

der Sheppard, which purports to be a study of the manners of a queer German court and people, two or three centuries ago? Why waste time on "The Lodestar," by Sidney R. Kennedy, a story of doubtful merit? Why take up "Shining Ferry," which reflects no notable phase of English civilization? There is little to be gained from the "Black Barque," by T. Jenkins Hains, who has assumed to tell once more in a watery form the story of a pirate slaveship on an African cruise in the early days of the century. There is positive historical loss in perusing "The Sign of Triumph," by Sheppard Stevens, because the story of the children's crusades is better told in historical volumes. And so one may go through the list of attractive covers and find only here and there slight justification.

The Canadian publishers of these books know nothing of the authors, and, I am told, very little about the stories. It has been stated that they buy their novels from the sample covers and illustrations made by the New York and London publishers. They are not looking for literature, but for "big-sellers," for the books which will attract the eye of the passing buyer, who is so ignorant as to think that a bright cover betokens a bright book. Of course, so long as the people part with their hard-earned cash for this sort of book so long will they find it set before them in tasty array. So long as they prefer trashy fiction to history, biography and travel, so long will the publisher seek the sensation which will most attract.

One truly remarkable feature is the carelessness which is displayed by some members of the public library boards in making their selections. The butterflies of summer are purchased by them to be placed on their shelves where there should be only books of permanent benefit. I am informed the Canadian practice is much different from the Japanese, and the effect upon the youthful mind is apparently in equal contrast. How many novels would be required to do as much for a youth's permanent pleasure and profit, as Hannay's "War of 1812," Parkman's "Montcalm and Wolf," a volume from "The Makers of Canada," Henbury's or Tyrrell's volume on the Northland, or a volume of stories by Fraser, Roberts or Thompson-Seton?

Probably the reader may smile and answer that young people do not read serious books. The reader is wrong, for it has been said that boys can be taught to take pleasure in these just as they can be taught to take pleasure in the problems of algebra and geometry. No doubt you heard about the man who took his little girl, ten years of age to see "As you Like It." He explained the play to her and