

## BOOK REVIEWS By J. C. Martin, K. C.

TO EFFECT AN ARREST, by Harwood Steele. The Ryerson Press, Toronto. Pp. 311. \$3.50.

Lt.-Col. Harwood Steele, M.C., F.R.G.S., is a son of one of the original and most distinguished members of this Force, and through that fact as well as by personal inclination has been its friend throughout his life. His book is a collection of short stories and its sub-title, "Adventures of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police", tells the nature of them.

The stories are well-constructed and well-written, with action and suspense a-plenty, and sometimes with humour. The setting is genuine, for the author knows the country of which he writes, and occasional touches lend verisimilitude to the stories—for example, there is no lack of famous names in the roster of the Force, and more than once an ex-member has exchanged the red serge for clerical garb.

Lieutenant-Colonel Steele says in a foreword that the stories deal with fact in the form of fiction, and in some of their incidents no doubt they will remind different readers of different cases. "The Boundary Line" is reminiscent of Bill Miner and his gang of train robbers, "Storm Child" recalls the case of Almighty Voice whom it mentions, "The Cat Comes Back" will remind some readers of the case of Larry Lett and the Idaho Kid. Nevertheless the stories should be read, not as factual accounts of actual cases, but as fiction in the same sense that Ralph Connor's novel *Corporal Cameron* is fiction with a Mounted Policeman as hero.

The book has a fault of over-emphasis. The tradition and teaching of the Force set a high standard, but the Mounted Policeman does not, nor did he ever, wish to be regarded as combining the best qualities of Sir Galahad, Richard Coeur de Lion and the Admirable Crichton.

CANADA MOVES NORTH, by Richard Finnie. The Macmillan Co. of Canada Ltd., Toronto. Illustrated. Pp. 226. \$3.

This is a new edition of a book published in 1942. Its author was born in the Yukon, the son of a former Administrator of the Northwest Territories. He writes not only with enthusiasm but with authority, for to his early experience of life in Northern

Canada he has added a great deal of travel and research. The book is excellent, comprehensive yet concise, and it is written in a pleasing style in which there is no straining for effect.

While the book is primarily an account of the history, geography and present state of development of Canada's northland, Mr. Finnie neither overlooks nor neglects the strategic importance of the area and the need for defensive precautions in the troubled state of world politics which now exists. Neither does he hesitate to discuss a subject because it is likely to arouse controversy. Thus, he criticizes the missionaries and expresses doubt that the white man's civilization has been of much benefit to the Northern Indians and the Eskimos. Again, he is critical of the attitude which governments, of whatever political faith, have taken toward the development of the North, although in this respect he softens his comments by saying in his postscript (dated September, 1947) that "The attitude of the Government towards social problems in the North seems to be undergoing a change, and some of the policies so earnestly advocated in this book are at last being given serious consideration".

The author's greatest enthusiasm is for the potentialities of the North. It has everything—minerals, including oil, for the recovery, power for the harnessing, fish and fur for the catching. It has everything, that is to say, except climate. On this point he is on ground which is at least debatable when he quotes with approval an opinion that the climate in Northern Canada presents difficulties no more insuperable than the Lake Superior region. One is reminded that, in his *Study of History*, Professor Toynbee makes the point that the greatest contributions to civilization have come from the hard countries, but he adds that even the hardy peoples have sometimes come up against conditions which were too much for them. The Vikings, for example, could cope with the conditions which they found in Iceland, but not with those which confronted them in Greenland.

The same point arises with regard to Northern Canada. Indeed, Mr. Finnie himself, in some interesting comments on the voyages of the *St. Roch*, says that "They only demonstrated what had long been