

noted; conclusions guessed at; and the whole thing tied up definitely in a few pregnant phrases. Not so with this arcanum of knowledge. Like Life itself, it must be grappled with; perhaps absorbed, as the infant Hercules strangled the serpent that threatened his cradle. We must each for one's self find the answer.

For example, take the question of "poles." Turn to page 156 and you have "poles—hoop, hop, telegraph, and other." You will find that from 1908 to 1912 the exports have decreased from \$161,424 to \$74,190, or over 50 per cent. "Grindstones" in the same period have been, as the markets say, "steady," just a variation of 20 comparing 1908 with 1912. Stuff—what interest is that, do you say? Consider, now, if one is a pole-producer, and there must be many such; or perhaps the owner of a grindstone quarry. There is the question of railway freights and tariff walls, and the rising cement industry as affecting poles. Also the increased difficulty of procuring and marketing same. Any human endeavour there? Any human interest, as philosopher Bridle remarks? Any puzzling brains, perhaps business failures with heartbreak and loss? Yes, verily, all those sorts of things.

**A** GAIN, take "explosives and fulminates n.o.s." They diminished from \$223,900 in 1908 to \$56,385 in 1912. What tremendous energy in that item? What bearing think you, household philosopher, will this have on international peace? O dilettante, if you come in some measure to think at all of this outstanding fact in our national life—will it not be because you read it in a *Globe* peace editorial only this morning? So we could go through 1,999 other items and draw conclusions—but we leave something to the reader. Here he can get the facts as imports or exports, for and against, coming and going, right side up and upside down, in years and decades, in quantities, parts and values, n.o.p., n.o.s., *ad val.* and *et al.*

Should the foregoing lines not be attractive, there are plenty of others in which the reader may wallow, so to speak. Perhaps one may be a social reformer. How is this? "Annual consumption of beer per head, 1869 to 1912," on page 375. Think only of the difficulty of obtaining the facts—ye who write books out of your heads, or make speeches, buy and sell for gain and all that and nobody to question. Off hats to Archibald Blue and Hon. George Eulas Foster. Or one may be a politician. Under "Defence—Naval Service," page 455, we have a succinct statement of the Laurier and Borden policies. Two pages of pica type tell the story. What a historian is our author. Think of the Great Flood of 1913 (oratory) on the subject. The Hon. Minister does

not explain his alleged change of front since 1909. Forced we are to believe that the historian has strangled the parliamentarian. How sententious and settling seems the little phrase at the end—"the Bill consequently failed of enactment." Truth, what a mighty weapon. Conscience, what a wonderful monitor thou art! Out of the storm-winged capitol at Ottawa comes the still small voice, exponent of the country—"the bill failed." No apologies, few reasons, but—for the People—in their



Mrs. Frances Hodgson Burnett Who, Years Ago, Endeared Herself to Many Through "Little Lord Fauntleroy," and Who Has Written "T. Tembarom," One of the Big Successes of the Year.

Year Book—the absolute truth!

Take, again, the record of the Dominion Ministries since 1867. Let us look at the 6th ministry. "Premier Hon. Sir Mackenzie Bowell: Took office Dec. 21, 1894." Now read the foot-note—"In Jan., 1896, several members of the cabinet resigned, and on the fifteenth of the month it was reorganized with four new members." Here is an example of the Muse of history dealing out the Facts, but oh what poor, small, lame, unmeaning things they may become when stripped of the warm atmosphere which vivified them in the minds of our fellow-countrymen. Any vaulting ambition, any heart breaks, any classic phrases born in the events of that fortnight? Yea, truly! And yet we have had

History—impartial history, too—by a valiant fighter of those days!

Getting any ideas that a Year Book has imagination, fancy and romance in it? Why, the smallest item reveals hints of struggle, or promises of victory. The book is the "book of the year" in our opinion. It is Life. Indeed it possesses the element of certainty that every-day life holds in hazard. Who would think of disputing, or even checking, a statement by Blue? 'Tis absurd. That way madness lies. When we read the tables of export and import we feel the thrill of millions. What boy will not read with regret that whilst in 1910 the number of whales marketed was 958, it dropped down to nothing in 1912. If he has read Ballantyne he will blubber at the news. We note the Methodist increase of 17.78 per cent., against the Mormon increase of 131.77 per cent. And we cannot but ask, Why?

