

not limited at all. Possibly something might be said, even from the point of view of expediency, in favour of extending copyright to authors' children for life. Mr. Dicey justly remarks that it is only exceptional works—the few, in fact, which are the fruit of higher power, more cultivation, and greater effort—that are worth anything at all beyond the term which the law now allows; but it is precisely the producers of works of that rare and valuable kind whom it is the interest of the State to encourage. His objection that “descendants” might arbitrarily and capriciously suppress valuable works, to the injury of the public, is met by the answer that such suppression—inprobable as it must always be—is already forbidden by law, under pain of forfeiture of rights upon a simple complaint made to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. Mr. Dicey seems to have forgotten that, as a fact, copyrights are often vested in descendants for an entire generation, without any of those consequences which he regards as practical grounds of apprehension.

Neither “copyright by right Divine,” to use Mr. Dicey's expression, nor perpetual copyright, is, however, really a question of the day; and to place these matters, therefore, in the foreground, as they are placed in the *Fortnightly* article, is calculated to mislead. What the literary class is now asking for is, greater security and extended area of protection for literary property. Underlying the appeal even of the most excited writers on this subject, there will be found, I think, a reference, expressed or implied, to those familiar principles with regard to the foundation of rights and their relation to human welfare, which Mr. Dicey is at so much pains to establish. Nothing in Mr. Charles Reade's letters in the *Pall Mall Gazette* has, I believe, created more impression in the United States than his demonstration of the great injury inflicted on American literature, and therefore on one of the highest interests of the American people, by the neglect of the legislature of that country to recognize the principle of international copyright. The narrowness of view on this point which pervades Mr. Dicey's article is the more remarkable, because Mr. Reade's argument with reference to the depressing influences which the absence of international copyright exercises upon American literature, is therein set forth with perfect candour. If it be admitted that American literature “struggles in vain” against this influence; and that “the possession of a national literature is an object to which great importance is attached in the United States,” it would seem to be difficult to answer Mr. Reade, even on the barest ground of national interest. In point of fact, Mr. Dicey confesses that something should be done; but he is for the remedy always so much in favour of this country—“a compromise.” He would ask for the English author, he says, “half a loaf” in preference to the “no bread” which he assumes to be the only alternative. This may be prudent from the English point of view; but that is confessedly only part of the question. As far as appears, the half loaf to the English author would still leave the American author with none. The admitted evil is, that it is in America cheaper to reprint English books than to pay native authors, and that hence—political journalism apart—the population of the United States are deprived of that national literature which is the intellectual life of a people. Mr. Dicey's proposal of a small royalty would, as far as I can see, still leave it cheaper, and therefore must be expected to fall short of the desired effect. His statement that the Canadian Government proposed last year such a “per-centage” as he suggests, is as erroneous as his observation that, under this proposal, the Canadian publisher was “to retain the power” of reproducing English books without the consent of the author. The Canadian publisher has never exercised or possessed any such power; nor did the Canadian Government last year propose a per-centage. The further observation that “any system of international or colonial copyright must be based on the understanding that the British

author has no power of deciding whether, and on what terms, his books shall be republished out of England,” is partly answered by the fact that this very power was conferred to the English author, as far as Canada is concerned, by an Act of the Canadian Legislature passed last year, which has since received the Royal assent. It has never been disputed, either by English or Canadian lawyers, that the operation of our Imperial Copyright Acts extended, as therein expressly enacted, not merely, as Mr. Dicey imagines, to “the countries within the four seas,” but to the whole of our colonies and possessions; and hitherto, I believe, unauthorized reprinting of English copyright works in Canada has been entirely unknown. Indeed, the long standing and just complaint of the Canadian publishers has been that, whereas they have been rigidly precluded from reprinting English copyright books, the publishers of the United States have, by our own Government's Order in Council, been allowed to send their unauthorized editions into Canada upon the mere payment of a duty levied in the interest of the English author. This, it will be observed, is a widely different position of affairs from that which the *Fortnightly* Reviewer gravely tells his readers has always existed, and must continue to exist. The truth is that Mr. Dicey's exposition of the legal rights of English authors in the colonies, together with his suggestions for amendment, are founded upon a complete misapprehension of the facts of the case.

MOR THOMAS.

A CASE OF ROMIC IDE.

Tientsi, Jan. 2, 1870.

