

Fifteen years ago the historical records of Canada had scarcely an abiding place. We had no regular system by which letters, pamphlets, printed books and documents and manuscripts relating to the commercial, literary and political activity of the country could be preserved, and rendered accessible to the student. Thousands of valuable papers were in imminent danger of being lost; many undoubtedly did perish. In 1871, a number of literary men of Canada, petitioned the legislature to organize a branch of the public service by means of which historical data might be preserved. Parliament promptly acceded to this request, and the Minister of Agriculture added the Archives branch to his department. Mr. Brymner was placed in charge, and he began his work of collecting absolutely *ab ovo*, not a single document of any sort being in hand when he commenced. To-day, the shelves of the Department contain upwards of seven thousand volumes of historical papers on every conceivable subject of interest to Canadians. The work of indexing these enormous collections goes on daily, and fresh matter is constantly being added, Mr. Brymner's aim being to make the Archives truly national in every respect and as complete as possible.

Much has been written about the law of copyright. Canada passed a fairly good act in 1875, but as it contravened the Imperial statute, it was not long before the authorities in London declared the act *ultra vires*, and our publishers have been in a most unhappy frame of mind ever since. In a word, the business of publishing books in Canada is at a pretty low ebb, and publishers find little encouragement in extending their trade. The Canadian author is not so badly off, just now.