

## THE TRADE OF 1869.

The Book Trade continues each year to show a steady and marked advance in the country; and it is a gratifying feature to the educationist and legislator, as well as to every one who is interested in the intellectual progress of the people, that there exists an increasing desire for reading among the masses, and an improved and more wholesome taste in the selection and character of that reading.

As education extends, and the character, reputation and facilities of our importing book houses advance—for the book houses are educators of the people—so must the taste and habits of reading increase; and it is a matter of no little satisfaction to find that these houses which are engaged in the business—or we might almost say the profession of book-selling—are of such a high class as to have, in no little degree, influenced and elevated the character of the reading matter current in the country, and have done much towards supplanting the pernicious literature in vogue amongst the people in former years, by a more healthy, wholesome and instructive literature, which is most noticeably popular now.

While saying this much for our native booksellers, of course it is also due to the British and American publishers to acknowledge the efforts made by them to improve and make attractive and interesting, as well as (which is an important matter) to *cheapen* the issues of the press in these days. Certainly, at no former era of our literature has there been so prolific an issue of good entertaining and instructive reading. Our standard authors have been cheapened and brought within the reach of all. Science and abstruse subjects have been popularised. Politics, history, &c., has narrated its story. Travel and exploration have brought their treasures to the press—while the thoughtful, toiling mind has been working to extend thought and knowledge wherever the enterprise or speculation of the publisher has been met with. In the busy *producing* centres of the trade, our native houses have not been indifferent frequenters; but have been in the past year, as the statistics of the year's importation in books show, heavy and constant buyers, and the new warerooms and enlarged premises of our importers evidence the steady growth of the trade of the past year.

One feature in the progress of the book trade of 1869 we cannot close without alluding to—that is, the inauguration of the trade sale, an institution having many advantages to the country dealers, which Messrs. Adam, Stevenson & Co. introduced and carried suc-

cessfully out in September last, and which this firm promises to repeat annually.

It is worthy of note, also, to record, that in the past year a larger number of British houses have been represented in the importations than formerly, which is a gain in no small degree to the reading public; and, while it evidences the enterprise of our Importers, it at the same time betokens a departure from that stiff and impolitic conservatism which in prior years so characterized the dealings of the English Publishers with Houses on this side, as to render it impossible to treat advantageously with them, and compelled our Houses to restrict their transactions almost entirely to the American Reprinters.

And referring to the Reprinters on this side, it is curious to note now the tables are now turned. English editions are now supplanting the Reprints, and as a consequence of the above fact. The English Houses have seen it, at last, to their advantage to reasonably meet their Canadian brothers-in-trade, and have, in the generality of Houses, met fairly any overtures for editions of their publications for this market, being influenced, no doubt, by the fact that any trade pushed here was a positive gain, and in no way interfered with their Home transactions, and that the native trade had to compete with the Reprints, and had the disadvantage of long transit, with freights, insurance, duties and other expenses to bear. Further, English books are now having the advantage, in that the Reprints are held at high prices—the old rates current during the war still obtaining, when everything was a fictitious value, while there is now but a trifling off-set in the difference of the currency. Our friends across the line, if they are to regain their lost ground, will have to revise their price-lists.

## THE CULTURE OF THE TRADE.

*The London Bookseller* of January 4th has an article commenting on the lack in the Booksellers of the present day of that precise knowledge of books and authors, which contrasts most unfavourably with the broad information and culture possessed by the preceding generation of booksellers, and bemoans the fact that but few, in the modern trade, possess that intimate acquaintance with books and book-men which their predecessors, the Pickerings, Bohns, Murrays, and their cotemporaries possessed.

Various reasons are exoneratingly given for this deficiency in the practical and exact knowledge of the Trade among the present race of booksellers—to wit: old books for-