

THE NEWS COPYRIGHT BILL.

To the Members of the Senate and the House of Representatives :

Believing that the news copyright bill now before Congress would, if it should become a law, increase the power of the great metropolitan newspapers which do not need protection, and would create monopolies in news calculated to curtail the dissemination of intelligence and to injure the weaker and country press, and believing that the principle of the proposed law is contrary to common sense, to justice, and to the Constitution of the United States, the undersigned, publishers of newspapers, would respectfully petition Congress to defeat the proposed measure ; and in support of our views we submit the following

ARGUMENT.

A copyright or patent secures to the writer or inventor for a limited time a monopoly in his own creation or invention. For what purpose is this monopoly granted? *It is to stimulate creative talent.* This must be the only reason, for during the life of the copyright or patent the public is poorer for the grant of the monopoly. All legislation must be for the public good, and hence there can be no justification in copyright or patent laws, except on the sound theory that the ultimate results justify a temporary monopoly.

Now does the business of news gathering need the stimulant of copyright? It would be folly to say that it does. The rewards of judicious expenditure in the collection of news are ample, and the strong newspapers which are the champions of the news copyright bill are among the most prosperous business enterprises in the country.

The metropolitan newspapers claim that they expend large sums in the collection of news, and hence that they should be protected in its use by copyright. Copyright and patent laws are not made to reward individuals or corporations for the expenditure of money, but to stimulate creative and inventive talent. If a copyright can be granted on news, it must be to him who creates or invents news, and not to the newspapers which are buyers of and dealers in news.

What is news? The statement of facts, the history of current events. Can any one create or invent a fact or event? If he cannot create or invent a fact or event, how can he copyright it?

News is the history of the time. The law cannot make it any one's property.

NAME.

NEWSPAPER.

TOWN AND STATE.

Doering & Hinrichsen

Illinois Courier
Daily Weekly

Jacksonville
Ill