

Book Buyers.



EVERY bookseller must have noticed the different methods which customers employ who purchase books.

There is the customer who drops casually in in a disinterested sort of way and glances generally about the shelves, and concludes by asking for a catalogue, which, by the careless way he thrusts it in his pocket, shows that he will probably never read it, or if he does, will not appreciate the desirability of the books offered. This kind of client generally buys showy sets and table books at the more prominent shops. He is the collector that *sees*.

Next is the customer who comes in and asks to "look around." He has learned a little something of book lore, and hopes to catch a bargain. If the dealer tries to engage him in conversation, in order to discover his taste and to offer books of a kind to gratify it, he is likely to be politely rebuffed in a manner which shows that the collector is afraid to be sold something he doesn't want. This kind of collector must be adroitly dealt with, for he is generally inoculated with the idea that he knows it all. He is the collector that *looks*.

Look at the man who enters a book store in an assured manner, and proceeds with confidence to inspect the shelves. Note how his eye scans the top shelves and runs down to the larger volumes below. He rapidly perceives the arrangement and classification of a stock, and skips whole sections of books which he knows are "out of his line." He will slowly encompass the whole shop, and if then he does not find books to please him will approach the dealer and make intelligent inquiry. Then very likely there will ensue a chatty conversation which will prove of benefit to both. There will be an interchange of ideas and a kindling of enthusiasm if the dealer has books on which he can expatiate. There will almost surely be a barter and sale, and when after a half-hour or so the customer departs he goes away pleased, the richer in books and the knowledge of them, and resolving to come again. The dealer is gratified, less at the pecuniary part of the transaction than by the pleasure of having made almost a friend by the magic freemasonry of book love. We have described the customer who *observes*.

The door opens quietly and there enters a man of secretive aspect. Upon being asked his requirements he replies: "Nothing, oh, nothing; just to look around." He takes a comprehensive glance over the shop, and, disdaining the sets of books and those of fine appearance, gravitates surely to the sections and corners where stand the musty-fusty volumes huddled together. Now observe him carefully and note how he takes up volume after volume, inspects it critically, and turns promptly to see the price upon the fly-leaf. If the price is too high in his estimation he puts it back with a sigh; if moderate his hesitation is evident, and he will probably put the volume on one side for consideration a little later; if cheap, note how he brightens up and promptly claps the volume under his arm. If he gathers several cheap books he is apt to

disregard all those he hesitated over, and with his selection he will go to the dealer and ask him what he will take for the lot. As the dealer glances over them he knows he has marked them too low, if anything, and yet he knows he must do better on the lot or lose a customer who always pays cash. So he makes a virtue out of a necessity, gives a slight deduction, surrenders the books, and with a rueful countenance watches his customer depart, for he suspects he has been "bested." We have attempted to describe the *book hunter*.

The truest book hunter is the book dealer himself when he makes a *sortie* into other dealers' shops. With what keen delight does he lay aside in an apparently unconcerned and business-like manner certain treasures which he knows will delight the souls of some of his customer friends. The dealer selling, while he knows his brother dealer is getting some advantage over him, cheerfully lets the nuggets go, with the reflection that he will return the compliment some day. Moreover, it is to the good of the trade, and "a fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind."—*Book Lover*.

A CURIOUS and instructive fact bearing upon the conditions of things as affected by the new Copyright Treaty with the United States is going the rounds of the press. There is no English novelist who has a larger following across the Atlantic than Mr. William Black. Just now, Messrs. Sampson Low & Co. are issuing a cheap edition of his works. Harper Bros., who had long been Mr. Black's publishers on the other side, had the option of obtaining the copyright in America, republishing the book there, and distributing it in the ordinary way. Having counted the cost, they have decided to purchase from Sampson Low & Co. as many copies of the book as they reckon they can sell, and import them bodily. It will be understood that this involves a series of exceptional expenses. They pay the English publisher trade price for the book, incur freightage to New York, and there they are met by a demand for the heavy duty imposed by an enlightened legislature on printed books. Yet such is the cost of labour and material in the United States, as the necessary corollary of protective duties, that Harper's find it worth while to get their supply of Mr. Black's books in the manner described.

PARCHMENT PAPERS.—So marked is the difference between genuine and imitation parchment paper that if some care is taken in the selection, one can easily protect himself against fraud. Genuine parchment paper is of glassy transparency, and when torn shews smooth edges without fibre; the imitation parchment paper, however, shews as much fibre as any other paper, and this is easily discernable by means of the magnifying glass. The genuine article resists humidity almost completely, while the imitation absorbs water and may then be easily torn. The best test is to cut the parchment paper into narrow strips and immerse them in hot water for about ten minutes. If it retains all of its qualities as to transparency and strength, it is, without doubt, genuine; if not, it is imitation.