

*Lord Knutsford to Lord Stanley of Preston.*

DOWNING STREET, 8th November, 1890.

The Right Honourable The Lord Stanley of Preston.

MY LORD,—With reference to your despatch, no. 160, of the 28th August, I have the honour to transmit to you, to be laid before your ministers, for any observations that they may wish to offer, a copy of a letter from the Incorporated Society of Authors, respecting the proposed Canadian copyright legislation.

I have, etc.,

KNUTSFORD.

*The Society of Authors to the Colonial Office.*

4 PORTUGAL STREET, LINCOLN'S INN FIELDS,

LONDON, W. C., 3rd November, 1890.

MY LORD,—In answer to the letter from Sir Robert Herbert, of the 17th September, 1890, I have the honour to inform your lordship that a meeting of the general committee of the Incorporated Society of Authors, including the sub-committee on copyright, has been held to consider the questions raised by Sir J. Thompson in his report to your lordship of 14th July, 1890. I am directed by the committee to inform your lordship as follows:—

(1) They can express no opinion on the question of the general policy which her majesty's government may think fit to adopt towards Canada with regard to the question of copyright.

2 They hope, however, that if her majesty's government think fit to undertake legislation in order to give effect to the principles of the Canadian Copyright Act, such legislation will embody due precautions for making the collection of royalty charges really efficient.

(3) They submit that the clauses relating to the collection of royalty charges as drafted in the Canadian Copyright Act, 52 Vic., c. 29, are not sufficient for the proper collection thereof, and

(4) It appears to the committee to be doubtful whether the Canadian Copyright Act, 52 Vic., c. 29, does not purport to abolish copyright altogether, unless the person entitled thereto reprints or republishes in Canada within one month after printing or publishing elsewhere.

At best, the language of the act is ambiguous on this point.

I have, etc.,

W. OLIVER HODGES.

*Sir John Thompson to Lord Stanley of Preston.*

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE, OTTAWA, 15th December, 1890.

MY LORD,—Availing myself of your excellency's permission to place before you the result of my conversation with Lord Knutsford on the state of the copyright question in Canada, I beg to make the following statement:

Lord Knutsford was unfavourable to the view which I had put forward, as to the powers of the parliament of Canada, in my report to your excellency dated 3rd August, 1889. This matter formed the ground of much argument between his lordship and myself, resulting in neither party changing his opinion. Lord Knutsford concluded the discussion by remarking that unless the constitutional question should be decided in our favour by the judicial committee of the privy council, he thought it would not be practicable to get the British parliament to pass an act to set the colonies free as to legislation on the subject of copyright.