

TOPICS FOR THE BOOKSELLER—Continued
 so many of the new books in Canada, where cutting is done, do include fiction, renders the experiment of less value to us than otherwise it would be. Still, Rome was not built in a day. If we in Canada are watch

The Net Price System.

many years—the trade may congratulate itself upon the happy issue, as a total result, when pros and cons are summed up, of the net price system. The result, we take pleasure in recording, has been due quite as much to the willingness of the public to cooperate as to the vigilance and efficient

breaks were much less frequent than was expected, and obstinate in but one case. In a number of cases, even, the breaks were not due to malicious intention, but were made inadvertently, often by a subordinate, and were corrected by the one in authority as soon as attention was directed to them. A recent tour through the North and West has given convincing proof that the movement has the heartiest support and best wishes of those concerned in selling and buying books.

“Those engaged in publishing books have, on the whole, good reasons to be pleased with the result of their initiative. Though a temporary loss of orders has confronted a number of the members of the American Publishers’ Association time and again during the past three months through refusing to sell their books to suspected agents and intermediaries, the loss was borne unflinchingly, and, we believe, has in most cases been practically made good through other channels. Nor have we found, so far as our investigations have reached, that publishers have attempted to take advantage of the net price system to raise prices. The question of series has presented the main difficulty: in most cases where the connection of the books with previous issues accentuated a difference in price, the increase was due to valid and sufficient reasons, and would have been made irrespective of the operations of the net price system. While the inevitable increase in price in the few known cases called forth considerable adverse criticism, the reduction in price of other series and the lower pricing of other books, on the other hand, attracted less specific attention. We think it will be found to be true that on all the books put out this Fall the publishers’ net return is no greater than it would have been under the old system, or, rather, lack of system, while the advantage to the bookseller, morally as well as pecuniarily, has been a decided one.



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ing this system, considering it carefully as a possible remedy for cutting prices here, and are not too impatient in getting it into force, there is no reason to despair. Our New York contemporary says: “At the close of this year—one of the most eventful to the publisher and bookseller in

work of the directors of the two official book trade associations.

“A very large proportion of the trade in books, for the first time in almost a quarter of a century, has since the Summer been done upon a uniform basis of price to the satisfaction of nearly all concerned. The

“Having been inaugurated so auspiciously and maintained with such esprit de corps by the united trade, there is no reason why the measure should not survive, and why it should not at an early date be extended to cover fiction, and thus be comprehensive.”