

THE CANADIAN LITERARY NEWS LETTER

And Booksellers' Advertiser.

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THE CANADIAN LITERARY NEWS LETTER.

The frequent applications made to the Colonial Trade, respecting new works issued from the press in Great Britain and the United States, their prices, sizes, &c., and which in many instances they are unable to answer promptly and satisfactorily, have induced the Publisher to undertake the present **monthly Literary News Letter**. In one of the leading divisions will be presented Lists of the latest published works in Europe and America—the prices quoted will be those current at the places of publication, to which, of course, the Canadian bookseller will have to add a reasonable advance to cover difference in currency, freight, insurance, and his own profit. Another division will contain brief notices or criticisms of the most important new books taken from the best informed sources, discoveries or improvements in science and art, anecdotes of Literary men, &c. &c. Free use will be made of all the best Literary Journals, and such private means of information as are accessible respecting new books, authors, &c. In the present number, we have been greatly indebted to the London Athenæum, Bent's (London) Literary List, and Norton's (N. York) Literary Gazette. The concluding pages will be devoted to Publishers' advertisements of their books, newly issued or about to issue from the press. The Trade in Britain and the United States are invited to avail themselves of the columns of the News Letter, for making their publications known. Terms, 3d. or 5 cents per line, payable in advance.

TO ADVERTISERS.—The circulation of the *News Letter* is guaranteed to be 2500, and it will be carefully and judiciously distributed by different Booksellers throughout the Province among Literary Institutions, Clergymen, Lawyers, Physicians, Engineers, Merchants, and others likely to be interested in such a publication. An excellent opportunity is thus afforded to advertisers to make their respective publications known. Publishers in the United States may communicate with the undersigned direct, and orders left with Messrs. Trubner & Co., Paternoster Row, London, will be transmitted to Montreal.

Montreal.

H. RAMSAY.

ENGLISH COPYRIGHT IN THE COLONIES.

From the *London Athenæum* 23rd Dec.

ADVICES from the Cape of Good Hope bring a piece of intelligence, against which it is necessary for all men of letters, for all who respect literature, and for all who desire to maintain an honourable character for the trade in books, to enter instant protest. This African colony has just received a constitution,—and the first use to which it has turned its initiative of legislation is to pass a Bill to rob the authors of the parent country.

Incredible as it may sound, a Bill has actually passed both Houses of the Colonial Parliament, authorizing "the importation into the colony of the Cape of Good Hope of books, being foreign reprints of books first composed or written, or printed, or published, in the United Kingdom, and in which there shall be copyright."—In other words, the American pirate system is introduced into the colony! Such a Bill is equally preposterous and wicked. Admit the principle, and all our colonies will adopt the rule. It is cheaper to appropriate than to purchase. What is good in Cape Colony will be thought good in Australia, Canada, Hindostan and the West Indies. Of course, we do not for one moment believe that this pirate Bill will be sanctioned here, unless by oversight. The Act of Parliament gives the

English author a property in his intellectual labour in the British Empire; Cape Colony is part of that Empire; and a local Act cannot be allowed to invade an Imperial right. But literature must defend itself against these inroads. Sorry are we to see the first session of the colonial legislature disgraced by the passing of such a Bill; the more so as the colonists must feel that they are offering an unprofitable insult to England, for we trust there is no possibility of a Bill being accepted by the Queen, the bases of which are laid in moral wrong and in violation of an Imperial statute.

From the *London Athenæum* 30th Dec.

"In your observations in last week's *Athenæum* on the enactment of a law at the Cape of Good Hope, permitting American reprints to be imported into that colony, you properly say—Admit the principle, and all our colonies will adopt the rule. What is good in Cape Colony will be thought good in Australia, Canada, Hindostan, and the West Indies." Now, my belief is, that a law of this very kind is already in operation in the British American colonies, where, during my late visit, I found American reprints of British copyrights on every book-eller's counter. Inquiring into the subject in Nova Scotia, I was informed that, by a lately enacted colonial law, such pirated reprints were admitted on payment of a certain fine or duty, the amount of which was to be handed over to the proprietors of the copyright works so imported; but on pressing the question, I learned that not one farthing had ever been so paid over to any English publisher. Whether, however, there is such a sham law or not, the result is practically the same. Reprints of books and periodicals from New York are admitted in vast abundance without the slightest obstacle into Canada, and all the other British American possessions; and as these countries are becoming great and populous, and with a prevalent taste for English literature, the damage done to British publishers is more than can be justly estimated. Publishers in this country, as a class, have surely been remiss in allowing this gross invasion of their rights to go on so long; and unless they speedily interpose, their exports to the colonies will at no very distant day cease altogether. The question, indeed, has another bearing. The stoppage of the trade in pirated editions to the colonies would be felt as a severe blow by piratical American houses and help materially to promote the enactment of a law of international copyright in the United States. As a complaint from one party can be of little avail, I should recommend a meet-