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CURRENT NOTES.

SELLING CANADIAN BOOKS.

IT IS not reasonable to expect that booksellers should promote the sale of any Canadian work simply because it is Canadian. That is nativism run mad. But a work of merit from being Canadian should have an added interest and value. The national feeling is utilized in almost every department of commerce; why not in books? Is the bookseller's business so profitable at present that we can offer to overlook almost any element that may contribute to larger sales? Accordingly, it strikes us as good business to bring prominently forward every Canadian book that has the selling qualities. Is the customer a steady buyer of standard religious books? There are Sir W. Dawson's latest. Is he

devoted to history? Prof. Roberts' "Canada" is a charming work both in literary style and appearance. Is he interested in our great northern regions (and if he isn't he must be a woodenhead)? Mr. Tyrrell's "Across the Sub-Arctics of Canada" is valuable and readable in the extreme. Is he a lover of fiction? Mr. Gilbert Parker's novels are just the thing. We could expand the list indefinitely.

FUTURE REDUCTIONS IN PRICE.

The report of the Ontario Commission to enquire into the prices of school books was issued about Jan. 15. The commissioners were Judge Morgan, Mr. James Bain, jr., and Mr. C. Blackett Robinson. They heard the evidence of a number of witnesses, and, after confirming the present prices of a number of school books, reported in favor of reducing the following:

- First Latin Book, from \$1 to 75c.
- High School Book-keeping, from 65c. to 60c.
- Public School Geography, from 75c. to 60c.
- Public School Writing Course, Vertical Series, 1 to 6, from 7c. to 6c.
- Primary Latin Book, from \$1 to 75c.

The reductions do not take place until after the end of 1898, and in the case of the writing course not until after the end of 1899.

THE STATE OF TRADE.

Business is unquestionably better than it has been for a long time, and if it were not for competition and the slaughter prices of the department stores, the booksellers of the country would feel reasonably happy. We hear no complaints of the new tariff,

and the less onerous duties are certainly more favorable to the imports of English books, whatever other effects lower duties may have. During the last three months of 1897—no figures for January, 1898, have yet appeared—the imports have shown increases. In October, \$11,000; in November, \$7,000; in December, \$15,000. The total increase in imported books for the first seven months under the new tariff amounts to \$23,000 in round numbers. The duties collected for the same period are nearly \$42,000 less. In other words, the rate of duty on books has dropped from 27 per cent. to about 18 per cent. The details for the seven months are:

IMPORTS OF BOOKS INTO CANADA.

	1897.	1896.	Duty '97.	Duty '96
June	\$57,628	\$60,964	\$13,347	\$18,562
July	48,028	56,947	10,327	13,857
August ..	66,489	67,608	13,804	15,496
September	95,308	96,662	17,683	23,920
October	101,633	90,430	16,504	21,648
November	109,274	102,977	19,075	25,291
December.....	101,530	86,431	19,254	22,626
	\$579,890	\$556,410	\$109,994	\$141,300

CUTTING SCHOOL BOOK PRICES.

An Ontario bookseller, whose name we are not at liberty to make public has written BOOKSELLER AND STATIONER a letter on a matter of much importance to the trade. He protests strongly against the cutting of department stores on these books. He points out that by selling at 20 per cent. under regular retail rates and paying postage on country orders, the city department stores are doing the town trade out of the business. It is difficult to meet such competition. The publishers of school books say it is impossible to keep supplies out of hands of the departmentals. To a certain extent we believe this to be true. By order-