

Books And Their Authors

A BOOK OF CANADIAN PROSE AND VERSE

Compiled and Edited by Edmund Kemper Broadus and Eleanor Hammond Broadus. Macmillan, \$2.50.

There are plenty of Canadian anthologies, most of them confined to verse, and most of them also the result of personal taste rather than of any definite standard of critical judgment. There was however an undeniable need for a book of selections, containing both prose and verse, picked in accordance with a well-formed and professional rather than personal taste, and accompanied by a moderate amount of criticism and valuation in which patriotic sentiment should not outweigh honesty. The Broadus volume, which, until something much better succeeds it, should certainly be adopted for use in all school and college courses in Canadian literature and should be kept under hand by anybody who wants a reasonably broad acquaintance with that literature, is the work of one who for a number of years has held a chair of English in a Canadian university, who is American by birth and has devoted much time to sympathetic and keen research in the best fields of classic English literature; and he has been materially assisted by his wife. The result is an unprecedentedly representative and meritorious collection of extracts. Nor have we any objection to raise to the principle of selecting only work which affords some contribution to "a picture of Canadian life, past and present." The main business of Canadian writers, as Canadians, is to depict that life; the best work of Canadians has been done in depicting it; and while some good work is thus excluded, it is only the least Canadian of the work done by our authors. The biographical and critical notes are brief but of good quality. Oratory, a vital part of the literary effort of a people engaged as Canadians have been for some generations in the settlement of constitutional problems, but not hitherto recognized in such collections, occupies nearly a fifth of the volume.

THE CHILD'S HOUSE.

By Marjory MacMurchy. Macmillan, Price \$1.75.

Children are amusing things. It is possible to write about them in other ways; to depict their (supposedly) frightful sufferings as nature and society roll out their idiosyncrasies and make them exactly like everybody else; to show them as nasty little brats chiefly occupied with the mysteries of sex; to paint them as the congenial enemies of the adult, and especially of their parents, pastors and masters. But it is best to treat them, as everybody would like to treat them if only they would let us, as amusing things, a superior kind of pet animal, with more surprising kinks of character and more capacity for learning (especially what they are not wanted to learn) than a parrot or a monkey. This is how Booth Tarkington treats them, and Miss MacMurchy, dealing with a damsel of eight to fourteen, in the person of Vanessa Brown, makes her one of the most amusing infants in Canadian literature. When she grows up Vanessa ought to marry one of Mazo de la Roche's "Explorers of the Dawn,"

thus providing a new literary infant for the next generation of Canadian readers.

MY LADY PAIR.

By Louis Hemon. Macmillan, Toronto, Price \$2.

Early short stories, mainly of London East End life, by the author of "Marie Chappelaine." Interesting to the student of literary development, these tales are too imitative and juvenile to make any addition to the fame of the ill-fated writer who immortalized himself and the Lake St. John "habitants" just before he died. He seems to have been a good deal influenced by Mr. Burke and other "Limehouse" authors, and he reads into his East-enders a good many rather French characteristics which would greatly astonish the people whom he is trying to portray. Technically the stories are clever and professional, with the facility of the industrious student of de Maupassant.

A KING'S DAUGHTER.

A Tragedy in Verse, by John Masefield. Macmillan, Toronto, \$1.50.

Mr. Masefield appears to enjoy himself in these rather fluent re-writings of ancient narratives in the form of blank-verse drama, and as it evidently does not take much time, and he gets a good sale for them on the strength of his more genuine poetical work, perhaps nobody need complain. The play isactable, and no harm would be done to the stage by its being acted.

CRUCIBLES OF CRIME.

By Joseph F. Fishman. The Cosmopolis Press, New York. Price, \$2.00.

