

piece on Canadian poetry (which is also highly entertaining and is at least worth disagreeing with). There is a nice list of guerilla theatre tactics that one can perform on behalf of Canadian books. In addition, however uneven and unco-ordinated and repetitious and ignorant one finds the reading lists, almost everyone who persists in going through them will face some pleasant surprises or learn of good books he didn't know existed. In a larger piece on what's wrong with *Read Canadian* (to appear in the next issue of *Tamarack*), I have included a far-from-complete catalogue of the best Canadian books and writers omitted by this book, a list rather too long to include in this review.

Read Canadian consists, basically, of a pleasant, lightly disarming introduction by Robert Fulford, which really doesn't excuse what follows; 207 pages on *some* of the social sciences and *some* parts of Canadian history; a 53-page section called "Literature and The Arts" (sadly unbalanced within itself and also *vis-à-vis* the rest of the book); and an essay on Canadian publishers, which omits the names of several Canadian houses.

The omissions in subject matter are so numerous, however, that at least some of them must be mentioned here. There are no sections at all on such particularly vital subjects in the Canadian experience as war, religion, business, biography, natural history, popular fiction, travel, medicine, technology and inventions, transportation, anthropology, and ethnic groups. And almost *none* of the books on these topics are covered in other categories. There are also no sections on science; philosophy; psychology; film; music; folklore; social, intellectual and cultural history; sports; fashions, etc., etc., while space is being squandered elsewhere in the book on lists that are either badly organized, repetitious, unimaginative, or all three.

The most inexcusable gap is the lack of any section on general books about Canada, e.g. Morton's *Canadian Identity*; or of any section on the most useful anthologies of Canadian writing. I understand that one or two of the editors fought with the publisher for these, but lost.

It is the editor's right and duty, even if he chooses to veto nothing in the

style and content of his writers, at least to act like Bagehot's Queen Victoria; that is, he must expect to warn, to advise and to be informed. The publisher and the editors of *Read Canadian* have failed to exercise these rights and duties. The better essays, such as those by Mel Watkins and Abe Rotstein, presumably got that way thanks to the writers alone, without any help or comment or co-ordination from the editors.

Lest all this sound as if I am criticizing *Read Canadian* for something it does not pretend to be, let me emphasize that I am not looking for a Great Canadian Books program. I do not seek an exhaustive compendium, either literary or academic. Nor a shorter cram list for Canlit 100. Nor a public librarian's Most Beloved Books of 1971, let alone something for the Princess Margaret Rose Chapter of the I.O.D.E. Literary Guild, or the Canadian Authors' Association 20th-century Pantheon. But I do take the editors at their word. They say it is a beginners' and students' and teachers' guide to some of the best and most readable books in the rich fields of Canadian writing. As such it is, on balance, a failure. In its present shape it should never have been published.

At one point in the book, Michael Cross attacks the *Penguin History of Canada*: "Its once-over-lightly approach, sloppiness in detail and lack of any clear viewpoint make it no bargain at even under \$2.00." I can't state what is wrong with *Read Canadian* much better than that.

Unfortunately, it *has* been published and there are 11,000 copies of the damned thing to be dumped somewhere before even the improved second edition promised by the editors can be brought out. So, dear reader, buy it, I guess — especially if it means you'll order a dozen or two of the titles listed in it at some decently Canadian bookstore. But *caveat emptor*, and for Canada's sake, may somebody get to work on a decent book of this sort soon. And at half the length, with a single essay or two — or at double the length — it could, and it must, be done! □

WILLIAM KILBOURN, alderman, civic activist and author, is a professor of history at York University, currently on sabbatical leave.

heard & told

YOUR FRIENDLY LOCAL IBY: International Book Year which, like a Canadian spring, started late and then seemed to amount to nothing, is with us still (officially if intangibly). All sorts of people in the book community claim to have had their projects okayed, including ourselves. We intended to initiate a readers' survey in this issue, which was to provide material for a series of reports on how well you all feel yourselves served by Canada's libraries, bookstores, publishers, and writers. So far the Treasury Board has not got around to releasing the funds for our project or for anybody else's. Trouble may be the appointment as Ambassador to Portugal of M. Roger Duhamel, who has been serving as on-again-off-again chairman of the Secretary of State's IBY committee. His replacement is said to be Mr. Pelletier's most redoubtable pinch hitter in the field of publishing, Ralph Hodgson.

A report in the London *Observer* suggests that the British regard International Book Year as mainly for underdeveloped countries (like us?). One of their few observances of the Year is an exhibition entitled "I Spent Last Night With Lady Chatterley, Let Me Tell You Who Else Did." We offer a book prize for the most appropriate title for a Canadian exhibition along the same lines.

HONOURS LIST: Almost unnoticed by the newspapers, the Canadian Booksellers' Association chose for their IBY Book Award Alice Munro's *Lives of Girls and Women*, published by McGraw-Hill Ryerson. Given the CBA's aim of focussing attention on a book that deserved more popular attention, there could not have been a more appropriate choice. Similarly unnoticed, the Book Promotion and Editorial Club chose as the best-designed and best-produced Canadian books of 1971, Glen Franfurter's *Baneful Domination* and *Parsons On The Plains*, edited by Thomas Bredin; both were published by Longman. Things go better with foreign capital, eh? □ JANUS

CANADIAN PUBLISHERS have become, with no great show of reluctance, our national culture heroes. Their often brief dedication to Canadian literature and scholarship, under assault by foreign invaders and betrayal by quizzing readers and booksellers and librarians, has been coloured from mundane reality into national myth. A much-needed Royal Commission on Book-Publishing, now deliberating in Ontario, has been adopted as their official shrine. Hopefully, when the commissioners make their recommendations later this summer, they will not neglect to include amongst them the recommendations that Canadian publishers return to both their senses and their sources.

