

SCIENCE :

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THE recent discussions on the proposed international copyright have served to display the prejudices and animosities of those engaged in the controversy, rather than a true exposition of the actual principles involved.

It is not difficult to discover that under the plea of maintaining the rights of authors, leading publishing houses on both sides of the Atlantic are manoeuvring for a "literary treaty" which shall result in their own benefit only.

How little the author has at stake as a result of all this agitation may be gathered from a statement by one who writes on the subject, perhaps not in the interest, but undoubtedly under the patronage, of one of the largest New York publishing houses.

He says: "If the author's interest in a book is represented by 10 per cent. the publisher's interest is represented by 90 per cent." It is not, therefore, surprising to find these champions of author's rights feebly contending for the protection of the works of literary men, but strongly united to secure a monopoly of the business interests involved.

The American publishers who previously were unwilling to concede to foreign authors even their "ten per cent. interest," give at length a tardy consent to a copyright treaty, provided their "90 per cent. interest" is made secure, and their possession of the monopoly rendered impregnable by law.

The New York *Herald*, on the 4th of October last, stated this case as it now stands with admirable judgment, and we are glad to find the powerful influence of this journal taking ground which is in perfect accord with the view we maintain on this important matter. The *Herald* says:

"The corner-stone of the proposed treaty is that protection in this country be given to British authors on condition that they republish here within three months after pub-

lication in Great Britain, and on the further condition that the work be issued here by an American publisher. On like terms British copyright is to be extended to American authors.

"That this scheme would work to the profit of the largest publishing houses in this country, if not of American publishers generally, there is little reason to doubt. It would be a protective measure in their interest. It would create a monopoly in their favor. It would compel foreign authors to come to them or pay the penalty of piracy. It would have no material advantages for the great reading public in either country, and so far from being favorable to either British or American authors it would work against the best interests of both. It would drive both, in order to get foreign protection, to deal with publishers three thousand miles away, and to bear the expense, loss of time, labor, and inconvenience of republication. Still more burdensome and unjust would be the condition requiring the author to republish in the foreign country within a short time after publication at home or lose all his foreign rights and claims to protection."

No impartial reader can peruse the above extract without admitting the justice of the writer's conclusions; he rips off the thin disguise which covers this ridiculous treaty, and reveals the true purpose of those engineering the movement.

The intemperate language employed by the organ of some publishing houses on this question should be noted. The Editor of *Popular Science Monthly* assails Wilkie Collins (who advocates the only right principle of international protection to literary property) with uncalled for severity; he is called "a common-place scold," and his temperate and forcible article on the subject is termed "a blast, which did not amount to much," and as "a perverse and unhelpful utterance." Was it in good taste for the same writer to tell Mathew Arnold that "he was devoid of sense?" But the conclusion of this article demands more than a passing notice, as it conveys a threat, expressed in language which is very significant considering the house from whence the publication emanates, and may be taken in the light of an ultimatum from the publishing interests to their literary patrons.

It may be remembered that Wilkie Collins simply asks that an author may possess "by law (on conditions with which it is reasonable to comply) the same right of control over his property in his book, in a foreign country, which the law gives him in his own country." This is what the New York *Herald* advocates, and we would concede to authors of all countries.

The *Popular Science Monthly* states that "if Mr. Collins [and of course all other authors] has any idea of getting it, he 'had better possess his soul in great patience,' for he will assuredly have to wait a long time before he gets what he wants."

As the writer of this threat has no authority to dictate such an order, or the power to enforce it, it may be safe to assume that it was written under the instruction of those who have the power to give it effect. To such a menace there can be but one reply; much as we desire to see justice done to authors and their rights assured by international treaty, we would, without hesitation, decline concessions thus tendered, and hampered with conditions which would destroy the essence of the gift. We would rather counsel literary men "to possess their souls in great patience," and calmly await the day when their adversaries' souls may be possessed with moderation and justice, or public opinion be sufficiently strong to secure for them their just rights.

