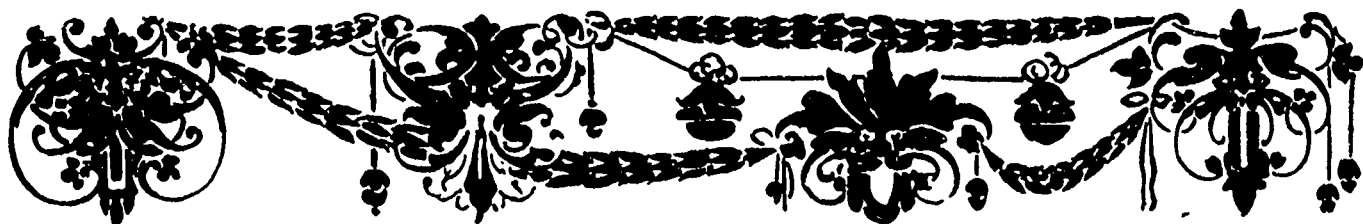


The Bookseller and Stationer



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Topics for the Bookseller.

WRITING to BOOKSELLER AND STATIONER regarding last month's trade, an enterprising Ontario bookseller says: "The holding back by the Canadian publishers of their new books until nearer Spring made February a dull month in books. The 'Right of Way,' in paper,

The Book Trade.

and 'Audrey,' in cloth, will open trade for March, but we have no particularly good sellers to report for last month, simply odd sales of December and January books." From other quarters we hear favorable reports of the book trade, now in process of opening out, since our correspondent wrote. He, like a good many other Canadian dealers, requires no hints as to how to push book sales. Many of our readers do a satisfactory business in books, and, at certain seasons, a fine business. Despite departmental store competition; despite the attraction of the libraries for a certain class of readers; despite the cutting of prices, and other tendencies that strike at profits, we believe that there is money in books. The trade must be worked up. It won't always come into the store. To sit down and wait for it is the way not to get it. Local advertising, circulars, news notes in the papers, and canvassing are all as necessary as in hardware and dry goods. Some dealers also remember the windows as a factor in drawing trade. It pays to change the windows just as it pays to dust and change the stock around. Other lines of trade are doing this, so must we.

In pushing Easter trade, for example, window trimming is a distinct factor. Some

of the new books, a few papeteries, playing cards, etc., can be well set off in a general window along with Easter cards and booklets. Flowers, if available, can be used with advantage. When new goods

come in, at any season, they

Easter Trade. should certainly form part of the window display. Some dealers neglect this. Their windows are dull and uninteresting. If they do get in a good display they leave it until the people know it by heart. This, as we have often said, does not apply to many Canadian dealers, but it does to some. These are usually the very people who wonder why they don't do better.

An agitation which has been on foot for some time to have a duty put on magazines coming in free in bulk is being met by a petition against it from the news trade to the Government.

The budget speech of Mr. Fielding, accompanied by any tariff changes which

the Government may decide upon, is announced for Monday, March 17. Before that date the petition will be presented to the Minister. Those who advocate a duty of, say, 20 per cent. on magazines argue that United States printed matter is overwhelming the market, is preventing the establishment and growth of a periodical and magazine industry in Canada, and is limiting the printing and publishing trades here to that extent. Others, who are not interested from a trade point of view, complain that the distribution of so much United States literature in this country, often hostile

to our institutions and people, is objectionable from the political and sentimental standpoint. On the other hand, the views of the trade engaged in selling this literature call for consideration. If a duty be placed upon magazines in bulk, thus increasing the price to the consumer if ordered through the dealer, the subscriber will naturally order direct from the publisher and have his copy sent through the mails free. Owing to the international postal arrangement between Canada and the United States, no duty could be placed on magazines coming in through the mails. Thus the trade would lose the magazine business. It is unnecessary to state in detail how this loss would affect the book-selling and newsdealing trade. Our readers are quite familiar with the facts. They do not wish to be deprived of this business, and they therefore petition against a duty which would affect them and which would not, as far as they can see, affect anyone else. A duty would not stop the magazines coming in, or increase their cost. It would simply pass the business over to the United States publishers who already are anxious to get hold of individual names, and who would therefore welcome the duty as another means of helping them. We do not say that there are not arguments on both sides of this question, but from the trade standpoint it is hard to see how any other conclusion than one hostile to putting a duty on magazines in bulk and leaving them free when entering by the mails can be reached. When a proposition to tax magazines both in bulk and by mail is made—so as to leave the dealer an even chance—then we can all discuss that subject. But, meantime, no such proposition is up. If the 20 per cent. duty is needed for revenue we would also see reason for discussing that. But, at the present, the national revenues are quite equal to all the charges.