

The World of Rare Books

By FREDERICK M. HOPKINS

THE SUPPLY OF RARE BOOKS

THE auction season in England came to an end with the same inquiry uppermost in the minds of many, as was the case in this country, "Where is next year's auction room supply of rare books coming from?" Commenting upon the sales of the last season in general, a statement issued by the Anderson Galleries summarizes the situation. It says:

"The outstanding feature of the season was the comparatively small number of choice manuscripts and books which were offered and the high prices which were bid for them. Every time a rare and valuable book or manuscript appeared a record price was bid. In the opinion of the Anderson Galleries, the demand for choice books and manuscripts will from now on exceed the supply. Nearly all the desirable ones which have been offered during the past three or four years have been bought by public institutions or by private collectors whose collections will eventually be bequeathed to institutions. There are, of course, a few important private collections in America which will be sold 'by way of the auction' when their owners die, but these cannot begin to supply the extraordinary demand there is today in America from the large and increasing number of collectors."

Five or six years ago, in an interview printed in *The Publisher's Weekly*, Dr. Rosenbach, the rare book dealer, pointed out very clearly the conditions that are now confronting the book collectors of the world. He said:

"It is now dawning upon us that we have been living in the most wonderful period of opportunity that book collectors have ever had. It is also clear that we are never likely to see such a period again, for the rarities that have been passing through the market have been bought mainly by book-lovers and collectors, not speculators, and will largely go into the great university and public libraries, never to appear again at public sale. . . . The books of all periods from Caxton's day to our own have made amazing advances. The cause is plain enough: more collectors, a keener knowl-

edge and appreciation of literature, greater wealth, and a growing tendency to preserve the world's great books in libraries, thus constantly removing them from the possibility of private ownership. Are these causes likely to remain effective in the future? Is it probable that the population of the United States, Great Britain, with her American, African and Australian colonies, will continue to increase? And will their progress in education, culture and wealth continue? And will the building of great libraries, which seems only to have just started, go on? If so, we shall have an ever-growing market. And if collecting continues at its present pace we shall have a constantly diminishing supply. An increasing demand and a decreasing supply will force price advances. All hinges upon the progress of the English-speaking people. Upon this point there is little chance for doubt. The next century is likely to be quite as wonderful as the last."

This was all very plain to Dr. Rosenbach in 1919, and he gave good reasons for his opinions. It is now very plain to us all in 1925. If any of us thought that Dr. Rosenbach was a "plunger" five or six years ago when he was buying up all the rarities in sight, we now see that we were mistaken and that he was a cool, calculating buyer who saw that it was perfectly safe to pay good prices on a rising market and a contracting supply.

"Where will next year's auction supply of rare books be coming from?" This is an interesting question and many collectors will be interested in its answer. Nevertheless the hunt for literary rarities will go on and money and intelligence will make it more exciting than ever.

SALE OF SCOTT MANUSCRIPTS

IN the last century many of the manuscripts of Sir Walter Scott's novels and poems have been sold in London auction rooms and their steady rise in value furnish a good illustration of the growing interest of collectors in authors' manuscripts generally. On the 27th of July the manuscript of "The Antiquary" was sold at Sotheby's in London bringing the record price of

£2,100. In July, 1919, the manuscript of "Quentin Durward" in the same auction room brought £700, and in November, 1923, that of "Redgauntlet," £520. These were record prices only a few years ago. A number of Scott's manuscripts were sold in the '60's and '70's but prices were comparatively low. The largest sale of Scott's manuscripts was held in 1832, when those of thirteen novels sold for £317 18s. These manuscripts and the prices which they brought were as follows: "The Monastery," £18 18s.; "Guy Mannering," £27 10s.; "Old Mortality," £33; "The Antiquary," £42; "Rob Roy," £50; "Peveril of the Peak," £42; "Waverley," £18; "The Abbot," £14; "Ivanhoe," £12; "The Pirate," £12; "Fortunes of Nigel," £16 16s.; "Kenilworth," £17; and the "Bride of Lammermoor," £14 14s. From 1832 to 1925, a period of ninety-three years, the manuscript of "The Antiquary," advanced from £42 to £2,100. The manuscripts of some authors show even greater advances. And some of the most extraordinary records in literary material of this kind has been made since the end of the World War. And prices are still advancing.

