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**CURRENT NOTES.**

EVENTS IN THE MARITIME PROVINCES.

THE death of Mr. T. C. Allen, of Halifax, Oct. 26, and the burning of the publishing and book warehouse of Messrs. J. & A. McMillan, St. John, Oct. 29, are two events in the Maritime Province book trade which we record with great regret.

The late Mr. Allen was a well-known citizen of Halifax. An Irishman by birth, he came to Canada early in life. From Toronto he went to Halifax 25 years ago, and had built up a large wholesale and retail book and stationery business. He was formerly an alderman of the city, and in other ways interested himself in public

affairs. He was only in his 48th year, and leaves a widow and six children. The funeral was one of the largest seen in Halifax for a long time. Mr. Allen's estate is valued at about \$50,000, of which half is life insurance.

The fire at Messrs. McMillan's, St. John, started early in the morning of Oct. 30, and began, apparently, on the first storey, spreading to the entire four storeys. A large quantity of the goods in the lower flat were got out by the salvage corps. The printing presses, binding machinery, etc., were destroyed. The total insurance was \$16,000, but this does not cover the inconvenience and loss to the firm, who had a considerable quantity of work under way. The trade will feel sympathy for this old firm in the inconvenience and loss made by a serious fire.

MONTREAL TRADE REPORTS.

"I can't complain of the condition of trade," said a Montreal bookseller to BOOKSELLER AND STATIONER recently. "There seems to be lots of money in circulation, and the public are buying books freely. Of course, the improvement has not been startling, still, it is entirely satisfactory." This appears to be the general opinion of the eastern retailers. They expect an AI holiday business, and are making preparations to meet it.

Among the books that have been in demand lately are "John Splendid," by Neil Munro; Jerome's "Second Thoughts of an Idle Fellow," and "Forty-one Years in India," by Roberts (this is selling particularly well). The sale of Secretan's "To

Klondyke and Back" has revived, and though the demand by no means equals that which existed in the early days of the "gold rush," still many copies are being purchased. Stanley Weyman's "Castle Inn," and "The Adventures of Francois," by S. Weir Mitchell, are the books that are having record sales in Montreal.

FREE SCHOOL BOOKS TO PUPILS.

It is a relief to hear a protest at last against that piece of socialistic humbug, the giving of free text books to public school children by municipalities. At Kingston, Thos. McAuley and F. Nesbitt, booksellers, have petitioned the council to reduce their taxes by 25 per cent. because of the action of the school board in providing books and material for school purposes to the pupils. This action, they claim, has been injurious to their business. The petitioners say the board has as much right to furnish boots and clothing as school books, and they protest against being singled out and discriminated against.

The protest is timely and reasonable. The whole proceeding is unsound and objectionable in practice and principle. Our elected bodies in this country, municipal, legislative and parliamentary, are getting into a bad habit of trying all sort of fads, for carrying out which no mandate was ever given them by the electors and taxpayers. These and other ideas are imported into Canada, usually by persons who originate nothing themselves, but who copy what they see being done elsewhere, without regard to the propriety of the proposals or the wishes of the locality. Messrs. Nesbitt and McAuley, more power to your elbow!