

A subject of some country—say, for instance, of the British Empire—trading at a foreign port, finds that certain needy persons, taking advantage of a popular tumult, have appropriated to their own use a hundred or so of his last month's profits, and have delighted themselves by the immediate display, upon their persons, of some of his gowgaws. Straightway the 'palaces of oak' are moored before that city of lawless ruffians, who are offered the alternative of 'a bombardment, or restitution of British property.' But the lucre-loving foreigner may step upon British soil, boldly and openly seize upon the first production of intellectual labour which may seem to him pre-eminently valuable, a work upon the sale of which probably the author depends for his daily bread, one over which perhaps his head may have grown gray, and no *human law* will say to the plunderer, 'thou shalt not do it.' No, but there is a *Divine law* which declares he shall not! That work, unless voluntarily disposed of, is the author's property, and his alone: it is more essentially his than any species of property which man, under any condition of his being, has ever laid claim to; and it is his against the demands of the whole world.

The man who clamours for the universal and equal distribution of what is now called *private property*, and which, for the sake of distinction, we may also call *physical property*, is stigmatised as a sort of legal infidel, a theoretical robber, and is put down as being at once a Socialist and an enemy to Society; but he who acts upon the same principle practically, with regard to *intellectual property*, is lauded for his enterprise in a good cause. He who forcibly appropriates to his own use, or to that of his friend, one species of useful property belonging to his neighbour, finds himself warred upon by the world as a pirate or a robber, and is finally launched into eternity from the scaffold beneath the gallows-tree; whilst he who similarly appropriates another species of equally useful property, of like ownership, suddenly comes to be considered a benefactor to society, dies comfortably in his bed, and probably has a monument erected over his grave at the public expense. Now any society where such a state of affairs is suffered to exist, must either be guided by unsound—nay, by villanous principles, or it must be very far gone in stupidity. In this author-robbing age, let not monarchs talk of being compelled by a sense of justice to make wars, long and bloody, in protection of subjects' property, when we, every day, see most glaring instances of such property being pillaged by foreigners, without a finger being raised, a warning whisper uttered, to deter the plunderers from the act.

But the receivers of the stolen goods are also, in this case, losers by their share in the dishonest act; and those who would seem, at first sight, to gain most by such a system of fraud, are, in fact, the greatest losers. Take the case of Great Britain and the United States. For one American book republished in England, in defiance of the author's equitable claims, the American publishers carry into their own country and republish at least ten English