

can Review, though The Canadian Magazine is bought, by American tourists especially, almost as much as either of these. The English people buy The Strand Magazine principally, and, as to books, Marie Correlli's novels sell better than anything else. He makes it a rule to read every new book he puts in, or, at least, to glance over them sufficiently to be able to answer questions or give recommendations. American newspapers are worth keeping, particularly if it is possible to get them up to date.

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He would rather do business with the English people than the American. "An Englishman," he says, "knows what he wants, and will walk up, ask for it, and go away; but the American will turn the whole counter upside down before he decides what to buy."

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Stationers should consider it part of their business to have at hand a postal guide, for the information of their customers, and also for their own use in handling newspapers and magazines. If there is not access to one in their own locality, the official Canadian guide could be obtained, or, for small places in Ontario, the "Toronto Postal Guide" would give all necessary information as to rates, foreign mails, weights, etc.

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Mr. John Hart, a Perth, Ont., stationer, carries, as part of his regular stock, a line of paints and oils. He was a painter by trade, before entering the stationery business, so he is qualified to deal in these goods—better, perhaps, than many merchants with whom paints and oils are staples. If there is a particular line in which any stationer is competent to deal, whether it is usually associated with the trade or not, there is no good reason why he should not handle it. Besides, many stationers carry a stock of artists' paints, in water colors and oils, and it is not a very radical departure into other paints.

C.G.H.

McLeod & Stanfield have commenced a stationery business in Sydney, N.S.

The firm of Russell & Co., booksellers and stationers, Winnipeg, have changed to J. Russell, Lang & Co., Mr. Lisgar Lang, who has been connected so long with the firm, entering into it as a partner, and, during Mr. W. D. Russell's temporary absence, will take full charge of the business. Mr. Lang is very favorably known, both to the public and to the trade, and will devote his entire energies to the firm's rapidly-growing business.

### IS THE BOOK STORE DECLINING?

THE disappearance of many of the old bookstores in Toronto is a matter of some comment among those who deal in books to-day. With a greater number of books published and a large increase in the number of readers, it would be natural to suppose that bookstores would become more numerous. There is much room for speculation as to the cause of a decline when there should be an increase. I asked several who represent the book selling fraternity of the present time, to hear their opinions on the subject, and found them nearly unanimous in believing that there was no room for the old-time bookstore in the trade of to-day.

The successors of the former booksellers are the dealers in magazines, papers, stationery, etc., who always keeps a sideline of books. One of these, Mr. Winniffrith, on Toronto street, believes that there is room in this city for two, and possibly three, good bookstores. "What killed the old bookseller" he said, "was the cheap edition of standard works. A number of years ago the only books put up in cheap form were novels of the penny-dreadful description. All good books by reputable authors were issued in comparatively costly editions, and these are what kept up the bookstores. With the necessary capital I could start a bookstore on King street to-morrow and make it pay. The department stores do not do much trade in really well-bound books by standard authors, but their big cuts are on current literature; and, although their books look well and are often well printed, they are not what a good buyer of books would care to invest in if he is looking for a standard work or some popular book of to-day to place in his library. I think if a man went into the book business and kept only standard works and good current literature, that is not put up in cheap form, he could defy the department stores. It would take considerable capital, of course, and it might be best to keep a small line of stationery, as the two always are expected to be sold together. But I have no doubt that it would succeed."

Mr. Robertson, the manager of the Upper Canada Tract Society, who do a large business in theological and other books, was also of the opinion that the department stores were the cause of the decline of the old bookstores. "They sell books cheaper than any bookseller can afford to do. I do not believe that people go into them very much for the sole purpose of getting a book; but they get the crowd in

there for other things, and their low prices on books induce people to buy them. If we could get the people into our store we could sell a large number of books too. But we have nothing but books, and I think the present generation buy books on the moment. At least, that applies to all but some popular novel that is being widely talked about.

"There was a time when theological works would sell well for years, but now they have their day—a pretty short one too—and then are forgotten. I think the public read as many books as ever, though I have noticed, sorry as I am to say so, that the falling off in books is chiefly in the line of Bibles. The book trade has got into so many hands now that there is only a limited amount of business to be done. The stationers are the largest booksellers. Formerly the bookseller generally kept a side line of stationery; now it is the stationer who keeps the side line of books. There are a number of authors who were very popular for a long time when I was a young man, but the reading people of to-day know next to nothing about them. It is harder every year to know what books to buy."

Another manager of a large bookstore, is Mr. Anderson, of the Fleming H. Revell business, on Yonge street. He takes a different view of things to the others. "No, I do not believe that the department stores have done much toward putting the old bookseller out of business. They have a good deal of the trade he did, but they got it only after he had lost it. The trouble, I think, is that the class of reading done now is totally different to what it used to be. There is a large demand for popular novels in cheap form, and the cheap magazines are read by a great many people in preference to a book. They want short stories nowadays. People, especially the younger class, will not be bothered reading a long book; if they do, they pass over all the introductory or descriptive portions and read the story alone. I think this is one reason why many of the old writers are not read so much—their books are too long.

"The public libraries have a good deal to do with the question. The majority of people, when they wish to read a standard work will make use of the public library instead of buying the book. There was a time when it was most reading men's pride to possess a private library, but it is not so now, and the making of private libraries gave to the old bookseller a large part of his trade.

"On the whole, though, there is really no particular place to put the blame. It's simply the change that is always taking