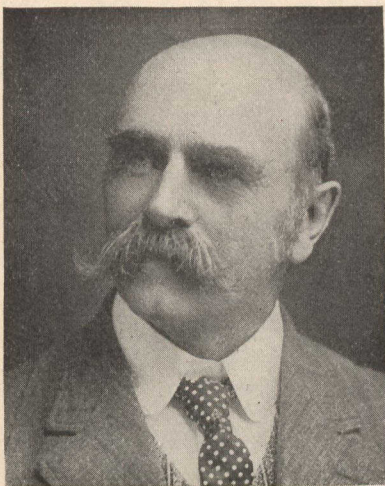




Mr. Walter R. Mursey,
Author of "Life of Brock."



Mr. Arthur Johnston,
Author of "Myths and Facts of the American Revolution."



Mr. J. W. Tyrrell, Explorer,
Author of "Across the Sub-Arctics."



Mr. Robt. J. C. Stead,
Author of "The Empire Builders."

CANADIAN BOOKS OF THE YEAR



BOOKS about Canada and books by Canadians are fairly numerous this year. Our scholars have been exceedingly active and many historical works of considerable value have been added to the rapidly growing list of works of this character. Canadian novelists have not been quite so

active, and there are no new stories by Parker, Fraser or Ralph Connor. The poets have given us a rather large supply, but the average of the work is not high.

It is impossible in one article to give a comprehensive comparison and review of all the new books, but the following notes and lists will give any prospective book buyer a rough and ready guide to the publications of 1908. There is no mention of any work not related to Canada in some way, nor is their any mention of the publications of societies or governments.

The essay, as a form of literary art, has been somewhat neglected in late years, but there are two recent collections of this class by Canadians which are delightful in style and treatment. Dr. William Osler in "An Alabama Student and other Biographical Essays" (Henry Frowde) has given us a volume, rich in the result of scientific research and polished with a literary care such as few modern writers bestow. "Dull would he be of soul" who would not find within the covers of this book such chronicle of high endeavor and sacrifice in the cause of distressed humanity, told with a master's restraint, as makes a book to be read more than once—even in an age of many books. Mr. Bliss Carman in "The Making of Personality," (L. C. Page & Co.), turns prose writer, although the poet nature is infused into these chapters which deal lightly yet discriminatingly with the graces and growths of life. This work is a suitable companion to the author's "The Kinship of Nature."

In that interesting series, "A Historical Geography of the British Colonies," edited by Sir C. P. Lucas, K. C. M. G., the second part of the fifth volume, dealing with the history of Canada, by Hugh E. Egerton, has just been published, with ten maps. The first part, treating of New France, was published several years ago and the present publication brings the record down to "The Dominion of To-Day."

In "The Tercentenary History of Canada," from Champlain to Laurier, by F. Basil Tracy, we have at last a definitive history of Canada told in a very graphic and impartial manner. It has long been deplored of course that Parkman in his many volumes only touches on parts of Canadian history, and stops before the really important part of our history commences. It is possible that owing to the author's absence from Canada for some years, he has been able to write in such an impartial a manner.

In style, literary finish, and broad conception, Mr. Doughty's book on Quebec excels all other works which have been issued to mark the Tercentenary year. "The Cradle of New France" is an excellent title. The dedication to Lord Grey is a suitable tribute to the man most responsible for the success of the national portion of the celebration. The colored illustrations, the two chronolo-

gies, and the excellent folding map add something to a well written story. The main portion of the book is much shorter than the more elaborate history to be found in "Quebec under Two Flags," by Messrs. Doughty and Dionne, published in 1903. The briefer story makes it more suitable for the general reader. (Cambridge Corporation, Montreal).

The publishing of the last volumes in the "Makers of Canada" series brings to a close one of the most notable, perhaps the greatest effort in the history of Canadian publishing. Mr. Morang may not have made much more profit in his venture than was made in England in publishing the "Dictionary of National Biography," but he has certainly made for himself a niche in the Canadian temple of fame. To publish twenty volumes of Canadian biography, covering an historical period of three hundred years, and to do this publishing in a country where there are few writers of books and even fewer buyers, was a task which only a sublime optimist would attempt. Mr. Morang is deserving of much praise for his courage, his patriotism and his unselfish efforts on behalf of Canadian publishing. True, his editorial board might have been better chosen, and the books might easily have been made more popular, but these are matters of opinion and judgment. The work is done; it is one of the most notable publishing events in our annals—and that is sufficient.

