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CURRENT TOPICS.

LAST month we had something to say about the man who centred all his energies on "pet" departments and neglected the other portions of his business. This month we would like to press this matter still further home and endeavor to stir up our readers to branch out and get clear of the ruts of business. How many merchants there are who will say, "Oh, we don't handle fountain pens. There is no demand for them." Why is there no demand? Simply because they don't handle them. One dealer gets the name for selling all the fountain pens in a certain town, and, of course, the other dealers are never asked for them. The stock must be there and must be advertised. Then it will be surprising to observe how the demand will spring up. The same may be said for other side lines, which can be profitably added to any business.

IT seems to be a common impression among a certain section of United States manufacturers that under the provisions of the Canadian tariff, British goods are admitted into Canada duty free. This erroneous impression doubtless arises from ignorance of the relation existing between Great Britain and Canada.

An Erroneous Impression.

There are still many people in the United States who imagine that Canada is governed directly from Windsor Castle; that Canada is taxed to support the British army and navy, not to speak of the throne and the aristocracy, and that Canada is preserved as a market for British goods, which can enter the country without the payment of any imposts whatever. It is the duty of Canada to show that none of these things are true, and that however some people may desire it, British imports pay almost the same duty as those brought in from the United States. Add the cost of ocean carriage and it will be found that the British manufacturer in many cases pays more to place his product in Canada than the United States manufacturer.

WITH a few notable exceptions, the bulk of the publishers' Fall books have appeared already, or will be issued during the course of this month. The demand has noticeably settled on a few prominent books and the tendency to spread sales over a large number of titles, evident during the Summer and early Fall months, has disappeared. The appearance of Marie Corelli's "God's Good Man" was the signal for a rush of buyers, especially women, to the bookstores. The popularity of this book will apparently exceed that of any of her previous books. With a somewhat different class of readers "Old Gotgon Graham," the sequel to the "Letters From a Self-Made Merchant to His Son," has been largely in demand. "A Ladder of Swords" and "The Princess Passes" have maintained large sales, while "Traffic and Discoveries," by Rudyard Kipling, has been selling quietly but strongly. A new candidate for public favor, which promises well, is G. B. McCutcheon's new romance, "Beverly of Graustark." Its sales have been good so far. Among last season's books a noticeable demand is still recorded for "The Pillar of Light" and "The Crossing."

The Current Book Trade

BETWEEN now and the end of November the trade will receive their supplies of several novels which have been awaited with great interest. "The Prodigal Son," by Hall Caine, is almost ready as we go to press. "Doctor Luke of the Labrador," by Norman Duncan, will probably be in the hands of the dealers before this issue reaches them. "The Prospector," by Ralph Connor, which by the way gives promise of being the strongest of all Fall books, is nearly ready. "Jess & Co.," by J. J. Bell, comes out in a day or two. "The Sea Wolf," by Jack London, has doubtless already been received by the trade. The Fall novels of Anthony Hope, Stanley J. Weyman, Max Pemberton, Rider Haggard, W. W. Jacobs, Frankfort Moore and Joseph Hocking, will appear at intervals from now to the beginning of December. Looking back over this list it becomes most apparent that the Fall offerings for 1904 are of a variety, an extensiveness and a strength seldom before equalled in any publishing season. Hardly ever before have so many novelists of note chanced to send out their works in the same season.

The Outlook for November