

**TWAIN AND CABLE.**—Toronto has been twice this winter favoured with a visit from those two writers, who after the fashion set by Dickens and others, are giving readings from their own writings.

It would be hard to find so great a dissimilarity both in person and in the productions of their pens, than these two. Mark Twain, shock-headed and uncouth, with a drawling nasal voice. Geo. W. Cable, a dapper little gentleman, courteous and agreeable in his manner, and with a ready flow of good English that makes you feel at once that you are in the presence of a well educated man.

The readings were successful in a pecuniary point of view, and those who were present went away perfectly satisfied.

Mark Twain has long been before the public as a writer, and as a successful one, though there are but few of his books that can be read through with pleasure. A joke of his in the "funny column" of the paper reads very well, but to commence a book of his and read it through, is somewhat of a punishment. His tale of "Life on the Mississippi," is his most sensible book, and is good reading.

We have read in *The Century* some chapters of his new book "Huckleberry Finn," his latest production, and cannot say that we were charmed.

One great objection to Twain's books is, we put it mildly, his want of reverence, and this seems to be growing on him, as he advances in years. He is credited by *The Week* with possessing a large amount of dry wit, rough wit would be a corrective definition of his peculiar style of poking fun at all that is good and true.

Cable is much later in the field, as it were but yesterday, but has already attained a position as a novelist that is hardly second to any on the American continent. His delineation of character is admirable, and the description of locality very good, while the lessons he teaches all tend to the elevation of humanity.

The book that has gained him most notoriety, "Dr. Sevier," we have already noticed, and it became naturally the subject of conversation when we called to see the author.

We found that like all good novelists, Mr. Cable has a loving regard for the characters he has delineated, and we naturally drifted into a talk on the principal ones. Narcisso, to use Mr. Cable's expression, is his "pet" creation, while he says, and we believe correctly, that the reader who does not thoroughly understand the character of John Richling, does not fully appreciate the book, or comprehend the lesson taught.

**OUR GOVERNING BOARD.**—The Executive Committee of the Ontario Booksellers' Association, held

its first meeting at James Bain & Son's store, in Toronto, last week, when there were present Messrs. Day (President), Taylor, Bain, Cloke, Middleton and Dyas.

The prospects of the Association, which are bright, were talked over, and plans suggested for furthering its usefulness, and for holding a general meeting in July.

It was resolved to issue a circular to those who had not responded to the former one. The Treasurer reported a good balance on hand.

### WHAT EXPERIENCE HAS TAUGHT ME.

Never stand by talking politics in your shop and leave a clerk to wait on your customer. Make it a rule, when possible, to wait on every customer yourself, because you can do it better than your clerk, and your customer is pleased to see you come forward and serve him. He feels he is of some importance, and wants your attention, and if you are careless he will go to some more attentive or better managed store.

Booksellers, weed out of your business the poor paying stuff. Never push any goods that only yield 20 per cent., for your expenses eat up the whole of it. You are carrying a load and have to develop the paying portion of your trade. Develop that part of your business that pays best. Don't mind if your competitor undersells you. Be civil, honest and fair with your customers every time, and you will win, and your competitor fail.

The 40c. song yielding the retailer 20c. profit is now put at 5c., yielding the retailer 2½c. Extra sales, because of low price, three to one, profit on the one, 20c. on three copies of 5c. music, 7½c. The extra cost of selling, arranging, keeping in order is equal to the increase in sale, so that the dealer by being too progressive and pushing 5c music, makes 2½c. instead of 20c.—no money in 5c. music.

The old-fashioned bookseller sold "Handy Andy" and such 2s. novels at 60 and 70cts., at a profit to him of 40 per cent. The modern bookseller sells the same works in the shape of sea-side libraries at 10c. and 20 cents each—profit 20 per cent.—has to pay all the cost of express, shop expenses, theft, bad debts, out of the 20 per cent. Is it any wonder he is poor and likely to remain so?

Pay your accounts every thirty days and save the 5 per cent. for cash. This will nearly pay your rent, and, besides, you will buy less and only as you want the goods. One sure advantage the cash buyer has, (if he is a good buyer and not lazy), on the whole 10 per cent. less than the slow, pokey credit man, and, besides, he gets a hold of a job line now and then that sells well at a good profit.

AN OLD BOOKSELLER.

W. J. FOSDICK, for some time travelling for a Montreal house, has returned to his old love, and is on the road for W. Warwick & Son.