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THE COLLECTION OF SMALL LIBRARIES.

ONE of the most intelligent booksellers in Ontario, who has his store in a good town, was complaining to BOOKSELLER AND STATIONER, when in Toronto the other day, about a falling off in the purchase of better books. In his opinion, people were not buying standard works with the same freedom they used to do. This naturally affects the bookseller, because well-bound volumes by great writers yield a better profit to the trade than cheap stuff.

No doubt the establishment of free libraries has an effect upon the book-buying public. In these libraries there is usually to be found a good selection of modern and classic writers. People get to feel that if they want to read Macaulay's "History" or Addison's "Spectator," or Charles Lamb's "Essays of Elia," they can borrow them from the library. Now, apart altogether from the trade interest which is at stake, we consider a tendency to depend on borrowed books an injurious sign. Libraries are justified because they encourage general reading and have a good effect upon the masses of the people. Free libraries are, however, primarily for those who

cannot afford to buy books. It would be a great misfortune if our young people who can afford to spend a moderate sum in books should give up the collecting of small private libraries, which tend to widen the culture, form the literary style, and strengthen the mind of the average individual.

A bookseller, therefore, in a town provided with a public and high school could, with no mere selfish aim, quietly point out to the masters in the senior classes the wisdom of inculcating in the pupils a taste for owning a few books. Ownership is very different from borrowing. And as this is a schoolmaster's duty and not that of a trade journal, we need not enlarge on the absolute necessity of a boy or girl becoming more and more familiar, as the years go on, with the Bible, Shakespeare, Milton, Wordsworth, Tennyson, Addison, Macaulay, Ruskin and others. These are all a part of a person's necessary equipment. One of the defects of our school system is to leave the pupil with the notion that, on leaving school, his education is complete, only requiring a subsequent course of magazine and newspaper reading.

ANOTHER COPYRIGHT INCIDENT.

EVERY week fresh incidents occur to prove the utter helplessness of the Canadian book trade under our present copyright system. When the English publisher makes his bargain with his United States agents for the publication of the American edition he simply throws in the

Canadian market, just as a man would throw a bag of bricks into a scale to help to weigh it down.

Consideration for the Canadian publisher, dealer, or reader, never enters into the calculation. Our interests are so trifling that the London and New York houses never lose a wink of sleep over what we may think of the matter. Forty years ago a London publisher said to the late Mr. John Lovell, of Montreal: "What, allow our books to be republished by a colonist! I could not think of such a thing." We hope there is no revival of this feeling.

Yet the refusal of English publishers to consider reasonable offers for the issue of Canadian editions by Canadian houses goes on. Take a recent case in point. Anthony Hope's new novel, "The Heart of Princess Osra," is to be issued in the United States in a cloth edition at \$1.50.

Canada with the publishers is just as it was with Voltaire, "a few arpents of snow," so we are thrown into the bargain. We are not even to have the cheap colonial edition, it is said, the English firm having, with great consideration for the feelings of the New York house which is to produce the \$1.50 American edition, undertaken not to push the colonial paper edition in Canada for a while, anyway, but reserve it for the other colonies.

The publishers, we understand, have declined to issue a Canadian edition, though fair offers were made to them.

When Parliament gets down to business on the copyright question we hope to see an end to this legalized petty meanness and disregard of the Canadian market.