

Montreal Book Trade

From Our Own Correspondent.

Montreal, April 9, 1902.

BUSINESS in books and stationery in Montreal is not particularly active just now, except, perhaps, in a special line or two. But the new books coming out have a ready sale, and in stationery, whatever is both novel and useful (though the latter quality is not of the first importance), providing it is also agreeable to the eye, takes well in dull seasons as in more active times.

Several new books have taken well. The Easter trade was better than usual, and in that time a great many prayer books were sold, and the demand is still good. In this connection must be mentioned the prayer books imported by Mr. E. M. Renouf, one of whose specialties is the supplying of the churches with the finest prayer books and bibles. The "Queen Victoria," "Prince of Wales" and "Duke of York" prayer books are three of his which are very handsome specimens of bookmaking. They are from the Oxford University press, printed in large type on India paper and exquisitely bound in the best morocco. "The Prince of Wales" is the newest. "The Duke of York" prayer book is becoming very scarce and is bound to be in demand shortly, if for nothing else than its rarity. Mr. Renouf is bringing in a prayer book with the old-fashioned brass corners and clasps. This makes a very attractive book and will doubtless be a selling article in the more expensive class. He has a few sets of Messrs. A. & C. Black's (London and Edinburgh) edition of Sir Walter Scott's works, which are among the finest books selling to-day. They are printed on handsome paper, strongly bound, and make a book that will last. Only 300 copies of this were gotten out, and each set is numbered and signed by the publishers. They come in 25 volumes to the set, and are illustrated with the finest wood engravings. The first volume contains Scott's dedication to King George and a facsimile of the author's advertisement in 1829. They are being sold at a special price.

Wm. Drysdale & Co. are showing a book called "Crankisms," which is unique, and will sell well. It is by Lisle de Vaux Matthewman, and is a book of satirical aphorisms, which at once entertain and give food for serious thought. Each page is embellished with a clever illustration to the text by Clare Victor Dwiggin. Another book which seems to be handled exclusively by Drysdale & Co. is "Bridge Whist; How to Play It," by

Lennard Leigh. This is timely just at present and is selling.

Mr. A. T. Chapman has done an excellent Easter trade in Stevenson's Prayers, printed in white letters on a rough, dark paper. The beautiful art pictures, of which he makes a specialty, have been a good selling line for Easter, and are still going well. A new set of Howard Chandler Christie's are very popular, and others of The New York Life artists' drawings are on view.

"The Englishman in Canada," a series of clever cartoons by A. C. Racey, which appeared in The Montreal Star, are now out in book form, and the demand is of the best. Mr. Racey's work is now appearing regularly in New York Life, which may forward the sale of that periodical in Canada.

During Easter the best selling book was, perhaps, "Audrey," by Mary Johnston. Now, "The Hound of the Baskervilles," another Sherlock Holmes' story, by Conan Doyle, has appeared, and though it is rather early for any sales it is very likely to be the book of this month. John Phillip Sousa's "Fifth String," like most stories by musicians, is a weird sort of book, but has been selling well. The well-known name of its author has a great deal to do with its sale, no doubt. An odd book for boys, but which others will be interested in is called "The Master Key," an electrical fairy tale, founded upon the mysteries of electricity and the optimism of its devotees. The book is handsomely bound, and is illustrated in colors. "If I Were King," by Justin McCarthy, is a romantic novel which is in good demand. "Arms and the Woman," by Harold McGrath; "Angelot," a story of the first Empire, by Eleanor C. Price, and "In the Fog," a modern detective story, by Richard Harding Davis, are three popular books of the hour. The last-mentioned is beautifully illustrated by Pierce and Steel. It has been called Mr. Davis' best book. "Count Hannibal," by Stanley Weyman, and "Kate Bonnett," by Frank R. Stockton, are also selling well.

Mr. S. R. Crockett's latest story, "The Dark o' the Moon," has only lately appeared, and is just commencing to sell. Scotch people always like the stories of Mr. Crockett, or J. M. Barrie, or Ian Maclaren, because they can find compliments for themselves on every page from cover to cover; but how they will regard "The House With the Green Shutters," by George Douglas, is a question. This book, which is selling well in both paper and cloth, shows the worst side of the Scottish character—not the noble, self-sacrificing lives of the Thrums and Drumtochty people, but the mean, grasping, 12 per-cent. proclivities of another class of Scotchmen, who, are, perhaps, just as true to nature, but do not make such comforting reading. Wm. Drysdale & Co. are handling this book, and report an excellent sale for it. C. G. H.

BOOK AND STATIONERY NOTES FROM THE WEST.

From Our Own Correspondent:

Winnipeg, Man., April 1, 1902.

"THE Man From Glengarry" still heads the list of best selling books, and recently, the author has delivered lectures on two unpublished chapters dealing more directly with the boyhood of the hero—Ranald MacDonald.

The arrival of "The Right of Way" in the paper edition has largely increased the sale of Gilbert Parker's latest, and you hear it discussed continually. Surely it is the author's best work so far, and a wonderful character study. Perhaps its especial charm is its departure from the beaten track, while students of heredity must be forcibly impressed with the struggles of poor "Beauty Steele" and his final triumph. There is no cleverer touch in the whole book than the alienation of the reader's sympathy from his wife by the simple announcement of her marriage to another man within seven months of her husband's supposed death.

Seton-Thompson's "Lives of the Hunted" sells steadily, and its popularity increases as time goes on. On the whole, it is not as good as "Wild Animals I have Known," as there are traces here and there of striving for effect. "Audrey," by Mary Johnston, is selling well, although hardly as rapidly as could have been expected from the sale of her other books.

STATIONERY.

A very fair trade has been done in Easter cards. No expensive lines have been shown, but all the designs are exceedingly chaste.

There has been a good sale for society stationery all season, but the best business has been done in office stationery and supplies. A great many new offices, more especially those of land and loan companies, have opened here during the Winter.

GAMES.

The demand for ping-pong seems to increase rather than diminish as the season advances, and dealers here find it quite impossible to keep ahead of their orders.

The city council of Winnipeg have received notice from Mr. Andrew Carnegie that the money for the Winnipeg library is ready whenever they are ready to proceed. Active steps are being taken to get the matter under way.

A LITERARY TREAT.

On Friday, March 20, Mr. W. Sanford Evans, author and editor, delivered his famous lecture, "The Story of the Spanish Gypsy," in the Winnipeg Theatre, in aid of the Children's Home. John S. Ewart, K.C., occupied the chair. It must have been very gratifying to Mr. Evans to know that by the afternoon of the day the plan was opened the house was sold out. The audience was one that would do credit to the brains of any city and the attention given the speaker was almost breathless. Mr. Evans' commanding presence, full, rich voice and grace in declamation are sufficient to win the hearts of an audience on the spot, and when to these are added a lecture of the literary merit of the "Spanish Gypsy," it is difficult to imagine a more delightful and instructive way of spending an evening. E. C. H.