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IMPORTANT BANK DRAFT DECISION.

A recent decision of the Illinois Supreme Court involving the paying of money on a fraudulent raised or altered cheque which was certified by the bank on which it was drawn after the change is naturally of great importance to bankers generally. The decision was in the case of the Metropolitan National Bank vs. the Merchants National Bank, both of Chicago, and establishes the following propositions, which we find condensed in the Bankers' Monthly :-

First—Where a cheque or draft dranw upon a bank has been traudulently raised or altered after it was drawn, the rule is well settled that money which has been paid by a bank upon such a fraudulently raised or altered cheque, may be recovered back from the party to whom it was paid, in an action for money had and received, on the ground that the payment was without consideration and made by mistake.

Second-The fact that the bank on which it was drawn has certified the cheque after the change has been made, is not conclusive against such bank, nor does it preclude it from showing the fact of such alteration, nor even a recovery from the party who receive the cheque on the faith and credit of the certificate alone.

Third-The bank is not bound to know anything more than the drawer's signature, and in the absence of any circumstance which inflicts injury upon another party, there is no reason why the bank should not be reimbursed. Its certification of the cheque does not preclude it from showing an alteration, nor does its teller's declaration, after he has examined it, that it is right in every particular.

Fourth-Where the customer has a deposit account with the bankers on which he is accustomed to deposit cheques payable to himself and which are entered on his pass-book, and to draw against such deposits, an indorsement of the words "for deposit" on a cheque so deposited is, in the absence of a different understanding, presumptive of more than mere agency or authority to collect.

The decision ratifies the opinion of the New York Court of Appeals in the case of Marine Bank vs. National City Bank, 59 N.Y., 67. The court there held that "a bank by certifying a cheque in the usual form simply certifies to the genuineness of the signature of the drawer and that he has funds sufficient to meet it, and engages that those funds will not be withdrawn from the bank by him; it does not warrant the genuineness of the body of the cheque either as to payee or amount.

It is also apparent from the facts in the case that perforation, as a safeguard against fraudulent alteration of cheques and drafts, cannot be relied on absolutely.

THE Merchants Bank of Halifax, according to the Bras d'Or Gazette, is fitting up an office in Louisburg to open up a branch office in that town. And the agency building of the Union Bank of Halifax in St. Peters is now practically finished. The agent, Mr. Gray, has arranged neat offices, three in number, with also an apartment running the length of the building for customers. The counter with its wickets of antique copper finish, with cherry top running its entire length, adds greatly to the appearance of the interior.

PETER CAMPBELL'S elevator at Glenboro, Man., was burned down Wednesday night of last week, with 10,000 bushels of wheat. There is \$5,000 insurance.

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