

1896. What provisions the Act will make is a matter to be made known by your Government when the proper time arrives. But I am betraying no cabinet secret when I say that at the conference with the Ministers of Justice and Agriculture, which my colleague, Mr. Daldy and myself, together with the Canadian Copyright Association and Canadian publishers, were permitted to hold in Ottawa to-day, a draft measure, which forms an agreement between myself as the delegate of English authors and the interested parties in Canada, was submitted and recommended to the Ministers, and we have every reason to hope that, in the wisdom of your Government, it will be regarded as a probable general basis for forthcoming legislation. By this agreement the time within which a copyright holder can publish in Canada and so secure an absolute and untrammelled copyright is extended from thirty to sixty days, with a possible extension of thirty days more at the discretion of the authorities. Also by this agreement the license to be granted for the production of a book that has not fulfilled the conditions of Canadian Copyright law is limited to one license, and this single license is only to be issued with the copyright holder's knowledge or sanction. Further, the copyright holder who has an independent chance of securing copyright for himself within a period of sixty days, is to be allowed a second chance of securing it after it has been challenged and before it can be disposed of by license. And finally the royalties of the author are to be secured to him by a regulation of the Revenue to stamp an edition of a book on the issue of a license. This is the ground of the Draft Bill which the Canadian Copyright Association has joined with me in recommending to your Ministers, and on its general principle I have to say, first, to Canadian authors, that a bill framed on these lines will not put them into a position of isolation among the authors of the world; and next, to the authors of England and America and of all the countries having a copyright treaty with England, that it will secure to authors the control of their property, and put them all alike on an equal footing, and therefore, it will not, I think, disturb the operation of the Berne Convention so far as Canada is concerned, or the understanding between Great Britain and the United States. Beyond this I must allow that the arrangement is a compromise. There have had to be concessions on both sides. The people who are sticklers for principle will condemn us all round, and there are always folks enough to holla for the moon when they only want green cheese."

Some  
Details.

The draft copyright measure agreed to at Ottawa is said to be satisfactory to those who framed it. It is a compromise. The necessity for re-publication in Canada in order to obtain a Canadian copyright is preserved. By the Act of 1889 only one month was allowed for this purpose. This period is to be extended to two months, with a possible extension of another month at the discretion of the authorities. Under the Act of 1889 if an author did not copyright his book any person who chose could reprint it. Under the Draft Act only one person will be able to secure that right, and that person must secure the author's or copyright holder's sanction. Under the Act of 1889 a royalty was nominally payable on reprints, but it was only a nominal obligation. Under the Draft Act this royalty is to be secured by each copy being stamped with a Government stamp which will only be affixed on payment of the royalty; any other impression may be seized as an illegal issue. The point on which the compromise has been made is that the Canadian Press Association succeed in their contention that in order to entitle an author to get a Canadian copyright he must

publish in Canada. The English authors, fighting their own battles, and also that of Canadian authors, have succeeded in getting a reasonable time allowed in which they may re-publish if they choose, and if they do not choose to do so they will be fairly well secured of some reward for their work by the better collection of royalties which they will receive. Between the free trade doctrines of England and the protectionist policy of the United States, Canada has chosen the latter. Public opinion has spoken so strongly on this point that it is useless to contest it. Theoretically England may be right, practically the protectionist fallacies seem to have answered their purpose on this continent, and situated as we are in Canada we cannot help ourselves but must follow in the same lines. It is a matter for very great congratulation that the operation of the Berne Convention, so far as Canada is concerned, is not likely to be disturbed by the proposed Act. Any legislation which would imperil Canada's position with respect to the Berne Convention and force her authors into a position of isolation could not be accepted by us. It is highly satisfactory to note, also, that the understanding between Great Britain and the United States is not to be disturbed. That understanding is of vast importance to both countries concerned and we are glad that its importance is appreciated by the Copyright Association.

Views and  
Opinions.

Mr. Hall Caine concluded his interesting speech by some very appreciative remarks on Canada. A novelist's impressions of the Dominion are not without interest at any time, but in the case of Mr. Hall Caine, who apparently came to us with prejudices not particularly favourable, his remarks have an added interest. And this is what he said:

"If it is not ungracious to say so at this genial board, it is not my fault that I came to Canada, but it will be my fault if I do not carry home from it a vivid and unfading memory of a great and beautiful country. I cannot easily tell you how Canada has impressed me. It has impressed me from the point of natural grandeur as the most wonderful country I have seen on this continent. Its mighty forests, its great inland seas, its vast oceanic planes—I can never forget them. But Canada has impressed me yet more as a commonwealth, as the youngest among the nations. In this regard it is difficult for any exercise of the imagination to be fantastic, to be overstrained, to outdo in dreams what the future may bring forth in fact. Your great cities that are yet to spring up out of the desert, your mighty railways that are to link ocean to ocean, your future ships that are to bridge the sea, your future telegraphs that are to abridge the land, your material science that is to conquer even the frozen territory that frowns on you from the north,—nothing can affect the imaginative mind more profoundly than these near and imminent possibilities. But it is of Canada in relation to England that I think oftenest when I allow myself to make visions of your future. Gentlemen, if you ask me as a matter of romance which of the two promises the most romantic future—Canada as an independent nation, fighting its own hard fight and winning its own place as a separate state among the states of the world, or Canada as the newer England, the greater England beyond the seas, the young son of an old sire—I cannot hesitate for a moment. I see Canada in the time to come, if you can forgive the figure, as Joseph the son of Jacob being sent out to the strange land, becoming master there, and if the days of dearth should ever befall, feeding with his corn the sons of his father from the old country. It is a great future that is before Canada, and I rejoice that no little thing, no narrow interest, no interest of class whether high or low, is to be allowed by you or by yourselves to strain the relations between us."

We have no doubt that the visit of Mr. Hall Caine to Canada will do a great deal of good in more ways than in Copyright matters. We can but regret that his visit has been so brief.