

THE Bookseller and Stationer

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORIAL SANCTUM

ACCORDING to our custom in past years, we will make the May issue of *Bookseller and Stationer* a Summer Reading number. The usual lists of books suitable for holiday trade will be provided and full information given regarding cheap editions. The number will also pay special attention to souvenir goods. The demand for novelties to attract the tourist trade is always strong, and anything we can do to assist dealers in securing an attractive stock will be done. The number will, of course, be considerably larger than our ordinary issue and will be well illustrated.

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Some complaints have reached us that our reviews of books are not as impartial as they should be, and that, were booksellers to follow our advice, they would make mistakes in their purchases. We protest strongly against any such assertions. In the first place we hold that the bookseller is himself the best judge of the saleable qualities of a book for his particular district. Accordingly, in our reviews we do not express dogmatic opinions, but endeavor to assist the bookseller by telling him what a given book is about. The great bulk of current fiction is mediocre, and we would be the last ones to attempt to magnify the value of a poor book. It is our aim to state briefly what a book is about. If we can conscientiously praise any feature of it we do so. Thereafter we leave it to the intelligence of the bookseller to decide whether or no he can sell the book.

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That the advertising contest which we conducted last Fall was appreciated by our readers is evident. In the course of a letter to *Bookseller and Stationer*, C. L. Nelles, the Guelph bookseller, writes: "I might as well continue and make an observation about the advertising contest held by your good paper some months ago, in which R. A. Land was judged first. This seemed to be (by the ads shown) a decision of a man who approves more of the solid-reading than the display style of advertising. There is a great diversity of opinion amongst expert advertisers, some of them sticking almost exclusively to solid matter, whilst a great many others consider display ads as being more catchy and attractive. However, I hope your contest gave some good result to the trade, as there is no doubt that a number of them require brightening up on the side of advertising."

The special attention of our readers is directed to the offer which we make at greater length in the editorial pages, with regard to sending lists of best-selling books to local newspapers. This is a form of advertising for the retailer that costs nothing, and on the face of it looks to be advantageous. A paragraph in any newspaper giving the names of the six books which are in greatest demand in Canada is certain to arouse some interest and, if we are not mistaken, to lead to an inquiry for the books mentioned. To repeat, we will send to any newspaper with which an arrangement is made by a local bookseller, an advance proof every month of our list of best sellers for the preceding month.

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A department which we hope to be able to place on a permanent footing soon is the department devoted to the interests of the window-dresser. The difficulty in the past has been to secure illustrations, for without an illustration it is almost an impossibility to give a proper lesson in the art. However, it is our hope that soon we shall be in a position to insert an occasional illustration that will be of value to our readers. The department of good advertising will, at the same time, be sedulously cultivated.

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It is gratifying to us to find our readers appealing to us to make public certain grievances which are interfering with the smooth running of their business. This month our attention has been particularly directed by a correspondent in the Northwest to the inadequacy of the news companies' service in that part of the Dominion. On receiving his letter we immediately referred it to our Winnipeg office, and the manager there did the best he could in a short time to size up the situation by interviewing prominent dealers there. We would like any of our readers in the west, who are interested in the matter, to drop us a line, believing that there is a great deal of efficacy in combined action.

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A monthly letter from London is to be a feature of future numbers of *Bookseller and Stationer*. It will be written by a capable correspondent in our London office, and will give a thorough account of trade conditions in the Motherland. A section of the letter will deal with books, and the balance will discuss stationery and fancy goods lines.

THE EDITOR.