

facts. In the first place, not only do the producers of books not require this duty for their protection; but, in the second place, the duty has the very opposite effect to that of encouraging the producer.

"The first of these assertions is based on the fact, that, without any protective duty, book-makers are already, in one respect at least, more effectively protected than any other class of producers. The law of copyright absolutely prohibits the importation of any foreign reprint of a book produced in Canada. This law is now so liberal, if not to Canadian authors, at least to the men interested in the mechanical work of book manufacture, that the works of British and foreign authors may be reprinted in Canada, and the reprinter is absolutely protected against the importation of foreign reprints. I am informed that Canadian editions of Tennyson's and Swinburne's works, which few men with any care for their eyesight would choose to read, have closed our markets against all the beautiful American editions of these poets, even though the poets receive a handsome royalty from the American publishers for the privilege of republishing, and from the Canadian importers a duty of 12½ per cent for the privilege of importing their works. The Canadian printer who is still unsatisfied with all this protection, must be extremely voracious in his demands.

"But the truth is that there is no other intelligible demand that can, in the circumstances, be made. It is conceivable, indeed, that, when a book is produced by a Canadian author, the tariff may be intended to compel Canadians to read his book by putting a high duty on all foreign books upon the same subject. If this was the object of the tariff, if it was designed to make it difficult for us to become acquainted with foreign literature or science, in order that we might restrict our literary and scientific tastes to the productions of Canadian authorship, it would be an interesting fact to know. But it would be unfair to suspect our legislators or publishers of such vandalic obscurantism; and, as for Canadian authors, the first has yet to be discovered, who, except, perhaps, by way of a jest at a protective tariff, has proposed to compel men to read his works by excluding the works of foreigners.

"Unfortunately the duty on books, so far from encouraging the sale of a Canadian author's works among his countrymen, has usually the very opposite effect. A Canadian author, be he French or English, has the good fortune to use a language which is spoken by many millions of people outside of his own country; and, whether for the sake of pecuniary remuneration, or fame, or intellectual influence, it would be folly to seek his readers, either solely or even primarily, within the limits of the Dominion. Consequently, every Canadian author of any note has found it an obvious requirement of prudence, if not of necessity, to publish his works in England or the United States, and even his occasional essays find the most desirable channel for their publication in the widely circulated periodicals of these two countries. The result, therefore, of the present tariff on books to the Canadian author is, that any work of his, which addresses itself to the great English-speaking communities of the world, or any magazine with an article of his seeking the same vast audience, is met at the frontier by a regulation imposing a fine on every one of his countrymen who wishes to read his productions. The only way in which this barrier can at present be broken down between the Canadian author and his readers in Canada is by restricting his literary production to works of such insignificant value or of such narrow interest, that it is not worth while to seek for them a circulation beyond the limits of the Dominion.

"Is it, therefore, an unfounded charge against the duty on books, that, so far from attaining the end of a protective tariff by encouraging native industry, it is a serious discouragement to one form, at least, of production which has always been regarded as the most unmistakable sign of a people's civilization? To a certain extent, indeed, the duty hampers every important industry in the country. There is scarcely a single occupation in life which is not instructed by a more or less valuable literature that is constantly increasing; and most of the agricultural, mining, manufacturing and commercial industries are the subject, not only of independent works appearing from time to time, but also of periodicals explaining the perpetual improvements in processes and machinery, by which the cost of production is diminished or the value of products is enhanced. The effect, therefore, of the duty on books is to discourage every producer in the country from keeping abreast of the new inventions by which his industry might be improved. But the men and women, on whom this duty falls with special severity, are those who are engaged in literary, or scientific, or educational pursuits,—forms of industry which, even in an economical point of view, ought to rank among the most valuable occupations in a country.

"It thus appears that the duty on books can be viewed in no other light than as a tax for revenue purposes; and, without urging that books are among the last articles that should be selected for taxation in a civilized country, it is satisfactory to know that the present state of the revenue puts the Government in a position to repeal this tax without any inconvenience. It is not yet a year since the Government, in answer to an appeal of the mercantile classes, abolished the stamp duties, even though these duties form a mode of taxation which may be justified as falling upon those who are well able to pay it, and falling upon them generally in proportion to their ability. Is it too much to ask that the Government shall now listen to the cry that is coming to them from every humble country parsonage, from every poorly remunerated teacher, from every retired student of literature and science, from all those classes, in short, which, while doing valuable service to the community, are seldom in a position to bear any unusual burden of taxation?"

That is the special view of the author and the literary man; and it seems to me from both the points of view to which I have referred, that it would be better to revert to the former

policy on the subject of books, and impose a general tax of 5 per cent. which, as far as I can learn, would produce upon the whole the same revenue which the hon. gentleman will obtain from his tax of 15 per cent. on the foreign editions. I would prefer to see them free—as free as the air we breathe, but if there must be a tax on them, public convenience, the convenience of the importer, and the convenience of everybody in obtaining the late editions at the same rate as the earlier, so far as the Customs Department is concerned, and the convenience of the Customs as a fiscal Department, would all be served by reverting to a uniform duty of 5 per cent. instead of what the hon. gentleman proposes. I have made these observations because I feel that the case is a special one. As I have said, books are one of the influences on the more important part of the existence of our whole people, the moral and intellectual life, and it does seem to me to be a matter that ought to receive the earnest and serious consideration of every man who indulges for this country those high aspirations which we hear so often repeated in this Chamber.

Sir LEONARD TILLEY. I have listened with a great deal of interest to the address, the very eloquent address, which has been delivered by the hon. gentleman who has just taken his seat. He has made a very powerful and a very feeling appeal to the Government to remove the duty on books. Now, Sir, while I was listening to the hon. member appealing to the Government to remove the duty entirely, I asked myself, why was it that when the hon. gentleman himself was a member of the Government, he did not secure its removal. I saw that he guarded himself with regard to the proposition of 5 per cent., but he was most emphatic—was he not?—in his declaration that he would be delighted to have the duty removed altogether. I thought it was strange, if the hon. member felt so deeply, as his speech indicated, that when the late Minister of Finance was preparing his Tariff changes, he did not go to him and say, "Sir, this is a most important question; it is at the bottom of the moral and intellectual life of the people of this country; these are articles from which we ought not to obtain any revenue at all." I can imagine, if he had appealed to his late colleagues in such a speech as he has just delivered, it would have been irresistible, and the late Minister of Finance would have come down with a proposition to remove the duty entirely. Well, there is some difference in being a member of a Government and a member of an Opposition, I do not say that the hon. gentleman did not feel as strongly then as now; but, at any rate, he did not impress his colleagues with the opinion that the duty should be removed entirely. "Well," he asks, "shall we be seven years behind the rest of the world?" No; and we are not. I have heard my hon. friend speak in glowing terms of our neighbors to the south of us—they were an enlightened, an intelligent, a progressive people, and still we are thirteen years ahead of the United States. We are simply asking that the duty shall be collected on books that have not been printed seven years; they demand that duty shall be collected on books not printed twenty years.

Mr. BLAKE. They have a circulation forty times as great.

Sir LEONARD TILLEY. We are not behind them. I think there might be a good deal said on the subject of this duty for revenue purposes alone. The necessities of life, whatever they may be, are as important to the people as books. All Governments have, from time to time, imposed duties on articles which are necessary to sustain life. I know it is important to do all we can for the moral improvement of the people. When I spoke of novels I had not reference alone to novels—and I agree with the hon. gentleman that there are a large proportion of novels and other publications