298 THINGS DONE IN ONE LIBRARY.

classes, which are on 32x cards and occupy a separate cabinet. These have short entries: all the other cards are transcripts of the full entries of the official author catalogue.

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PAMPHLETS AND THE PAMPHLET DUTY OF 1712.

HE British pamphlet literature of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has seldom been collected with ardour or catalogued with accuracy. The subjects with which it deals are interesting enough at times, but its bulk repels, and so do the endless anonyms, the pretentious pseudonyms, and the complicated relations of 'Cases Stated,' 'Vindications,' 'Modest Replies,' and 'Unanswerable Answers.' In its own day, however, this literature took the place of magazines, and excited a keen if ephemeral interest. As a curious tribute to this may be cited a four-page folio pamphlet in the British Museum, entitled 'The Proposal of William Laycock, of the Inner-Temple, London, Gent. Humbly Recommended to all such Persons, who are generously inclined to encourage Arts and Learning, and in Order thereunto for raising a Fund for the buying up of a Stock of scarce Sticht Books and Pamphlets, amongst which all Bookish Gentlemen well know, that there are to be found abundance of excellent Tracts and Discourses, not treated of in larger books.' Laycock, it appears, having married the daughter of William Miller, of London, Stationer, 'became intrusted in the year 1693, to dispose of the said Mr. Miller's Stock, which chiefly consisted of loose Papers and Pamphlets, and by the Assistance of Charles Tooker, Bookseller . . . did digest the said Stock of Pamphlets into

such exact Order and Method, by way of Common Place and Alphabet, that the said Laycock could find without any Difficulty any Thing contained in the said Stock, tho' it was but a single Sheet of Paper in the said Stock, which did consist of above 2,000 Reams of sticht Books or loose Papers. And the said Laycock, having sorted and digested the Stock as aforesaid, met with that encouragement from the Publick, that he did exercise the said Trade of selling scarce Books and Pamphlets for the Space of Seven years.' However, lawsuits followed, and the labours of Mr. Laycock were 'totally blasted' by intruding bailiffs. To this tale of woe succeeds an enumeration, in twenty-one breathless paragraphs, of a few ('not the 500 part,' says Mr. Laycock) of the good things contained in the vanished collection.¹ He shows how his methods had served the ends of divines, 'disposed to know what has been written in Controversies,' of 'Noble Statesmen and Worthy Senators,' 'Gentlemen who Delight in Reading of Ceremonies at Coronations,' 'those who are Poetically inclined,' and 'Booksellers, who upon all occasions used to apply themselves to the said Stock or Repository.' Mr. Laycock's occasional variations in tense betray his position between 'the beauty coming and the beauty gone.' He hopes to renew his enterprise, through the aid of the booksellers and the public. At the end of his appeal is printed a list of eighteen booksellers subscribing a guinea or a pound apiece, and he 'doth most Humbly Desire and Intreat such Gentlemen, who are inclinable to Incourage him in so good an Undertaking, that they would be Expedition in their Subscriptions.' Also 'as a further Incouragement to such as will Contribute, . . . the said Undertaker will Print a Catalogue of the

¹ The catalogue was published under the title: 'The Famous Collection of Papers and Pamphlets of all Sorts, from the year 1600 . . . commonly known by the Name of William Miller's Collection . . . Composed by Mr. Charles Tooker. London: M. Gilliflower, etc.,' and largely bears out Laycock's claims.

said Books, with a List of the Names and Sums of the Benefactors, which shall be presented Gratis, by way of Acknowledgment to the said Subscribers.'

