

LITERARY FACTORIES.

Of course we all know that all kinds of factories exist in New York, but until last week I never knew that the great metropolis boasted of such a thing as a real and fully equipped literary factory. I ran across this wonderful place accidentally, but when I did, I was glad to spend an hour beside the desk of the manager and watch the modus operandi.

This literary factory is hidden away in one of the by-streets of New York, where one would never dream of finding anything in the shape of literature. It employs over 30 people, mostly girls and women. For the most part these girls are intelligent. It is their duty to read all the daily and weekly periodicals in the land. These exchanges are bought by the pound from an old junk-dealer. Any unusual story of city life—mostly the misdoings of city people—is marked by these girls and turned over to one of three managers. These managers, who are men, select the best of these marked articles, and turn over such as are available to one of a corps of five women, who digest the happening given to them and transform it to a skeleton or outline for a story. This shell, if it may be so called, is then referred to the chief manager, who turns to a large address book and adapts the skeleton to some one of the hundred or more writers entered on his book. Enclosed with the skeleton is sent a blank form, of which the following is an exact copy.

To: ————
Please make of the enclosed material a ——— part story, not to exceed ——— words for each part.

Delivery of copy must be by ——— at the latest.

A check of \$— will be sent you upon receipt of manuscript.

Notify us at once whether you can carry out this commission for us

Very respectfully,

Now the most remarkable part of this remarkable literary manufactory came was that manager's address book of authors upon whom he felt at liberty to call for these "written-by-the-yard" stories. The book was handed over to me to look over for my private examination, of course. There were the names of at least 20 writers upon that book which the public would never think of associating with this class of work—men and women of good literary reputation, whose work is often encountered in some of our best magazines.

"Not such a bad list of authors, is it?" laughingly said the manager, as he noted my look of astonishment. I was compelled to confess it was not.

"Why, those authors to whose names you have pointed are glad to do this work for us. Their willingness is far greater than our ability to supply them with 'plots.'"

"What in the world do you do with those stories?" I asked.

"We sell them to the cheapest sensational weeklies, to boiler-plate factories, and to publishers of hair-curling libraries of adventure."

Upon further enquiry I found that very good prices were paid the authors, and that of course even better rates were received by the "factory" from their customers.—E. W. Bok, in The Boston Journal.

AMONG THE WHOLESALEERS.

Another successful month has been experienced by the trade in this city. Wholesale merchants of all kinds are feeling in good humor over the state of trade. The placing orders in the fancy goods trade are nearly all in and travellers are now seeking sorting-up orders. Import orders are nearly all filled, but a few lines remain to be shipped yet; but a week or so will see all this executed. Payments have been somewhat slow, but not more so than in previous corresponding seasons. Booksellers report a strong demand for all classes of books, domestic and imported.

For a long time merchants have desired some means of selling pens readily, in less than gross lots, and Messrs. Brown Bros. are now offering a line of boxed pens which should take well with the trade. A dozen in a box is the rule, and the convenience of handling pens in this way is quite apparent. These boxes can be sold at ten and fifteen cents retail. They have just received a large shipment of Arnold's inks in the three leading varieties—the blue-black copying, the chemical writing and the brilliant red. These inks are not new ones, but proved by time and experience. They have also received fresh stocks of ball pointed pens, vulcanite holders, and zylonite paper cutters. Here it may be remarked that zylonite is rapidly taking the place of ivory, owing to the scarcity of the latter, and owing also to the fact that the zylonite can be polished so as to look like ivory. Their office supplies are strong at present, especially in cashboxes and ink stands.

Nerlich & Co. are always adding to their extensive stock of fancy goods. Among the latest additions is a line of ivoryware, with pansy decorations, which are beautiful goods. In plate glass mirrors they show some beautiful hand-painted designs on square, horseshoe, and palette-shaped glasses. Ladies' triplicate dressing mirrors are a new thing. They are arranged for hanging on the wall, and while being ornamental, are also very useful, as by a simple arrangement the lady is enabled to see herself from the side and rear point of view, thus obviating the use of the hand mirror. They are carried in all sizes. They also have a new line of magic lanterns, some of which will take photographic plates. At present they are busy shipping albums and plush and leather cases. Skin toys of all kinds are taking well this year, and this house has endeavored to meet the demand with a large and extensive stock. A willow cart, attached to a goat, is an excellent and fast-selling toy.

W. J. Gage & Co. are just opening up four hundred cases of miscellaneous books. Among the familiar authors are Disraeli and Will Carleton, who have written works that should be familiar to every Canadian. The Scott Library is a new series which contains nearly all the standard works that have appeared in the Camelot series, but these now appear in a more artistic binding, and better paper is used. George Macdonald's famous works are also prominent, as well

as a twenty-cent edition of *Recreations of a Country Parson*.

One of the newest things in the complete stock of playing cards carried by Warwick & Sons is a line of scientific whist cards, which are manufactured by the celebrated English firm of Chas. Goodhall & Sons. Each card has on its face a number of rules specially suited to that card, telling when it should be lead, etc. These rules are printed in duplicate so that they can be read no matter which end of the card is up. They will be an excellent aid to learners, young players and ladies. The dealer who sells this class of goods should get a sample.

Owing to business expansion Messrs. W. H. Bleasdel & Co. have been forced to take in two extra flats of their warehouse for the storage of goods. This now gives them a roomy warehouse with five flats well stocked with seasonable goods. It is ample evidence that their business is not at a standstill, but is steadily progressing, keeping step with the progress of general trade. Any merchant who furnishes his customers with saleable goods at fair prices must reap the reward of increased trade.

Messrs. Kelk & Black, who have been running off the stock of Hickson, Duncan & Co., have nearly completed their task. The sale has been a success from a financial point of view. A few scattered lines remain, which includes sporting goods in several varieties, but the great variety of the stock presented a few months ago has entirely disappeared.

A retailer in the city is after a wholesaler's scalp because he "stole" a clerk from him. The retailer doesn't believe in competition in some cases; while the wholesaler does not always believe in doing as his friends would like him to do. The buyer always has the remedy in his own hands. The clerk is now in the new bazaar store on King street.

The Copp, Clark Co., Ltd., have just issued a new pen in their special series. It has been manufactured on purpose for those who desire a broader point than is generally used. It is made in two numbers, 3403 M and 3403 T, and is called The Challenge Pen.

AN ENDURING CHRISTMAS PRESENT.

Talking of Christmas presents, they say "The Star" Almanac, to be issued shortly in Montreal, will be one of the most acceptable Christmas presents that could possibly be sent to friends in foreign lands. It is statistical and descriptive, and has six colored maps of Canada. It holds up Canada to its proper place. The "Star" Almanac will be kept in all private libraries and preserved for reference.

BUSINESS CHANCE.

BOOKS AND STATIONERY STOCK OF ABOUT \$1,000 for sale, oldest stand in Toronto, best of reasons for selling, address P. O. Box 576, Toronto. (9)

WANTED.

Traveller, Stationery, thoroughly experienced, for Eastern Ontario and Quebec. Apply, Warwick & Sons, Toronto.