**T**HEN, by the way, note the literary interest. Names, more than figures, yield romance. Isaac Taylor and Bishop Trench would have simply danced a hornpipe over the Year Book. It abounds in the picturesque. Look on, say, page 68, "The bait used is chiefly herring, squid and capelin; and the fish principally taken are cod, haddock, hake, pollock and halibut. The means of capture employed by boat fishermen are gill-nets, hooks and lines, both hand line and trawl; and from the shore are operated trap-nets, haul seines and weirs. The commercial food fishes are the cod, hake, haddock, pollock, halibut, herring, mackerel, alewife, shad, smelt, flounder and sardine." A Kipling reads this and straightway writes another "Captains Courageous." Think, too, of the romance back of these names, at random—of Quebec, Hochelaga, Maisonneuve, of Terrebonne and Soulanges. What transpires, say, at Chilliwack? Comox-Atlin—it has the sound of Bow Bells. There are a hundred pages of historic stimulus in the book.

Judged by all standards, the book is a great one. We learn that the authors are contemplating a ripping sequel with nearly the same plot and characters next year. If so, it may be assumed that the output will be enormous. There is literally no end to a literary career based as this one is. It is practically continuous. Take, too, the matter of illustrations. No book in recent years is so correctly illustrated. The drawings are perfect. The reason is that they are "drawn to scale." Think of what this means. But we must hasten on.

As we were saying, the central theme of the book must be developed. In about four columns—

[Editor CANADIAN COURIER: No, not a paragraph more. This is a review, not a—]

[Author: Very well; we shall then simply have to wait for the sequel.]

## The Year in French-Canadian Literature

By BERNARD MUDDIMAN

Maurice River. We meet a young French Vicomte, Jacques, who is turning the globe with an artistic friend, Gilbert. When the story opens they are in



Hector J. Bernier, a Coming Man Among French-Canadian Novelists. He is the Author of "Ce Que Disait la Flamme" and "Au Large de L'Ecueil."

the village of St. Jacques des Grandes Piles, on the banks of the St. Maurice River in Quebec. Here he meets Marie-Anna Cartier, a French-Canadian girl, on whom he tries the art of flirtation to no better purpose than falling seriously in love

with her. So serious is he, in fact, that, a child of sunny Normandy, he decides to endure a Quebec winter to be near her.

In such little points as this Floris Bluther, in his charming, witty French way, pokes fun at us. But behind his book there is a deeper message. "Les Canadiennes ne savent pas aimer," cries the Vicomte, when he finds all his arts cannot conquer Marie-Anna like a French girl. And she replies: "Oh, vous, vous trompez, monsieur! . . . Elles savent aimer, au contraire, mais d'une manière différente, peut-être, de celle des jeunes filles de votre pays." But just when our gallant Vicomte has subdued the delightful Canadienne girl, he is called home to France to attend a great family wedding. Yet, before he goes, he sings that sweet old "chanson d'adieu":

"Je vais revoir ma Normandie  
C'est le pays qui m'a donné le jour . . ."

But the course of true love cannot be allowed to run smooth in a novel that is only half done. When the Comte and Comtesse in France hear with whom he has fallen in love, their aristocratic souls are up in arms; while the parents of Marie-Anna quite recognize the impossibility of the match. They want their daughter to marry a small, silent, young French-Canadian, who is going out into the world to butcher people as a doctor, but who has played with her in childish days. The Vicomte writes his Canadienne letters, which she answers; but, as time goes on, her letters grow more distant and shorter. He is distracted. Her family are winning her over to the doctor idea. He must return to Canada and win her. Finally he forces his parents' hands and is allowed to go. Arriving, he finds the newly-made doctor engaged to her. He persists

**T**HE present year of grace in French Canada has not been remarkable for any new discoveries. The world of letters in Quebec has not been startled by any new genius or school suddenly springing a mine under their decidedly clerical feet. For the moment the influence from Paris, that which inspired the literary movement of the Chateau de Ramezay, is not very vital; but there is no doubt that it is working in secret and leavening a great deal of the crudity of the native authors.

In this year's output of French-Canadian books, the most interesting features for students of belles-lettres are two novels. Unlike so many of the Canadian novels issued in English, that deal with our romantic past or the far northland of white snows, both these French-Canadian works are novels of manners. They deal with contemporary life in Quebec along the St. Lawrence, and, though they thus lose perhaps a certain fictitious charm, they are far more valuable than the average English-Canadian work as documents from our life.

The first of these is "Marie-Anna La Canadienne," a novel written in a good and easy style by Floris Bluther. It is the author's first work. The writer's real name is Monsieur Francois Baboulene, one of the Professeurs aux Hautes Etudes Commerciales at Montreal. He is an old country Frenchman, which explains the wit and ease of the book. You are never bored. There is nothing stilted about the sentences. They run along like well-trained carriage horses with a smooth action. As a rule, a French-Canadian novel makes me sleep owing to its cumbersome style, its aping culture, its wearisome reiteration. But you will enjoy "Marie-Anna." You will read it for its love story and its picture of the country of the St.