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J. BAYNE MacLEAN, President. HUGH C. MacLEAN, Sec. -Treas.

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TORONTO:

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26 Front St. W.

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Telephone 3148.

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John Cameron, General Subscription Agent.

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#### DEPARTMENT STORES.

WE return to this subject, although the daily press, having got tired of a business discussion, has dropped it.

A lot of buying is done in these stores during the summer by people visiting the city. You can hardly blame a tourist from buying a few things while in the city. But we are alluding to systematic purchasing which, in the interest of a locality, ought to be curtailed. A stationer in the east writes us complaining that his landlord, who was a merchant himself, had been telling him how his customers went to town regularly for their dry goods. The stationer found that this very dry goods man with the grievance was buying his stationery in a city department store! Another incident which shows the hold these stores have got on a gullible generation is related by a Toronto bookseller, who, having got hold of some books at a figure, sold them at less than the price advertised by a big store. He happened to mention this to a customer. But the customer was incredulous. Couldn't

believe that any book store met the departmental man's figures, etc.

In the view of some people it is useless fighting the stores. We are not of this opinion. There is so much humbug and deception in the way sales are secured for these establishments that a bookseller would have no spirit at all if he resigned himself to his fate, and allowed the legitimate trade to go under. We observe in Montreal that a big store is devoting one of its numerous windows to books, and the trade says that cutting is going on. An active man said to THE BOOKSELLER AND STATIONER the other day: "These big stores should be met on their own basis; lay in cheap lines as well as better books and let the public know that you are in a position to meet any demand. There should be unity enough in the trade for a number of firms to join in placing a big import order and by thus ordering a large number they could get a better price than any department store. I know of English and American publishers who are anxious to help the regular trade if the latter will show enterprise. The publishers are not fond of the department stores by any means, and would like a chance to divert trade to regular channels."

Of course this presupposes a mutual understanding among the members of the retail trade which we fear does not exist. But it ought to exist. One departmental store certainly does not represent as much capital in books as three or four retail

bookmen; but the store has one policy and one directing mind; the others too often fight among themselves. In disunion there is no strength, and thus the bookseller is liable to be undermined by a large concern which cannot possess the qualities required in the art of buying and selling of books.

#### THE MAGAZINE TRADE.

By buying out Massey's, The Canadian Magazine now possesses the whole field in the Dominion. A practical step to enlist the sympathy and support of the bookseller is the reduction of the trade price to fifteen cents. The margin of profit is thus considerable on each copy sold, and the Canadian enterprise should be pushed, from business as well as patriotic motives. The United States ten-cent magazines are not what they were a few years ago, and it is a bookseller's duty as well as interest to say this to those who want to take out a year's subscription.

The situation seems to be this: If The Canadian can secure some distinctly attractive feature its chances of capturing a hitherto unapproached circulation in this country are excellent.

#### CURRENT TRADE.

Trade during June held its own fairly well, considering all things, although we are approaching a somewhat quiet season in the book and periodical lines; why it should be quiet is not so evident. There is considerable foreign travel into Canada this year and several immense congresses are going to