THE reported arrival at the port of New York of two male *woolly* elephants of dwarfish dimensions, has resulted in a request from a subscriber for authentic information regarding these strange animals.

It was alleged that the elephants in question were discovered upon the Himalaya mountains, and that the hairy covering found upon their bodies, and the great diminution of the natural size, were due to the cold of that region.

The inference to be drawn from such a description was, that the present specimens were in a measure a return to the extinct *Elephas primigenius*, the remains of one of which was found at the mouth of the river Lena in Siberia, with the flesh still in a good state of preservation, showing the skin covered with hair.

We find that the new arrivals were not found on the Himalaya mountains, but were purchased at the Parah River, Malay Peninsula, after the ship had left Calcutta. Their size is normal, for their age is not four and six years; but, probably, the smaller is about twelve months old and still feeds on milk, while the larger specimen is about two years old.

All young elephants are covered with hair, which afterwards falls off as they increase in age. These animals have this infantine crop of hair somewhat abundant, but not to an extent to create any especial wonder.

As Mr. Conklin, of the Central Park Menagerie, states, our knowledge of baby elephants is very limited in this country, and perhaps after all, the apparent excess of hair on the flanks of these animals may be normal. The young elephant, born at Philadelphia about nine months since, had a similar crop of hair, but not to the same extent.

Dr. Spitzka, of New York, who has seen these young elephants, confirms the opinion we have given, and states that they are not a new species or even a

variety; and he believes that the hair will eventually disappear, and even now finds, on the larger specimens, bald spaces.

We do not desire to spoil the speculation on these animals by stating the price at which they were sold on their arrival here, but the multiplication table has not been without its use to create an artificial value.

ACCURACY IN THERMOMETERS.

By recommendation from the Winchester Observatory, a bureau has been established at Yale College with the practical view of accurate verification of these instruments. Any person may send thermometers to this institution for the purpose of having them compared with the standard thermometer, and any variation from the accurate standard will be recorded. For the purpose of defraying the expense of these comparisons, the following scale of charges has been adopted for this verification: For standard meteorological thermometers, one dollar; for ordinary meteorological thermometers, fifty cents; for ordinary maximum thermometers, seventy-five cents; for ordinary minimum thermometers, seventy-five cents; for clinical thermometers, fifty cents. In case more than eight instruments of one kind are submitted at the same time, twenty per cent. will be deducted from these charges. Clinical thermometers, in numbers of two dozen or more, will be verified for four dollars a dozen. For thermometers of exceptional pattern, the charge will vary according to the character of each instrument. Communications relative to this subject may be addressed to Leonard Waldo, New Haven, Conn.

THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON.

The accumulation of material at Washington illustrative of the several branches of Anthropology, has drawn together a large number of specialists in Comparative Anatomy, Archaeology, Ethnology, Linguistics, and Sociology. For mutual improvement a number of these gentlemen have organized the above-named society, with Major J. W. Powell as President, Dr. Elmer R. Reynolds as Secretary, and Professor Otis T. Mason as Corresponding Secretary. The facilities which the Army Medical Museum and the Smithsonian Institution, with its Bureau of Ethnology, furnish for the preservation of valuable papers obviate the necessity for a voluminous journal of the Society. We have made arrangements, however, to present abstracts of communications and discussions on the week succeeding the meetings, which take place on the first and the third Tuesday of each month. The following is a *résumé* of the proceedings of Tuesday evening, October 20th:

The Anthropological Society met in the Smithsonian Institution, Major J. W. Powell in the Chair. After the reading of the minutes the following papers were communicated; "Notes on the Identity and History of the Shawano or Shawnee Indians," by C. C. Royce; "Civilization," by Mr. B. W. Hough. Mr. Royce stated that his paper was an introductory effort to a thorough study of the Shawnese, who were the Bedouins and Ishmaelites of our territory at the time of its first settlements. The early home of these people is shrouded in mystery. After carefully going over the Jesuit relations and other early histories, the author concluded with the bold proposition that the Massawomacks, the Eries