

of January reduction sales. The books of the hour did not have as large a sale as one might expect, and I assign this to the slaughtering of department stores. However, the medium and better priced goods sold, not only here at holiday time, but straight through the year. Sales of odd books, titles that suggest ingenious stories, are gratifying, and profits are generally good.

Speaking of cutting prices, it only attracts a certain trade, and thus far has been only in some lines of new fiction. Publishers haven't protected us in this respect, although this is more the agent's fault perhaps, as he is generally on commission, and anxious to sell. This matter must readjust itself, as publishers are sure to see book-sellers are their strongest support.

Another grave mistake in Canadian trade, is issuing editions at \$1.50, when such a price is unreasonable, the get-up of the book rendering such a price impossible. One or two publishers have settled on \$1.25, and this is more satisfactory. It is lamentable that many of my customers say—"Oh, I'll wait till I'm in New York, and get the American edition"—This can be easily remedied.

A. R. Grafton, of F. E. Grafton & Son, Montreal

Trade in 1904 has been fully up to the standard with us, and I understand the up-town stores have done well. Men are our principal customers, and they are calling for the best, not only in literature, but in mechanical get-up. It is lamentable in this particular that the average Canadian publication is not up to the standard of American editions, and further, our customers are getting to know this. Inferior binding and poor paper loses us customers who insist upon attractive and serviceable books. For my part, I firmly believe there should be an open competition in books as in any other line of production. We cannot sell American editions according to the copyright law. Why shouldn't an author who receives royalty on his book printed, say, in the States, have the right to have his book sold everywhere. As long as some of our publishers continue issuing some poor editions, many of my customers will send to New York for their books. There is no reason why Canadians cannot publish the best in every particular, and these criticisms apply to only a few. I look for improvement.

A branch of the book trade which is doing better with me, than fiction, is the selling of standard sets. I have adopted a monthly easy payment plan, which has proved fairly successful. My stationery business is principally with commercial houses, and I have no complaints on that score. The demand is for good stationery.

Russell, Lang & Co., Winnipeg.

Manitoba is having a season of great prosperity, and naturally, the book and stationery trade has come in for its share of the increase of business. Winnipeg is considered by eastern and British publishers, however, to be a good book town, and while we have not yet a book collecting clientele, still, we in the west are lovers of good books. Fiction, of course, bulks most largely in the year's turn-over. It is no uncommon occurrence for a first order for a forthcoming popular book to be in the hundreds. We understand the Winnipeg advance

orders for "The Prospector," was up in the thousands. The stocks in the book stores here are exceptionally large this winter, and almost any book in demand is to be obtainable.

Speaking for ourselves, our stock is the pick of British, American and Canadian publishing houses, and the only thing lacking is adequate space to display it. The limp leather and India paper editions, are much sought after, and eagerly purchased. The children's books this year are very attractive, and selling well. Among the best selling books are: "The Prospector," "God's Good Man," "Old Gorgon Graham," "Traffics and Discoveries," "Beverly of Graustark," "Whosoever Shall Offend," "The Masquerader," and "A Ladder of Swords." The Buster Brown Books, "Wizard of Oz," and such books, are also in great demand.

Charles L. Nelles, Guelph.

The book and stationery business in Guelph was, I think, very satisfactory for the past year, at least I found it so, and we finished December with the biggest month and year that we have had. This was more than expected, as our large wall paper business got a bad set back the first three months of 1904, by the hard winter and heavy snow.

For 1905, we hope things will be better than ever, as the old established business of T. J. Day, which has been on the market for four years selling out, is now disposed of, and we hope to form a local association with the new proprietors Messrs. Scott & Tierney, and Miss Anderson. If we do, prices will not be so cut, and demoralized as they have been.

The wall paper section is also likely to be better, as a company in business only two and one-half years, The Guelph Painting & Decorating Co., have made a big failure with liabilities of \$11,500.00 and assets a little over \$4,000.00, which will explain why we have had a hard time in this department while they were doing business and selling goods for less than cost.

If, as I said before, we got together here and avoid petty differences, which we can, I think the outlook for 1905 will be very bright and a year from now we hope to report everything as it should be.

Money seems to be fairly easy, although during December our higher grades of goods were hard to move, and standard sets of books and high priced editions were a complete failure.

Hattie Tweedie, Moncton.

Trade must be judged very largely from the standpoint of the individual business, and upon that basis I can report a busy year, surpassing any previous season. The public are more alive to-day than ever to the fact that it pays to purchase the best goods the market affords, and the dealer who keeps these goods is the gainer. The people of the city in which we do business, and the traveling public are not slow to discover where the best that the trade offers is to be found. My holiday business has been exceptionally good, and what is true with respect to the Xmas season, may be said of the whole year. My book sales especially have grown largely during 1904, and the prospects are bright for the sure, steady advancement.