

### OLD-STYLE BACK-TALK.

HOW OUR EARLY AUTHORS PUBLISHED ONE ANOTHER.

The "Providence Gazette" of October 6, 1792, contains an extremely amusing advertisement of Noah Webster's, denouncing an edition of his book published in New York. The advertisement reads:

TO THE PUBLIC.—Whereas, in the fourteenth edition of my Spelling Books, printed in New York, for Samuel Campbell, Robert Hodge, etc., the Publishers have inserted a declaration that the edition contains my latest corrections and that it is the most correct edition printed on the Continent. This is to notify all persons concerned that the Declaration was inserted without my knowledge or consent, and that after examining the work I find it the most incorrect edition I have ever seen. There are in it between two hundred and three hundred errors in printing, great numbers of them very material ones, not to say anything of two or three sheets of the work which are printed on bad paper and old worn-out letter. For the information of those who wish to have correct copies of this book, I think it my duty to give public notice that on account of the multitude of errors in this edition I utterly disclaim it.

NOAH WEBSTER, JUN.

HARTFORD, September 15, 1792.

There was, at times, hot rivalry among the early publishers, as is visibly demonstrated by these two fiery invectives printed in the "Pennsylvania Gazette" in November, 1729, soon after Benjamin Franklin became its proprietor. The first is:

Whereas, William Bradford, of New York, Printer, has basely and villainously forged an almanack in my name, and I will therefore take methods to prosecute the said Bradford.

TITAN LEEDS, Burlington.

The following week came Bradford's reply:

These are to inform all persons that the above assertion of Titan Leeds is a base and notorious falsehood, and Friend Titan is hereby advertised that he may expect to be handled in another manner than this advertisement for his so free charges of villainy, forgery, counterfeit, etc.

—From "The Reading of Our Ancestors," in "Godey's Magazine" for January.

The ubiquitous book agent is a danger. The anti-combination or anti-trust mania has inspired Mr. Wheeler, of Kentucky, to introduce in the House of Representatives at Washington a measure that provides that "no person holding a copyright for any book, map, or pamphlet shall enter into any agreement, combination, or understanding with any person or persons whereby the parties to said contract shall have the exclusive privilege to sell books, maps, or pamphlets, or into any agreement, combination, or understanding for the purpose of controlling or regulating the output of books, maps, or pamphlets, or for fixing, establishing, regulating, controlling, or influencing the price for which books, maps, or pamphlets are sold." The penalty proposed by the bill is a cancellation of copyright.

The phraseology of the bill seems to cover

a direct attack upon the present system by which the publishers of subscription-books dispose of their publications by agents with exclusive territorial rights or privileges. It is also, therefore, a measure calculated to make the "grasping and avid" book-cannasser uneasy as to his future. The "Publishers' Weekly" truly says: "He will have to stir himself as never before to convince Congress of the injustice of such a measure against the advance agents of civilization."

A young writer tells this story on herself: she says the "Housewife"—the best joke of all! she sent a batch of squibs to a comic paper, requesting pay at the usual rates, and was tersely informed that the paper's usual rates consisted in "glory." "Then print my jokes, and give, oh, give me glory!" she replied. They gave her glory with a vengeance, printing her name, street, town, and State address, in large type, at the foot of her jokelets.

BOTH CLEVER. — Mr. MUNRO Fraser, one of H.M. Inspectors of schools for Scotland, tells a story of a Highlander who was out for a walk with his wife one day, and had the ill-luck to fall into a river. After great difficulty he managed to scramble out again, and was assisted up the bank by his wife, who had been almost distracted. "Ah, Donald dear," she said, "you ought to be very thankful to Heaven for your life being spared!" Donald was quite offended at this way of putting it. "Ay, ay!" he replied "Profitence was ferry kend, but I was ferry clever too!"

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