

their travels during this period in his life are among the most interesting in the book.

However, it was in the summer of 1900 "the most important and significant of my whole life" that Dr. Camsell decided "to abandon the purposeless wanderings of the last five years and settle down to the serious business of acquiring a profession". That profession was geology and his decision to adopt it marked the beginning of a distinguished career of exploration that has played a vital role in the development of Canada's North.

The book is full of factual data gathered on the author's geologic surveys, but it is all interesting, and seasoned as it is by a host of human interest anecdotes about the variety of "northerners" he encountered in his travels, interprets the North in its true color.

In writing his autobiography, Dr. Camsell had two objects in mind (1) to provide himself with some activity in retirement, and (2) "to leave for my children and grandchildren a record of a kind of life they knew nothing about and would have no opportunity of experiencing". The text indicates that the author was referring to his life up to 1920 when he was appointed Deputy Minister of Mines. He terms the ensuing years "another story" and says that a Deputy Minister's job "is purely an administrative one involving a permanent seat in an office chair". It is disappointing therefore, to find that he has devoted only the last four pages of the volume to the period in which he rendered his most distinguished—if less exciting and arduous—service to this country. H.E.B.

OLD TORONTO, A selection from John Ross Robertson's "Landmarks of Toronto". Edited by E. C. Kyte. The Macmillan Co. of Canada, Toronto, Canada. Pp. 346. \$5.

To avoid any misconceptions it should be mentioned that "Old Toronto" is not a history in the usual sense, nor was it meant to be. Nineteenth century scenes from the lives of the inhabitants of York and district, incidents which involved the common man of that locale and era, and facts concerning the growth and development of York in its early years are all in the book, but many famous names, illustrious deeds and important occurrences have been purposely

neglected or omitted for the sake of "compression and inclusion". It lacks the comprehensiveness and form of a history.

The major sources of material have been the volumes entitled "Robertson's Landmarks of Toronto" which in turn contain articles first collected 70 years ago by reporters from the *Toronto Evening Telegram*. Factual accounts inform the reader of York's early growth and development—how everyone including the mayor pitched in to help build its first streets; the difficulty of the citizen in paying taxes because of the lack of currency; its first business establishments pin-pointed and described as to wares and operation. The editor's comments relating to the subject matter do not distract but rather enhance and weave facts together into a flowing account. In many places throughout the book his remarks show a good understanding of the times and in several instances clear up minor discrepancies which for some time have been a source of uncertainty.

The reader gains considerable insight into the general conditions existing in old Toronto and into its people—their peculiarities, habits, talents, spirits, character, amusements, ideas, likes and dislikes. We learn of the commotion that rocked townsmen when they heard of the approach of rebels back in 1837, the discontent which led people to revolt in the first place and the equally strong feelings which made Loyalists stand together and fight back. That certain "intimate" touch which colors events of major importance is used to good effect in relating common occurrences, too. A certain charm of simplicity of life is captured here. A reporter attends churches of every denomination and records his impressions of the services—the sermon, music, even the conduct of church-goers and their attitudes toward attending. Not even the little girl who dozes off in the gallery and attracts suppressed snickers from some of the congregation, escapes mention.

As a contrast a chapter entitled "The Course of Justice" was evidently meant to satisfy other tastes. Details of public hangings are not omitted. Questionable administration of Justice which caused many innocent people to pay needless penalties, and stories of brutal crimes make depressing reading. It is certainly hard to imagine that brutality and an apathetical regard for