

REMINISCENCES OF EARLY WINNIPEG TRADE.

Special Correspondence of THE BOOKSELLER AND STATIONER.

THE tragic death of Mr. Alex. Taylor, last month, and the consequent change in the ownership of the book and stationery business conducted by him, has set old-timers recalling incidents of the book trade in the seventies, and the changes that have since occurred.

Donaldson's used to be the bookstore par excellence of Winnipeg in those days and did a flourishing business. About 1876 Alex. Taylor, then a youth of about 19 or 20, came up from Lindsay, Ont., and went into Donaldson's business as a clerk. He had previously worked at the same business in Ontario. Shortly after this Parsons & Richardson, both Toronto men, started in business in the same line just across the street from the Post Office, and among their staff was a Mr. C. H. Black. About 1878 or 1879 Mr. Taylor left Donaldson's and started in business for himself, the firm being known as Benson & Taylor, and their stand being near the corner of Bannatyne and Main.

About 1880 Donaldson sold out to Kennedy & Strome. Afterwards Strome left and went to Portage la Prairie. Kennedy lost his health and the business was sold to a Mr. Mortimer from Montreal, who carried it on until sometime in '85 or '86, when he sold to J. B. Ferguson. Meantime Mr. C. H. Black had left Winnipeg and gone to Regina, where he did, and is doing, a large and flourishing business. Mr. Ferguson about three years ago decided to give up the bulk of his business and sold out all but a few lines to Mr. Alex. Taylor, who thus became possessed of what was practically the old Donaldson business, in which he had served his apprenticeship.

At this time the Ferguson business was in the McIntyre block, and thither Mr. Taylor moved his own stock, combining the two businesses. In February, of 1898, in common with other tenants of that block, Mr. Taylor was burned out. He started business again immediately above Portage avenue, and as soon as the new McIntyre block was completed, sometime in December last, he moved into one of the handsomest and most convenient bookstores in Canada. Here he continued doing business until the first week of July last. One Monday evening a friend spoke to him as he was boarding a car for his home, between 11 and 12 p.m. He was never seen again alive. The following Thursday evening his body was found floating in the Red

river. Just what happened no one will ever know but the calm Summer moon, and she has never been known to tell a secret. There was no sign of violence and his watch and papers were all in order in his pockets. A very profound feeling of regret spread through the community, for few men had been more generally liked than "Alex. Taylor." He was only in his forty-second year and unmarried. Three sisters, all residents of Winnipeg, lament his untimely end. His business was wound up by the executors and offered for sale, and the purchaser is Mr. C. H. Black, of Regina, the former employee of the old Parsons & Richardson business. Such is the whirligig of time.

Mr. Black, having taken over the business, has gone west to Regina to close out his business there. He has been a very successful man in Regina and has to a considerable extent kept in touch with life of Winnipeg, and, in spite of the rapid changes of the West, there are still many who remember him when he was in Winnipeg. He is reported as having ample capital to extend the business, which is thoroughly well established, and had been fortunate in retaining the services of Mr. J. A. Hart, who is well and widely known among the book-buying public of Manitoba.

E. C. H.

Winnipeg, Aug. 30, 1899.

BOOK TRADE IN MONTREAL.

THE trade in Montreal are busy with school and college text books. Later on the library business will open out, and already preparations are in sight for the Christmas and holiday trade. The Wernicke elastic bookcases, so successfully placed on the market by the William Drysdale Company are proving an important factor in creating a revival in book collecting. The unit system proves so convenient that it became a real pleasure to add to one's library from time to time. During the past few weeks they have been popular as wedding presents. The agents are pleased to send descriptive pamphlet to all who send in their addresses.

The reduction in price of Harper's Monthly to 25c. per copy should stimulate the sale considerably.

"The book trade," say The Montreal News Co., "will be pleased to learn that a new collection of Dr. Drummond's poems in French-Canadian dialect will soon be issued." Among the many books to be specially handled by The Montreal News

Co. will be: "King's Mirror," by Anthony Hope; "Stalky & Co.," by Rudyard Kipling; "Kit Kennedy," by S. R. Crockett.

The demand for the 15-volume set of Kipling's works bids fair to soon exhaust the edition, and, as this is the first set of Kipling's works furnished complete in uniform style, it will doubtless very soon be sold at a premium. The number printed was limited, and the edition will not be republished. Orders, therefore, should be sent in without delay.

Interest at the present time centres largely around the Transvaal. Montreal has been visited recently by Rev. Mr. Meiring and wife, from Johannesburg, and the papers there have interviewed him fully. He sides with the Boers, and makes out a very good case. We are shortly to have a new book from the Appletons, of New York, which certainly will be a timely publication—"Oom Paul's People," by Howard C. Hillegos. This is to be issued about September 10. This work presents, from the most authoritative and recent "inside" information, the Boer's side of the case. The book is to be fully illustrated, and will include several new photographs of the President of the South African Republic. While British capital has been the power behind the development of the Transvaal, America (which includes this Canada of ours) has furnished much of the brains by which the capital has been utilized. In a word, Mr. Hillegos sets forth that the present crisis, which must inevitably result in war, has been brought about solely by London stock-jobbers and a great clique of international politicians.

Montreal, August 31, 1899.

POINTERS ON WINDOW DRESSING.

The varying forces of window dressing and interior decorating must all be called to the assistance of the salesman.

People in its sense judge a store or window by its "front." Considerable profits are to be derived from a well-dressed window or store. Then the question to consider is what means can you adopt, or best fixtures to use, so as to obtain the desired results. We would call the attention of readers to the illustrations in another part of this journal, and can recommend it to the trade as the most useful piece of store furniture on the market for window dressing or interior store decorations. They are adjustable to any angle, and have an automatic spring lock, made in 8 sizes, and finished in several colors, to match store fixtures.

Every up-to-date merchant should not be without one or more of these display stands, as they will more than pay for themselves in a very short time.