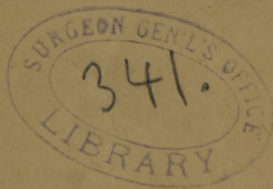


[WEBSTER (J.W.)]

Reply to a "notice" of mess Wiley
and Putnam, x x x x x x





W (J. W.)

Reply to a "NOTICE" of Messrs. WILEY & PUTNAM, publishers of the unauthorized reprint of the Second Part of Professor Liebig's Report on Organic Chemistry, published in the "Boston Daily Advertiser," of August 16, and in other newspapers.

THE First Part of Professor Liebig's Report on Organic Chemistry, drawn up at the request of the British Association, has passed to a third edition in this country, having been published by Mr. John Owen, of Cambridge. That the publisher of the First Part of this Report would make arrangements for publishing the Second, namely, the Animal Chemistry, was to be expected, both by the "trade" and the public.

From the care bestowed upon the republication of the First Part, the author and translator were desirous that the Second should appear from the same press, under the supervision of the editor of the first, and arrangements were accordingly made.

The arrangements, and the wishes of the translator and author were duly announced, in the "Boston Medical Journal," in the newspapers, and by a circular of the editor.

In April, Messrs. Carey and Hart, of Philadelphia, announced their intention of republishing the new work of Professor Liebig. On being informed of the wishes of the author and translator, they, at once, courteously relinquished their undertaking.

Regardless of the usages of the trade, and of the published wishes of the author and translator, Messrs. Wiley and Putnam, of New York, with all possible despatch, republished the work, from a London copy, with all the errors of the London press, and others in addition.

The editor, to whom the care of the republication in this country had been committed by Dr. Gregory, deemed it his duty to make known the fact, that the New York reprint was incorrect.

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As was to be expected, the public were disinclined to purchase the New York edition, and as more than one of the trade disapproved of the interference, Messrs. Wiley and Putnam issued their "Notice," or, what would be more correctly termed, an apology to the trade.

In this "Notice," assertions are made, which are entirely without foundation. This would have been proved to the satisfaction of all, before this, had the editor not preferred to wait for evidence. It has now come to hand, and has, moreover, been confirmed by a gentleman, who has long been intimately connected with the British Association, and who is thoroughly familiar with all its rules and customs. But upon the published evidence alone, contained in the annual volumes of the Association, the assertions of Messrs. Wiley and Putnam will be seen to have no foundation.

Messrs. Wiley and Putnam published their edition, with a notice attached to it, that it was "faithfully copied from the London edition." This is freely admitted, and a more certain method of diminishing its value could hardly have been found, than that of pasting in each copy this certificate by themselves, that their book contains all the errors of the London press,—a press from which, scientific works, especially where figures are concerned, are so often admitted by the authors themselves to be incorrect. We have an example in Turner's Chemistry, a book in the hands of every Chemist in this country; it was not until after the many and laborious corrections of the accomplished editor of the American edition, that it could be relied upon.

In their "Notice," Messrs. Wiley and Putnam say, "the work being prepared at the request of, and paid for by, the British Association, &c., could not be, and was not published, until presented to, and read before the Association, which was done on the 24th of June. (See 'Athenæum,' July 2d.)"

There is not the slightest foundation for this positive assertion,—the book was not *read*, nor was it *paid* for, by the Association. On referring to the "Athenæum" of July 2d, what do we read in the account of the proceedings of the Association?

Why, that Dr. Lyon Playfair read an *Abstract* of Professor Liebig's Report! An abstract, merely, — not the book; not a volume of more than three hundred pages! but an abstract, which is given in the "Athenæum," of which it occupies — two pages. The Association, undoubtedly, had time to listen to this abstract, but not to an octavo volume, with all its figures and calculations. Indeed, Dr. Playfair expressly says, that of parts, and important parts, of the Report he "dared not venture to make an abstract." (Vide London "Athenæum," July 2d.) So much foundation is there for this unfortunately positive assertion of Messrs. Wiley and Putnam.

