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SIR JOHN THOMPSON, having once put his hand to the plough, does not look back. He continues to urge with undiminished zeal the claims of this country to enact final copyright legislation to which all holders shall be subject. In his opinion Canada's competence to legislate on copyright is as full and clearly conveyed in the British North America Act as is her power to control her own tariff. This opinion is embodied, and unanimously endorsed by both houses of Parliament, in his Canadian Copyright Act of 1889, in which Parliament undertakes to put limits on the English copyright holder's absolute power to prevent the publication of his book, in this country, such prevention being in the interests of publishers outside of this country. This Act still awaits the assent of the British Government to a proclamation to bring it into force. The time during which the measure may stand in this suspense is two years. If it does not receive by the end of that period the royal proclamation necessary to usher it among the laws of our country, it must be considered as disallowed. The two years are now very nearly up, and rather than permit the claims put forward in the Act to lapse, Sir John Thompson on the 29th ult. moved an address of the House to her majesty on the subject. The address was passed without discussion.

The memorial represents substantially: That under the Imperial Acts of 1839 and 1843, the privilege of copyright was given to any subject or resident of the Empire who should publish a literary

work in the United Kingdom; and that by the same Acts the republication within the empire, or the importation into the empire of such work was forbidden. The inconvenience attending these conditions led to several formal remonstrances from the various legislatures of the North American colonies. To these remonstrances, Earl Grey, then Colonial Secretary, had transmitted a circular reply, in November 1846, to all the governors of the colonies, informing them that her majesty's government had decided on proposing measures in the very next session of Parliament to endow the colonial legislatures with the power to pass such laws or ordinances respecting copyright as they might see fit, such legislation to have the effect of repealing the Imperial Acts in any respect wherein the former conflicted with the latter. This promise the address next states was never fulfilled. It asserts that the right to legislate on copyright was conceded in the B. N. A. of 1867, but that every Canadian copyright measure passed since then was regarded by the British government as requiring the sanction of the parliament of the United Kingdom, and that this sanction had so far been withheld from the Canadian Act of 1889. The provisions of this Act are shown to be such as are required by the interests of the Canadian people, and not to be unfair to any part of her majesty's subjects. As the question whether Canada is constitutionally competent to pass such an Act appears to be one on which doubts have been thrown in England, the memorial asks that a statute be passed in the Imperial Parliament to give effect to the Canadian Act of 1889, to carry out the promise made in 1846. Attention is called to the recommendation in 1876, of the royal commissioners on copyright, to concede to colonial legislatures the very power which is necessary to make such an Act as this one law. The address prays that her majesty will therefore invite such legislation in the Parliament of the United Kingdom as will remove all doubts of Canada's competency to pass this Act, and confer upon Canada the power to legislate in the interest of its people on all copyright matters, regardless of Imperial statutes passed before Confederation. To give full effect to the Act, notice is asked to be given that Canada withdraws from the Berne Copyright Convention.

It is not a common thing for a colonial house of commons to resort to an address to accelerate imperial action. In this case it was necessary. The reasons submitted for the allowing of the Act are strong ones. In the first place, the promise of the Colonial Secretary forty-five years ago, ought to be redeemed. It places a moral obligation on the British Government to introduce such a measure as that to which Earl Grey's circular had so explicitly committed the Government of his day. In the second place, the claim that Canada possesses the power, under the Act of Confederation, can be backed up by as strong argument as the opinion that Canada does not possess the power. In the third place, the Act ought to be allowed because the interests of the Canadian people demand it, while it does no injustice to publishers or authors in the United Kingdom. Finally, the recommendation of the royal commission on copyright in 1876 is in favor of such power being granted to all the colonies. In opposition to these reasons what is there? Nothing but the selfishness of holders of copyright taken out in the United Kingdom. They are not Canadians and therefore have no interest in seeing the growth of a publishing industry in this country. They have a moral right to pay, in the form of copyright, royalty or license tax, for the product of their brains, when it is used by a publisher in any country, the same as the owner of anything else that is used as raw material by a manufacturer has a right to pay for it. But they have no right to act the dog in the manger. If they will not publish their works here themselves, they should not have it in their power to prevent other enterprising people from publishing them, upon payment of a fair tribute to the holders of the copyright. There are some questions already cropping out, whose proper solution can be arrived at in no other way than by such copyright legislation as is embodied in the Act of 1889. The movement some time ago on the part of the Employing Printers' Association to have a heavier duty put on a certain class of books, would have had no motive were this Act law, and were the power exercised which it confers upon the Governor in council, to prohibit the importation from any but British sources of books sufficiently supplied by native publishers.