Will you kindly allow me to apologize in your columns to that estimable ecclesiastic whom I so unwittingly put to death in ‘Gonilla-land.’ I had read in *Ocean Highways* (Sept. 1873): “Monsgr. Bessieux has just died, aged seventy,” and, being out of England, I neglected to verify the report. Monsgr. de Bessieux, Bishop of Gallipolis, was still living when the book appeared, and I venture to wish him at this season a happy new year and many of them.

R. F. BURTON.

Literary Gossip.

NEXT week, probably, we shall publish a poem by Mr. W. B. Scott, and in an early number a poem of some length by Mr. Swinburne.

MR. E. J. REED, M.P., intends to give to the world some of his experiences in his last year's tour, under the title of ‘Letters from Russia in 1875.’ Mr. Murray is the publisher.

MR. M. E. GRANT DUFF, M.P., is going to publish in a volume, under the title ‘Notes of an Indian Journey,’ his papers on India recently contributed to the *Contemporary Review*. The publishers are Messrs. Macmillan & Co.

THE life of the late Dr. Sumner, Bishop of Winchester, by the Rev. George Henry Sumner, Honorary Canon of Winchester, is in the press. It is published by Mr. Murray.

AMONG Mr. Murray's other announcements are ‘Sport in Abyssinia; or, the Mareb and Tackazze,’ by the Earl of Mayo; and Capt. Moresby's work which we have already mentioned, ‘New Guinea and Polynesia: Discoveries and Surveys in New Guinea and the D'Entrecasteaux Islands, a Cruise in Polynesia, and Visits to the Pearl Shelling Stations in Torres Strait of H.M.S. Basilisk.’ We believe that Capt. Moresby's matter-of-fact narrative will form a striking contrast to Capt. Lawson's marvellous tales of adventure.

THE collection of engraved portraits and etchings by the old and modern masters formed by Mr. James Anderson Rose is to be sold

under the hammer of Messrs. Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge in the spring. The collection, which has been in course of formation during the past thirty years, is believed to be one of the most extensive now existing. A thousand of the historical portraits were exhibited at the Guildhall on the occasion of the opening of the New Library in 1872. The modern etchings have also formed part of the exhibitions at Liverpool, Birmingham, and Southampton.

MR. ST. GEORGE FIVART will shortly publish, through Messrs. H. S. King & Co., a volume, entitled ‘Contemporary Evolution.’ This will be a review of the present course and tendency of philosophical speculation, scientific advances, and social and political change; in so far as they affect Christianity. It will also discuss the probable effects upon the Church and society generally of the further continuation of the process of evolution in these spheres. In addition, it touches on the effect which may hereafter be produced on Christian art by the further evolution of Catholic opinion.

‘PICTURESQUE EUROPE’ is the title of the new illustrated work which has been for some years in preparation, and is now about to make its appearance. It will be a description of the most picturesque scenes in Great Britain and the Continent, illustrated by steel plates and engravings on wood from original drawings specially made for the work by several artists. ‘Picturesque Europe’ will be published in monthly parts by Messrs. Cassell, Petter & Galpin, and the first part will appear in February.

WE wish to draw the attention of Mr. Kershaw, and of higher authorities also, to the following communication, which we have received since the publication of his letter in our last number:—

“The inquiry, signed by three gentlemen, in your paper of Jan. 1st, as to risk of loss by fire or theft, in consequence of the use of the Lambeth Library as a court of justice, seems to have been not altogether without some result. I went there yesterday, and saw the barriers, which, I believe, were put up because of that inquiry, but in the roughest way possible. Nor were they fully adequate to the purpose; for though the spectators were not numerous, yet some were within the barrier, having crawled underneath it, and could easily have taken away books. The fog was dense; and only a few candles for the judge and lawyers, and a solitary light at the end of the room. Dr. Stephen's candle was fixed on a pile of books, glimmering and burning to the socket, and set upon a paper tray. Whilst on this subject, I may add that two years ago I pointed out to the librarian possible danger from the stove—it was red-hot; and I think the same stove is there now. If the palace is insured, it would be well for the insurance office to see to this.”

A CORRESPONDENT WRITES:—

“Members of the Society of Antiquaries are beginning to ask themselves if a new President in April is indispensable. You spoke last week of Mr. Overy being ‘generally and deservedly popular.’ No one can deny that; in addition to this, he is not only an efficient chairman, but the best conductor of business in the Society, with sufficient knowledge and taste to appreciate good and well-considered antiquarian work. What more is required?”

THE Rev. J. Franck Bright has sent us a letter about our recent review of his ‘History of England,’ in which he says:—

“It was not, however, the general tenor of the