

THE WEEK.

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Current Topics.

Ourselves.
We beg to announce that THE WEEK has been purchased from its late owners and is now the property of THE WEEK Publishing Company, of Toronto, Limited. This issue of the journal is printed from new type throughout and on superior paper. Beginning with the issue of November 30th—the first number of its twelfth year—certain marked changes will be made in THE WEEK's editorial and literary columns which it is hoped will tend to give the paper greater popularity and greater scope for usefulness.

The Copyright Question.
It is to be hoped that Sir John Thompson, while in London, may be able to come to some understanding with the Colonial Office on the Copyright question. It is not surprising that Canadian publishers are expressing themselves somewhat strongly upon the subject. We do not know whether their representations, as coming from those who have a business interest in the operation of the Canadian Act, will have much influence with the British Government, but it should not be forgotten that a similar selfish interest, or supposed interest, on the part of British publishers, is at the bottom of the difficulty. When the interests of Canadian and British manufacturers of the same class clash in regard to a question of Canadian legislation, it is not unreasonable to insist that the views of Canadians shall prevail. There can be no doubt, we suppose, that legislation in regard to Copyright is one of the powers expressly handed over to the Canadian Parliament by the B. N. A. Act, seeing that it is distinctly specified, Sec. 91 (23). Our self-governing powers are, of course, in this, as in every other respect, subject to the supreme veto of the Imperial Authorities, but it would severely strain Canadian loyalty, strong as such loyalty is, should her power of self-government be arbitrarily interfered with on any but distinctly Imperial grounds. It would be difficult, we fancy, to convince any colonial authority that such concerns are involved in the Copyright question. Not even Imperial treaties should be permitted to interfere with Canada's right to protect herself against a combination of British and American publishers to her detriment, and it is surely nothing less than a combination when, at the instigation of American publishers, British publishers refuse

either to sell books to Canadian booksellers, or to sell plates to Canadian publishers. The Copyright Act has been long enough in suspense, and it is time that our Government should insist on knowing what is to be done in the matter.

The Attack on the Lords.

The agitation for the restriction of the powers of the House of Lords appears to have been greatly strengthened by the announcement made a week or two since by Lord Rosebery, on behalf of the Government. According to the latest telegrams, the Government resolution is to cover the abolition of the veto power, and is to be first on the Government order paper. Just what is meant by the abolition of the veto power, and what position the Upper House would occupy after such abolition have not yet been made clear. The likeliest supposition seems to be that, while the second chamber would no longer be able to cause any measure to be defeated, or thrown out, by refusing to pass it, it will still have the right to discuss and amend measures sent up from the Commons. It would follow, we suppose, that bills thus criticised and amended would be returned to the Commons, where the amendments would be considered and either rejected or adopted, as that House might determine. The nation would in that way get the benefit of whatever wisdom the Lords might be able to bring to bear for the improvement of the measure, if they should choose to profit by it. It is clear that in this way the nation might get some of the benefit of the more dispassionate and mature deliberations of the Peers, of which we have heard a good deal during this agitation. But it is not in the least probable that the Upper House will ever consent to occupy this subordinate position, unless and until absolutely compelled to do so. By what means they can be compelled to vote for their own degradation and ultimate extinction—for this would almost surely be the outcome—it is hard to conceive.

Russia and Great Britain.

Lord Rosebery's statement at the Lord Mayor's banquet, the other day, touching the good understanding which now prevails between Great Britain and Russia, is one of the most important announcements which has been made by a Prime Minister for a long time. Such utterances, shrouded, as they are always supposed to be, in a thick veil of diplomatic reserve, are naturally understood to mean more than meets the ear or the eye. To say that the Government's relations with Russia have been more cordial for a little time past than the Premier is able to remember their having been at any previous time, and that the frontier difficulties are now nearly settled, is saying a good deal. For many years past the attitude and operations of Russia on the borders of India have been the occasion of an almost chronic uneasiness. Should the two nations now have the good sense to come to a fair and permanent agreement in regard to the boundaries, an agreement so clear and distinct as to leave no room for misunderstanding, if such a thing be possible, an important guarantee of European peace would have been given, and both nations would be enabled to carry out peaceful enterprises for the development of their respective possessions, as it has been and would be impossible for them to do under the shadow of an ever-threatening war-cloud. Beyond some such specific