

THE PROVINCIAL.

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INTERNATIONAL COPYRIGHT.

THE subject of an International Copyright, as between Great Britain and the United States, has already in certain quarters, received considerable attention. That attention has been bestowed, however, but by a few individuals—by the authors of those respective countries—those who, personally and more immediately, feel the glaring injustice, in this particular, of the Law of Nations. Such being the case, the *readers* of the English tongue, on both sides of the Atlantic, supposing—if they have ever glanced at the subject at all—that the *writers* only are interested in this question, have been content to let it remain as it is. We venture to allege, and shall endeavour to prove, that the whole population of the British Isles and the United States are, somewhat remotely it is true, but nevertheless deeply, interested in the question of International Copyright generally, and that those interests cry aloud for a change. This point once settled, it will be easy to show that the true interests of the British American Provinces demand such a change as peremptorily as either of those nations; and that the literature of these Provinces, so far as it can be affected by the Law of Copyright, is now in a more hopeless condition, than that of any other civilised country under Heaven.

Taking the subject in its widest extent, the cool manner in which the *right of property* in the productions of intellectual labour, has been entirely thrust out of view in every international code and international treaty, is certainly one of the most monstrous of the many inconsistencies of which modern and civilised nations have been guilty. The *right of property* in land, in the productions of manual labour and mechanical skill, is jealously surrounded by every guard which a protecting Government can furnish, against the inroads of plundering foreigners; yet those same foreigners may, with impunity, carry away and dispose of the thoughts—the intellectual productions of that country—that which is not only the fruits of soul, the means of life to the individual pillaged, but is also the true boast and glory of his country, and a portion of that to which her prosperity is mainly owing.