

tions, we should be prevented from giving to our own population the benefit of a law that would increase our power of disseminating literature and science among our population, and should be obliged to borrow from our neighbors the power we want for the publication of works which we ought to be entitled to publish here as well as our American neighbors to sell. Under these circumstances, as I mentioned at the opening of my remarks, I have much pleasure in seconding the resolution, and I hope no objection will be found to prevent its adoption by this House.

Mr. CARON. The hon. gentleman, the mover of this resolution, stated in his opening remarks, and it certainly did not apply—that the subject he was treating was not one that appealed to most audiences. I can tell the hon. gentleman and the hon. member who has just taken his seat, that they have succeeded in making what I consider most interesting speeches upon a most important question. I claim that in the matter of copyright we, as Canadians, are as interested as any other people in protecting, to the very utmost limit, the property in copyright which exists in this country. But I cannot agree with my hon. friends in the conclusion at which they have arrived, that the law, as it exists, is anomalous or unfair to anybody or any interest in the country. It is well known that the Act of 1875 was passed when the hon. member for East York (Mr. Mackenzie) was at the head of the Government, after much consultation, correspondence and discussion, with the representatives of the book-printing and book-publishing interests of this Dominion. By the operation of this Act many English authors have, from time to time, taken copyrights in Canada, on editions printed in Canada by our printing and publishing establishments. And I cannot see how the hon. gentleman can state that the public here are not protected, in so far as getting reprints of books into Canada. As I understand it, when British authors do not care to take out Canadian copyrights, or when it does not suit our printers or publishers to take them here, the public get their works in the cheap editions as reprints. Our Canadian authors are protected to the very extreme limit. They have absolute sway and control of the Canadian market, and as I understand it, it is now contemplated in England to accept Canadian copyrights in the same way as copyrights are made to apply to the British Empire by International Copyright Treaties. The British copyrights extend to all British possessions, and as I have already stated, it is contemplated to give the same sway to Canadian and colonial copyrights in England. The British Copyright Act at present is limited in its extent in favor of the Canadian public, in so far as by the Imperial Act, 10 and 11 Vic., supplemented by our legislation, cheap foreign reprints may be imported into Canada, so that the English copyright owner, if he does not choose to reprint the copyright in Canada, must suffer the competition which is created by cheap reprints that are brought into the country. It will be remembered that the Bill of 1872 was refused the Royal assent. One reason why the Royal assent was refused was, that it was an attempt at the piracy of British authors' works in British territory. The Copyright Act of 1875 was accepted as the result of negotiations, and it solved the difficulties which up to that period had existed. It was considered at that time that the Act of 1875 was not trespassing on the rights of property, and in consequence was not refused the Royal assent, which had been refused to the Act of 1872. The Copyright Act of 1875, it will be remembered, was also the subject of a good deal of discussion at the time. It was also in conflict with Imperial legislation affecting this important subject, but it was considered a fair measure, respecting all rights, and it was accepted and assented to. Now, Mr. Speaker, I do not wish to be understood as saying that there is not a great deal in what has been stated by the hon. gentlemen who have respectively

Mr. DESJARDINS.

moved and seconded this resolution, but I believe at present the Act of 1875 is working satisfactorily, and I do not believe that the reopening of the question at present would lead to any better results than were obtained by the Act of 1875. If the resolution which is now moved were accepted, I believe that Canadian authors and Canadian copyright owners would lose the benefit contemplated, of having their rights co-extensive with the British copyrights—that is, of being made operative in all British possessions and eventually in all countries having a copyright treaty with the United Kingdom. Under these circumstances, Mr. Speaker, I think that the resolution, which affects most important interests, might be considered for the present to be premature. The hon. gentleman, in the remarks which he made, stated, if I correctly understood him, that the foreign reprints came into Canada without any duty being paid upon them.

Mr. EDGAR. I did not say that; foreign reprints pay 15 per cent. duty.

Mr. CARON. Then I misunderstood the hon. gentleman. I understood him to say that these reprints came into Canada without paying any duty, and the hon. gentleman who seconded the resolution stated that one of his objects was to apply to the copyright question the National Policy, which had been introduced as the policy of the country. Well, I think the Tariff shows, in so far as the interests of these copyrights purchased by Canadians are concerned, that these rights are protected to the very utmost. Upon that question I may say that I was informed that when Dawson Bros., of Montreal, purchased the copyright of "Endymion," in Canada, and the "Seaside" edition of "Endymion" came into Canada, this "Seaside" edition was confiscated, because the copyright had been purchased by a Canadian, and the full protection created by the National Policy was applied in that case, as it is in every other case. Under the circumstances, I believe that the resolution which the hon. gentleman has moved, and which has led to the interesting discussion which we have heard, is not one which, at present, should be passed by the House.

Mr. EDGAR. I do not see, from anything the Minister of Militia has said, what remedy he proposes for the two main difficulties that the publishers and the Canadian public have to face in this matter. We know that there is nothing in the Act of 1875 that meets these difficulties. It is true that the Canadian public can get cheap American reprints of American copyright books. That is all very well, so far as it goes. But why should not the Canadian public get the benefit of Canadian reprints of British copyright books as well as the benefit of American reprints? I can see no reason why they should not.

Mr. BOWELL. He can, if he obtains the right from the English holder of copyrights.

Mr. EDGAR. Yes; a Canadian copyright can be taken out, but I say that Canadian copyright is not taken out.

Mr. BOWELL. What I say is this: that if the owner of an English copyright sells it to a Canadian, he has the right to publish and to control the sale of the book in this country, to the full extent of prohibiting its importation into Canada at all.

Mr. EDGAR. Of course he would, and that is what I would like to make him do. I want to make him come here and publish, either by taking out a copyright directly, or selling to a publisher who would take out the copyright directly. But he is not compelled to do that. He can prevent a single copy of his book being published in Canada, without taking out a copyright here at all, merely by getting an English copyright; and I do not see that we should go back on what we decided in 1872, that Canadian publishers should stand on the same footing as American publishers, in respect of