

far as Government hindrances will enable him to do it, we shall be seven years behind the rest of the world. The hon. gentleman says: "Providing your book has been printed seven years ago, you may get it in free, but if it sins by having been printed within seven years, I shall charge a tax, the financial effect of which is to add to the bookseller's advance, with the duty, a cost of somewhere about 22 per cent. to the cost of the work." Now, Sir, this is an era, as I have said, not merely of the publication of numerous books, but also there is a revolution in the system of publication, and the system of cheap editions, which existed to a considerable extent in the United States some time ago, has there assumed most marvellous proportions. The enterprise which has been displayed, and the proof of the possibility of production, added to the almost nominal cost of the books, if only a wide-reading public could be procured, is wonderful, and it has followed in England also; and I find very cheap editions of many standard works, and many new works also, published in England. Now, the circumstance, Sir, the fact, that we are getting, that we can get books very cheaply, may be argued by hon. gentlemen as a reason why, after all, it is not a great imposition to have to add 22 per cent. practically to the cost of them; but, Sir, I want that we should be as well off as the rest of the world in this regard. I want those advantages, which the practical application of this idea within the last few years has produced for America, and largely for England, should not be limited to the other side of the line that separates us from the Republic; and I want to point out to the hon. gentleman that the widely extended application of this principle places the Canadian publisher in a position which renders it practically impossible for him to compete in many instances except at a largely enhanced price, because he must have, even at the best, a very limited circulation; he must have a very limited circulation for his books if the production is confined to Canada; upon the extent of the circulation is dependent, I may almost say, the whole of the cost, and the condition of things is such that it is impossible for him, without getting the circulation, practically to produce the works as cheaply as it is done abroad. Shall we, then, in view of that state of things, not merely arrange in reference to the publication here of some works which are peculiarly suited to our country, for which, as in the case of the school literature of Ontario, a very large circulation may be obtained. The production of such may be procured at a moderate rate; but shall we proceed for all time to come, to place a tax, to maintain a tax, the result of which, as I have stated, is to add not far from 14 per cent. to the cost of the book on all late literature, and on all late editions of old literature. Editions are coming out. I will give another example of competition in this matter. Take the classics. Take the ancient standard works, the classics; I do not mean in the languages of Rome and Athens only, but take the classics, the standard works of English and French literature. Of these gems of the world, new editions are being published, annotated, it is true, with fresh information as to the authors, with fresh suggestions as to passages which have puzzled and excited the curiosity and wonder and admiration of the world for a long time: I know not whether the circumstance that a new edition comes out—no, I do know now, that circumstances ought not to deprive us of the benefit of a new edition. We are not to know, what the latest discoveries, the latest suggestions are with reference to these great standards. If some new views are found with reference to Homer, or Shakespeare, or Milton, or Dante, or Esculapius, or Euripides, or any of the great men of the world in literature, a new edition is published, but the scholar, the investigator is told: My good man, seven years; you must go back seven years and find whatever is to be found seven years old, and you can have that free, but if you want a book which contains the latest information on this subject, the latest suggestions, you must

MR. BLAKE.

pay your tax of 15 per cent., which means to you 22 per cent. Now the hon. gentleman made us a mention of novels in his Budget Speech, and he said he did not see much objection to novels being published in Canada. Neither do I, Sir. I am not going to pass any wholesale condemnation on novels. There are works of fiction, which I believe form part of a liberal education, which ought to be widely read, ought to be read by any who professes to call himself a cultivated or educated man; but had he imposed the tax on the season novels which appear, I should not object for my part, not merely to 15, but 30, 40 or 50 per cent. while the hon. gentleman in one clause of the Tariff resolutions propose to prohibit the export of turkey, quail, and deer in the carcase. I should not object, in a word, if he prohibited altogether the importation, or even the publication in Canada of some of these novels, if the prohibition of publication were not inconsistent with the fundamental principles on that subject, but upon the mere question of the season novel I care little whether the Canadian publisher publishes it or the foreign edition comes in. But that is not the main question. There are Canadian publishers, if you will, that publish that class of works which may be published and get to a wide circulation; but for the sake of protecting them with reference to that particular kind of publication which they do publish, and which is the one thing which the hon. gentleman mentioned as being published by him, why impose a tax on all the standard works to which I have referred, of which it is not likely that one in one hundred, or perhaps one in one thousand will ever be published here, but on which we must all pay a tax who desire to have them? It does not seem to me that the circumstance that our people may be well told that the season novel is a luxury and they must buy it from the home publisher or pay 15 per cent. duty, is a reason why those who want more wholesome literature which they cannot get here should also pay 15 per cent. Our publications in the country, through the state of circumstances to which I have referred, as to the extent of their circulation, must be comparatively narrow. It is only within a very limited range that we can hope that they could at all compete, and for that we are called upon to retain this tax upon all that is fresh and new in the world of literature, and upon all the fresh discoveries, suggestions, annotations and editions of all that is old and well known in the world of literature. That is the view which the hon. Minister takes, and that is the view from which I venture very respectfully to dissent. But there is another view which I think it is important to present to the House upon this matter. The view with reference to the producer of books, not the publisher of them, has been stated better than I can state it by an accomplished gentleman of my acquaintance who, not long since, wrote a paper which has been published over his name in a Montreal newspaper. I refer to Prof. Murray, and I shall trouble the House with his references on that subject:

"Among the alterations in the Tariff introduced by the present Government has been a very serious increase of the import duty on books—an increase to three times its former rate. No other article that I can remember underwent such a serious addition to its cost; and, therefore, as nearly all the books that are read must be imported, it is no wonder that educated men in general, and especially those whose professional wants demand a large supply of books, should have complained all along about the injustice of this unusual burden. Their complaints have at last assumed form in petitions to the Legislature for the repeal or reduction of the tax on books. It would be little less than a useless impertinence to ask the present hon. Minister of Finance to make an alteration in the Tariff which would involve a reversal of his whole fiscal policy; and no sane man can expect the existing House of Commons to sanction a measure entirely hostile to the system which they have been elected to support. But the repeal of the duty on books would not involve any abandonment of the policy to which the present Government and House of Commons are committed. On the contrary, while freedom in the book trade should commend itself to the opponents of the popular policy, it ought, for many reasons, to be demanded by the supporters of that policy themselves. Occasionally extremes meet; and for once Protectionist and Free-trader may combine in demanding from the Legislature a very simple concession of justice. This must be evident from two