

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE WHOLESALE BOOKSELLERS AND STATIONERS
SECTION OF THE BOARD OF TRADE OF THE CITY OF TORONTO.

The stationery trade of Toronto has shown very healthy activity during the past year, and the most satisfactory feature is that the increase of sales has been progressively growing, the business for the second three months of the year being an advance on the former, the third an advance on the second, and the last three months exhibited not only an increase on the preceding quarter, but a very marked advance on the corresponding period of the preceding year. This increase has been general, both on home manufactured articles and imported goods, the tendency on the part of the purchaser being not only to buy larger quantities, but more expensive styles. The increase of business, compared with the previous year, has been from twenty to twenty-five per cent. There has been a slight increase in the price of stationery to the public, but not in proportion to the higher amounts paid for imported goods and the greater cost of manufacture. This increase is accounted for by the growing value of raw material and the advance in wages, which has been very general in all branches of the trade. This is a healthy condition of things, for higher wages means a diffusion of prosperity. The advance in the price of stationery has not, however, been in proportion to the higher expenditure, but before long the equilibrium must be restored. The difficulty of reaching this point at once is caused by a want of common action on the part of the wholesale stationers. Each is afraid to make any serious advance lest a rival house gain some business advantage. There is a general desire for concerted action, not in the shape of a trust, but a friendly consultation at which prices could be readjusted to meet the growing expense of manufacture and importation. The new tariff has proved very satisfactory to the trade. The book business is also flourishing. More works of English and American authors were published last year than during the previous twelve months. The publishing trade would be greatly increased were it not for the unsatisfactory state of the copyright law, which places the Canadian publisher at the mercy of the English and American firms, who have a large field of their own. The Dominion Government should, at the very earliest period, pass a copyright law on the lines agreed upon between Mr. Hall Caine, representing the British Authors' Association, and the Canadian Copyright Association. This agreement has practically had the approval of the British Colonial Office. The stationers, like others, are feeling the effects of the growing times and are prospering, with a bright outlook before them.

EDGAR A. WILLS,
Secretary-Treasurer.

A. S. IRVING,
Chairman.

REPORT OF THE HARDWARE AND METAL SECTION OF THE BOARD OF
TRADE OF THE CITY OF TORONTO.

These trades have experienced a good demand during 1899, stimulated to some extent by advances in prices of almost all commodities; advances which have been successive and generally well sustained, admitting reasonable, and in some cases, large profits.

These conditions, and the safety in granting credit, both permitted by the healthy financial position of the people consequent upon reasonably good crops and returns to the farmer for all his produce, and the revival in many of the producing industries, have made the year notably prosperous and satisfactory.