

remarkable, when contrasted with the state of things but a few years back, is it not a farce and a reproach that, having this demand, and the facility for the supply, our own market should continue to be fed by an alien people, and that foreign enterprise, capital and labour should possess privileges which are denied to home industry?

Of course, were there an International Copyright treaty between the mother country and the States, or had American reprints never been permitted by the British Government to cross our frontier, the native trade would have no grievance: but while no reciprocal treaty exists, and while foreign reprints of British copyrights have, for thirty years, had the *entrée* of the country and a monopoly of its trade in competition with author's editions, which, in the main, pay no royalty to the owners of copyrights, why should we not legalise native editions, under a system of Government excise, and in the special interest of the authors concerned?

Unquestionably, the benefit to English authors in legalising Canadian reprints of their works, which would pay, through the Government, an author's percentage on the editions printed, would be direct and substantial; and in contrast to the wholesale admission of foreign piratical editions into our market, the proposal to reprint copyright books in Canada, even without an author's royalty being levied, would seem reasonable, as it would, at any rate, have the advantage of developing the trade of a kindred, rather than an alien, people.

Apart, however, from the aid to native industry and the publishing interest, this proposal is urged for the protection of the interests of British authors, and that they may reap the benefit of the sale of their works in Canada and also from sales in the American market, which our publishing houses would be competent to secure; and we cannot comprehend why our Government finds it impossible to get the British authorities to sanction the proposition. But, it has been argued, let the native trade negotiate directly with the authors for such permission, and then secure the market by an authorized edition, copyrighted at Ottawa. We reply to this:—Why take this round-about and troublesome course, and one which can only be effective if negotiations are made prior to the appearance of the original English work? Before overtures are made to the author of a published work, an American reprint, it may be, enters the country and supplies the demand. The author, besides, on that plan, has no advantage, as it will reasonably be presumed he would receive no more in the sum volunteered by the negotiating publisher than he would receive in the royalty, accruing to him from the duty levied by the proposed plan.

Hence, in view of all the points of the case, were prejudices removed, and the author made clearly to understand the position of the Trade here in regard to the question, and how honourably they wish to secure legalised reprints of English copyrights for their market, we cannot doubt that English authors would readily accede to their desire.

We have but room left us briefly to notice the action taken by an honourable and worthy publisher in Montreal, Mr. John Lovell, who has earnestly and warmly urged an improvement in native legislation on this subject, in the interest of authors.

He has recently had set up in his Printing House in Montreal an elegant combined edition of Macaulay's Lays of Ancient Rome and Aytoun's Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers, and after stereotyping the matter has sent the plates out of the country to a bordering town and had an edition printed and brought back to Montreal, and there paid at the Customs the 12½ per centum copyright duty, which will go to the respective owners of the copyrights. This, it is needless to say, has been done by Mr. Lovell to show the anomalies of our Copyright Law, and to give practical evidence of how absurdly the Act favours the foreign reprinter, and yet how easily its restrictions, which would subject the native publisher, regardless of the spirit of the law, to fines and imprisonment, can be evaded in the letter of the law.

Surely now common sense will prevail!

## LITERARY GOSSIP.

MR. FORSTER'S "Life of Charles Dickens" has reached its ninth edition in England.—The first part of Dore's London, with descriptive letter press, by Blanchard Jerrold, has appeared and is well spoken of by the art critics.—The third and concluding volume of Lord Brougham's Autobiography is just issued.—The experiment has just been made to issue original novels in a cheap popular form when first published, instead of in the conventional three-volume guinea and a half shape. The credit of the innovation is due to Messrs. Tinsley.—Mr. Fields, the publisher, has collected his reminiscences of English and American writers, contributed to the *Atlantic Monthly*. They are issued under the title of "Yesterdays with Authors."—Mr. Baring-Gould's "Legends of Old Testament Characters, from the Talmud and other Sources," is just published.—A series of Essays upon the Acts of Statesmanship, under the title of "Thoughts upon Government," appears from the pen of Mr. Arthur Helps.—A new novel, by Mr. J. C. Jefferson, is announced, under the title of "A Woman in Spite of Herself."—The editor of *The Leisure Hour* publishes his impressions of America and its people, during a recent tour in the United States, under the title of "Across the Ferry."—A New York clergyman has published a rather startling work on the vices of the times, entitled, "The Abominations of Society."—Dr. Hayes' narrative of observation and adventure in Greenland, bearing the title of "The Land of Desolation," is now ready.

## ITEMS.

### NATIVE.

Messrs. Dawson Bros., of Montreal, have republished, by arrangement with the author, "Lord Bantam, a satire, by the author of 'Ginx's Baby.'"

Mr. Lovell, of Montreal, announces the publication of the "First Directory of Victoria, and British Columbia Guide," comprising a general directory of business men and householders in Victoria; with full lists of every important district in the Colony. The volume, we doubt not, will be useful to the merchants of Ontario; and many, we dare say, will be curious to know "Who's who," among our brothers on the Pacific side.