

SUNDAY PAPERS.

Mr. Charlton, M.P., seems to think he is the guardian of the public morals. He seems satisfied that Sunday papers are one of the means whereby public morals are demoralized. Therefore he is determined that, so far as he can help it, there shall be no Sunday papers in Canada. But, like many another well-meaning man, Mr. Charlton goes too far. He is not only determined that no Sunday papers shall be printed in Canada, but he goes a step further, and says that no Sunday papers shall be sold in Canada, even although the attempt be made to sell them on other days than Sunday. Of course such a proposition is ridiculous, and the introduction of Mr. Charlton's bill into Parliament was the signal for a storm of protests from every section of the country. This restrictive legislation would have been felt particularly by the newsdealers throughout the country, many of whom sell a large number of Sunday papers. Protests against the principle of Mr. Charlton's bill poured in thick and fast on the members of Parliament from all sections of the country. It was pointed out to the members of Parliament that to prohibit the sale of all Sunday papers, because a few of them were ultra-sensational in tone, was something that could not for a moment be tolerated in a free country. In consequence of these protests, Mr. Charlton's bill was quietly shelved. Let us hope that we have heard the last of it. There are enough restrictions on the trade of the bookseller and newsdealer, without such an absurd bill as this of Mr. Charlton's being introduced to further harass and worry the trade.

POSTAGE ON PAPERS.

The proposition of Postmaster-General Mulock to charge a rate of a cent a pound on newspapers carried through the mails has raised a storm of protests. The religious papers especially have been vehement in their opposition to the proposed tax. The following deputation interviewed Mr. Mulock at Ottawa on April 18, with reference to the matter:—Dr. Withrow, "Methodist Magazine"; G. R. Roberts, "Canadian Baptist"; Frank Wootten, "Canada Churchman"; Mr. Seager, "Evangelical Churchman"; Dr. Briggs, Methodist Book and Publishing House; Rev. A. C. Courtice, "Christian Guardian"; Patrick Boyle, "Catholic Register"; Alex. Fraser, "Presbyterian Review"; Dr. Macdonald, "The Westminster."

The deputation placed their case before Mr. Mulock. Dr. Withrow said that American competition, with more advertising and cheaper paper, was running them hard. These American publications promoted a

wrong sentiment among Canadian children. Dr. McDonald and G. R. Roberts emphasized what Dr. Withrow had said.

Mr. Mulock, however, was firm in refusing the prayer of the deputation, saying that all classes of papers must pay the new rate. On the whole we are inclined to agree with the Postmaster-General. Newspaper proprietors have no more right to have their papers carried through the mails free than other classes of the community. We would, however, like to see the Postmaster-General omit the ten mile limit from the new scale. Make all papers pay postage rate, whether delivered within one mile of the publishing house or within fifty or five hundred miles thereof.

THE OTTAWA PUBLIC LIBRARY.

The Ottawa "Free Press," in a recent editorial, was somewhat severe on the proposition to establish a free public library in the city of Ottawa. The writer is, however, decidedly astray in his conclusions. The gist of his argument seems to be that because people read novels there should be no free library. Surely the writer has never been in a public library and seen the hundreds of readers of all ages and conditions in life who consult the dictionaries, the encyclopedias, and other works of reference. As a matter of fact, the circulating department of a popular library is but one, and that one not the most important, feature of the library. The reading rooms and the reference library are equally as important as the circulating department. And because people read novels, that is no reason why the people as a whole should be deprived of the benefits of the library. The Ottawa library will be an exception to the rule if the use of the books on the arts and sciences and general literature does not compare most favorably with the use of the novels. No doubt more novels will be read, but a novel can be run through in a night or two, whereas a mechanic will study a book on the steam-engine, or on electricity, for two or four weeks before he will take it back to get another. So with the student and with the reader of history and travels. The "Free Press" writer would do well, too, to understand that while certain classes only read books in certain classes—no one but a plumber, for instance, would study a work on plumbing treated from a technical point of view—all classes read novels. The lawyer, the merchant, the mechanic, the housewife—all these like a novel occasionally. And for a very good reason too. A good novel is a relief to the tired-out man or woman. A good novel gives one an idea of life outside one's own little circle. Thus as all classes read novels, it is no wonder that the use of novels in libraries is very large. But no harm will

result from this if proper restrictions are placed on the circulation, and if only the healthier class of novels are provided. It is unnecessary to say that it is the duty of the library board to see that novels of an objectionable or low moral tone are rigidly excluded from the shelves. We yet hope to see Ottawa enjoying the benefits to be derived from a well-conducted public library. We are satisfied that the people of Ottawa will find that money so spent will be money well invested.

AUTHORS' RIGHTS.

Editors and publishers owe a duty to their contributors. This duty is to see that nothing material is omitted from the manuscripts sent in by authors. Two instances that have recently come to our notice serve to emphasize the importance of this duty. THE CANADIAN BOOKSELLER recently had to point out the fact that in an article in "Chambers' Journal," the authoress, Isabella Fyvie Mayo, seemed to have taken the matter almost entirely from the Misses Lizars' clever book, "In the Days of the Canada Company." We understand that Mrs. Mayo feels very much hurt at this assertion. From a letter received from a friend of Mrs. Mayo's, we understand that Mrs. Mayo gave due credit to the Misses Lizars' book, referring to it in complimentary terms, but that the editor of "Chambers' Journal" cut out these references, for no other reason, as Mrs. Mayo could judge, than to bring the article within a certain space. This certainly clears Mrs. Mayo of the charge of not mentioning the Misses Lizars' book. But what shall be said of the editor of the old reliable Chambers'? Without dwelling further on the case, we can only say it would have been in much better taste had the editor of Chambers' omitted something else and given the Misses Lizars the credit that was justly due them. Another case of a very similar character is that of Mr. McLellan's book, "Spanish John," published by the Harpers. Mr. Marquis somewhat bluntly accused Mr. McLellan of having compiled this book from an old story published many years ago, and of palming it off on an unsuspecting public as his own original composition. In reply to this charge, Mr. McLellan says that in the manuscript of his book he mentioned the story alluded to by Mr. Marquis, but that in publishing the book the Harpers omitted this memorandum. Mr. McLellan adds that he is in no wise to be blamed for this omission of his publishers; the less so as he amplified, enlarged, and improved on the story alluded to by Mr. Marquis. These two instances show, as we have said in our opening lines, that publishers owe a duty to authors. Authors must evidently insist on