

THE NELSON TRANSFER.—We feel that, as far as the Book Trade of Canada is concerned, we are writing its history, and therefore, all the ins and outs of the School-book trouble should be recorded. One circumstance that has received a good deal of comment, is the approval by the Local Government of the transfer of Nelson's supposed interest to Copp, Clark & Co. This was done in haste. The creditors of James Campbell & Co. considered they had at least an interest in whatever assets the government recognised, yet before they could get an opinion as to their claim, while the trustee was still having prepared the matter to be placed before his legal adviser, the sale was made and approved of, although the Government had been notified that the estate claimed the third. We believe the Premier himself, took so much interest in the matter as to make it his personal act (as far as the power of the government went) to approve of the transfer.

The creditors are naturally indignant at the attempt to deprive them of their rights, and we can say almost to a certainty, that they will immediately prosecute the claim against the government for damages by the loss of a valuable asset.

Why have the Nelsons such power? And why was undue haste manifested in placing them in the rank of a privileged creditor? It certainly is hard to explain. The supposition of a portion of the Press that the Government has done it on account of the support of the paper mainly owned by the Nelsons can hardly be the reason. Time will probably tell.

A CONTRARY OPINION.—Just as we are going to press, a valued contributor of considerable experience in the book trade, writes us "My belief is that in the general interest of the trade, short discounts are better than long ones, with a limited discount like 20 per cent. The retail dealer is likely to get the whole benefit of it, and not have it fritted away by trade cut-throats."

As our aim in **BOOKS AND NOTIONS** is to give full candid opinion on both sides of the question, though, not in any way shirking a bold stand for what we consider right, we gladly insert this extract.

SO MUCH of this number is necessarily taken up with the school book question that other matters of importance are crowded out, we have even had to reduce our advertising columns.

MR. ALFRED SANDHAM, who has been Secretary of the Toronto Y. M. C. A., severed his connection with the Association at the end of December.

He leaves the position to take the management of the publication department of the Willard Tract Society.

Before leaving his late position, Mr. Sandham was presented with a well filled purse.

Book Notices.

THE NEW ONTARIO READERS—FIRST BOOK.—The second part has just been issued (price fifteen cents) by a combination of three publishers who have been favoured with the monopoly, and can therefore very naturally charge their price. These two parts are somewhat larger than the old first book, being made to correspond in superficialities with the more advanced books of the series; but do they contain a greater quantity of matter? We think not nearly so much. The paper and printing is certainly good, and the illustrations fairly so. There are eight cuts in outline, for copying on slate or blackboard, two full pages as drawing lessons, and thirty-eight cuts of every conceivable shape—scarcely two of the same size—some with a light border, some with a heavy border, and some without a border, leading to a suspicion that they are adapted from some other publications, and which are intended to illustrate the text. There is also a full page frontispiece, which, having nothing to do with the book, is put in as a pretty picture.

In speaking of the embellishments, we must notice the covers. The front has a lettering in Roman, Egyptian and fancy type, with a bit of arabesque bordering, heavy at the top and light at the bottom; all of which may be very ornamental and in very good taste, but the difficulty will lie in convincing the public that it is so. Are the departmental shields on the back and front badges of ownership or authority?

These two parts of one book have each a preface. We, in our simplicity, always understood the preface to be addressed to the reader; now fancy two pages of small print, dealing in all the technicalities of the language, being addressed to children just starting to learn their A B C! But this is not all, for the learned compiler has one page of "suggestions to the teacher," and further suggestions or directions are supplied by foot notes throughout.

The following occurs in the preface, presumably also as instructions to teachers (although in the pupil's book): "In phonic drill the teacher should constantly use the blackboard. Having, for instance, exemplified the use of the two initial or final consonants with a digram, he should write down other digrams, which the pupils should pronounce, and by prefixing or affixing, as the case may require, the sound of the two consonants to them, form new words. Facility on the part of his pupils in recognising and making use of the phonic powers of the letters is what the teacher should aim at. He should also be careful to see that the pupils understand the meaning of the words in the phonic lists. The meaning of the words can be readily imparted by judicious questioning, and by the illustration of their use in simple sentences.

"The remaining lessons after the 15th are devoted to the long sounds, the broad sounds, and the diphthongal sounds of the vowels. If we regard the short sounds as the normal sounds of the vowels, all these long, broad and diphthongal sounds have no normal representation, but are for the most part conventionally denoted by various letter combinations, and with more or less constancy. The more common and regular of these combinations form the basis of arrangement of these lessons."