

## BOOKS AND NOTIONS

ORGAN OF THE

Book, News and Stationery Associations of Canada.

Subscription, \$1.00 a Year in Advance.

OFFICE :

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## RATES OF ADVERTISING :

One Page	1 Month	\$25.00
One-Half Page	"	15.00
One-Fourth Page	"	8.50
One Column	"	10.00
Half Column	"	6.00
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One Page	12 Months	250.00
One-Half Page	"	150.00
One-Fourth Page	"	85.00
One Column	"	100.00
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Quarter Column	"	35.00
Eighth Column	"	18.00

Copy for advertisements must reach this office not later than the 25th of the month for the succeeding month's issue.

BOOKS AND NOTIONS, TORONTO.

Vol. X. Toronto, July, 1894. No 7

## RELIGIOUS BOOKS.

**A**LTHOUGH Canada very liberally supports several large bookselling houses, dealing almost exclusively in books religious or of a religious tendency, there does not appear to be the active interest taken by the retail trade generally in publications of this character, and too frequently we find the most unattractive portion of a book-ellers' store devoted to the stock of this nature, and only an indolent interest betrayed in its behalf. We find various, yet not insurmountable, objections urged against a cultivation of such a class of business, and the most common one, that of necessary discounts, seems to be the great bugbear. In what other lines of bookselling are discounts not necessary? List prices on any save net books are to-day scarcely ever obtained, and yet these same reasons are not employed by the dealer when discussing other lines of bookselling.

If the trade in religious books has been driven to the book centres, it is largely an outcome of the lack of careful interest and cultivation on the part of the local bookseller. Right here comes the solution in part of the Sunday school library difficulty. The church trade properly cultivated will run through local trade channels much more readily than any other class if the dealer aims to supply the various kinds promptly and correctly, and the difference between trade and retail discounts is sufficiently

large to admit of a very profitable class of business being obtained and maintained. As a natural consequence, those buyers are almost invariably the ones chosen by a school to select reading matter for the scholars. And what more natural than that they should seek the source of supply where their individual requirements have been most satisfactorily met. A large stock is not necessary, and the publishing house will not be slow to recognize and support any member of the trade who seeks to build up and localize this, the best class of bookselling.

It is beyond a doubt that Canada offers a market unsurpassed by any other country, population considered, for the sale of a highly moral and religious class of literature, and the dealer who by his efforts succeeds in building up such a trade has the double satisfaction of having a profitable, prompt paying class of customers, and of circulating literature calculated to build up the community.

Further, in no line of thought are new books more anxiously sought or more eagerly purchased than in those devotional and religious, and from a casual dropper in the dealer will find those in every community who will become regular customers.

If, then, in seeking new avenues for energy the bookseller will give a careful consideration to the religious book trade, he will, we safely venture, not find that energy misplaced.

## EATON'S BOOK DEPARTMENT.

**I**N Toronto there is a big dry goods store owned by The T. Eaton Co., Ltd., and this dry goods store possesses a book counter which does a rattling big business. The books sold are of the cheap variety, because most of the people who buy do so according to price, not according to the merit of the book. Still they have some purchasers who are very discerning.

For example: Last Friday, this great company advertised "Ships That Pass in the Night," at five cents. Well, the wholesale price in the city varies from twelve to fifteen cents, and of course there was money in them for somebody at five cents. A bright young man saw the advertisement and he went up and picked up the entire stock—ten copies—and paid his fifty cents. Then took them away and sold them at fifteen cents each.

Some more examples: Nearly every small bookseller in Toronto goes regularly to Eaton's and buys his stock, whenever he can buy it at less than wholesale. If he is asked the regular wholesale price, he prefers to place his order with the regular wholesaler, but he buys with avidity whenever Eaton's prices are below cost.

The Eaton Co. are supposed to sell below cost for advertisement purposes; yet about two-thirds of the stock sold at this price goes

into the hands of the other booksellers, and hence The Eaton Co. pay for advertising which they never get.

This is an example of intensely slack business methods. It is also an example of the fact that large stores, like corporations, have no souls; and pursue a course of unrelenting and selfish cutting which is disastrous to established trade. The slack business methods are not inevitable, but they are very likely to exist in a very large business. This indiscriminate cutting is a feature which is also not inevitable, and which has really no part in the methods of conducting a large retail store of the kind managed by the T. Eaton Co., Toronto.

No one objects to the large houses selling at close margins, but when they have a small stock of a book which is much in demand, and they cut the price down below cost, clean out the stock and get in no more (they sold "Heavenly Twins" at 20c.), they are simply doing something which injures legitimate trade and does themselves no good.

The part that the departmental store will play in the future is an economic question, too vague and too large for present discussion.

## MAY WAS QUIET.

General business during May was very quiet if the bank note circulation is any criterion.

During last month it declined \$1,530,000, and at the end of May stood at \$28,467,000, the lowest figure for this period in many years, as the following comparative statement shows:

## CIRCULATION IN MAY.

1894....	\$28,467,000	1890....	\$30,831,000
1893....	31,927,000	1889....	30,012,000
1892....	31,383,000	1888....	29,278,000
1891....	30,917,000	1887....	30,086,000

Of course owing to the general decline of prices during the past year, the circulation of 1894 is undoubtedly equal to the circulation of 1887. This is an important consideration when comparing distant dates.

Still the bank reports which have been published during June show that nearly all the banks have done an increased business for the twelve months ending June 1st, 1894, and have made a good profit. Most of them have also increased their reserve funds, and hence a bank panic is unlikely yet, impossible.

## THE AUGUST ISSUE.

The first special number of a trade journal devoted to fancy goods, toys and holiday goods ever issued in Canada will appear about August 1st. The number will be special in every way and will be profusely illustrated. It will contain full information as to the character of the goods shown by all the leading Canadian jobbers, and also by foreign jobbers and manufacturers who sell in Canada. It will be a complete index of what can be bought for the coming holiday trade.