

THE LONDON BOOK TRADE.

MR. ANDERSON SETS FORTH THE VIEWS OF THE FRATERNITY ON THE TARIFF.

At the meeting of the Tariff Commission in London, Dec. 3, Messrs. J. I. Anderson, D. A. McDermid and John Mills appeared for the book trade. Mr. Anderson read a statement signed by all the dealers in the city, which clearly set forth their views as follows:

"As representatives of the bookselling business in this city, we desire to bring before your notice some features of the present tariff which we think work to our disadvantage, and at the same time are of no appreciable benefit to the public at large or any special class of the community; and we also desire to suggest changes which we think will help us to carry on our business with greater satisfaction to ourselves, without being detrimental to the interests of others.

"The first and principal grievance which we desire to have removed is the specific duty of 6c. per pound on books, and we submit the following reasons in support of the removal. In ordering books it is impossible to know what they are going to cost until the books are received and the duty paid, and it sometimes happens that by the time duty is added, the cost is more than the price agreed upon with the customer, while in the majority of cases the margin left is so small that it does not pay to handle them. Again, in handling large shipments, containing books of various sizes and weights, the advance for duty has to be added according to the percentage on the whole invoice, as it would be next to impossible to ascertain the weight of each book separately, and add the duty accordingly. In many cases, where separate books in such shipments have to be re-ordered, we find that the duty is altogether different from the percentage added on the whole shipment. These may seem small matters, but we admit that where conditions are imposed which hamper the conduct of any business, and which can be remedied by changing the conditions, such a change should be made.

"Another reason, and one which will probably appeal with stronger force to those who have the government and the interests of the whole people to consider, is that the present tariff is very much in the interests of the wealthy classes as against the wage-earner and general reader. Expensive books, such as only those who are wealthy can buy, pay a very much smaller duty than those which are read by the people whose means are limited; the duty in the case of some of the cheaper lines running up as high as 50 per cent., and while free

libraries to a limited extent remove this objection, the fact remains that the more the people are encouraged to buy books for themselves, form their own libraries and love books for their own sakes, the more that people will grow in the higher virtues. It is claimed by some that the present tariff prevents the importation of cheap paper-bound books and gives them a chance to print such works in Canada, thus giving employment to a large number of our countrymen. This may have been a good argument to induce the Government to put on the specific duty in the first place, but experience has proved that such a desirable result has not been obtained. There have been very few cheap paper-bound books published in Canada since the specific duty was adopted, except those of Canadian copyright books, and the duty makes no difference with regard to them, as no foreign editions can be imported. So that this contention, which is made much of in certain quarters, falls to the ground. What we suggest as a remedy for this grievance is an ad valorem duty of not more than 15 per cent., which we think would be satisfactory to the large majority of the trade.

"A second grievance, and a very serious one, is the virtually shutting out of the retail trade from supplying mechanics' institutes and free libraries, by allowing them to import their books free of duty. As members of the trade, we signed the petition presented to you in Toronto on this subject, and we desire now heartily to support the prayer of that petition, and hope the Government will see their way to grant it.

"In the interests of those members of the trade who handle magazines, we would like to see the extra duty imposed on fashion magazines removed so that they be allowed to come in the same as other magazines. It does seem very unfair that people sending their subscriptions direct to the publishers should receive their copies free of duty, while the merchant bringing the same in in quantities, has to pay the tax. This is competition which no merchant can meet and be honest.

"In conclusion, we hope that the grievances herein stated will receive your careful consideration, and in so far as the Government in their wisdom see it to be at least not against the interests of our great Dominion, that they will be removed.

"JAMES I. ANDERSON & Co.
 "W. L. CARRIE.
 "JOHN MILLS.
 "SIFTON & Co.
 "McDERMID & LOGAN."

THE DECEMBER MAGAZINES.

THE first of the Christmas magazines to appear was Frank Leslie's Popular Monthly, and it is in every respect a beautiful number. Under the title "A Magic Island," Beatriz B. de Luna writes entertainingly of the picturesque Catalinas of California. Cornell University is described by Herbert Crombie Howe. Major-General O. O. Howard tells something of the "Character and Campaigns of General Robert E. Lee," and among the illustrations to this article is the last portrait of the great Confederate; there is an interesting paper on pottery by Lawrence Mendenhall; an excellent Christmas story is contributed by Margaret E. Sangster; in "Canoeing Down the Rhine," Rochefort Calhoun takes the readers pleasantly from Basel to Heidelberg; Francis Wilson's new play, "Half a King," is described and pictured with portraits and views of the principal scenes; Varina Ann Jefferson Davis, the "Daughter of the Confederacy," has something to say of the proposed Battle Abbey of the South; and there are numerous short stories and poems and an attractive young folks' department.

The Westminster, the new monthly for the home, continues to make marked progress. It has a fine cover. Its articles on social, political and religious subjects are well chosen. The fiction, poetry, literary gossip, table talk, etc., are all excellent. The Westminster promises an attractive programme for 1897. Editor, Rev. J. A. Macdonald, The Westminster Co., publishers, Confederation Life Building, Toronto; \$1.50 per year, 15c. per copy.

The Christmas number of The Pall Mall Magazine contains "Mathurin: A Sinner of Pontiac," a story by Gilbert Parker.

DEATH OF MATTHEW MILLER.

ON Nov. 22 a well-known stationer passed away at the age of 73. Matthew Miller was in the stationery business in Quebec for 35 years. He was at first with Middleton & Co., who were proprietors of The Quebec Gazette, one of the first newspapers published in Canada. When the firm was changed to Middleton & Dawson, Mr. Miller commenced business for himself. By economy and close attention to business he built up a substantial connection. He retired from active business three years ago. One of his clerks took over the business and carries it on at the old stand on St. Peter street.

He won the respect and esteem of his fellows by his integrity and business ability. He was for some time an alderman, and as such was a faithful servant of his city.