

CHAT ABOUT BOOKS.

Some Things Which Canadian Authors Have Contributed To Literature.

TO whatever influence we may ascribe it, there can be no question that a great development has occurred in Canadian literature during the past few years, and likewise a great development in Canadian publishing. Only a few years ago there were comparatively few who aspired to the dignity of being authors, and there were not many publishing houses to buy their work and publish it. To-day we have not only a large number of writers, but a large number of good writers, and there are several publishers who turn out very creditable work. The chief influences have probably been the spread of education and the growth of prosperity.

A new Canadian author is Mr. Knox Magee, who has written a stirring historical romance, "With Ring of Shield." Readers are apt to fight shy of a new author, but they will find their confidence repaid in reading this story, it being a tale of the War of the Roses, in which the author gives evidence of more than ordinary talent. The materials are well studied; the work is strong and able.

Gilbert Parker's new book, "The Lane That Had No Turning," is meeting with great success. It is a collection of short stories that have a connecting thread, and display his complete and comprehensive acquaintance with life in the Province of Quebec. This finishes his series of novels on Quebec, so he tells us. The dedication to Sir Wilfred Laurier is a beautiful piece of composition.

Miss Joanna E. Wood, of Queenston, Ont., is an authoress who is better known in the United States and England than in her own country. Her contributions to literature have been chiefly through the magazines, but one story, "A Daughter of the Witches," has recently made its appearance in book form. It was originally published in the Canadian Magazine.

"Mooswa and Others of the Boundaries," by W. A. Fraser, illustrated by Arthur Heming, is a book of imaginative interest and romantic realism. Many are no doubt already acquainted with it. The dramatis personae are denizens of the Canadian forest, and their life is depicted in a fascinating way.

Miss L. Dougall, who is considered by some to be our most distinguished Canadian writer of tales, is the author of "The Mormon Prophet." This book is not very new, and is therefore in all likelihood known to most readers, but those who are unfamiliar with it will find that it is a story of striking interest and power.

THE BLUENOSE. MODERN PAINTERS.

SIR Edwin Henry Landseer was born in London, in 1802. He was the son of John Landseer. The family name has been well represented by artists, there having been six painters and two engravers, all directly connected with the subject of our sketch. Perhaps the most noted of these, after Sir Edwin, was his brother Thomas, a celebrated engraver.

John Landseer began training his children at an early age. At five years Edwin was already a student of drawing. His progress must have been rapid, for at the age of twelve he exhibited a picture at the Royal Academy. He was not, at that time, a student of the Institution, his picture winning acceptance on its merits and as coming from an honorary member. Two years later he entered the school.

Landseer was small in person, and of a generally attractive appearance. In his youth he was the possessor of a bright, witty and agreeable disposition.

A large number of this artist's work have been engraved. In this manner he is represented in all parts of the world. Many of the highest honors of his profession were conferred on him during his life. In 1865 he was offered the presidency of the Royal Academy, but declined it.

During the past sixty years about three hundred of his works have been sold at auction. The following are a few of the highest priced ones:—

"Braemar" sold in 1868 for 4,200 pounds.

"The Lady Godiva's Prayer" sold in 1864 for 3,300 pounds.

"The Deer Family," sold in 1875 for 3,045 pounds.

"Portrait of Sir Walter Scott" sold in 1877 for 3,202 pounds.

"The Otter Hunt" sold in 1877 for 5,932 pounds.

"Well-bred Setters, who never say they are bored," sold in 1884 for 5,250 pounds.

"Man Proposes, God Disposes," sold in 1881 for 6,615 pounds.

"Stag Pursued by Deer-hound" sold in 1881 for 5,250 pounds.

"The Monarch of the Glen," one of his most famous works in the opinion of many people, was sold in 1884 for 6,510 pounds. In 1892 this picture was again sold, when it brought 7,245 pounds, a gain in eight years of 735 pounds. Many other pictures of his, sold at various auctions, realized from 1,000 to 4,000 pounds.

The death of the artist occurred in London, October 1st, 1873.

J. A. JOHNSON.

NOT AN ENCOURAGING BEGINNING. From Fliengende Blaetter.

A young doctor has waited long for his first patient, and at last is rejoiced to find a sick man at his office.

"Well, my good man, what is troubling you?" asks the doctor.

"I wanted to ask," said the sick man, "if you can tell me the address of your predecessor."

A DEPARTMENT OF IRRITATION.

A. McP. Gets After the General Public With a Long Pole Once More.

If a gang of ruffians caught the children in the city every morning at nine o'clock as they were entering the school-house door and throttled each one for a few seconds, what a stir there would be! Such an outrage could not happen more than once. We parents would turn out in a body and scour the villains from the earth. Hanging would be too good for them, and we should have recourse to the methods of Judge Lynch, in the Southern States.

And yet a little choking would not inflict a tenth part of the injury upon the school children that our present system of daylong slow stifling entails. Some day there will arise a race of architects who know how to put up schools in which children shall not breathe over and over again the same dirty, used-up air. Some day there will be a race of ratepayers wise enough to insist on their money being spent for the benefit of the coming race, their own children. In the meantime, we people of Halifax tax ourselves thousands of dollars each year to provide amusement for shoals of strangers, to give horses a place to run in, and allow our children to be herded in rooms where they cannot get clean air to breathe. We are a wise people. So many thousands every year to improve the breed of cattle, of horses, to give us better orchards, and nobody cares whether the breed of men improves or runs out.

How many schools are there in this city which have been built with any regard for the supply of fresh air? How many are there in which there is the regulation air space for each pupil? How many school-rooms are there in which there are no more pupils than one teacher should be required to look after? To answer these questions, let the Hall-gonian who pays taxes and sends his children to school, take half an hour from business some day, just to understand the conditions under which his children must spend most of their daylight. Let him go, not at the time of examinations and addresses in the summer, but in the winter, when the furnaces are going and the windows are shut (and must be kept shut), and he finds Johnnie or Mary in a room that was built for forty children and holds fifty-five.

The most severe reflection on our intelligence, as a city, is the very cap-sheaf of our school system, the County Academy. Built in a slum, without a vestige of a playground, and vilely overcrowded, it is about as complete a machine for undermining the health of our children as could be devised.

Whose fault is it? The supervisor protests year after year in his reports, which nobody reads, against the state of things. Every teacher knows what is wrong and who is to blame. Everyone is to blame. You are to blame and I am to blame. It is time for a change.

A. MCP.