

some extent free public libraries, stand in a different position from Mudie's and Smith & Son's, and other libraries conducted for profit. Whether the Museum is privileged absolutely, or by the occasion, must depend on whether under the charters and statutes constituting the Museum they are bound to give facilities for reading, and to publish to that extent the books sent to them. A possible distinction may be taken between British and foreign works, inasmuch as the Copyright Acts, apart from conventions, do not apply to the latter; but here also the answer to the question must be sought in the statutes and charters. If it is decided that the Museum is not absolutely privileged, we shall be in this curious position: that any person who has been defamed in any book will be able to insure the destruction of all record of the defamation, even in the National Library, and, moreover, the authorities may at any moment be indicted for obscene libel in respect of the undeniably numerous works on their shelves which are unsuitable for general reading. The reasons for stopping general circulation of a libel are obvious; but they are inapplicable to a national repository of all published books, and, if they had been applied in the past, many manuscripts and documents which have been of the greatest value to historians would have been ruthlessly destroyed. If, therefore, the ultimate result of the litigation now pending is unfavourable to the Museum, as on the general principles of the law of libel and the particular decision of the Divisional Court seems possible, legislation will undoubtedly be necessary to protect the National Library, and such legislation will not really prejudice any living person.—*Law Journal* (London).

RIPARIAN RIGHTS.

A point of some interest and novelty on the subject of riparian rights was considered in the Scotch appeal case of *Young v. The Banker Distillery Company*, L. R. (1893) App. Cas. 691. Some sixty years ago the company, the respondents to the appeal, established a distillery on the banks of the Doups Burn, in the county of Stirling, attracted apparently by the soft character of the water. The appellants, the lessees of certain mines, had taken to pumping water from these mines into the Doups Burn at a point above the distillery. The water so added to the stream, which would not otherwise have flowed into it, was perfectly