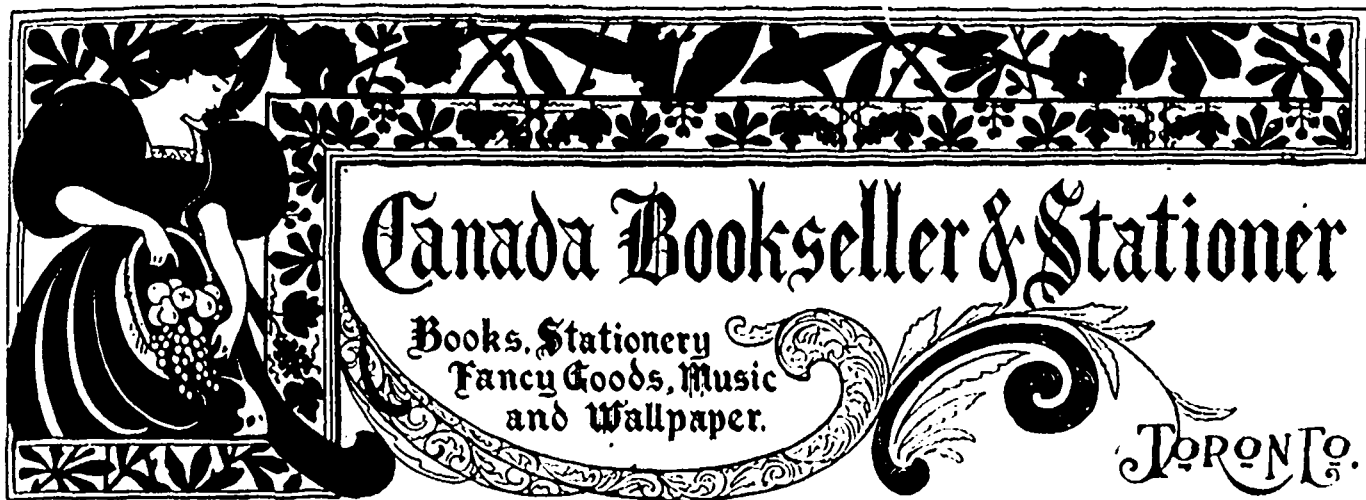




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HELD OVER.

THE useless session of Parliament is over, and nothing was done in the matter of copyright. That subject, with several other business questions, was postponed, while the politicians talked themselves hoarse on the school issue. Now we are in the throes of an election campaign, and as the politicians do not see many votes in copyright they will not talk much about it. It is not probable that much will be said on the matter during the contest. Mr. Edgar, who understands copyright thoroughly, may have something to say, but in the main silence will reign until Parliament meets again in July, when we hope the struggles between parties will not prevent final action being taken. The Copyright Association know their business, and when the opportunity arrives will seize it.

THE INTERESTS OF RETAILERS.

THERE used to be a retail booksellers' association in Toronto of which well-known men in the trade like Bain, Wallace, etc., were members, but we cannot find that it exists now or that there is any medium for united action by retailers on the hundred

and one issues that concern their business. One of the trade, in mentioning the matter to BOOKSELLER AND STATIONER the other day, wondered why the trade did not get together for purposes of organization. In his opinion there were matters now which might be dealt with by such a union. The problem of book slaughtering at the department stores is one. It is quite clear that if the retail city trade do not look after their own interests no one else will. That they may cultivate mutual co-operation on all subjects of common concern regular meetings and permanent organization are absolutely essential.

GLARING CUSTOMS TYRANNY.

IT seems impossible for any trade to escape annoyance at the hands of the Customs Department. BOOKSELLER AND STATIONER'S attention was called to the latest instance of petty Customs tyranny in Montreal the other day. A well-known firm of fancy goods jobbers received at the Custom House a consignment of fishing rods. They passed the entry for these, but when the goods were opened at the examining warehouse a small lot of fishing rod ferrules was found among them. As they were not invoiced the Custom House officials at once jumped at the conclusion that it was a case of smuggling. They seized the lot, worth probably \$25, and notified the firm that they would be released upon payment of the duty. As they had not ordered the ferrules at all, they suspected that it was an oversight in packing at the factory in the sales. Their surmise was correct, for the manufacturers, when communicated with, promptly for-

warded affidavits testifying how the mistake had occurred. This did not satisfy the Customs people, who again asked the firm to pay the duty. As the latter had not ordered the goods, and did not want them, they referred the authorities to the American manufacturers, stating that the latter were the people with whom they had to deal. The officials refused to treat with the latter and at the last sale of unclaimed goods sold the parcels of ferrules for \$3. Their course in this matter is quite on a par with other actions to which The Canadian Grocer and Hardware and Metal have called attention from time to time. Their actions infer that in their opinion every respectable merchant is a thief trying to cheat the country out of its dues. This is about the best method of creating a thorough contempt for the law that could be devised. Another instance is to hand which strengthens what is said above. It is well known that violin strings are admitted free of duty. In a case of violins imported by the same firm, which were opened, a small parcel of strings were found. As they were not invoiced, this also was set down as smuggling and the parcel was confiscated. This is the height of absurdity. It is unreasonable to suppose that a firm of wide-awake merchants would be so foolish as to smuggle goods which they had only to declare as free goods. It was simply another case of mistake in packing, but the Customs people failed to see it in this light, and kept the goods. There is certainly room for sensible officials in the Examining Warehouse at Montreal. Some of the present staff don't seem to possess any discrimination at all.