

The Best Books for Boys and Girls

By MONA H. COXWELL

ONCE I asked an old lady of over eighty, "What was the most delightful book you ever read?"

"The first book I ever read," she answered, promptly. "I don't remember its name, or who the author was, or what it was about, but I can truly say I have never read a book since that gave me so much delight. I was a very little girl at the time. An uncle who had never seen me before came to visit us and, forgetting that little girls do not grow up into big girls overnight, like little mushrooms grow into big mushrooms, he was very much surprised to see how much of a child I was still. 'I had an idea that she was almost a young lady,' he said, 'and I have brought her a book instead of a dolly.' My uncle knew that a book was a rare treat to a girl in those days. I would not have him think me a baby, so I begged for the book. 'See,' I said, when it was given to me, 'I will show you that I can read it.' To my mother's astonishment, for my schooling had not been a matter of much importance up to that time, and to my uncle's delight, I picked my way through half a page of the wonderful volume without a mistake. The book was mine! I shall never forget the dear delight of reading it. It took days, weeks, and even months, and when it was finished I cried bitterly. I felt that I had lost a host of friends. I knew that no other book people I should ever meet would be as dear to me as they had been. And

read gave them more pleasure than all that came after them. Perhaps that is the reason why many authors love to write for young people and why the crop of splendid books for boys and girls grows larger year by year. This autumn the publishers' reports of books especially intended for "juveniles" is a most attractive one. A real "boy's story," full of adventure and enthusiasm, is "The Wilderness Castaways," by Dillon Wallace. (McClelland and Goodchild, Toronto.) It tells the adventures of a pampered New York youth invited to join a party of men who are sailing into the northland in search of big game and fish. Through his own selfishness and heedlessness he becomes lost with a sailor companion, Dan Rudd, 'way up in the arctic region, and is obliged to spend a winter of peril and hardship in that desolate land. The story of their hardships, sufferings and miraculous escapes in their efforts to battle their way back to civilization makes stirring reading that will be enjoyed by grown-up boys as well as younger ones.

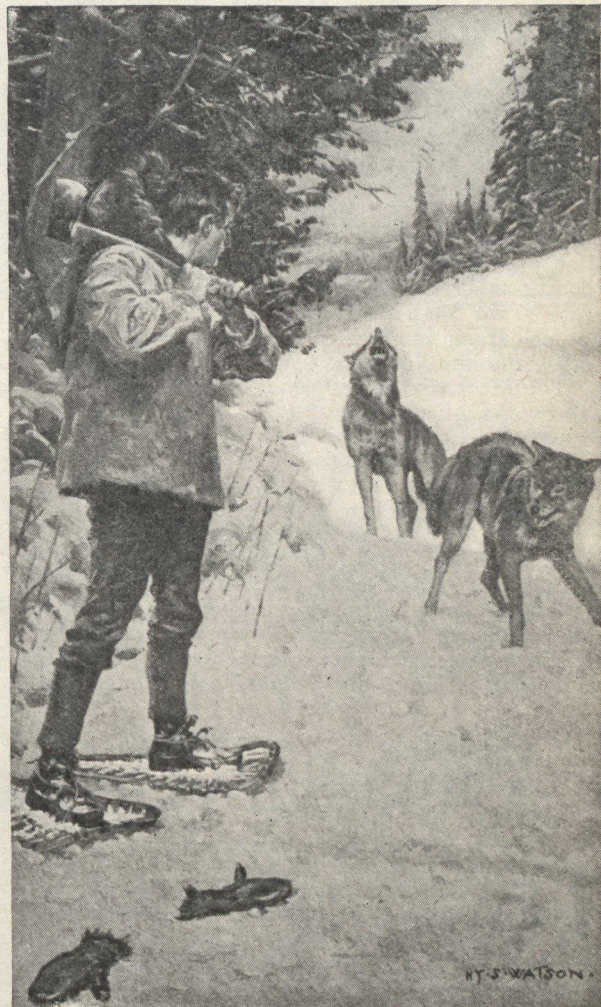
The same publishers have brought out the latest book by Annie Fellows Johnson, under the title of "Miss Santa Claus of the Pullman," one of the most delightful Christmas stories lately written. It is the tale of the tender faith of two little country children in the justice and bounty of the great Father Christmas, their firm belief that goodness will be rewarded and badness be punished when the Day of Giving arrives. Every one will love the trusting little Will'm and Libby, his seven-year-old sister, in whose superior age Will'm was so much awe. The way in which their reward for "goodness" came about on Christmas Day is part of the story, but there is more to it than that. It is an ideal book for the Christmas stocking.

