

explain the nature of this measure, that so little attention has been paid to the action of the Legislature of this country. In order to explain the object I wished to attain, I shall refer to my original motion, of so far back as 1868. "That an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor General praying him to impress on Her Majesty's Government the justice and expediency of extending the privileges of the Act 9th and 10th Vic., to Canada, so that whenever reasonable provision and protection shall, in Her Majesty's opinion be secured to authors, colonial reprints of British copyright works shall be placed on the same footing in Canada, as foreign reprints, by which means British authors may be more protected in their rights and interests, and benefits may be conferred on the printing industry of the Dominion." Since that time an address to the Governor General on the same subject from the Senate has been annually voted. Not only has the general approval of the Senate thereto been obtained, but that of Her Majesty's Government in Canada, so that great hopes have been entertained that something would be done for the advantage of the printing trade. Well, the result of repeated representations from the Senate was the passing of an Act, last year, to amend the Act respecting copyrights. The preamble declares its object to be the making of a provision for securing and protecting, in Canada, the rights of authors in works wherein the copyright is subsisting in Great Britain, and, at the same time to extend to printers in this country the same privileges now granted to foreigners, that is printers in the United States. This was considered so desirable an object that, after waiting the action of the Imperial Legislature for some years, the Government of Canada, taking, I think, a proper view of the matter, introduced more than a year ago, the Act I hold in my hand. But, owing to some doubt as to the jurisdiction of this Parliament to legislate on the subject of copyright, by the advice of Ministers here, this Act was reserved for Her Majesty's consideration and assent. Well, I think hon. gentlemen will admit that time enough has been given for a decision on this question by Her Majesty's advisers in England, whether they will recommend assent to this bill or not. At the commencement of the session, in answer to my question as to whether the Act had been assented to or dissented from, the hon. gentleman (Mr. Campbell) informed me that no informa-

tion had been received on the subject, and he states the same thing to-day. No despatch has come; no notice, apparently, of the bill has been taken. I hardly think that is treating the Government of this country with the respect which it might look for at the hands of the Imperial Government. In the bill every means is provided for securing British authors more than they at present receive from the duty on reprints of copyrights, from the United States, which is so badly collected on that frontier. But until it receives Her Majesty's assent, it remains a dead letter. I hope the address to His Excellency, which I am now going to propose, will induce our Government to be more active and energetic in urging this matter upon the Imperial Government, and will have the effect of calling forth a decision as to whether this bill is to come into force or not. I believe the great difficulty which it has met on the other side, is the adverse influence of certain wealthy publishers, whose interests are not at all at one with the authors of Great Britain. I believe these authors sympathise with this bill and are anxious it should become of effect. But the publishers, who are a very wealthy and powerful body, exercise a strong influence against this measure, because it would deprive them of their monopoly, and diminish their profits to the advantage of Canadian printers. This is a view of the subject with which, of course, we can have no sympathy. But, again, it was urged I believe by these influential parties that the passing of this bill might interfere with the prospects of an International Copyright Law between England and the United States. Well, I hold in my hand a document which, I think, will satisfy these publishers and this House, that there is very little prospect of any such law. The document I shall cite is the report of Senator Morrill, of Maine, dated Feb. 22nd, 1873, from the Joint Committee on the library, to whom was referred the resolution, directing them to enquire into the practicability of securing to authors the benefit of International Copyright. This is the conclusion arrived at: "In view of the whole case your committee are satisfied that no form of International copyright can fairly be urged upon Congress, upon reasons of general equity, or of constitutional law; that the adoption of any plan for the purpose, which has been laid before us, would be of very doubtful advantage to American authors as a class and would be not only an unquestionable and permanent injury to the manufacturing interests concerned in producing books, but a hinderance to