

## THE BOOK MART.

FOR BOOKREADERS, BOOKBUYERS, AND BOOKSELLERS.

## EASTERN LETTER.

NEW YORK, February 1, 1896.

January is considered a poor month for the production of new books, so that the books of 1896 are few as yet. This, together with the fact that many dealers take this time of the year for the rearranging and annual accounting of stock, has made the orders for miscellaneous books rather light.

Sales in text-books in all departments, however, have had their customary revival, there being an especial demand in New York for physiologies to supply the public schools, in compliance with the law recently passed making this subject a compulsory study. Supplementary reading continues to be popular, and the various seditions of standard titles prepared for this purpose are extensively called for.

Library trade has been especially active. Many libraries receive their appropriations now, and make their arrangements for purchases during the coming year. As we have before mentioned in these letters, it is pleasing to note that these orders are generally for a higher class of literature on all subjects than was customary a number of years ago.

Paper-bound novels are again beginning to attract attention, preparatory to the regular spring trade in them. A number of new issues have been made in the different series, the most popular being *Philip and His Wife*, by Margaret Deland, in the Riverside Paper Series, which, with this number, appears in a new and very tasteful binding.

The early months of the year are favourable to the publication and sale of works on religious subjects, and among those now in demand and recently published are a new edition of Renan's *Life of Jesus*; *The Ministry of the Spirit*, by A. J. Gordon; *The Victorious Life*, by H. Webb Peplow, and *Gathering Clouds*, by F. W. Farrar, the last as yet hardly selling as well as expected.

Beside the *Bonnie Brier Bush* and *The Prisoner of Zenda* continue to lead everything else in point of sale. Some of the other volumes of fiction in especial demand are *The Sorrows of Satan*, *The Red Badge of Courage*, *Jude the Obscure*, *A Cuban Sweetheart* and *A Little Wizard*.

*The House Boat on the Styx* and the two *Jungle Books* still sell largely. More serious works called for are *Menticulture*, by Horace Fletcher, *Letters by Matthew Arnold*, and *The Makers of Modern Rome*, by Mrs. Oliphant.

Books on whist are at present selling readily, and among those accepted as authorities are *Foster's Whist Manual*, *The Gist of Whist*, by C. E. Coffin, and *Cavendish on Whist*. The subject of cooking is also popular, the new *Century Cook-Book* being very well received, while *The Chafing Dish Supper*, by C. T. Herrick, and *The Bachelor and the Chafing Dish*, by Deshler Welsh, are very popular.

The most prominent titles of the month's publications are in fiction, and include new novels by R. L. Stevenson, Stanley J. Weyman, Mrs. Hungerford and Mrs. L. B. Walford. Other recent

books are *The Life of Cardinal Manning*, by E. D. Purcell, and *Iron-Clads in Action*, by H. W. Wilson.

Reports from the retail dealers as to the month's sales are rather unfavourable, and the impression received seems to be that sales during the opening of the year will be light. On the other hand, many of the publishers announce new and attractive lists of early publications, and seem disposed to push vigorously their various lines for the coming year. The popular books for the past month, as indicated by their sale, are as follows:

Beside the *Bonnie Brier Bush*. By Ian Mac-laren. \$1.25.

*The Prisoner of Zenda*. By Anthony Hope. 75 cts.

*A House Boat on the Styx*. By John Kendrick Bangs. \$1.25.

*The Love Affairs of a Bibliomaniac*. By Eugene Field. \$1.25.

*A Kentucky Cardinal*. By James Lane Allen. \$1.00.

*Aftermath*. By James Lane Allen. \$1.00.

*The Century Cook-Book*. By Mary Ronald. \$2.00.

*Amos Judd*. By J. A. Mitchell. 75 cts.

*The Makers of Modern Rome*. By Mrs. Oliphant. \$3.00.

*A Little Wizard*. By Stanley J. Weyman. 50 cts.

*The Days of Auld Lang Syne*. By Ian Mac-laren. \$1.25.

*The Second Jungle Book*. By Rudyard Kipling. \$1.50.

*A Singular Life*. By Elizabeth Stuart Phelps. \$1.25.

*The Red Cockade*. By Stanley J. Weyman. \$1.50.

*Jude the Obscure*. By Thomas Hardy. \$1.75.

*Coffee and Repartee*. By John Kendrick Bangs. 50 cts.

## WESTERN LETTER.

CHICAGO, February 1, 1896.

While the various war scares and the panicky condition of financial affairs in general tended largely to unsettle trade during January, yet the record of business done is very encouraging and surpasses expectations formed early in the month. Quite as many books were sold as during the corresponding period last year, and the demand, it is satisfactory to notice, instead of being confined principally to a few books, as was the case last year, was good all round, all classes of books being in steady request. Library orders were one of the strong features of the month, and they are still coming in, in good style. They cover a wide range in literature, embracing pretty nearly all subjects, and bear witness to the omnivorous character of the reading of the people, in even the smaller cities. Country orders were, as a whole, fairly good, considering the times, but it is evident that the trade is "going slow," as it is technically termed, in regard to stock.