Again, Messrs. Wiley and Putnam assert, with equal positiveness, that the Report of Professor Liebig "was purchased by the Association." They had less, if possible, of foundation for this assertion. In the first place, all who are conversant with the proceedings, rules, and customs of the Association, know that this cannot be true. The Association appropriate funds for the prosecution of some scientific researches, for necessary apparatus, &c. In the Annual Reports, all such appropriations are particularly designated, and in the Treasurer's Annual Statement, all sums so employed and paid, are noted. From the examination of these documents, from the time Professor Liebig was requested to draw up this Report, namely, in 1838, not a shilling appears to have been appropriated for defraying the expense, or to have been paid to Professor Liebig. These documents are accessible to all.

On this point, too, evidence, has been obtained from the distinguished member of the Association already alluded to, who has held the office of Vice President in the Association, and been a member of its Council. Not only has he confirmed the inferences previously drawn from the volumes of the Association, but supplied additional evidence, that payment could not have been made, or the Report published, at the cost of the Association. The only Reports published at the cost of the Association are those contained in the annual volume. Up to the latest date, nothing appears from which Messrs. Wiley and Putnam could, in the slightest degree, be authorized to say, that pay-

ment was made to Professor Liebig, or the translator; but all the evidence is wholly the other way.

So much for the foundation of the assertion that Professor Liebig "was paid" for his Report, and that it was "generously given," by the British Association, "to the world."

To return to the *Abstract* of Dr. Playfair. It was, no doubt, prepared from the German original; not from Dr. Gregory's translation. Of this abstract, the editor of the Cambridge edition had been already informed by Dr. Gregory, in one of his letters. The abstract was read on the 24th of June. Messrs. Wiley and Putnam positively assert, that the book (that is, Dr. Gregory's translation), *was not, and could not be published, until the 24th of June.* This it is not necessary now to dispute; it may, however, be worth while to state, that a medical friend, being in London, actually purchased a copy "at open sale" on the 23d! But, even admitting that what Messrs. Wiley and Putnam say is correct, how could Dr. Playfair have found time to read, much less to study, the book in its English dress, to write his abstract and to read it on the *very day of publication*? He had obviously made use of the German original. Furthermore, on the 30th of June, Dr. Gregory writes; "The new work has been received in Germany with enthusiasm." The work, then, must have been published in Germany, before the time, when only (according to Messrs. Wiley and Putnam), it *could* have been published, not in London alone, but in the world, namely, June 24th. But it seems it had been published on the continent, had been read and admired, and sufficient time had elapsed for Dr. Gregory to learn that it had created a sensation in Germany.

Messrs. Wiley and Putnam undertake to decide, that Professor Liebig had "no power to authorize the republication of his work any where." This they infer from their previous assertion, that it had been "purchased from him by the Association." Having shown, that there could have been no purchase, this inference has no foundation. Besides, by a standing Rule of the Association, even had the work been purchased by the Association, the author might have retained his right of property in it, and his

power to authorize the publication of it, when and where he chose. The Rule is as follows; "The author of any paper or communication shall be at liberty to reserve his right of property therein." (Vide any of the volumes of the Reports of the British Association.)

That the author had this right, and that he exercised it, is apparent from the work having been published in Germany. And the translator had the same right over his translation. The assertion, that the author had no power to authorize the republication, is but a feeble apology for interference with the wishes of the author, and, like the other assertions, has no foundation in fact.

It seems hardly worth while to attend to the insinuations in Messrs. Wiley and Putnam's "Notice," since any effect they were designed to produce, has been so completely dissipated by the pithy reply of Mr. Owen, and the statement of the printers, which was published in the newspapers, and is given below.*

Messrs. Wiley and Putnam endeavor in their "notice" to convey an impression, that the Cambridge edition was printed,

* As I understand from the Booksellers, that the public are disposed to wait for the appearance of the Cambridge edition of Liebig's new Work on Animal Chemistry, I should have no motive again to call attention to the subject, except to reply to the insinuation of the publishers of the New York edition, that theirs will be used in revising mine. The following statement of the printers may serve to show from what source the revision of my edition will be made.

J. OWEN.

Cambridge, August 17, 1842.