Bearing in mind the importance of the pamphlet-issues thus evinced, it is easy to conceive the agitation aroused by the Act of 10 Anne, c. 18, which struck a blow not only at pamphlets but newspapers. The following was the tariff of the stamps required under the Act. For pamphlets or newspapers of $\frac{1}{2}$ sheet or less, $\frac{1}{2}d.$ per copy, of $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 sheet, $1d.$ per copy. For publications containing more than 1 sheet, $2d.$ ('The Statutes of the Realm,' printed in 1822, says 2s.!) per sheet, anything more than 6 sheets octavo, 12 sheets quarto, or 20 sheets folio, being regarded as a book, not a pamphlet, and so being exempt. All stock in hand was to be stamped. Stamps on unsold copies might be cancelled by the Commissioners appointed under the Act, and the value of the stamps repaid. Any failure to comply with the Act was destructive of all copyright, even although the title of the book had been duly registered at Stationers' Hall. A penalty of £20 was appointed for omission of the name and address of printer and publisher.

This last proviso indicates, of course, that the Act was designed partly to swell the revenue and partly to check the licence of the Press. The effects of it on trade opinion can be judged from the same source as those of the Paper Duties (see an article in 'The Library' for December, 1899) which form part of the same Act, namely, from the collection of contemporary broadsides in the British Museum. The Act as above given was tempered to various shorn lambs, agreeably to, and possibly in consequence of, certain appeals of the trade that may be seen in that collection, the contents of which are as follows:

(1) The Case of the Company of Parish-Clerks, relating to the Duties on Pamphlets, etc. Humbly offer'd to the Honourable House of Commons.

(2) The Case of the Members of the Sun-Fire-Office, London, relating to the Duties on News-Papers, humbly represented to the Honourable House of Commons.

(3) The Printers' Case: humbly submitted to the Consideration of the Honourable the House of Commons.

(4) A Proposal for Restraining the Great Licentiousness of the Press, . . . Humbly submitted to the Commons of Great Britain, by W. Mascall, Gent.

(5) A Certain and Necessary Method of Regulating the Press, which will hinder and deter the Daily Insolence of False, Malitious, and Seditious Libels. Designed for the Service of Her Majesty's late Gracious Message to the Honourable House of Commons, *etc.*

(6) The Case of the poor Paper-Makers and Printers, farther stated.

(7) The Case of the Manufacturers of Paper, the Stationers, Printers, *etc.*, of this Kingdom, relating to several Duties on Paper and Printing, now Voted in the House. Humbly represented to the Honourable House of Commons.

(8) Reasons humbly offer'd to the Parliament, in behalf of several Persons concern'd in Paper making, Printing and Publishing the Half-penny News Papers, against the Bill now depending, for laying a Penny Stamp, *etc.*

Several of these piteous Cases, as we have said, seem to have succeeded in their object.

Thus the 'Bills of Mortality' were exempted, the Government doubtless being moved by the appeal of the Company of Parish-Clerks, whose case (No. 1) deposes that 'The said Company, by their Charter, are obliged to keep a Press in their Hall, for printing the Weekly and Yearly Bills of Mortality, . . . the Profits whereof is the Support of the Charges and Expences of the said Company, they having little or no Lands or Estate to defray the same.' The Bills, they point out, are not only of great importance, 'for the Security of all Orphans, but also a

general Satisfaction to all Persons, by showing the Nature of the Diseases, and of the Increase and Decrease of the Burials each Week,' and they are in great fear lest, if the Bills are taxed, the Company 'will be utterly Dissolved and Overthrown.'

The 'Members of the Sun-Fire-Office' also profess themselves in great straits, for their policies were already taxed, and they had 'oblig'd themselves . . . to furnish Weekly every Person Insur'd with three printed News-Papers, call'd The British Mercury' (No. 2), the tax on which would eat a hole in their profits. It does not appear that their plaint was heard. The 'Printers' Case' (No. 3) seems to have secured another concession. It states that, 'of many Hundred Master-Printers and Journeymen in this City, two thirds do entirely depend upon the Printing of Small Papers and Pamphlets, especially the latter; by which all Britain is supplied with Sermons, and other Tracts of Devotion, at a cheap Rate,' which works, says another body of Memorialists (No. 7), 'are often by Charitable People disposed Gratis among the Poor,' so that their cessation 'will in a great measure prevent the Propagation of the Christian Religion.' Books of devotion were excepted from the operation of the Act.

