

## BOOKSELLERS AND COPYRIGHT.

NO man in Canada can give a more unprejudiced and a more valuable opinion upon the question of a Canadian copyright law than Mr. James Bain, jr. chief librarian of the Toronto Public Library. He has had long practical experience, both in publishing and in book-selling. He has now no personal interest whatsoever in either. Occupying a position which renders him perfectly impartial, and one, moreover, which keeps him in close touch with books and the book market, Mr. Bain is well qualified to speak upon the subject of copyright. He has taken no part in the agitation for Canadian copyright, and is, therefore, able to deliver an unfettered opinion.

These things being so, it occurred to me that Mr. Bain would be an excellent authority to ask for an opinion upon copyright, as it would affect the Canadian bookseller. In reply to a question, Mr. Bain said:

"During the past few years, the changed conditions of publishing have affected the situation. First, there is the change from the three-volume novel to the one-volume novel in England. This has supplied the English publisher with plates, which he can use at once for cheap editions without any additional expense.

"In consequence, we have the second feature in the changed situation: the enormous increase of cheap colonial editions.

"Thirdly, the Canadian publishing firms have shown themselves capable of producing really excellent editions, the equals of those produced abroad. We are, therefore, no longer dependent upon the English or American firms for well turned-out books.

"Fourthly, the American publishers have discovered that, for their purposes, it is more profitable to issue novels in cloth at \$1.50 than at 50c., and, compared with years ago, there are fewer paper-covered editions issued in the United States. For all these reasons, now that there is an ample supply of cheap books from England, and a reduced competition from the United States, it occurs to me that a Canadian Copyright Act, is advisable because that is the only way by which any special edition can have an extensive sale. Formerly, I did not advocate such a measure, but, under the altered conditions I have mentioned, it seems to me it should be adopted."

"But, how would the Canadian bookseller come out under such an Act?" I inquired.

"He would come out better than ever. He would have a larger and surer field to work upon, since hundreds of novels, which

were formerly unknown to the Canadian trade, are now being offered and supplied in the cheaper editions. The whole tendency of English bookmaking is to cheapen, while in the United States it is to increase the price, and both tendencies seem permanent. Under a new Canadian law, this supply of cheap English editions would go on to the advantage of the bookseller, as it does now."

"What about the exclusive market which the Canadian publisher would have on such books as he selected for reprinting here?"

"Well, as to books reprinted in Canada under the Copyright Act, I think there is so



JULIAN DURHAM.

"Julian Durham," author of the novel "Hypnotized?" is the literary and journalistic pseudonym adopted by Mrs. Henshaw, of Vancouver, B.C., who is beginning to make her mark as a writer. Mrs. Henshaw, although an Englishwoman by birth, has resided in Canada for over 12 years, and is now writing for The Vancouver Province and The Montreal Gazette a series of articles on "British Columbia up to Date."

much to be said in favor of Canadian books that their publication should be encouraged. When a publisher, under arrangement with the author, issues a book in this country, all other editions, including the English, should be excluded."

"But would not the publisher, in such cases, having a monopoly, increase the price?"

"No. Prices are not made by a publisher without serious thought. It is purely a business operation by which he can sell the largest number, and the bookseller, when the price is once fixed, will find him-

self protected from unfair competition. The department store would then be on the same basis as the regular trade, and, as far as these books are concerned, could buy them no cheaper. Not only that. A Canadian publisher, to make his books profitable, must spend money freely in advertising and pushing them. The result certainly benefits the bookseller. The English and American publishers, on the other hand, do not push and advertise their books here. They do not seem to have the desire to do so, and they do not reach the book buyers who are the customers of the dealers. Therefore, the interests of the Canadian publisher and bookseller in this matter are one. The only serious objection offered to copyright is the fear that specially printed or extra fine editions of any book may be excluded. This might easily be arranged by permitting the importation of, say, not more than two at a time, through the Canadian publisher."

"You do not think, then, that the Canadian bookseller should object to copyright?" Mr. Bain looked thoughtful for several moments and replied; "No, I do not."

## THE DECEMBER MAGAZINES.

Outing has a fine story of moose hunting in New Brunswick, and there are articles on dogs, sport in Ceylon, and golf. There is a good account, with illustrations, of the New York Athletic Club.

The Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly (10c.) for Christmas is now standard size, and will give the others a hard run. There is a continued story by Egerton Castle, author of "The Pride of Jennico," a comedietta by W. D. Howells, and other good holiday fare.

Lippincott's for December has for its complete novel "Mrs. Russell's Sister," by Annie Eliza Brand, a novel of stirring incident in England. Also a readable paper of Philadelphia a hundred years ago, when the place was still the capital of the Republic. Alfred Balch, a well-known journalist, has an article on the press, and Charlotte Adams gives a lively sketch of experiences on the stage.

## MARKET VALUE OF CANADIAN BOOKS.

At several auction sales of second-hand books lately, the high price paid for old Canadian books was remarked. They seem to be easily sold and fetch good prices. As Canadian books are often confined to one limited edition, they soon grow scarce, and are wanted by collectors and others. New Canadian books will become old some day, and those that are valuable should sell well now. E. Haight has opened a store in Adelaide street east, Toronto, entirely for the sale of Canadian books. He has quite a collection.