In "The Canadian Manor, and Its Seigneurs" Professor Wrong has performed a praiseworthy service. It once more reminds us of the wealth of historical material that must be available to Canadian writers, more especially since the better organization of the archives at Ottawa and in some of the provinces. The ramifications and diverse interests which the manor at Murray Bay has been found to possess is the surprising feature of Professor Wrong's book. It has an added interest since it gives side lights on the American Revolution, and the War of 1812 as affecting the people of Canada at those times. Not the least valuable part of the book are the concluding chapters which are devoted to an illuminating discussion and exposition of French-Canadian life.

Travel and discovery are dear to the Canadian, whose continent-wide Dominion has a map which is but half unrolled. Mr. Lawrence Burpee tells in graphic fashion in the volume, "In Search of the Western Sea," the story of the early adventurers and explorers, while "Through the Mackenzie Basin," by Charles Mair, is a work of decided historic and geographic value. We have been accustomed to think of Canada as the land of Great Lakes, but the story of northern and western exploration brings home to the dweller on the lake shore that Canada's rivers are mighty streams with a history sparkling with hardy adventure. Mrs. Leonidas Hubbard, a Canadian woman who has recently become the wife of Mr. Ellis, has written an account of her completion of her first husband's explorations in the Nascaupsee regions of Labrador. The book, "A Woman's Way Through Unknown Labrador," has been most favorably received, both in this country and in England, giving, as it does, a simple account of a journey through part of the Barren Lands. Miss Agnes Laut, who has devoted so much attention to the Canada of the past, has written "The Conquest of the Great North-West,"

a worthy successor to "The Vikings of the Pacific."

Just why any publisher should issue two books by different authors in one set of covers, it is difficult to understand. Why the account of a treaty and its negotiations should be combined with a book on mammals and birds is equally mysterious. Yet this is just what has been done in the case of the volume entitled "Through the Mackenzie Basin," which also contains 250 extra pages devoted to "Notes on the Mammals and Birds of Northern Canada." The combination makes the book bulky and unsuitable for many readers. Two volumes would have been more profitable and more suitable. This feature does not detract, however, from the praise which should be given to each of the two writers. The expedition, which Mr. Mair describes, occurred in 1899, and its history might have been given to the public at an earlier date. Yet if it had never been given, Canadian literature would have lacked the interesting story of a unique and almost romantic expedition. The second part of the book is almost purely scientific, and should have been published separately. It represents the work of many years on the part of an observant Hudson's Bay company factor.

The well known Canadian explorer, Mr. J. W. Tyrrell, C.E., has just returned from a trip through the northern part of Manitoba, where he has been on a survey trip of an extensive character. Mr. Tyrrell arrives from the north just in time to see the new edition of his book "Across the Sub-Arctics," come from the press. His publisher, Mr. William Briggs, has had this new edition in preparation for some time, and it will contain a large number of new illustrations. Mr. Tyrrell has added two new chapters which will be of considerable interest, one on the subject of the new sea route to Europe via Hudson's Bay, and the other on the subject of musk-ox hunting. Mr. Tyrrell is an enthusiastic believer in the possibilities of this new sea route, and has by practical observation come to the conclusion that the plan is perfectly feasible. In conversation Mr. Tyrrell almost invariably speaks of Fort Churchill as the coming Liverpool of America.

The modern publication deals with the latest conditions in the newest mining camps. Hence one is not at all surprised to find "Trails and Tales in Cobalt" by Mr. W. H. P. Jarvis in the forefront, while Mr. Anson A. Gard contributes to the accounts of that district in a work bearing the reassuring title, "The Real Cobalt." The literary man usually finds a vein of "copy" wherever there has been a streak of silver.

Among the reminiscent works of the year, none is more charming than "Sixty Years in Upper Canada" by Col. Charles Clarke, late clerk of the Legislature of Ontario. It describes in a chatty way, the chief political events and personages of the last sixty years. The days of open voting previous to 1874, when the ballot was introduced, were stirring days and the men who fought the political battles were brave men—"Coon" Cameron, John Sandfield Macdonald, D'Arcy McGee, Hon. R. W. Scott, Edward Blake, and others almost equally famous. It is a charming work, partly history, partly biography, partly reminiscence, but always sprightly. (Wm. Briggs, Toronto).

A six-volume work, entitled "Little Masterpieces of Autobiography," which has been edited