A picture even more alarming is drawn in another broadside, which takes up the democratic side (No. 8). The halfpenny paper had been sold 'to the poorer Sort of People, who are Purchasers of it by Reason of its Cheapness, to divert themselves, and also to allure therewith their young Children, and entice them to Reading, and should a Duty of Three Half-pence be laid upon these mean News-Papers (which by reason of the Courseness [*sic*] of the Paper, the generality of Gentlemen are above Con- versing with) it would utterly extinguish and suppress the same: And thereby his Majesty's Revenue will not only be lessened, by entirely sinking and loosing the Duty paid by the Paper-makers and Printers . . . but Hundreds of Persons and Families who chiefly get their Bread by selling

the same, will inevitably be reduc'd to extream Poverty, and become Chargeable and Burthensome to their respective Parishes, if not necessitated to turn Thieves; more especially the indigent Poor and miserable Blind Hawkers; . . . for divers of them, who are Industrious, and have but a Penny or Three Half Pence, for a Stock to begin with in a Morning, will before Night advance it to Eighteen Pence or Two Shillings, which greatly tends to the comfortable Support of such miserable Poor and Blind Creatures,' etc. These Memorialists certainly protest too much.

The Pamphlet tax was, however, not entirely designed to afford a revenue, but to check 'false and scandalous Libels.'¹ Some of the abuses which it was intended to remedy may be gathered from Mascall's 'Proposal for restraining the Great Licentiousness of the Press.' He suggests that every book and pamphlet should be entered either by the Author, Publisher, Proprietor, or Printer at a Government office to be created *ad hoc*, on the day before publication, and an affidavit made as to the number printed off. Further, with a view to checking scurrilous publications, 'that no Impressions shall be made with short Words, or Initial Letters, with Dashes, or without, to stand for any Word or Words, but all to be Printed at length, or to be taken, *ipso facto*, for a Libel. That no false sham Names shall be Printed.' These suggestions would have saved the modern librarian an infinity of trouble. The next broadside in our list (No. 5) puts forward similar proposals, stipulating that the Registrar of pamphlets should not be obliged to read them, not in the least out of consideration for him, but to preserve the liberty of the Press.

The 'Printers' Case' (No. 3) suggests a difficulty which was probably real, that if the tax were imposed many printers would be thrown out of employ, and would be

¹ Queen's Speech, January 17th, 1712.

tempted to print anything that was offered to them, to keep the wolf from the door. Another plaintive wail in this same 'Case' concerns a difficulty which was removed by the clause allowing a drawback of duty on unsold pamphlets. 'Paper, after it is Printed, is of no intrinsick Value at all, but depends merely upon the Humour and Opinion of People; and there are few Printers in this Town, who have not many Thousand Copies by them, which they daily sell for waste Paper.'

Thus the Printer. The views of the Author may be gauged from Addison's remarks in 'The Spectator' (No. 445). 'This is the Day on which many eminent Authors will probably Publish their Last Words. I am afraid that few of our Weekly Historians, who are Men that above all others delight in War, will be able to subsist under the Weight of a Stamp, and an approaching Peace. A Sheet of Blank Paper that must have this new Imprimatur clapt upon it, before it is qualified to Communicate anything to the Publick, will make its way in the World but very heavily. In short, the Necessity of carrying a Stamp, and the Improbability of notifying a Bloody Battel, will, I am afraid, both concur to the sinking of those thin Folios, which have every other Day retailed to us the History of Europe for several years last past. A Facetious Friend of mine, who loves a Punn, calls this present Mortality among Authors, The Fall of the Leaf.'

This Mortality did not, however, touch 'The Spectator,' which doubled its price, and kept up its circulation.

JOHN MACFARLANE.