It is claimed for this book of Mr. Fishman's that it has been more widely reviewed and discussed since its appearance than any book published in the past ten years. That is great praise, indeed, but a careful reading of the book reveals sufficient reason for understanding the statement. What Dickens did to expose crime and barbarous punishment in England, Fishman has done in this book for the United States. Details surpassing anything that Dickens or Reade had to allege against earlier places of confinement in England and related as existing, and enough particulars are given of dozens of American jails to demonstrate the existence of a nation-wide scandal. The author writes in a manner that leaves no doubt that he knows what he is talking about and the pictures he visibly paints are convincing. Mr. Fishman discusses the jail from every angle and proves his points with data obtained first hand from all parts of the United States. He presents a remedy for the situation which is feasible and sound. The reader cannot avoid the conclusion that present day jail administration is vicious and inhumane, that it possesses few elements to check and correct, but on the contrary actually stimulates the criminal instincts of the hardened, and provides wretched pest houses where first offenders get new germs. Here is a subject that is much to the fore at the present time, in Canada as well as the United States. When students and leaders are directing thought and effort to the correction of errors responsible for lawlessness

and crime, and the author's treatment will appeal to that large number enlisted in the movement to improve prison conditions. It is a volume that makes the reader think.

Canadians, who had the privilege of listening to any of the addresses recently delivered in this country by Mrs. Ballington Booth, learned something of her long years of work among convicts. Mr. Fishman supplements this information with a multitude of facts that are appalling. The book should do much to arouse in the republic a sentiment that will eventually demand and secure an improvement in prison conditions.

Rod and Gun for January.

The story of an eventual canoeing trip is told in the January issue of Rod and Gun in Canada by Frosty Snow in "With Paddle and Fish Pole in Quebec." There is also a good description of a moose hunt on the Athabasca river by H. K. Henry, while F. V. Williams vividly describes a tragedy of wild life as unfolded by tracks in the snow, in his story "As Told in the Snow." A. A. Haines, who is an authority on hunting knives has a well illustrated article dealing with the various makes of hunting knives together with his opinion of them. After trying for twenty-three years Bonnycastle Dale has finally taken a splendid photograph of the Red Breasted Merganser, and his description of the life and habits of this bird is of interest to all. Guns and Ammunition is particularly well stocked with interesting articles as well as the questions and difficulties of sportsmen, answered by C. S. Landis, while Fishing Notes, Along the Trapline, Outdoor Talk, and other departments are filled with fine articles by specialists.

The January issue opens the first number of the new year with articles on canoeing, fishing, moose hunting, ski-ing, hunting knives, nature studies, guns and ammunition, trapping, kennel interests and a host of other subjects.

The House of Macmillan.

An attractive little volume, bound in black and orange, has come to us as a souvenir of Canadian Book week. It is the story of that well-known publishing house. The Macmillan Company of Canada, Limited, a story read with pleasure by those interested in Canadian literature. The company came into being in December, 1905. Its first officers were: President, Frank Wise; secretary, William Whitney; board of directors, Mr. (now Sir) Frederick Macmillan, George Augustus Macmillan, George Platt Brett and Robert L. Johnston. In 1912 the company obtained the control of the Morang Educational Company, Ltd., and merged the two companies under the name of The Macmillan Company of Canada, Limited. In 1921 Hugh S. Eayrs became president and his post as secretary was filled by Robert Huckvale. The Macmillan Company of Canada is a descendant of one of the oldest publishing houses of Britain, and the frontispiece shows the headquarters of the parent company, Macmillan and Company, Limited, St. Martin's House, London, Eng. The Macmillan Company of New York is also an allied house, and a cut of the illustrations. A cut of Sir Frederick Macmillan and of the president of the Canadian company, Hugh S. Eayrs, are also among the attractions of this book. The names and a short account of their work, with in most cases a picture of the author, of the writers whose books have been published by the Canadian house, is contained in "A Canadian Publishing House." The Macmillan Company of Canada seeks for the best and publishes only the work of Canadian writers that can measure up to British and continental standards, feeling that in this way alone can a Canadian national literature of real value be built up.