THE PUBLISHERS' WEEKLY for August 22 is a special "Good Book Making Number." Its important articles include "The Making and Judging of Books," by Porter Garnett, master of The Laboratory Press of the Carnegie Institute of Technology; "Present Tendencies of the Typography of Books," by William A. Kittredge, director of Design and Typography, R. R. Donnelly & Sons Company of Chicago; a check list of typical productions of "The Merrymount Press of Boston" prepared by D. B. Updike, a list that all lovers of fine printing will want to preserve; "The Revival of the Woodcut in Modern Book-Illustration," by Bertrand Zadig; "What Paper for Books," by Franklin Spier. There many interesting illustrations in these articles.

In the leading editorial in this number discussing "The Rightness of Good Book-making," the editor says:

"Leaders who can raise the craft of printing to a fine art cannot be expected to develop in every generation but the present day is fortunate and books are being produced by such men as Updike, Rogers and Rollins, which future collectors will

be glad to secure when the present-day collectors shall scatter their libraries. Booksellers who can gather about them a clientele for the more distinguished examples are finding it a worthwhile department and one which gives the booksellers a wonderful opportunity to put to use his best knowledge and taste."

GOOD BOOK MAKING NUMBER

THIS inquiry comes from two readers of these columns in mails very close together. There is no fixed and uniform meaning for the word edition. Some publishers regard a thousand copies as an edition, thus a novel is in its fiftieth edition when it has sold 50,000 copies. Others regard a single printing, or impression, as an edition. "The Bookman's Glossary" defines an edition as (1) The form of a book or set, referring to its editing or style of make-up. (2) The whole number of copies of a book or other publication in uniform style. The Publishers' Association of England recommended an interpretation of edition which is generally observed by its members and is favored by the publishers of America who follow the best traditions of the trade. Edition is not used in connection with repeated printings unless there are changes in the text, a revision, new matter added, or change in format or price. If it is a new printing only, without changes, the term should be issue, impression, or printing, or simply a statement of the total number of copies printed to date. There has been a tendency toward a more uniform meaning for the word edition in recent years in both England and America.

Edward Goldston, the English bookseller who recently discovered and purchased a fine copy of the Gutenberg Bible from a monastery in Austria, reports that American collectors are negotiating for its purchase.

Cablegrams from London report that the danger which recently threatened the seclusion of the church and churchyard at Stoke Poges, made famous by Gray's "Elegy," is at last wholly removed. The plans of the parochial church council of Stoke Poges have succeeded and that historic church and churchyard will be handed over to the National Trust for preservation as described by the poet Gray. The announcement comes from Canon Barnett, the

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AMERICAN TURF REGISTER and Sporting Magazine, volume 15, 1844, also the following numbers or the engravings.—Vol. IV, October 1832, Indians gathering wild-rice. April 1833, "Timolion"—Volume VII, June 1836, "Trump"—Volume VIII, November 1836 "Felt"—Volume XIV, April 1843, "Grey Eagle," January 1843, "Fashion."

Memorials of the Discovery and Early Settlement of the Bermudas, by Sir J. H. Lefroy, 2 vols. London 1877-79.

Down the West Branch by Capt. C. A. J. Farrar.

Heroes and Heroines of the Grand National. The Acadians in Song and Story, Ficklin.

In Acadia, Ficklin, New Orleans, 1893.

"The Rock Floor of Intermont Plains of the Arid Regions" by Charles Rollins Keyes, pub. in Bulletin of Geological Society of America, vol. 19, 1908.

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WE have left another vicinity behind us! Our strolls along Third Avenue are likely to be no more for some little time. Now we sit observing plumes of steam from an eighth floor office behind the Harvard Club and strive (with grist of copy temporarily cast to the four winds of Moving) to grind our little mill. * * * "You heard wrong," reads a letter from Charles Bayly, Jr., of Holts. "Bob Benchley will call his new book something other than 'David Copperfield.'" * * * Mr. Bayly speaks firmly. He goes on to say that, after the title "The Cult of Asininity" was first announced and cancelled, "Ho-Hum" and "Now, This Li'l Girl" also went into the discard. * * * The final and authorized title of this latest item in Benchleyana is "Pluck and Luck: or Virtue Is Its Own Reward (it has no other)"—that is, conclude the long-suffering publishers, if they can afford a die big enough for that many words! * * * We haven't yet found a Wonderbuck. Our serial numbers are all wrong—as the editor said who advocated nothing but short fiction. * * * It is reported that a particularly hard-boiled (at least ten minutes) buyer of fiction for a bookstore found Barry Benefield's "The Chicken Wagon Family" the only novel that ever prevented the reading of his afternoon paper on the train! * * * We are all for more of this kind of prevention. * * * Our hated rival column "Cursive and Discursive" went after Mr. Curwood, noted author, the other day and referred to him as being a bit of a botanist because he spoke of the "sweet scent" of the purple trillium. Now one Lloyd E. Smith of Simsbury, Connecticut, rises to opine that his childhood recollection of the purple trillium is far from sweet:

It smells bad, very bad indeed. Of course, there may be different trilliums. But the bad smell makes me indulge in this splurge of protest—for, you know, we cannot allow the subtle anemone to be insulted.

* * * Kenneth Rede of Baltimore, Md., boasts the unsophisticated address of 2100 Callow Avenue, and there, at the sign of the Raven, he asks you to write him freely of the books you are looking for, because he claims he can supply them. * * * "Quinby and Son," we see, is advertised as "The Father and Son Book." This leads us to expect similar characterizations or possible future volumes: "The Mother-in-Law Book," "The Great Aunt and Second Cousin once Removed Book," "The Illegitimate Infant Book," "The Papa Loves Momma Book," "The Affable Uncle Book," "The Connection by Marriage Book," and so on. * * * Harold Bell Wright, they say, emerged from the quote wilds unquote recently "just long enough to buy a book at a Colorado town and then proceeded on the extended fishing trip which has taken him along the Colorado River. The book he bought was a copy of his own latest novel, 'A Son of His Father.'" * * *

And so our thought
Comes pat and trite:
After he bought
Did the fish bite?

* * * Zona Gale has dramatized "Faint Perfume," which will be produced at the

Neighborhood Playhouse. But Grand Street—as we remember it! * * * Gilbert Frankau is reported as calling many modern Englishwomen with money "sleek jungle cats who ought to be behind bars." *Sleek jungle cats behind your bars Who pour when you obtain your way, Care little for the household lars And crouch at teas in search of prey, Young Frankau has no use for you. It really ought to make you shiver. Though all seductively you sue He slaps you down without a quiver!*

* * * My, my, how tuneless we are this morning! * * * Frankau thinks woman's job is housekeeping, dusting, sweeping,—while men toil, fastidious weeping,—not, by Heck this prowling, creeping leopardessing, lounging, leaping,—sowing wind and whirlwind reaping, never caring where they're—

* * * But we really must stop this. It has gone altogether too far. But then so has Mr. Frankau! * * * Irving Blake, this city, tells us what we already knew, that the Oxford University Press, American Branch's illustrated edition of "Movements of European History" is the acknowledged D. H. Lawrence edition, in two formats—not two editions, as we ignorantly said. The first published edition, with author's name printed "Lawrence H. Davison," 1921, he goes on to tell us, was not illustrated. And then he suggests as follows:

In spite of their advertisements in your columns, please do not give—in the manner of the newspaper literary supplements—too much credit for their enterprise to American publishers who import British books and re-issue them without resetting here, merely putting their names on title pages. Least of all credit due to branch agencies of British publishers who hold up their American patrons for an enhanced price for their books considerably above our tariff added to the original British price. American buyers sensible enough to import British publications save themselves a goodly percentage of their annual book bills by ordering direct from London. But it is idle to hope that this suggestion will be printed in your columns.

* * * Well now, then, it wasn't so idle after all, was it, Irving, old Dear? * * * Just because of Irving getting so petulant, we're going to do it the old-fashioned way.

* * * Stokes for bringing out "Fairy Tales from Brentano," after all these years—yes with the original illustrations by F. Carruthers—could in Kate Freligh Kroeger's translation. This was one of the great children's books of our youth and the original copy we have is all tattered and torn and pages are missing. But all our Carruthers Gould illustrations were in full color, and here only the frontispiece is so. Besides, the format of the book is different and the illustrations reduced in size. * * * But wiv cavil, since this remarkable children's book is again obtainable! Let us rather thank God for it. * * * Don't let your children be cheated of these stories, as much their proper heritage as the tales of Andersen and Grimm. * * * With which injunction we are, respectfully,
THE PHENICIAN.



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