For boys from twelve to fifteen years of age, Louise S. Hasbrouck has written a romantic history of Canada called "The Boys' Parkman." A copy of this volume should be placed upon the bookshelf of every school boy who is struggling to learn history after the conventional manner of the text book. It turns raw history into romance, and every boy loves romance. The notes of explanation and references found in the back should also be valuable.

Any Canadian boy or girl who is familiar with the Roy and Ray stories of Mary Wright Plummer will be delighted to know that the latest volume of this series deals with their own country. Encouraged by the assurance that "Roy and Ray in Mexico" had met, partially at least, a need in education expressed by parents, teachers and librarians, the author has prepared this record of a summer recently spent in the eastern part of the Dominion of Canada, in the hope that it may be equally useful. The book is interestingly illustrated with photographs and should be found very readable by young people.

Another "Oz" book has made its appearance, a more fascinating and entrancing volume than all the others that have come before it. I envy the small girl or boy whose name is opposite "The Patchwork Girl of Oz" on Santa Claus' Christmas list. Once more they will meet all the old friends from the fairyland of Oz. New friends are also introduced—the most delightful among them being the Patchwork Girl herself, though we must not forget Ojo and his Unc Nunkie, who journeyed to the Munchkin Country and there met with such wonderful adventures.

The book is made gorgeous with coloured illustrations and a great many sketches in black and white. For the child who has never lived in the Land of Oz, which exists between the covers of Mr. Baum's delightful books of fairy tales, "The



An Illustration from "The Wilderness Castaways," a Story for Boys, by Dillon Wallace.

Patchwork Girl of Oz" will be a joy; for the child who has travelled there with Dorothy and all the other fairy people, the reading of this book will be a new journey of delight.

For the small person a new and charming edition of the old Mother Goose Nursery rhymes has been published, beautifully illustrated in colour, and in black and white by the famous English illustrator, Arthur Rackham. It is called "The Arthur Rackham Mother Goose." (McClelland and Goodchild, Toronto.)

A picture book for very small people is called "Bunnykins," by Grace G. Drayton. (Copp, Clark Co. Toronto.) The rhymes are simple and easily memorized, and children will delight in the quaint sketches of the Bunny family and their queer adventures. The cover is very attractive, and shows a round-eyed baby bunny dressed in a little Red Riding Hood cape, with cunning brown shoes and blue stockings and a carrot in his chubby hand.

Further adventures of the Brownies, those jolly little people invented by the clever brain of Palmer Cox, will be found in his new book called "The Brownies' Many More Nights." (McClelland and Goodchild, Toronto.) It is the latest and best of his popular stories of these little people.

Canadian Fiction of a Year

By HUGH S. EAYRS

SINCE the last Book Number of the CANADIAN COURIER was issued, a year ago, many new books have been published in Canada, and have found favour with the reading public of the Dominion, which is, no matter how the contrary is urged, a country that reads and reads hard. Old and familiar names have gained fresh lustre and earned new laurels; new and unknown names have come into prominence as the names of authors of first books worth while, whose second book will be awaited with interest, often with eagerness. As the years go by, the Canadian contribution to the fiction of the world grows in quality and in size. Moreover, this year's Canadian novels, save in one

or two cases, are the production of well educated men and women, which goes to knock on the head the criticism of some people that we in Canada are too busy looking after the almighty dollar to give education its proper place.

IN many ways the novel of the year by a Canadian writer was Sir Gilbert Parker's book, "The Judgment House." This was published in Canada by the Copp, Clark Company, and had a big sale in the Dominion. It is not unnatural that so distinguished an author should have created his public

in England, too—where, bye-the-bye, Sir Gilbert lives—and the sale over the water was immense. On all hands "The Judgment House" was claimed as a great novel. The story deals with three men and one woman. The three men were in love with the one woman. The mysterious death of one lover is the reason why each of those remaining tries to saddle the other with the crime, and eventually the two men—and the woman—go out to South Africa, the two men with their regiments and the woman in the uniform of a nurse. The features of the book are the superb character delineation and able and colourful description of South Africa in its most spectacular history. The book is a book to