

1842 seemed to contemplate for the London publishers. But this colony was at that time not as wealthy as it is now, had but the year before obtained responsible government, and its people could not afford, and cannot even now, to buy the costly British editions that alone were legally available to them. There was a strong demand for cheap literature, and the United States was providing it in reprints of English works at from one-tenth to one-fourth the cost of the English publishers' books. The North American colonies had one after another and repeatedly memorialized the British Government to have the Act of 1842 repealed almost from the session in which it was passed, and had been given encouragement to hope it would be repealed, or that its action would be suspended to allow of the unhampered operation of colonial legislation upon the copyright question. These promises were not kept by the Colonial Office, but the agitation in behalf of cheap literature was kept up by the colonies, until the measure of 1847 was passed, to permit the importation of foreign reprints of English copyrighted works, upon which an impost was to be collected by the Canadian customs department for the benefit of the author.

The getting of cheap literature was the end aimed at by the North American colonies from 1842 to 1847, and when they obtained that boon in the latter year, they desisted from further criticism of the English copyright laws for nearly twenty years. They had got what they were at that time prepared to enjoy, cheap literature. They could not afford to buy the costly English books, and even if they had the right they had not yet the fullest means to publish these works themselves. Access to the United States market sufficed therefore for a time. But during the last twenty years, opposition to English copyright laws has been resumed on other ground: we have the desire and the means to make publishing a Canadian industry. Our publishing is now mostly done for us by the United States, whose customers we are forced by English monopoly and permitted by the Act of 1847 to be. We have a large reading population, we have the material for skilled labor, and we can make native publishing a more profitable thing for the British author than our importation of reprints of his works from the United States is to him. When the British Government put off the demand of the colonies for an amelioration of the effects of the Act of 1842, by passing the Foreign Reprints Act, it merely postponed the question. We have outlived the condition that such discrimination in favor of the United States could allay. We can publish the books we read, and do it with more justice to the author and not less cheaply than the United States can publish them for us. Our large reading population are maintaining many United States artisans in employment, while they might be afford-

ing work to our own countrymen. It is not desirable that our publishers should move their plants to the United States to obtain the right of reprinting English copyright works, or that our printers, bookbinders and kindred craftsmen should go to the United States to obtain employment.

The argument that the Canadian publisher can buy copyright from the author as well as the United States publisher can, is purely theoretic, and is contradicted by the facts of actual practice. If a Canadian and a United States publisher should vie with each other to buy copyright from an English author, each for his respective country, it is almost a certainty that both would not get it, and it is even less a matter of chance that the United States man would get it. For the Canadian can afford to pay no more than he can get out of Canadian consumers alone, because if the work is not copyrighted in the United States it can be pirated there and the Canadian publisher shut out. On the other hand, the United States publisher has larger facilities and a many times larger home market; the holder of the copyright also knows that the United States man can supply the Canadian market nearly as freely as that of the United States, and knows moreover that if he does have the supplying of the Canadian market every book sold there will render a royalty to himself the publisher. In selling to the United States publishers the author really opens the way to get tribute from both countries, and binds himself to prosecute the Canadian who prints the work. In all the circumstances it is plain that the United States has no interest in agreeing to any compromise for international copyright. So long as the Imperial Act of 1842 remains unmodified, either by amendment or by the enactment of a colonial law like our Act of 1889, the United States will continue to insist on printing within its borders as a condition requisite for an outsider to secure copyright protection from its government. In the measure now pending in Congress that condition is embodied. The independent attitude of the United States is further manifested in its suspending the operation of the bill until other powers have adopted laws for the benefit of United States publishers. The objection of English authors to this measure may have operated along with the convincing effects of Sir John Thompson's arguments to moderate their animosity to the Canadian Act.

THE MAIL AND THE BRITANNICA.

Twenty-four dollars cash pays for the receipt of one Daily Mail for a year, and buys a copy of a certain edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica. This is a special offer of the Mail Publishing Company for 1891. Does it do justice to the trade? A little examination shows that it does not. At present a trader makes a dollar for every subscription he gets to the daily Mail. But he

is to receive only 5 per cent. on every subscription he gets to the combination of the Mail and the Encyclopedia. That is, he gets \$1.20 on the combination. Now, \$1 of this he would have got for a subscription to the paper alone, so that the remaining 20c. represents his commission on the Encyclopedia, rather an inconsequential allowance on the sale of a \$19 work. This commission is a hairbreadth more than one per cent. while it should be at least 20 per cent. This shows the unfairness of the arrangement for the trader.

The arrangement has in it surely the germ of its own failure, at least so far as its success is dependent upon the trade. Why should a dealer exert himself to sell a \$19 book for the sake of the 20 cents profit upon it, when he has many other volumes in stock on which the profit is so much greater, and of which the selling price is not so great as to be a hindrance to trade? The Mail has not thought worth its while to enlist the trade as a means to the success of its combination. In its disregard of the interests of the trade it may find that it has neglected an important element, one whose activity engaged at one per cent. commission can do quite as much to discourage, as it could do to encourage subscriptions at 20 per cent. commission. The Mail seems to trust to the advantages of its offer to subscribers to overcome the drawback of lukewarm service at the hands of the trade. This it may do through travelling agents, but here again the Mail antagonizes the trade to which it is indebted for much of its present circulation.

FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS.

William Bryce will shortly issue a Canadian edition of the late Mr. Wilkinson's works, who is the author of *A Real Robinson Crusoe*.

Williamson & Co. have in the press a pamphlet entitled *The British vs. the American System of Government*. The treatment of the subject will involve the Imperial Federation question. A leading Toronto lawyer is the author.

The American Girl in London, by Miss Sara J. Duncan, author of *A Social Departure*, will soon be produced simultaneously in Toronto, London and New York. Williamson & Co. will be the Toronto publishers, and they deserve praise for their enterprise in successfully negotiating for a privilege that Canada never had in the case of any other book.

WORTHINGTON CO., announce for immediate publication "*One of Cleopatra's Nights, and Other Stories*." By Theophile Gautier. Translated by Lascadio Hearn, 1 vol., 12mo, illustrated, forming No. 4, Rose Library. Exquisite short tales, as perfect as the world has ever seen, intensely dramatic; pictured with an idealistic brilliancy, they afford many examples of that peculiar beauty of fancy and power of words which made Gautier the foremost author of his time. The stories fairly enchain the reader. The subtle charm of the French style, light, brilliant and sparkling, is admirably retained by the translator, Lascadio Hearn, who is a true artist. The Photogravure illustrations add very much to the interest of the author's imaginative creations. Price in cloth, \$1.00; paper, 50 cents.