

THE Bookseller and Stationer

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CURRENT TOPICS

LAST month's feature in the book trade may be said to have been the astonishing popularity of Mrs. Hegan Rice's "Lovey Mary" and the consequent revival of interest in that author's earlier work, "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch." Reports from nearly all the important centres of the book trade in Canada indicate that the former has been the leading book of the month. Naturally, it is a species of literary product that appeals strongly to a very large class of people, and the rage for it may well be likened to that which for months followed the appearance of "David Harum." The earlier success of "Mrs. Wiggs," however, has tended strongly to increase the sales of the later book. The demand for the "Letters of a Self-Made Merchant" is still appreciable, though showing signs of a falling-off. "The Pit" continues to sell well, and "Thoroughbreds," "The Virginian" and "The Blazed Trail" maintain a steady sale. The late appearance of Mrs. Humphrey Ward's "Lady Rose's Daughter" prevented it from being a factor in the March sales, but there is every indication that the book will have a heavy sale in April.

The beginning of "Our Departmental Series" in the March number of THE BOOKSELLER AND STATIONER has been well received by the trade. This month the subject of wall paper is resumed and concluded so far as the series is concerned, though, as customary, some space will be devoted monthly to this important subject. Following wall paper will come a treatment of the picture and picture-framing department, sporting goods department, music department and others too numerous to mention. All of these sections form important portions of any up-to-date bookseller and stationer's business. Necessarily our treatment of each of these departments is somewhat briefer than the needs of the case would seem to merit. Whole books might with profit be written concerning each. We have striven, however, to give all the vital points in as compact and useful a form as possible, and trust that the trade will find them serviceable and valuable.

Canadian stationers will have to make up their minds to push the sale of souvenir post cards. In England and on the continent the demand for these goods is extraordinary, and manufacturers have directed their attention to turning out the most delicate and attractive designs imaginable. Recently an important London house held a competition, in which £1,000 was offered in prizes for the largest col-

lections of their cards. The lady who was so fortunate as to secure the first prize of £100 had in her possession no fewer than 20,364 cards. Canadians, as yet, have not come to appreciate such cards, and sales are consequently small and confined almost exclusively to tourists and travellers. But there are great possibilities before the business. The beauty of some of the card creations, the variety of subjects treated of and the cheapness of the goods render their sale easy, when once they have been introduced to the public.

A correspondent writes to THE BOOKSELLER AND STATIONER as follows: "I wish some of your readers who are running stores of several departments, such as fancy goods, wools, etc.; stationery, school supplies, newspapers, magazines, etc.; wall paper and bicycles, etc., in which the great majority of the sales are from 1c. to 5c., would inform me how they keep track of their cash without cash registers, especially on busy days such as school openings." This is the kind of query that THE BOOKSELLER AND STATIONER welcomes. Space is always cheerfully bestowed on those who are anxious to improve their business by a discussion of such questions. In this instance, we would be pleased could any of our readers enlighten our correspondent on the matter. The difficulty which he experiences is doubtless common to many of the booksellers and stationers of the country, who conduct businesses consisting of many departments. The same correspondent also makes some enquiries about picture-framing, which we hope to be able to answer in "Our Departmental Series" next month.

Indications are everywhere apparent that the old favorite game of croquet will this year come to its own again. United States papers have been remarking on the exceedingly active demand that is being felt all over the country for croquet sets, and here in Canada there is the same increased desire for the game. Manufacturers, it is said, have been caught napping, and some doubt whether the supply now in the hands of the dealers will be sufficient to supply the wants of purchasers. This opinion is, however, erroneous so far as Canadian dealers are concerned. Last year's experience served as a warning and every preparation has been made to cope with the needs of the situation during the coming season. One noticeable feature in connection with the new sets, as contrasted with the sets of the olden days, is their cheapness. Superior and less expensive methods of production have been introduced, which have rendered the production of croquet sets rapid and economical. The public will thus be able to gratify their desires much more cheaply than in by-gone years.