

10557



Toronto, Jan. 2nd, 1897.

My Dear Laurier:-

P R I V A T E.

I have been rather rushed since I received yours of the 23rd of December asking my views about the Copyright Memoranda that have been received from the Imperial Government.

I have thought over the point a good deal and I believe that you will have to decline to sanction the ratification of the Paris amendments to the Berne Convention. In the enclosed memorandum I give the reasons for that course in the briefest language possible and it will probably serve your purpose.

However, your real difficulties will be encountered when you come to legislate. You have to reconcile the assertion of Canadian rights to self-government with the English theory that they can legislate on Canadian Copyright. You must do justice to Canadian publishers without being too hard on English authors, and at the same time the Canadian publisher and even Canadian authors must be taken care of.

Then, you must try not to offend the American publishers unduly, for they have now taken the English authors under their protection, instead of fleecing them like pirates, as they used to do.

10558



2.

And, as you see by the recent Memorandum from Downing Street, you must have regard to the effect of your legislation upon the Powers who have signed the Berne and Paris Conventions.

For the reason that the Imperial Government will feel themselves responsible for Canadian legislation and will, no doubt, consider that they require to ratify it by English legislation, a full conference should be had with them on the subject, and a Bill agreed upon in all respects.

I really do not see how you can avoid going across about it yourself if you feel that it must be dealt with next session.

With best New Year's wishes, believe me,

Very Faithfully Yours,

*J. D. Edgar*

Hon. Wilfrid Laurier M.P.

Premier, etc., etc.,

O T T A W A, Ont.