

some special book. Formerly I went to a local bookseller and gave an order. He would promise to write home. I would wait a month, six weeks, two months, and finally do without it. Now, I always write to a British publisher to send it by book-post. When the book does come, I receive a notice that it has been transferred to the Customs house; and there, after a most vexatious and lengthy process of signing papers and paying fees, the book is at length obtained. The process is the same as though one were importing dynamite or some such suspicious or communistic material." It is no wonder that Canadians who have contemplated and actually commenced writing on subjects of general interest have abandoned their work solely from want of the needful books. The loss to the country in reputation and in all the higher interests of life is incalculable.

From the students point of view the tax is peculiarly odious and indefensible. It adds greatly to the cost of every valuable textbook, and these are the tools with which he has to work, and tools that cannot be made in Canada. Scientific apparatus is now admitted free, and books are the students' apparatus.

We shall be able to judge of the amount of "sweetness and light" in the present Parliament by the reception given to the Senate's petition.

THE late visit of Mr. Spencer to this continent and the consequent direction of attention to philosophical systems, the formation of the "Dialectic Club" in our midst, and the accidental notice of some remarks in a work of Sir W. Hamilton's, have occasioned in this article. We are glad to see the study of Philosophy increasing in popularity both within and without college circles. Especial prominence has been given it in our own university. This is as it should be, for no more important subject could be placed on the curriculum. The present may not be

an inopportune occasion for the discussion of its utility and for pointing out that no other study is so well adapted to give men a training such as will carry them far on to positions of influence.

Aristotle says that *happiness* is energizing according to virtue—a healthy unimpeded activity of every element of our nature. We *exist* as we energize; energy is the means by which our faculties are *improved*; and *increased* energy is the end which that development proposes. In energy, therefore, is contained the *happiness, existence development and perfection* of our being. Any collegiate training is therefore good in proportion as it affords a stimulus to greater energy. We have many studies which are, in a secondary sense, of great importance—important because they fit us for social or influential positions among our fellows. These studies, however, while they polish, do not give us increased strength of intellect. The march of intellect is not always a concomitant of the march of knowledge, and the value of any study is to be judged not so much by the complement of truth it gives to us as by the higher degree in which it determines our capabilities for action. As a means to this end metaphysical speculation should have a first place. It deserves this position first because of its dignity. It deals with thoughts the most sublime—God—the soul—the present worth and future destiny of man—are these not subjects which would make any study in connection with them important? But apart from the dignity which thus belongs to metaphysical pursuits, they are among the best gymnastics for the mind; they create the desire for and give the means of having increased energy, and where there is most energy or life, there is most victory. Philosophy commands us to know ourselves. Knowledge drawn from without is imperfect. It makes its votaries fatalists and materialists. We can only know God as we know our-