

THE MONTREAL BOOK TRADE

WHILE the Fall trade has been rather slow in opening up there is still a fair showing, and booksellers are looking forward to the holiday and Winter book business with every anticipation of a successful season. Christmas books have begun to make their appearance. All dealers are making preparations for the holiday trade.

Of the gift books there are likely to be none more suitable or more beautiful than Dr Henry J. Morgan's new work, "Types of Canadian Women, Past and Present," which has recently been distributed in Montreal. It is on the market for subscription only, as yet, but already the number of subscribers is large enough to warrant the success of the volume. The book is beautifully bound and printed. The engravings in half-tone are perfect. A page is devoted to each "type," a photo-engraving, with fac-simile autograph, accompanying the text. In Dr. Morgan's book not all the subjects are strictly Canadians; women who have been connected with Canada's history are also included. Women renowned for their cleverness, beauty, high qualities, the mothers, wives and daughters of our foremost men, are made the subjects of sketchy little paragraphs by the author. It is a revelation to "the stupid sex" that the Dominion was possessed of so many brilliant and beautiful daughters. Some, however, have recognized it. On the title page Dr. Morgan quotes from Sir Chas. Grey, "Thy Coronet, Canada—the Daughters of the Land," and from the Earl of Elgin, "The ladies of Canada have an unrivalled character for beauty and cleverness throughout the world." In his preface the author suggests the institution of a royal order by which the worth of the women of the British Colonies might obtain recognition. The book sells at \$5. It is an admirable addition to the holiday list.

In new fiction, "The Lightning Conductor," mentioned last month, is selling very well—better, in fact than was expected of it, judging by first sales. "Pigs in Clover," by Frank Danby, is a very powerful and realistic novel which gives promise of doing well this Fall. "Barlasch of the Guard," by Frank Seton Merriman, aroused considerable comment when running serially in an American magazine, and its appearance in book form has been greeted with a ready sale. "A Two-Fold Inheritance," by Guy Boothby, "The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come," by John Fox, and "A Deal in Wheat" (short stories), by the late W. E. Norris, author of "The Pit," are prominent "books of the month."

Somewhat of a curiosity is "The MS. in a Red Box," published by John Lane, London and New York. According to the publisher of this novel (who makes the announcement as a preface), the MS. for this book was sent in a red box to their establishment anonymously, and there was nothing about it to reveal its origin in any way. The publishers advertised in "The Athenaeum" and "The Academy" for the author, but without results, and finally put it on the market after "safeguarding the author's interests" by copyrighting the book in Great Britain and the United States. The publisher dedicates the book—to the unknown author.

If this is a new idea in advertising, it is a very ingenious one. But we are told it is not a hoax at all. If so, the unusual proceeding on the part of the author is likely to create an interest in the story which will result in much profit to the publishers at least; though if the publishers profit, the

author is bound to turn up. There would be something very uncanny in a writer who was so imbued with the "art for art's sake" idea that he would refuse to pocket his share of the profits. When once the bookseller calls the customer's attention to the publisher's announcement in this book, the customer buys. No further salesmanship is needed. W. Drysdale & Co are now handling this book and sales are very encouraging.

A feature of the present book trade well worthy the attention of every dealer has been pointed out to us by F. E. Grafton & Sons. This is the good business to be done in the older books—those which some six or seven years ago were engaging public attention. Many customers inquire always for the "latest" in fiction, and they are usually supplied without an effort on the dealer's part to sell them something which they would better appreciate. A good many of the latest books are not worth the paper they are printed on, and their sales mount up to a satisfactory figure merely on the strength of the publisher's "booming" of the author and his book.

Another class of customers—the best for the dealer—will not read a book till it has been out a year or so, has been well reviewed and shown that it can live. These customers ask the dealer to recommend a book, and when his recommendation suits them they come back to him when they want another. It is astonishing how quickly the reading public changes; and those who read the fiction of to-day often know nothing at all of the best fiction of a few years ago.

As an instance, "The Jessamy Bride" has been selling lately ahead of many of the latest so-called successes. In one case a customer to whom this book was recommended returned and purchased half-a-dozen extra copies for presenting to friends. If this book had not been called to his attention he would probably have taken a "book of the month," and might (very easily) have been disappointed in it. As it was, he took the dealer's choice; and it is ten to one that he will continue to take it in future. There are many books of this sort, which the bookseller remembers well, but which to-day's customer has never read.

Grafton & Sons say that trade in these books has been one of the most satisfactory features of their business during the past season, and they intend to keep it up. This firm are getting out something special in souvenir books for the holiday trade. They will appear next month.

FEATURES OF THE MAGAZINES.

THE RED BOOK.—A few months ago The Red Book was an unknown quantity in the realm of magazines. To-day it has taken its place alongside the standard monthlies of the book store. The November issue will be full of clever fiction, which, if it is of as good quality as that to be found in the October issue, will certainly be very good indeed.

EVERYBODY'S.—For October this magazine offers a varied programme. A character study of Chicago is contributed by Will Payne, accompanied by excellent illustrations. T. P. O'Connor writes of Mr. Labouchere. There are articles on "The Champion All-Round Athlete," "Heroes of the Hour," "The New Amsterdam Theatre" and "Ancient Corners of Modern London," and numerous short stories.

COSMOPOLITAN.—In the October number are to be found the beginning of a "Life of Henry Hudson," by Janvier; an engrossing article on "Risking Life for Entertainment," "The Future of International Yacht Racing," by Sir Thomas Lipton; "The Handsome Man," "Making a Choice of a Profession," "The Fascination of Being Photographed," and "The Story of the World's Largest Corporation."