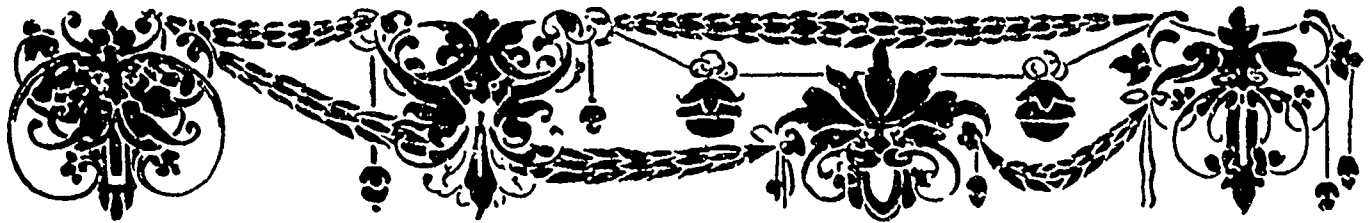


The Bookseller and Stationer



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Topics for the Bookseller.

CHRISTMAS TRADE.

FROM all accounts one hears, the Christmas trade this year is unusually good. This report comes from both the larger cities and the towns, and the demand which has been felt in the last two or three years for books as Christmas presents and for stationers' goods of various descriptions is keeping up well. The sale of Christmas papers this year is rather ahead of last year than otherwise, and it really looks as if the retail trade were certainly doing their best with the Christmas trade, whatever they may do at other seasons of the year.

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NET PRICES.

WE do not hear that any steps are being taken to discuss the question of net prices in Canada. Is this matter to be allowed to rest until it is too late to do anything? Are the bookdealers going to wait on the publishers for action, and are the publishers going to wait for the booksellers? Surely there are enough resolute men in the trade to have a preliminary conference and see what can be done. Then, there is the success of the arrangement by which the annuals are being sold everywhere this year at the list price. As it has taken the publishers of the annuals several years to bring about the present arrangement, dealers will see that it is not so easy a task to secure general acceptance for any proposal as might seem at first sight. We are thoroughly convinced that unless someone makes a move the present opportunity for taking action will go by, never, perhaps, to return. As publishing

expands in Canada, as it very likely will do, it would be desirable to secure such an arrangement now, whereas, when competition becomes keener and more houses spring into existence, to bring them together will be all the harder

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THAT NEW COMPETITION.

DURING the last few weeks the Book Lovers' Library has begun its Canadian operations by opening up a handsome branch in Toronto in the very centre of the city. The enterprise, we understand, is being pushed in a business-like way, and a certain number of subscriptions are being obtained. The books are delivered and collected to and from subscribers by a regular horse and carriage delivery. Thus far, the subscriptions have come mostly from well to do people, and it remains to be seen what patronage there is likely to be for a concern of this kind. It is our own opinion that they will find Canada an unsuitable place for working their scheme, and that it will ultimately have to be abandoned. In any event, we do not see what the booksellers could do except to patiently wait and see what the outcome is.

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ATTACKING A HUMBUG.

IN plain terms The Toronto World denounces The Ladies' Home Journal man as "one of the biggest quacks in the United States." The main object of the paper, it says, "appears to be to instil into every American girl's and boy's mind, and into every American woman's mind, that veneer is the thing, and that imitation of the rich by means of sham is the main object of life.

They are all going to live in the White House or at least be Vanderbilts, and, if they do not, then, at least, they'll be able to appear to live there, and to be millionaires, if they put tissue-paper shades on their lamps! The Bok idea is the pillow-sham raised to the thirty-third degree! But all this is done under the pretence of building up the home, of brightening the life of the American people, and, above all, of teaching and instilling a taste for package goods, for complexion powders, for corsets of wonderful build and scores of so-called proprietary articles." There are lots of good periodicals, and Canadian dealers should push them in preference to The Ladies' Home Journal, which, a few weeks ago, raised its price to the trade and gave insincere reasons for doing so.

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NET PRICES IN THE UNITED STATES.

The American Publishers' Association are still fighting undersellers who by some means or other obtain supplies. A circular issued to the trade says that jobbers have cooperated so as to stop leakages from that source. Then, the undersellers got supplies from some retail dealers who occasionally divide with another dealer and sell small lots at wholesale rates. Sometimes the sales were made innocently to an underseller's agent. Sometimes they were not. In order to put a stop, however, to this breach in the rules, the association, says the circular, "will adopt the following plan to bring about careful and intelligent cooperation throughout the trade: It may not be generally known that many books sold to the trade bear a private mark of the publisher, which enables him to tell to what dealer such books were sold, leaving no room for doubt. This mark is known to the association, and should a book bearing such mark be sold to an underseller, the dealer who originally bought it will be asked to explain how it reached the counters of the underseller. If such explanation is not satisfactory, the association will stand ready to adopt and enforce such methods of correction as seem necessary and proper."