

ENCOURAGING THE BETTER CLASS OF BOOKS.

AN effort is being made by some of the leading book publishers in Canada to encourage trade in the better and more permanent class of books.

One can no more judge a book by its cover than one can a man by his coat, but of one thing we can all be assured, the best and most permanent books are bound in more permanent materials than paper. Knowing this the Canadian publishers who are seeking to encourage the reading of a better class of literature are trying to confine their trade to books that are bound in material at least as permanent as cloth.

The slipshod and practically worthless character of many of the books which are to-day to be found in our bookstalls, is undoubtedly creating a reaction in favor of a reform in this respect. Some of the remedies proposed are wise, while others are foolish. One critic pleads that the novelist should be silent for half a century. Most people will probably agree that if certain novelists could be silenced for an eternity the world would be better rather than worse as a result. "Everybody," he says, "knows how to write novels in these days, but nobody can." This is, of course, an exaggeration. But grant that it be true, and that the silencing of all the novelists were possible, it would not be wise, even for posterity's sake, to cut off the stream of new novels. And the present generation would possibly disappear before the slipshod and inferior novel of to-day had vanished in the forgetfulness of to-morrow. Then, if we have no apprentices we can scarcely create the skilled workmen or artists for the future.

Instead of cutting off the stream we must improve it. And to improve it we must educate the people who read as well as the people who write. This is what the Canadian publishers are trying to do when they are encouraging the trade to handle the better class of books. And wholesale and retail dealers throughout the country can assist materially by impressing upon their customers the advantages of good and permanent books to the disadvantages of bad and ephemeral books. There are, for example, the window display and the advertisement,

to say nothing of other mediums that might be utilized in bringing about a reform if not the millennium.

MONTREAL BOOK TRADE.

From BOOKSELLER AND STATIONER'S Special Correspondent.

MONTREAL, June 11, 1902.

THE Summer book trade is now on, and Montreal dealers report quite a satisfactory business in the new books and in paper-covered books of all kinds. The demand for "Summer literature" has come unusually late, on account of the cold weather we have been having; but now that it is here the indications are that the season, though short, will be a very lively one, and that the usual volume of business will be done.

Doubtless the postponement of the Coronation resulted in a loss to some booksellers and stationers who had made big purchases of novelties for the occasion; but Montreal's dealers appear to have been very careful in buying things of that kind, and none have any very great grievance to report. The sale of the Coronation numbers of the magazines has no doubt been much smaller than it otherwise would have been; but so beautiful have they been that they are selling very well, particularly that of *The Illustrated London News*. Coronation post cards, of which there was an immense variety, have been entirely successful regardless of the unhappy turn of events in regard to the Coronation ceremonies. Orders have had to be repeated on some of the lines.

There seems to be no end to books on animals. The latest is by the well-known Canadian writer, Charles G. D. Roberts, and is called "*The Kindred of the Wild*." It sells for \$2, and the Copp, Clark Co. are the publishers. This is rather an expensive book for ordinary Summer reading, and the author's work along this line not being as well known to the public as others has tended to keep down the sales. All things considered, however, it is selling fairly well, and as a gift book it is, perhaps, one of the most suitable that has appeared for some time. The illustrations, by Charles Livingstone Bull, are beautiful. Mr. A. T. Chapman has the complete set of the original drawings on view in his store, where they are attracting much attention.

Mr. Chapman is making a specialty of a lot of English copyright novels, bound in cloth, which he is selling at 35c. each, or 3 for \$1. The original price of these books

ranges from 5 to 6 shillings, and at this great reduction they are being picked up rapidly. Libraries are the chief purchasers.

One of the leading books of the month is "*The Mississippi Bubble*," a novel by Emerson Hough, published by the Bowen-Merrill Co. This has been selling rapidly in Montreal. It is well illustrated by Henry Hutt. "*The Lady Paramount*," by Henry Harland, author of "*The Cardinal's Snuff-box*," is also selling very well. "*'Tween You and I*," by Max O'Rell, contains "some little problems on life," in the author's usual witty strain. The book is divided into two parts, the first concerning men; the second, women.

Wm. Drysdale & Co. are selling a seasonable book called, "*The Isle of the Shamrock*." This is in a way, a guide-book to the various points of interest in Ireland; but it is a guide book which will prove interesting to all, whether they are looking forward to visiting the "Isle of the Shamrock" or not. The Irish people, their customs and their country are dealt with in a most entertaining way, with many enjoyable anecdotes of the kind that can come from Ireland alone. The illustrations, except the initial letters, are photographs from life. Clifton Johnson is the author. Another book, with which Mr. Drysdale has had much success, is Bernard McEvoy's, "*From the Great Lakes to the Wide West*," one of the most interesting books on travel in Canada which has come out for some time. "*Armour Victor*," a novel of Ephesus and Rome, by Orr Kenyon, bids fair to become one of the best books of the season. It has been favorably compared to "*Quo Vadis*," and is considered a more carefully written book than that famous novel. Mr. Drysdale is selling it in paper and cloth, for 75c. and \$1.25 respectively.

T. R. Patillo, a well-known English sportsman, who recently spent some time in this country, has written a book with the title of "*Moose Hunting, Salmon Fishing and Other Sports in Canada*," which will appeal strongly to all who have the slightest sporting instinct in their make-up. This book, though a somewhat bulky one as the ordinary volume goes, is well gotten up and printed, and is selling very well.

Among the leading new novels of the month are "*The Colonials*," by Allen French (William Briggs, publisher), which, in its paper edition, has been going rapidly; "*Belshazzar*," by Stearns Davis, published by The Copp, Clark Co., is also in good demand. "*Rash Conclusions*," by G. W. Appleton, and "*As It Was Written*," by T. W. Speight, are two novels which have been well received in Montreal, and may be counted upon to be among the Summer successes.