

and also all along the line of general business. The three book stores here and also the department stores carrying books and stationery have all, I understand, done a prosperous year's business.

During the past year, however, I took note of the following facts which may be of some interest: Linen note paper, similar to our French organdie, Holland linen and dainty is sold on the American side by the pound at a much lower price than we can buy it for in Canada. The 10, 15 and 25c. papetries on the American side are gotten up in very fancy style and seem to sell well. In other lines of stationery we seem to have about the same values as on the American side.

Sarnia, I believe, is somewhat noted for being a poor book town. We have tried every means of moving the popular books of the day but without success, while across the river at Port Huron the book trade is good. Although they have to compete with Detroit departmental store cut prices, dozens of copies of each new book are sold in Port Huron at not less than \$1.15 each.

For Summer and Fall trade the 25c. paper-covered lines of copyright books such as "Graustark," "When Knighthood was in Flower," and "Arms and the Woman" have been big sellers and some more copyright books at that kind of price would take well around these parts. One of Collier's men told me that he was collecting on over \$3,000 worth of books sold in Sarnia on the subscription plan and yet I have had a first-class 24-vol. set of Scott in my windows quite often marked \$10, and another dealer has a nice set of Dickens in his window marked \$7. The subscription plan seems to beat us.

We tried an experiment in Sarnia last November in cutting school book prices. One dealer gave 20 per cent. to compete with Eaton's price and another beat him by giving 25 per cent. We were all mixed up in it more or less and the children ran here and there, having a regular picnic with us. After the whole business was over a general summary revealed the fact that we were all more or less stuck with various lines and out of pocket. It is to be hoped that next year we will all unite and sell at the marked prices.

I think a general understanding about prices among dealers in the same town, with a few kind words from the wholesale travellers to dealers inclined to cut prices, would be a great help to the book and stationery trade in general and in closing I might add that if the Canadian dealers would strongly support our trade paper "The Bookseller and Stationer," and use its columns for saying what we have to say to one another about trade in general we might do each other a lot of good during 1904.

From a Correspondent in Collingwood.

Trade in all lines has been good. In fact trade for the year just closed has been the best, I believe, in the history of our town. Speaking of our own particular lines we have found a marked improvement. Customers demand a better class of goods than in former years. There has been a good demand for new and daintily got up books, fine leather goods and high-class stationery. The demand for calendars and Christmas cards was fair, but appears to be gradually falling off.

Carter & Co., Limited, Charlottetown, P.E.I.

The book trade for the past year, especially during the holiday season, has been fairly good. The demand for a better class of books is growing.

We feel very much, of course, the effects of the big departmental stores in the upper provinces in the methods of their doing business, especially in the book trade, which is no doubt demoralizing the retail trade to a large extent.

The stationery business during the past year has been very good and we have no reason to complain. This is specially so in staple lines with a good demand for novelties. On the whole we think the season's business in the above lines has been fairly satisfactory.

AS MONTREALERS SEE IT.

MONTREAL wholesale stationers do not think their trade will be in the least affected by the agreement among Toronto stationers to adopt a uniform practice in regard to rebating freight on goods shipped to the Maritime Provinces so as to put themselves on the same basis of selling in that market as the Montreal stationers.

Apparently for some time various methods have prevailed among Toronto stationers to meet the requirements of the situation. At the meeting of the booksellers and stationers' section of the Toronto Board of Trade on December 18, resolutions passed will place all under the same rules, but from the Montreal point of view the Toronto men, as a body, will be no farther ahead of their competitors in Montreal as regards Maritime trade than before. They will either have to cut prices, which is not expected, or allow the freight between Toronto and Montreal; just as at present Montreal wholesalers allow freight between their city and Toronto, when selling to Hamilton or London customers.

The Montreal houses have probably the lead over other western Canadian houses in the Maritime market, at least in the more staple lines of stationery. In novelties and notions Toronto leads throughout Canada. Messrs. W. J. Gage & Co. have a flourishing branch in the Maritime Provinces, as well as in Montreal itself.

Altogether our Montreal friends tell us that they expect little if any change in the position of the two cities in the Maritime market, as a result of the Toronto stationers' action.

Another subject introduced at the Toronto meeting was that of uniform cash discounts. A Montreal representative of this paper is informed that Montreal wholesalers have received communications from their Toronto brethren in regard to this matter, but so far nothing has come of it. The feeling in Montreal is hardly in sympathy with the proposition. As one manufacturer remarked: "It is a matter for each to manage individually. As far as we are concerned we usually allow a cash discount of 3 per cent. on lines that are rather close cut, and 4 per cent. on general stationery. There is a vast difference between the class of goods handled by some stationery houses and others, and it strikes me that a great deal of difficulty would be experienced in creating a uniform rate of discount which would be satisfactory to all, especially as between Montreal and Toronto houses."

The Library Bureau of New York, inventors and makers of the card system, expect to have their factory in operation at Ottawa sometime during this month and will shortly open offices in Montreal and Toronto.