

MONTHLY REPORT FROM TRADE CENTRES

MONTREAL

Active Holiday Trade—Schemes Adopted for Display—St. Cuthbert's Leads in Popularity—Ready Sale for The Business Magazine.

Office of BOOKSELLER AND STATIONER,
222 McGill Street, Montreal.

December 11, 1935.

CHRISTMAS planning is reduced to a veritable science in some of Montreal's leading bookstores, and those who have introduced the most original goods and displays are reaping the greatest profit. Many of the larger stores realize the necessity for reaping quick profits and yet satisfying customers, and at least one store has inaugurated the policy of having wrapped staple stationery boxes and books. This aids materially in making additional sales, and the inconveniences caused by extra help are minimized. Window displays and interior decoration are at their height, and the usual collection of gift books, calendars, Christmas cards, etc., are judiciously mingled. The usual procedure is to display the books in the front of the window with the calendars at back and side. A crepe paper background is effective.

A favorite form of interior display is the overhead hanging of calendars stretching right across the store and extending throughout its length. Books for boys and girls of a holiday nature, as well as the multitudinous variety of little folks collections are always wisely arranged separately and classified according to subjects, in as far as possible. To avoid crowding up the front they are usually placed at the rear of the store. This is a necessity with St. Catherine street bookstores, which are crowded continually.

One of the novel means of effective advertising is noticed at E. M. Renouf's, in front of whose palatial store are several large board placards at various points announcing the arrival of new books by means of large reproductions of the cover, furnished by publishers. This is worthy of imitation.

Private greeting cards, Christmas and New Year's cards, are enhanced by orderly displays in attractive boxes in a series of prices. They are active sellers and require but little attention, although pilfering must be watched for. There are many new and handsome ideas in cards and calendars this year. The picture post-cards are prolific in variety for holiday greetings. One of the new ideas exploited by Morgan's book department is leather P.P.C., 5 for 25c., for making up into cushions.

"St. Cuthbert's," by Robert E. Knowles, is being pushed as the book of the season in every store and sales are rapid. "The Purple Parasol," McCutcheon's latest effort, has many admirers. Window displays of this title always introduce the real purple parasol. Among the new titles in fiction favorably mentioned are "The Cherry Riband," "The Hundred Days," and "Fair Margaret."

Gift-book selections in the usual fine bindings are being needlessly slaughtered in some stores, a surplus from one year ago. The same suicidal policy is taking place in two stores giving 20 per cent. off the publisher's price of all books, and 5 per cent. extra for cash. The necessity for this is hardly apparent, especially at this season of the year.

Stationery lines are very active, and toy and game departments are crowded. The usual grumbling is apparent in some quarters respecting department store business and the cutting of prices. Department stores are offering new paper novels at 60c., selections of recent bound cloth fiction at 50c., etc. The Booklover's Library was offered at Scroggie's for 35c. The fact remains, however, that the cost of doing business in these stores is proportionately as high and their departments will not ultimately pay if they do not make the requisite profit.

Christmas magazines are having a ready sale, and "The Business Magazine" is favorably spoken of in Montreal stores.

HALIFAX

Holiday Trade opens up well—Books in Demand—Some Changes in the Trade—Historic Store to be Vacated.

Halifax, Dec. 7, 1935.

ALL through the trade business is reported good, with excellent prospects for holiday sales, for which the retailers are now nearly ready.

At A. & W. Mackinlay's excellent business prospects are reported. Much of the business at this establishment is in the wholesale line, and the retail department does not cater largely to the holiday trade, though lines of stationery in packages, finished in style particularly adapted for Christmas, and leather goods, are shown. The rush of supplying the new readers throughout the province is now pretty well over.

T. C. Allen & Co. also report brisk trade and good prospects. They are constantly adding to their printing and binding plant, and this season have added \$1,500 worth to it. They report as leaders in fiction sales "The Gambler," "St. Cuthbert's," "Fair Margaret," "Nedra," "Starvecrow Farm," and "The Lure of the Labrador Wild." A new line of holiday goods showing at Allen's is that of artistic retouched calendars and cards. Oxford Press Bibles, Catholic prayer books, Presbyterian hymnals, and other religious books in leather bindings are expected to be in very large demand from now until the New Year, and are being shown in great variety.

J. L. Connolly, Barrington street, is booming his private greeting cards, done in three colors, green, red and gold, in his own establishment. The card is a folder and the die stamped designs vary, holly and mistletoe entering into all. The plate printing is done to the purchaser's order. This is the first work of this kind done in Halifax, and Mr. Connolly familiarized himself with it during a sojourn in the United States. He is also showing a line of purses, etc., in the latest style of leather, "frogskin," furnished for the holiday trade. He