

Mr. Arber's prospectus, 'Of many books—still lost to us—the Registers are the only record. They are also, and ever will be, the foundation of English Bibliography; and, besides, are the chief authority, for their period, in the history of English Printing. They are therefore especially valuable to the book-collectors and the administrators of public libraries. They chiefly enregister FIRST EDITIONS, but there are also occasionally TRANSFERS from one publisher to another. Most of the Poems, Interludes, and plays are recorded in them: together with the earliest Voyages to the East Indies, and the publications relating to the foundation of our American colonies. In fact there is nothing like them anywhere extant in any foreign language; so early, so precise, so voluminous, so certain, and therefore so authoritative.' While the private collector would hardly be justified in purchasing a word of this character, there can be no doubt but that in the interests of present and future Canadian scholars, our public libraries should each possess a copy. Not the least drawback to the progress of literary development amongst us is the impossibility of procuring authentic data and obtaining access to the more expensive class of works of reference. Neither our business nor our literary men are financially on a par with those of the British islands; and what to the Canadian scholar or the Canadian Literary Institute would prove an unwarrantable expense, might, with grace and usefulness, be borne by a government that has hitherto not been conspicuous for its recognition of the requirements of literature. Nowadays, of book-making there is no end, and instead of spending their appropriations in the purchase of all the ephemeral literary and scientific works of the time, the custodians of our public libraries might, with advantage, provide for the necessities of the future of Canada research.

To Canadian readers, however, we strongly recommend those of his volumes which Mr. Arber especially calls *English Reprints*. In the quaintness and freshness of the editor's style and remarks, there is a depth of pleasure which we should gladly know that everyone had tasted.

*The Bystander: A Monthly Review of Current Events, Canadian and General.* No. 1, for January. Toronto: Hunter, Rose & Co.

THE readers of THE MONTHLY, who were wont to peruse with lively interest the critiques upon 'Current Events' which used to grace our pages, from the pen of a well-known and scholarly writer, will specially welcome the publication of *The Bystander*. Its appearance in separate serial form, though somewhat a novelty in journalism, is, for many reasons, an advantage. It relieves THE MONTHLY and its writer from some embarrassments which, under the circumstances of our national and political position, were more or less always present. Of its *raison d'être* in any form, however, there can be no question. The point is far from being yet reached in this country of surplus, or even of adequate, intellectual activity and supply, and there is an imperious necessity still for the expression of outspoken and independent opinion. Not only is this the case, but the thronging interests of the time require discussion and criticism from a broad, philosophic point of view, and with all the aids which earnestness and strong conviction, coupled with clear and vigorous writing, can bring to their assistance. In the absence, in Canada, of a weekly press devoted to the work of higher criticism, there is the greater requirement of a publication that will discuss current topics with the vigour and ability that mark the editorials and criticism of the English journals. And no one can read the *Bystander* without believing that politics and literature, as well as our national, commercial, and social life, will gain in influence by the treatment of such themes in the style and with the thought characteristic of its learned writer. Great thoughts are of necessity the inspirers of great actions, and the influence of the publication, emanating from the source from which it does, can only and wholly be good. The writer's standpoint may not always be that of the reader; but to the lover of independent thought this will be no bar to the perusal and consideration of the disquisitions of a profound intellect, and of opinions presented with all the force and charm of a cultured mind. The first number, now to hand, justifies the expectation which the announcement of its appearing has excited, and doubt-