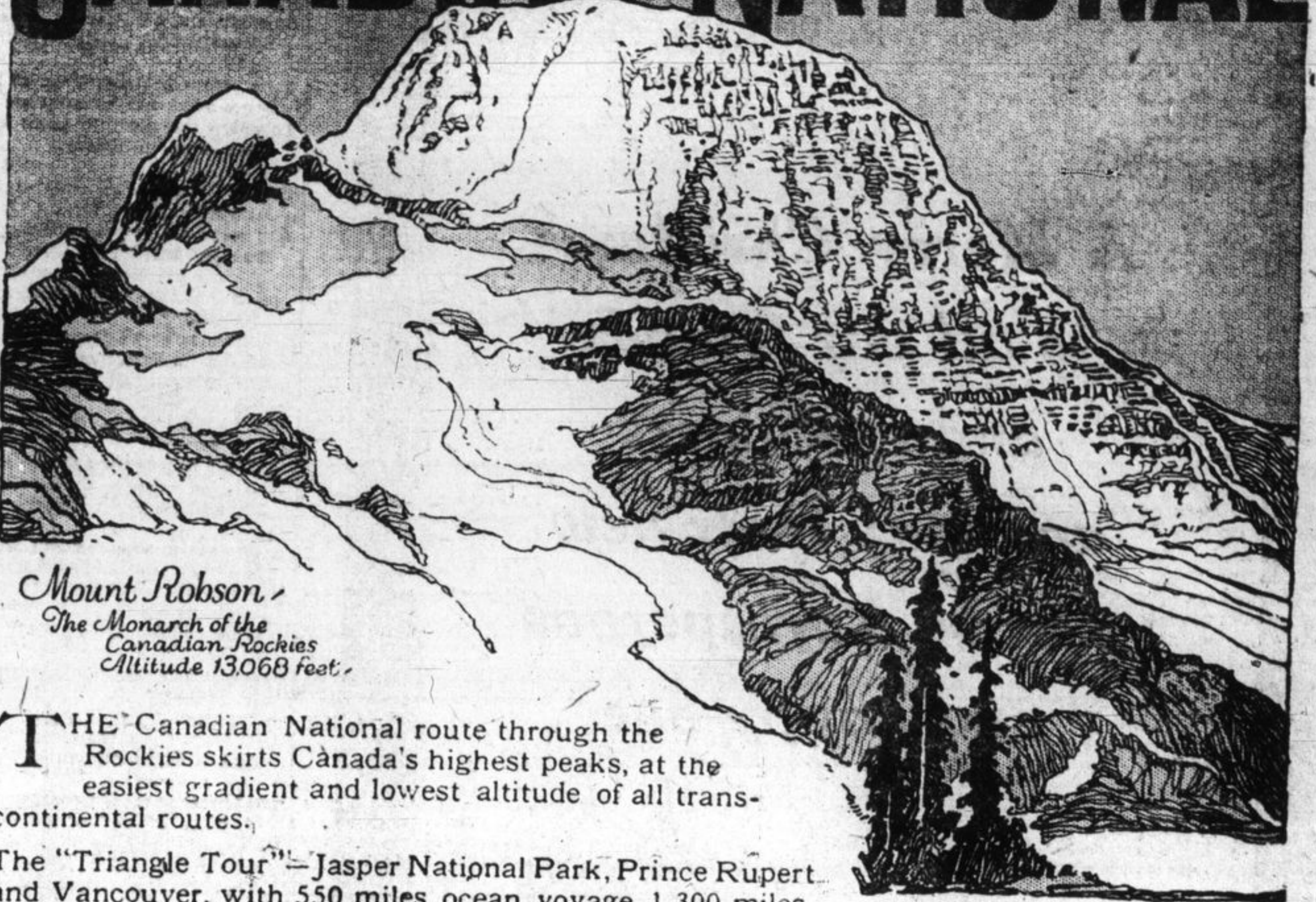
Titled Publication.

The notable case of the late Sir Henry Echlin ought to dispose of the old canard about Scottish parsimony. A succession of three hopelessly spendthrift baronets reduced the rich patrimony of the Echlins, one of the oldest and once among the richest families in Scotland, so that the eighth baronet, whose death occurred the other day, kept a small cider tavern down in the rural wilds of Haddenham. Local tipplers used to take a delight in ordering "Another pint, Sir Henry." It lent solace to the amenity of the tap-room. There is one noble house, associated with the West Country whose estates were heavily mortgaged through a sporting fever, who gambled away thousands on racing spiders along a window shutter. The present holder of that title is married very happily to a former musical comedy star.

Contributory Negligence.

"That cut was caused by her ring, your honor. She struck me in the face with her clenched fist," complained the young husband. "Where did she get the ring?" questioned the magistrate. "I gave it to her. It was our engagement ring." "The prisoner is discharged. This is clearly a case of contributory negligence," returned the judge.

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