In analyzing the demand, the first and most noticeable feature of January was the strong de-

mand for the sixteenmo style of Dodd, Mead & Co.'s authorized edition of *Beside the Bonnie Brier Bush*. The orders received for it have simply passed all expectation, and the way they are still pouring in from every corner of the West testifies to the wide popularity of the book. The remarkable call for Eugene Field's books, which was such a pronounced feature of December trade, still continues, but is now down to more moderate and manageable limits. The popular favourites, in the way of recent new books, all sold well, but otherwise there is not much that calls for special remark in last month's sales.

While the New Year's outlook does not, in the opinion of most of the experienced old bookmen, seem to be particularly bright, yet there does not appear to be much ground for apprehension at present, and it is quite within the bounds of possibility that we may have a fair spring trade, after all. The publishers' announcements received so far include, we are glad to notice, many new books by popular authors, which should sell largely, and it seems to us that the success of the spring business will depend mainly upon the success of these books.

Not much emanated from publishing circles during January, Eugene Field's *Love Affairs of a Bibliomaniac* being about the only book that appeared that is likely to meet with more than an average sale.

The present time is remarkable in being entirely free from a particular "fad" in the way of book reading, and the past year having been so fertile in this respect, one cannot help wondering what the next "craze" will be like. As a kind of minor fancy the *Red Badge of Courage*, owing no doubt to the generous appreciation of the book in England, is attracting considerable attention now, although when this work first appeared very little call indeed was experienced for it.

The new *Century Cook-Book* took first place among cook-books, when it was published in November, has led the demand in books of this class ever since, and judging from the way it is being asked for to-day, it will, in all likelihood, maintain it.

While this part of the West has not produced a poet of the first rank as yet, it is certainly keeping up its end in the production of what may be termed minor poets. To mention recent examples, December gave us a collection of the poems of Mrs. Lydia Avery Coonley, which had an excellent sale during the holidays, and since, and now we have just received Ernest McGaffrey's new volume, which is meeting with much appreciation and very frequent calls.

In the way of minor demand there are many inquiries for books on Africa, chiefly for those of an historical or descriptive nature, while the Monroe Doctrine is still attracting much attention, books dealing in any way with that subject being constantly asked for. There is also many inquiries for the work entitled *Drawings*, by C. D. Gibson, which is now out of print.

The books appended below were most in request last month, and it must be added, that while fiction shows up, as usual, most prominently in the month's sales, many books in other classes have made more than an average showing. *Degeneration* is still selling steadily, and the large demand for Horace White's new book on *Money and Banking* makes it manifest that the widespread interest in financial affairs which was such a feature of '95 has not yet entirely subsided.

Historical works are also selling well, particularly the various books by Professor Fiske and those by Francis Parkman.

Beside the *Bonnie Brier Bush*. By Ian MacLaren. 12mo, \$1.25, and 16mo, 25 cts.

The *Love Affairs of a Bibliomaniac*. By Eugene Field. \$1.25.

The *Days of Auld Lang Syne*. By Ian MacLaren. \$1.25.

A *House Boat on the Styx*. By John Kendrick Bangs. \$1.25.

A *Singular Life*. By Elizabeth Stuart Phelps. \$1.25.

The *Red Cockade*. By Stanley J. Weyman. \$1.50.

The *Sorrows of Satan*. By Marie Corelli. \$1.50.

The *Prisoner of Zenda*. By Anthony Hope. 75 cts.

*Aftermath*. By James Lane Allen. \$1.00.

The *Bachelor's Christmas*. By Robert Grant. \$1.50.

The *Master*. By I. Zangwill. \$1.75.

*Menticulture*; or, the A. B. C. of True Living. By Horace Fletcher. \$1.00.

*Law of Psychic Phenomena*. By Thomson Jay Hudson. \$1.50.

*Money and Banking*. By Horace White. \$1.50.

*When Valmond came to Pontiac*. By Gilbert Parker. \$1.50.

## ENGLISH LETTER.

LONDON, December 23, 1895, to January 18, 1896.

Compared with the corresponding period of former years, there is a decided improvement in business. The quiet season immediately following Christmas has not been so marked in its contrast with the busy time. Even during the Christmas week there was plenty of work to be done. All this is equally true of the foreign and colonial business.

School books now begin to form an important feature in orders. The text-books and manuals used for the University local and other examinations are being disposed of in large quantities.

With New Year's Day came the rush (that is the only suitable word) for diaries, calendars, and almanacs, telegrams and urgent letters arriving at all times.

The Venezuelan dispute has caused enquiry to be made for pretty well everything that has been issued bearing on the subject, not excepting a work by Schomburgk himself, published by Simpkin and Marshall some sixty years since.

The appointment of the Poet Laureate has naturally directed attention to his writings, and his *English Lyrics* and *In Veronica's Garden* appear to be the favourites.

The biographies of some of the missionaries who were massacred in China last summer have been much appreciated, and edition after edition has been called for in a very short space of time.

Year-books of the various dioceses are now being published, and their sale points to considerable interest in Church matters. No doubt the local sales are even far greater than the demand in London.

A 3s. 6d. edition of *John Halifax, Gentleman*, has been well taken up. Publishers are wise in bringing out the cheaper issue of a popular work without waiting for the copyright to expire.

The sale of *Tribby* is still good, although of