and mother and his mother's father and mother. If any mistake is made in this, the policy is null and void." His Lordship then read a long list of complaints which a man was asked whether he had suffered from, "including bronchitis—which I once heard Lord Campbell describe as a bad cold—colic, which we used to call stomach-ache—(laughter)—consumption or any form of trouble referable to the lungs, and difficulty in swallowing, or any symptoms indicating disease of the heart or neighboring vessels. Then he is asked: 'Have you had any ailment, disease, injury, or illness within the last five years?'"

Mr. Willis, one of the counsel, here said that these questions were put in regard to most policies.

The Chief Justice: "They are not in any of the policies I have signed, I am glad to say."

After being out deliberating for half an hour or more, the jury awarded one farthing damages to the Mutual Reserve Fund Life. The impression one gets from reading the full report of the case is that its effect must be injurious to the future success in Great Britain of this energetically "boomed" association. It is pretended that the opposition to the Mutual Reserve comes from the other life offices, which are "prejudiced" against the new light from across the Atlantic. Supposing this to be true, will any one believe that there are not in Great Britain as many shrewd people to the square mile as in America? And if these sensible men are satisfied that the new company is a valuable benefactor will not they be very willing to get benefit and save money by patronizing it? The Chief Justice who tried the case may, we think, be trusted to be unbiassed. And his view, after examining the company's literature and methods, was distinctly unfavorable.

#### WHOLESALE GROCERS' GUILD.

At a meeting of the Grocers' Guild, held in the city a few days ago, the much-vexed question of the excise law relating to tobacco was brought before the members. The cancellation of the revenue stamp has to be effected in such a way as to require considerable care, and if improperly done the retailer, in whose possession the box is found, is liable to fine. It was thought that the wholesaler from whom the tobacco was purchased and who paid the duty should protect the retailer, as it was the former who should see to the proper cancellation of the stamp. But a much more irritating restriction is that which makes a person liable to punishment should he be found with more than a pound of tobacco in his possession, outside of the original package, a regulation which the Revenue department contends is necessary to prohibit the illicit manufacture. A deputation will shortly interview the Government with a view to having such harsh measures modified.

#### DRY GOODS.

Montreal and Toronto, Hamilton and London, tell substantially the same story about trade in this line for the past week or two. It is lifeless, "insignificant," disappointing, "indifferent," and so on, according to the mood or experience of the wholesale man or the traveller who writes. Wet weather will account largely for the dulness now existing but not for that of previous weeks. Remittances have been backward, too, in fact the state of retail business is unsatisfactory and the feeling is the reverse of restful. City retailers are encouraged by the rise shown at the London wool sales now going on, and by the firm feeling in almost all textiles. From Halifax, Leicester, and Leeds, the latest news is all of the same tenor, namely, that wool is buoyant, hosiery active, tweeds steady, cashmere yarns advanced, blankets brisk. The Kidderminster carpet trade is "in an encouraging state." The linen makers of Fifehire are well employed, and the output of floor-cloth and linoleum very large and growing larger.

A letter from a Montreal buyer, visiting the Chemnitz industries in Saxony and other German manufacturing centres states that both prices and delivery of goods thereabout are

likely to be unsatisfactory. wide-spread dissatisfactions. Makers are accepting orders for the further extension already injured. It appears that goods are coming American dry goods and large buyers manufacturers of reported full of orders until June. have jumped from ago, to two shillings far-seeing Bradfords £50,000 by the addition of line of wools large anticipation of failure.

#### TIMBER AND

The Berlin mill shut down for the will be employed.

The woods of the rotary saw mill paper.

At Robinson, in M. Pope is enlarged to get out more logs.

There is to be a at East Angus. was down from M ing out a site. T be commenced so wood is to be the made.

Winnipeg advice ence to a matter issue of the 15th feet of logs were side of the Rainy tin people indign American press that they were purchasing der the supervision Minnesota."

The quantity of got out in Cumb is said to be removed the Sackville-Pos

the place, Parrs paid for squaring vessels will be built

Across Minas E work is going on R. E. Burgess has in King's County will be launched

Easton's firm has under way at Es be launched next

that J. B. North two vessels for the port, in the coun railway is being

12 or 13 miles long touching at Can

A magnificent "withering oak, inches in girth in and found to have interval of 145 years.

It is stated by the lumber ship United Kingdom the season just 1888, are as follows