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CURRENT NOTES AND COMMENTS OF TRADE INTEREST.

The Autumn Trade Outlook. Encouraged by improved trade conditions, THE BOOK-SELLER AND STATIONER deems it a fitting time to issue

a special number intended to summarize for Autumn trade purposes the information most useful to Canadian dealers in books, periodicals, stationery, fancy goods and wall papers. All the importing houses and firms which sell in this market have something interesting to say regarding the new features in their various lines. It has been sought to keep in view the fact that the paper is for the trade, who feel that an increased business is possible this season, when in previous years the outlook was but fair. People are buying more freely because there is more money in the country. In all the lines handled by the Canadian dealer, extensive ranges are carried by the firms whose announcements appear in this issue, and readers will find them worth perusal.

The prospects being so good, it is well for the dealer to bear in mind that an extra effort on his part will pay him. There are many dealers who require no such hint. All the year around, in season and out of season, they push business with an energy and ability which have carried them successfully through several years of very indifferent trade. But some dealers, in outlying points especially, have perhaps felt that conditions did not warrant any extra effort. Dull trade and excessive competition have discouraged those who try to do a legitimate business at

a profit and who depend almost entirely upon their localities.

But a better situation has come into existence, and we believe that a good Fall and Christmas trade is assured.

Cutting Prices.

The regular dealer is not responsible for the practice as it has prevailed in Canada during recent years. The department stores that carry books and stationery are responsible. In the case of new books this cutting of prices has been a source of great loss to the legitimate trade. Not only is this true of Canada, but of large cities in the United States as well. The correspondent of a New York contemporary gives an instance of this. He says that in San Francisco many regular dealers have been forced out of business by this competition. The small dealer there got about 40 per cent. discount. This was practically all absorbed in freights (San Francisco is a large way from the publishing centres) and the cost of doing business. When the book-stores, to meet competition, had to take 10 per cent or more off list prices nothing was left. No business can long hold out under conditions of this kind. This dealer asks why publishers cannot protect the regular trade by insisting that their books shall be retailed at list prices. The same argument is heard in Canada. Two reasons have been advanced against it. One is that department stores cannot be prevented

from getting supplies of books, and that they cannot be controlled as to selling price. In great measure this is true, for it is surprising what energy and ingenuity department stores will display in getting a supply of a book which the publisher does not wish them to have. This has been proved over and over again. Another reason is that local booksellers do so little to push a book that the trade, even in out-of-town districts, has been captured by the catalogues and extensive advertising of the departmentals. This is, in a measure, true. There has been some apathy on the part of some booksellers. But is their case not a particularly difficult one, and is it not fair, as well as good policy, for publishers to give the regular dealer as much help as possible in retaining his trade?

We believe that conditions in Canada have been greatly aggravated for some years by dull trade, so that book-buyers, to save 5c. or 10c. on a purchase, would go past their regular dealers, and order by mail from town. During the past year or so, business has so improved and the outlook is so much brighter, that we hope to see booksellers and stationers all over Canada get their home trade back. There is not nearly so much tendency to scrutinize a 25c. piece on the part of a customer as there used to be, and the advent of nicely printed and finely produced books in Canada has stimulated the taste for better bound books. A well-selected stock and energetic methods will now bring patronage.

The Best Selling Books.

In this issue will be found a list of the best selling books for August. It is our intention to cover other points in Canada in this respect, so that the trade may know how public taste all over Canada is tending with