to impress it forcibly on the minds of his readers. We cannot do better than spare a little space for a reproduction of some passages, as sample bricks of an excellent building. The lecturer commences with a luminous historical review of the origin of copyright, and devotes several pages to the controversy as to whether it exists by Common law, or is only a creation of the Statute Law. In speaking of literary productions as property, he says :—

"The law has always made a distinction between literary property and other property, and in spite of all that has been written this distinction is both necessary and just. It is in itself right and proper to reward literary labour; and it is, moreover, to the interest of society generally, that authors should be encouraged to write, precisely as inventors are stimulated by the Patent Laws; but an author does not create a new thing by his own labour. Much of his work is of necessity borrowed. Chaucer took his 'Canterbury Tales,' some from Gower, and generally from Boccaccio, Petrarch, and the Italian story tellers. None of Shakespeare's plots are original, and of Milton's 'Lycidas,' not only the framework, but whole lines are adapted from Theocritus. If this be the case with the great writers, how much more do the smaller ones enter in upon the labours of their predecessors? The number of original works is very small; and if the conditions demanded by the title of *occupancy* were strictly enforced, there are very few works in the world which would comply with its requirements. If copyright and patent right were perpetual, the whole intellectual and physical world would be parcelled out by inheritance into small holdings, interlaced so that the courts and judges would be occupied for ever in interminable discussions upon tangible things. The claims put forward by the writers on this subject will not bear investigation. They are for the most part special pleaders, and they go too far afield for their illustrations. Thus Mr. Drone is arguing for the perpetuity of literary property, as the result of labour, and he adduces an incident in the Book of Genesis, where Abraham digged a well; and he says that Isaac one hundred years later successfully vindicated his claim to it because his father dug it. This excursus into Philistine law is characteristic of much of the writing upon this subject. It is law run mad. Upon the laws of the Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, or Jebusites, 4,000 years ago, Mr. Drone is no better an authority than Mr. Morgan on Roman Law. If there be one thing clearer than another in the whole Book of Genesis, it is that the only real estate which Abraham possessed in Palestine was the field he bought of Ephron the Hittite. . . . The fact simply is that literary property is a recent creation, first of prerogative, then of statute —reasonable, just, and right—and that, in creating it, the law has put such limitations upon it as are necessary for the general good. We have seen that the first privilege on record, which was granted by Henry VIII., was for 7 years; the Act of Queen Anne was for 14 years; the Act of George III. was for 28 years; the Act of Victoria was for 42 years; the proposed new Act is for 50 years. The time is continually extending, and the copyright holders are still dissatisfied, and clamour for a perpetuity of monopoly. Few copyrights, as a matter of fact, are held by authors. They are held by capitalists, the large publishing houses, who would like them to go down from generation to generation. Jacob Tonson set up his carriage out of Milton's 'Paradise Lost,' for which Mrs. Milton got eight pounds. I am not arguing against literary property, nor against the just right of an author to his reward. Those who enjoy the fruit of his labour should pay for the privilege; but I am arguing against the demand to enclose in perpetuity the common ground of intellectual life; against the demand to vest in the descendants of authors, or of capitalists who have bought up author's rights, a property which *they*, at least, did not create; a property, moreover, intangible, difficult to define and keep separate, and which in a few generations would become hopelessly intermingled. Then, also, many great works might be suppressed as opinion changed from age to age, and a Puritan heir might suppress the works of Shakespeare, or a Jacobite lock up or expurgate the works of Milton. So far was the Parliament of Queen Anne from supposing that literary property was of so sacred a nature, that they inserted in their Act a clause by which anyone or a number of high officials could reduce the prices of books which might be thought unreasonably high; and this was in the very first Copyright Act ever passed by any nation. . . . The only persons who would be benefited by perpetuity of literary property would be the great publishing houses and corporations, and the dominion of capital would be extended into the intellectual world by a species of literary syndicates."

In speaking of the present state of the law in Canada, Mr. Dawson gives a sketch of our Act of 1875, which begins as follows :—

"I come now to the Canadian Act of 1875. Those who had to do with the framing of that Act were perfectly familiar with the state of the English and American law. They could not touch the Imperial Act, so they ignored it. They were careful not to allude to it in any way while avoiding collision with it. So jealous are the English publishers of any Colonial copyright legislation that the Act was reserved by Lord Dufferin under special instructions. On its arrival in London, the customary storm of misrepresentation and abuse broke out in the *Times* and other London newspapers. The Publishers Association sat upon it, and various legal luminaries were called in. But finding that the Act was strictly a local Act, within the powers of our