

ing through third parties, or in some ingenious way, they will get books. Yet the Presbyterian Hymnal prices remain fixed. How is this? The publishers are away across the Atlantic, but they appear to keep a watchful eye on supplies, and so far we have heard of very little cutting on the hymnals. The book has, therefore, been a boon to the trade. Can this not be done in the case of Ontario school books? Our correspondent asks if the Ontario Educational Department could not insert a clause in the agreements between the Government and the publishers stipulating that the books shall be a certain sum, neither more nor less. Now, it is stipulated that the price shall not be more than a certain sum. Why not also that it shall be no less than that sum?

As matters stand, the Minister of Education is a politician and is criticized for the present prices of school books. If some dealers are willing to cut their profits the minister would naturally be averse to coming publicly between the consumer and his chance of a book at a reduced price. The politicians are holding off the trade by promises that the whole subject of departmental stores shall be inquired into—after the elections. We hope none of our readers will be taken in by such vague promises. The politicians representing both sides shelved the question, and the only way to get after them now is to pledge the man you give your vote to. Take no refusal. Don't be "jollied," as the schoolboys say. Be firm. If you are a Conservative vote Liberal if your party candidate declines to give the required pledge; if a Liberal, vote Conservative should your representative try to dodge the issue. Supposing both candidates refuse to vote against department stores? In that case the bookseller must decide for himself, though declining to vote at all would seem the best way out of it. Our correspondent asks BOOKSELLER AND STATIONER to express an opinion and suggest a plan for preventing cutting. We have some very strong opinions on the subject, but hardly like, on the eve of an election, to plunge into a discussion of what is, to a greater or less extent, a party question. In the March issue, when the Ontario election is over, and should our correspondent care to hear it, we will ventilate the plan which seems feasible.

THE EFFECT OF CURRENT EVENTS.

Public events greatly influence the sale of books. Take Nansen's book as an example. Mansen's lecture tour through Canada, and the interest in all Arctic exploration, stimulated by Prof. Andre's journey with a balloon, have helped the sale of "Farthest North." We are informed that between 2,000 and 3,000 copies have been sold in Canada, which is a good record for a book of the kind. By watching current events the dealer can push sales. Supposing war breaks out over this China question, the demand for maps, atlases, military, naval, geographical works would be considerable. The dealer should order promptly and he would, if he knows his customers, find a response.

OWNED UP FRANKLY.

A well-known dealer in the west complained that the wholesale house when shipping him an order was short a volume charged in the invoice. Being a thoroughly trusted man, the firm was ready to allow the claim, when the following letter arrived:

Since writing you I had my clerks go through the case and packing, and found your extra novel. I have no doubt all shortages, or nearly all, are due to carelessness in opening the cases.

It is fair to say that the firms who ship have an elaborate system of checking, and are not so liable to make errors as some think. In the present instance the dealer's frank acknowledgment is a tribute to his fairness and candor.

ONE WAY OF DOING IT.

Canadian writers have complained of the difficulty of getting their work before the British public. It has occurred to an ingenious Scottish lady, one Isabella Fyvie Mays, how to solve this problem. The plan is simple. It is, to select some of the brightest things out of some bright Canadian book, make them up into an "original" article, and send to a widely-circulated magazine. The editor of Chambers's Journal has been made the innocent accomplice this time. In the January number of the Journal there appears an article by the lady above mentioned, entitled, "The Making of Canada," the matter in which is almost in its entirety taken from the Misses Lizar's "In the Days of the Canada Company," and no word of credit given from first to last, not even an

inverted comma. Naively (knave)ly enough, too, the words "All Rights Reserved" appear at the foot of the first page of the article.

AN OMISSION.

In recording the death last month of Mr. Maclear, the pioneer bookseller of Toronto, the writer accidentally and somewhat stupidly omitted the name above all others associated with his in the early history of Toronto trade—that of Mr. Richard Brown. Mr. Brown joined Mr. Maclear when a lad, and mastered every detail of the business during the eight years he remained with him. Leaving him to found the successful house of Brown Bros., King street, Mr. Brown is, therefore, a pioneer himself, and ought to be drawn upon for reminiscences of these early days.

TRADE NOTES.

Winnipeg trade, and indeed all the western trade, is in good shape. Russell & Co. doubled their floor space to meet the holiday season's demands, and issued 4,000 of their catalogues, noticed elsewhere in this issue.

The Robert Miller Co., wholesale stationers, Montreal, has ceased doing business, a winding-up order having been granted in the courts, Mr. J. McD. Haines has been appointed liquidator.

A day or two ago Montreal citizens were met with the sight of the sign of "To Let" in Takahashi's window, and it was soon known that he had given up business. As a newsdealer Takahashi was well known to all in Montreal, and many a prominent man was to be seen at his counter. A few months ago he went home to Japan, and has not returned, so far. The stand on St. Francois Xavier street, near the post office corner, which he has just given up, has been a news stand for many years, the business having been sold several times.

A FINE CATALOGUE.

Russell & Co., 504 Main street, Winnipeg, have issued their annual catalogue, and a most creditable production it is, indicating a large selection of books of every kind, and a very good range, from the cheap, popular editions to the better books. The catalogue is profusely illustrated, well printed, with a tasteful cover in colors, and containing in all 40 pages. It must have been particularly effective during the holiday season. What strikes one forcibly is the admirable classification of the books. Russell & Co. also issue annually a neat and elaborate list of school text books and educational works generally, which must greatly help the sale.