

Enclosure in No. 73.

COPY of a REPORT of a Committee of the Honourable the Privy Council, approved by His Excellency the Governor General, on the 14th day of May 1872. Encl. in No. 73.

ON a Memorandum, dated 10th May 1872, from the Honourable the Ministers of Finance and Agriculture, reporting that much anxiety has been manifested by Houses of the Canadian Parliament on the unsatisfactory state of the Imperial Copyright Act; that, as no reply has yet been received to the approved Report of the Committee of the Privy Council, dated 1st December 1870, they think it desirable that the attention of Her Majesty's Government should again be called to the subject.

That they have reason to believe that a good deal of discussion has taken place in England among the parties interested in copyright, and that the result of that discussion has been a considerable accession to the ranks of those who are in favour of the proposition submitted by them in the Report already referred to.

That it is apparent that the class which alone has a just claim to protection, viz., authors, have at length been convinced that their interests are not promoted by the maintenance of the present system.

That it is, no doubt, true that the principal owners of copyright are the London publishers, but it is, they state, equally true that those publishers have never paid to the authors one single pound more for their copyrights in view of circulation in Canada.

That it cannot be denied that the Canadian demand for concurrent publication in Canada should alone entitle the author to the benefit of copyright. That under the present system, which is wholly indefensible, and which is objected to, as well by the English publishers as by the Canadian publishers, the latter are treated with the greatest injustice.

That it has long been the custom for the owners of English copyright to sell to American publishers advance sheets of their works, and when Canadian publishers have offered to acquire copyright in Canada by purchase, they have been told that the arrangements made between English and American publishers were such as to prevent any negotiations with Canadians.

That Canada has passed a law by which British authors can secure copyright in Canada, and has further expressed a readiness, where authors do not choose to take out copyright, to secure adequate compensation to them by means of an excise tax on all English copyright works for the benefit of the authors.

They, the Ministers, recommend that a further appeal be made to Her Majesty's Government to legislate upon this subject without further delay.

The Committee concur in the foregoing Report, and submit the same for your Excellency's approval.

Certified,

W. H. Lee,
Clerk, Privy Council, Canada.

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The Colonial Office to the Board of Trade.

Sir,

Downing-street, 18 June 1872.

WITH reference to the letter from this Department of the 7th January 1871,* I am directed by the Earl of Kimberley to transmit to you a copy of a further Despatch received from the Governor General of Canada, enclosing a Minute of the Privy Council of the Dominion, setting forth their views on the question of copyright, and expressing a hope that Her Majesty's Government will legislate on the subject without further delay, and I am to state that his Lordship will be glad to be favoured with the opinion of the Board of Trade upon this question.

I am, &c.
(signed) *R. H. Meade.*

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Office to the Board
of Trade.
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* Page 59.

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