

will require a bill with a great many more clauses than the one under consideration. He was not certain what is the best course to pursue, but rather favored action by the Government if any were taken, as the question is of sufficient magnitude to justify the Government taking it into consideration.

Dr. Willoughby (Conservative, Northumberland) had a strong conviction that a great deal of harm was being done to ordinary business by the departmental store, but he was not sure that the proposition before the House was not an undue interference with private liberty. However, the subject was too important to be dealt with by a private member.

Mr. Connec (Liberal, Algoma) said that the evil could be remedied by a change in the assessment law, or by a change in the method of making the assessment. He hoped the Government would be able to put the House in possession of further information on the subject next session.

The question was finally shelved until next session—after the elections—when a committee of the House will investigate it.

#### A FEATURE OF THE REGULAR TRADE.

There was one noticeable feature this year in the character of the holiday stock kept by some of the regular booksellers in Montreal. There was less of the cheap class of books, and of those books whose sales are practically confined to the holiday season. This is the effect of departmental store competition. There is no doubt that this class of books can be bought more cheaply at such stores than at a regular bookstore. And the reason is obvious. A departmental store buys a large number of each book and gets a job price. It can consequently let them go at a cheaper rate. Buyers unfortunately do not expect as much from the book counter of a department store as they do of a bookseller, and put up with a lack of choice there of which they would complain in a regular bookstore. This is to be deplored, but it is a fact.

This action on the part of some of the Montreal booksellers relieves them no doubt of a certain amount of worry, and there is certainly not such a handsome profit to be made from that class of trade. Moreover, the more substantial class of goods is salable all the year round. At the same time it leaves this part of the field clear for the departmental store, and the question may well be asked, will people who are compelled to go to the departmental stores for cheap editions and the class of book having a purely Christmas sale not continue to give their patronage to the same place through

out the year? It may be added, however, that a host of buyers of this class of goods are holiday buyers only.

#### A HIT AT THE PUBLISHER.

Rev. Prof. Campbell, LL.D., of the Presbyterian College, Montreal, scores the Canadian publisher pretty severely in the January number of *The Presbyterian College Journal*. He says: "The publishing methods of Canada at the present day are simple, and involve the easy-going publisher in no risk. He sends the bills of printer and binder in to the author, and after these have been paid, gives him credit for a percentage of what he sells. This is very encouraging to native talent! The reason why Dr. Briggs is favored above other Canadian publishers is that he is careful and conscientious in making his returns, even in regard to trifling amounts, while other publishers are careless and rather think they honor the author by bleeding him freely and making him no returns. The enemy of Canadian literature is the Canadian publisher. Hundreds of valuable manuscripts, that the world would be the richer by possessing, are locked away in desks of authors who have not the wherewithal to pay for the honor of publicity."

We object to Prof. Campbell's criticism for the reason that it resembles the anger of the worthy Scotsman who "swore at large." He does not discriminate or specify. The reference to Dr. Briggs is, of course, strictly in accordance with the facts. There are other publishers in Canada with a reputation equally high. We do not know of any publisher who deserves the condemnation of the professor. As to native literature, give the Canadian publisher some privileges in his own market before you condemn him for not doing more than he does for the Canadian author. Prof. Campbell is a man of high talent, and a just man withal. Yet in this case we think he is unjust.

#### A CHANGE IN THE QUEBEC SYSTEM.

The Education bill which has just passed the Quebec Legislature is designed to make things somewhat easier for the bookseller who carries a large stock of school books. Practically the only clause which affects the trade is that looking to the simplification of the text book system, so that the series of

books used will be uniform over the province, and not as now, leaving a considerable choice of text books to the teacher and trustees. Instead of two or three sets of text books on one subject the bookseller will have to keep but one when the bill comes into operation. Moreover, the intention is to have fewer changes in text books, which will not leave the dealer with so much dead stock as formerly.

#### DEATH OF MR. MAOLEAR.

CANADA'S OLDEST BOOKSELLER AND PUBLISHER PASSES OVER TO THE MAJORITY.

THE death in Montreal of Thomas Maclear at the age of 83 removes an old timer in the Toronto book and publishing business. Mr. Maclear was born in Strabane, County Tyrone, Ireland, in August, 1815, and came to Canada in 1842, representing Messrs. Black & Son, Glasgow. He settled in Toronto, and conducted a well-known bookstore on Yonge street, two doors above King. Afterwards the place was moved to King street where W. A. Murray & Co., dry goods, now are. Mr. Maclear went into publishing, and issued Smith's "Canada Past and Present," "Uncle Tom's Cabin," "Dred" and Fleming's "End of All Things." For a number of years he also published *The Canadian Almanac*, namely, during the period from 1855 to 1859, and, although he sold it in the latter year, his name continued to be printed on it until 1861. Having sold out his book business to W. C. Chewett & Co., the firm being W. C. Chewett and W. Copp, he went into the wholesale stationery business on Toronto street. Mr. Maclear was one of the first directors of the Canada Permanent Building and Loan Society, and one of the first members of the Board of Trade. He also was actively connected with several benevolent societies. Of late years he has resided in Montreal with his son-in-law, Mr. David Burke. Mr. Maclear was married in 1839 to Isabel, daughter of Mr. Archibald Arbuckle, of Coleraine. She died in 1869. The surviving children are three sons and four daughters.

With Maclear passes away one of the old figures in the book-selling business of Toronto. There are now living, it is said, but five of those who were engaged in the book business in Toronto as far back as 1856: Mr. John Young, of the Bible House; Mr. Frank Nisbet, of Kingston; Mr. Alex. Lee; Mr. Hutchison, of Rowsell & Hutchison, and Mr. James Bain, jr., of the Toronto Public Library.