More than one half the pages of Liebig's Animal Chemistry, now printing at our press, was in type before the publication of the New York edition. The printing was commenced and has been entirely done from manuscript, and the corrected sheets sent out by the translator, Dr. Gregory. In no instance has the New York edition been used as copy or to "revise" the proofs.

METCALF, KEITH, & NICHOLS,

Printers to the University.

Cambridge, August 17, 1842.

at least in part, from "early proofs," and that the delay in the arrival of the other sheets, and with corrections, rendered that edition the only incorrect one. Whence they got the notion is unknown, the term "early proofs" was not used in any announcement of the Cambridge edition; if, in any notice of that edition from other hands, the term has been used, it is unknown to the editor. So far from "early proofs" having been sent out by Dr. Gregory, he expressly says, in his letter of May 14th, "he does *not* send such, being obliged to keep them in order to introduce some essential alterations expected daily from Professor Liebig." With the sheets sent on the 17th of June, he writes, "I send the sheets," (not early proofs) "*before publication.*" And in another place he writes, "you will see that up to page 224, the sheets are printed off, the rest being *last proofs.*" He then speaks of the cancelled sheets, which he also sends. Not only were the printed sheets, but also the cancels, the last proofs, and the manuscript matter received, but received *before* any copy of the work, or of any part of it, reached New York. Mr. Owen, too, was in possession of a copy of the London edition, the *first* received in this country. It was in his hands, and in those of several other persons here, before Wiley and Putnam could have received their copy. It was purchased in London at "open sale" no fewer than *nine days* prior to the purchase of Wiley and Putnam's copy. So far, then, as the usages of *the trade* are to be taken into account, Mr. Owen had still another claim to become the publisher, in addition to that arising from his publication of the First Part of the Report.

Messrs. Wiley and Putnam say, that no announcement was made in London, as late as July 19th, of any other edition, nor was there any intimation, that the edition was incorrect. Hence, they say, our reprint must be correct, for it is faithfully copied from the London edition. No one doubts that it is a faithful copy, — not an error has been corrected.

Another assertion, — we will not call it designed misrepresentation, of Wiley and Putnam is, that the editor of the Cambridge edition, "wishes us to believe, that the corrections were withheld from the English edition for the express purpose of

making his the *only perfect* copy, not only in America, but in the world." In refutation of this misrepresentation it will only be necessary to quote the words of the circular announcing the fact, that corrections, &c. would be furnished by the translator ; the words are, "The American edition will comprise all the corrections and additions, which are most important:"— "the author and editor have committed the corrected sheets to the care of the subscriber." "The only correct edition will be that now printing at Cambridge." This, taken in connexion with what is stated on the first page of the circular, and the whole relating to the Cambridge edition, or to an American edition, renders the meaning sufficiently apparent. Nothing is said or implied in relation to any other edition "in the world." The impression intended was, most obviously, that the Cambridge edition would be more correct than the London edition, or any other edition printing at the time in this country. It would have been no perversion of language, however, to have said, that the New York reprint is the most incorrect "not only in America, but" (as far as we yet know) "in the world."

It appears that Mr. Owen had the earliest copy of the work, and he had more than one half of it in type before the New York publication appeared ; he had corrections, and matter not contained in the London copies ; he had the sheets, the cancels, corrected *last* proofs, and manuscript, and the Cambridge edition had been announced by circular and in the newspapers. The fact had also been made known that the Cambridge edition was printing in compliance with the wishes of those to whom both the original and the translation belonged, and who had an undoubted right to authorize the republication.

Messrs. Wiley and Putnam would have the public and the trade believe, that they were not aware that the republication had been undertaken by any other publisher. It was long known to the trade, had been sufficiently announced, and one of the firm was at Boston and Cambridge after the printing had been commenced at Cambridge. Is it to be supposed, that in his interviews with the booksellers in Boston, and elsewhere in the vicinity, nothing was seen or heard of the republication ?

Until some protection is extended by the law to the literary, as it is to the personal property, of foreign authors, they can expect but little regard to their wishes and arrangements for the republication of their works, and even the usages of the trade will not always shield the publisher from interference.

Cambridge, August 29, 1842.

J. W. W.

John Webster

Wm See: Liebig

