

BULLETIN OF THE A. L. A. COMMITTEE ON BOOK PRICES.

The net price system is a method of maintaining and systematizing book prices. The firms that make up the American Publishers' Association agree to be governed by its rules. By this agreement, during the first year after publication, books are furnished to booksellers on condition that they shall not be sold for less than list price, except that to libraries a discount of 10 per cent. on non-fiction and one-third on fiction may be allowed. This applies only to works published since May 1, 1901, for non-fiction, and February 1, 1902, for fiction, which, since January 1904, is held to include juvenile fiction. Librarians generally consider the system unfair to them, claiming that under it prices have been raised. They have urged the allowance of a larger discount to libraries. The Booksellers' Association, however, advocates making the system more stringent by removing the year limit and by abolishing library discount altogether, or at least by making the fiction discount the same as that for non-fiction.

"They (librarians) were promised in advance by figures * * * that the net system of prices, taken in connection with the discount of ten per cent. to libraries, would mean for them an average increase of eight per cent. in their invoices of current publications. * But subsequent experience seems to have made of the promised eight per cent. a barren ideality."—*The Dial*, Feb. 1900. For examples, see Bulletin No. 3.

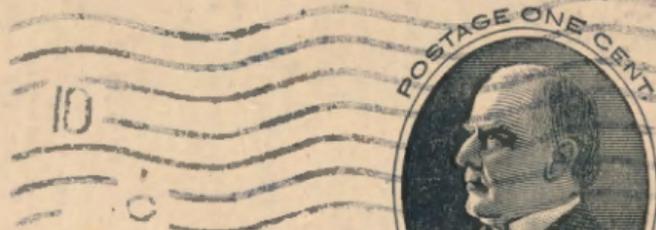
The best way to import books is through large importers. They deliver books at the library for a definite per cent. on list price. Libraries usually pay 21c. for a shilling, 21c. for a mark, 19c. for a franc. This includes all expenses. The importer puts the books through the custom house and sends the librarian the necessary papers to sign. Two good importers are Lemcke & Buechner, 1812 Broadway, New York, and G. E. Stechert, 9 East 16th St., New York. They constantly receive packages from abroad. If a book is wanted in haste they send direct from abroad to the library ordering.

E. G. Allen & Son, 28 Henrietta St., Covent Garden, London, and B. F. Stevens & Brown, 4 Trafalgar Sq., Charing Cross, London, W. C., are reliable purchasing agents in England.

Two good dealers in second hand books in England are Wm. Potter, 30 Exchange St., E. Liverpool, and John Grant, 31 George 4th, Bridge, Edinburgh. Get their catalogs, and order through importers.

Publishers and booksellers, in raising book prices and in treating librarians' protests as of slight consequence, are quite within their rights. This committee is simply trying to put librarians in touch with the situation and to encourage such methods of book selection and book purchase as will help to a wiser expenditure of book funds and make library trade seem to publishers and booksellers worthy of more consideration.

Address inquiries and suggestions to any member of the Committee. Arthur E. Bostwick, *Chairman*, N. Y. Public Library, 226 West 42nd St.; John Cotton Dana, Newark (N. J.) Free Public Library; Bernard C. Steiner, Enoch Pratt Free Library, Baltimore, Md.



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