

SOME IMPRESSIONS OF ENGLISH BOOK-SELLERS.

(Continued.)

Since Mr. Bohn's retirement, now many years ago no English bookseller can challenge comparison as to bibliographical attainment with Mr. Quaritch. Established in an aristocratic quarter of London he has gradually built up an enormous business, and his reputation is becoming world-wide. He is a rather undersized, middle-aged man with a Jewish cast of feature and keen restless eyes. There is nothing bookish about his appearance, and the stranger would scarcely suspect the mines of book-lore Mr. Quaritch keeps constantly at command, ready for every emergency. His specialties are early illuminated manuscripts, first editions of the classics and the highest class works relating to arts and manufactures. In these lines his splendid stock is unapproachable. He does not confine himself within these bounds, however. A bibliographical treasure of any kind appeals to his omnivorous appetite and he is always on the lookout for something still more rare than anything he has ever had.

After Mr. Quaritch, the large business built up by Henry Sotheran & Co. should be mentioned. This was first established in Tower Street in 1816 and has continued growing ever since. It now requires three very large shops in different parts of the city to accommodate the immense stock that the firm accumulates. Mr. Sotheran, I understand, takes no active part in the business at present, but leaves it to efficient managers whom he has himself trained for the purpose. The specialties of the firm are standard and high class books in superior bindings. They do a large trade with Australia and the United States, and their monthly *Price Current of Literature* is sent to all parts of the civilized world.

The Rimells, father & son, of Oxford Street, have a notable business. Splendidly situated for a "catch" trade they make the most of their extensive window frontage at the corner of Oxford and Dean streets; and the beautiful selection of rare prints and morocco bound books displayed therein always retains a gaping crowd before the shop. Within, the well arranged and attractive shelves invite purchasers. Above the ground floor are two or three other floors all filled with valuable stock gathered from many a dispersed private library. The Rimells' specialties are rare books of prints and superior standard books in fine bindings.

Just out of High Holborn in Southampton Row, is the business presided over by James Roche & Sons. Their shop, unfortunately, is all too small for the extensive character of their business. The most valuable and rare works are piled up in mountains on every floor, and how any particular book is ever found is a mystery to the uninitiated. Yet they not only contrive to find anything that may be wanted, but they publish at short intervals the most interesting and varied catalogues, indicating new purchases from every part of England. They must have a place for everything and remember to keep everything in its place. Truly necessity is the mother of invention, as the Messrs. Roche must have discovered ere this. Yet if they keep on purchasing for a year or so longer, their shop will be a solid cube, and they will have

to betake themselves to the street. It can't possibly hold much more.

Mr. Roche is a typical Englishman, and one of the most genial and kindly members of the trade. His experience has been very large, he can relate many a funny anecdote of curious adventures among famous bookmen and no less famous books gathered from many a notable auction sale. Mr. Roche's specialties are first editions, standard books and works of travel.

R.W.D.

PERSONAL.

It is with pleasure we note the appearance of R. B. Willing, formerly Willing & Williamson, in the establishment of Rowsell & Hutchison, Toronto. He has taken charge of the book department of the firm, and looks and acts as though he relished being home again among the volumes that crowd the store.

LAST month George Fotheringham, formerly of Ingersoll, now of the firm of Fotheringham Bros., stationers, Ottawa, was united in marriage to Miss Liz'ie Lee, of Gloucester Township. The marriage took place in Ottawa and many were the handsome presents.

A SAD DROWNING ACCIDENT.—A very sad accident took place yesterday, by which Mr. Louis Labelle, of Chapleau & Labelle, lost his life. About 7 a.m. Mr. Labelle left his residence, 464 Dorchester street, for a walk along the wharves. When near the Hudon Cotton Factory his foot probably slipped, and he fell into the river. A boatman named Guilbault, hearing the poor man's cries, rowed off to his assistance, but he sank before the boat reached him. The body was recovered. The coroner's jury to-day returned a verdict of "accidental death by drowning."—*Montreal Witness*.

IMPORTANT ACTION.

THE Toronto District Association held a meeting on Tuesday, 30th November, when there was present a much larger number than on previous occasions. Several matters of local interest were discussed, the principal one being the rumour that one or more wholesale houses were going to open up retail stores on King street for the Christmas holiday trade. It is needless to say that all were of one mind in finding fault with any who might do such a thing. We are glad to say that C. M. Taylor & Co., who it was positively stated was one firm that would do so, had no thought of such action. As a result of the discussion, it was determined to send a circular to all houses doing a wholesale business, asking them not to so interfere with the retailers' trade. The following is a copy:—

TORONTO, Dec. 2nd, 1886.

At a special meeting of the Toronto Booksellers, Stationers, and Newsdealers' Association, held on the 28th ult., the following resolution was adopted—

Moved by Mr. R. W. Douglas, seconded by Mr. D. Bain, that the wholesale dealers in books, stationery, news, and fancy goods in the city be asked to refrain from interfering with the business of those engaged in retail by supplying persons who are not in trade, especially during the approaching holiday season; and in the event of its becoming known to this Association that such interference has been practised,