

# THE Bookseller and Stationer

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## CURRENT TOPICS.

CANADA as a field for the novelist is coming more and more into prominence. Not only Canadian authors, but United States authors as well, are directing their attention in this direction. Last month two Canadian novels appeared, which seem to have pretty well hit the popular fancy. They are both maritime tales, the scene of one being laid in Halifax and the other in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. They are both written by Canadians and give evidence of much literary ability. One is entitled "A Detached Pirate," and is written by Helen Milecete, and the other, "The Sacrifice of the Shannon," is from the pen of W. Albert Hickman. Besides these two purely Canadian books, we find several novels by United States writers, which deal more or less intimately with Canada. Mary Catharine Crowley, whose portrait we reproduce in this number, is an example of the American writer who has adopted the Canadian field. There are numerous others, and the future is bound to see still more. The possibilities for successful novels about Canada, past and present, are enormous.

OVER in England just now they are discussing a project which is being set on foot to give the public some relief from the alleged ignorance of booksellers. In a prospectus issued by The Bookshops, Limited, it is set forth that English booksellers don't know their business, and that it is becoming more and more difficult for the public to get the books they want. Consequently, The Bookshops, Limited, is going to come forward and show how the book-selling business should be conducted. Any person can see that this is a libel on the booksellers, and merely a scheme to get the new corporation started. Booksellers are by no means the ignorant men they are painted. It is true an occasional unfit individual may be found, but the present system of book-selling is quite complete enough to render any charge of inefficiency untrue. It has been shown by a canvas of the readers of a recent novel in the United States that the bookseller's influence on the sale of the book was the predominant factor. This being so, it is absurd to make such charges as we have referred to.

SINCE our last report on the book trade but few new books of any importance have appeared. Publishers have confined their efforts to the production of paper editions of the favorite Spring novels, and some neat pocket editions of novelettes have also appeared, suitable for Summer reading. The retail trade continues good and the tourist, as usual, is consuming a great deal of light literature. "Lady Rose's Daughter" for the third consecutive month heads the list of best sellers. "The Letters of a Self-Made Merchant," which, by the way, has come out in a paper edition, shows renewed sales, and there is likewise a continued demand for "Love Mary" and "Wee Macgregor." Two favorite books of the month have been "The Virginian" and "Under the Rose." "Gordon Keith" and "The Pit" have had excellent sales and rank as standard novels of the season.

AGGRESSIVENESS is a characteristic which many booksellers sadly lack. That is, they seem to be quite content to move along in the same old rut, into which their business vehicle settled at the first turn of its wheel. Why it is that they fail to push forward into new channels or to broaden their scope, it is difficult to see. Doubtless it is simply the innate laziness of mankind that is exhibiting itself. If they could only impress on their minds the necessity for original effort they would make a greater success of their business and bring in more profits on their investment. Take, for instance, the business done in school supplies. How many school boards are in the habit of getting in supplies by the wholesale from outside centres? This is a state of affairs which ought not to exist. We believe in every community patronizing its own businesses whenever possible, and a school board should be the first to see this. The bookseller should wake up and get after the school trade whenever he finds it slipping from him. Numerous other instances might be given similar to the above, and all are more or less troubles which the bookseller himself can cure.