

It has been the cause of deep regret to Her Majesty's Government that, owing to his premature death, the personal discussion from which they had hoped that a satisfactory solution of this vexed question might result, did not take place.

The grave objections to some of the provisions of the Canadian Act in its present form, and the international difficulties and complications to which it would give rise if it were allowed to come into operation, have been fully dealt with in previous communications, and the correspondence which has taken place has failed so far to bring about even an approximation of view between Her Majesty's Government and your Ministers.

In these circumstances I am reluctant to continue a controversial correspondence from which no result seems likely to be gained, and the only course which appears to me to offer any prospect of a solution, is that, as soon as convenient, one of your Ministers, or some gentleman duly authorised by them and fully conversant with the subject, should come over and discuss the matter personally with Her Majesty's Government.

The interests in this country affected by the measure are extensive and powerful, and the persons concerned have become seriously alarmed, whilst those in Canada whose interests are at stake may naturally be becoming impatient at the delay which has taken place; and I trust, therefore, that your Lordship will press the suggestion of a personal conference on your Ministers as preferable to a further interchange of Despatches.

I have, &c.

RIPON.

No. 92.

THE SOCIETY OF AUTHORS to COLONIAL OFFICE.

(Received March 21, 1895.)

[*Answered by No. 103.*]

4, Portugal Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, W.C.,

MY LORD,

March 20, 1895.

I HAVE much pleasure in forwarding to you, for your consideration, the petition of authors, publishers, and all those interested in copyright in the United Kingdom against the Canadian Copyright Act. All the signatures have been copied on to the main roll, but the separate copies of the petition with the original signatures are attached in the packets forwarded herewith, and correspond to the letters or numbers on the main roll.

I am, &c.

G. HERBERT THRING,

Secretary of the Incorporated
Society of Authors.

Enclosure in No. 92.

To the Most Honourable the MARQUESS of RIPON, K.G., G.C.S.I., Her Majesty's
Secretary of State for the Colonies.

THE HUMBLE PETITION of the undersigned Authors, Artists, Publishers, and Copyright
Owners of Great Britain and Ireland.

Sheweth:

That a Bill entitled "An Act to amend the Copyright Act," chap. 62 of the Revised Statutes, passed through both Houses of Parliament of the Dominion of Canada, and now awaiting the assent of Her Majesty, is subversive of the principle which has hitherto governed copyright legislation in this country and on the Continent of Europe, is calculated to destroy the international arrangement known as the Berne Convention, and is likely to provoke retaliatory legislation by the Government of the United States.

And that the provision of the above-mentioned Act, whereby any Canadian publisher may republish the work of any British author, without his consent, which has fallen into the public domain in any form and at any time, on the sole condition of paying such author a royalty of 10 per centum on the published price of such work is unjust and impracticable. Further, that it is a retrograde step, inasmuch as the rights of authors are now, after long struggle, obtaining increased recognition throughout the civilized world.

Also that the provision whereby a period of one month only after first publication is allowed during which a British author may become entitled to exclusive copyright within the Dominion of Canada is insufficient.