The sources of whatever literature we have, and the eternal creditors of publishers, are of course our writers. It

should be superfluous to point out that men of imagination were telling superb stories and expounding brilliant ideas long before they came to write them down. And long before they got printers to print them. And long before they found themselves obliged to submit them to the judgment of publishers. Undoubtedly print publishing has enriched the experience of billions of readers, and has enriched the pockets of millions of printers and publishers; it has even made life slightly less hazardous for some of the world's writers. In Canada, homeland of the ironic, however, certain authors and poets are finding a return to the public recital of their work to small groups more profitable than its publication in book form.

To be fair, the interaction of our inherited economy, our geography and our demography, does make native publishing a tenuous business. That is why it merits the special concern of both federal and provincial governments, why Canadian books so often need support from public funds, and why governments are considering more systematic and far-reaching support of Canadian publishers now. But while the implementation of government policy on book-publishing may represent a welcome step forward for Canadian entrepreneurs, there seems a danger that it may mean at the same time a painful step backward for many Canadian writers.

What prompts misgiving are several demands now being lobbied by the Independent Publishers' Association, the recently-formed trade organization of most Canadian-owned publishing houses. The first of these demands is that the government should involve itself in the process of putting all book-publishing here under Canadian ownership by 1977. The next, that government subsidy and support should be denied entirely to books, even books by Canadian writers, that are published by non-Canadian houses. The last – and only a minority of IPA members support this demand – that publishers

should administer (at some profit to their own operations) grants awarded personally to their authors by the government.

If it were a matter of record that Canadian literature is largely the fruit of Canadian-owned publishing houses, there might be some validity in the attitude implied by such demands. But in fact the shelves devoted to Canadian books in our bookstores and libraries would be much emptier but for the past and continuing production of such books by American and British subsidiaries here, not always at great profit. Again, if the present range of Canadian-owned houses were displaying the ability, or even the potential ability, to wholly maintain the rich and varied filling of those shelves, there might be reasonable grounds for supporting their demands. What is significant at the moment is the fact that, despite growing popular sympathy and government support, the performance of member houses of the IPA has yet to win the unqualified confidence of more than a small percentage of Canadian writers.

Canadian publishers are overdue the opportunity to grow and prove themselves, but they should not be allowed to impose their pretensions on the true long-suffering heroes of our culture, Canadian writers. Much of the existing wealth on Canadian bookshelves is the work of Canadian writers who were obliged at the outset of their careers to establish their talent with foreign-owned houses here. Their livelihood is still caught up in that circumstance. They should not now be obliged (in the context of a chauvinism which is not always above the suspicion of being self-seeking) to place their talent in unproven and unfamiliar hands; nor should they be discriminated against in access to government support because they resist such an imposition.

For Canadian writers, patriotism has never been enough; nationalism, which in Canada looks too often like the patriotism of the entrepreneur, may prove too much. □ VAL CLERY

BOOKS *in* CANADA

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THE FALL OF '43

A CHAIR FOR WAYNE LONERGAN

HAMILTON DARBY PERRY
Collier-Macmillan
cloth \$7.95; illustrated; 290 pages

Reviewed by Douglas Marshall

The last time I had seen Wayne Lonergan was at a gay cocktail party. This was before he joined the RCAF, and he and Patricia Burton Lonergan, whom he is now accused of murdering, were outwardly happy together.

—columnist reporting Lonergan's trial.

WELL, THE LAST time I saw Wayne Lonergan was also at a gay cocktail party. This was after he had been released from prison, having served 21 years on a second-degree murder charge. In those days Lonergan was something of a social lion in certain Toronto circles. The nearest those Toronto hosts could come to imitating radical chic was to have a convicted murderer — especially a charming and still-handsome convicted murderer — sipping martinis in their livingrooms:

"Don't look now, my dear, but that attractive man over there chatting up Cecily is Wayne Lonergan. You remember him. Convicted of bludgeoning his wife to death back in '43."

Invariably, a well-oiled guest at those parties would amble up to Lonergan, pass a few clumsy pleasantries and then pose the central question of Lonergan's life:

"Did you really do it, Wayne?"

Lonergan would smile a cold, polite smile and say — naturally — that no, he didn't really do it. And everybody would still wonder.

Patricia Lonergan, 22, \$7-million heiress and part of the pre-jet set off which Lonergan lived (mainly by playing bridge for high stakes with Somerset Maugham and all the other wealthy old moms), was found nude and very dead on her bed in her New York townhouse one Sunday in October, 1943. Lonergan, then 26, was separated from his wife and attending RCAF training school in his native Toronto.

The murder occurred on a weekend Lonergan just happened to be visiting New York on leave, during which he just happened to lose the uniform he was wearing and at a presumed time for which he had no good alibi.

The mystery of the lost uniform, which the prosecution argued must have been stolen by 1977, is the crux of the Lonergan murder story. Lonergan originally claimed it had been stolen after a homosexual encounter with an American soldier. Later, in a confession grilled out of him by police but never signed, he said he had thrown it in the East River.

Hamilton Darby Perry's muddled book is dedicated to proving, first, that Lonergan was the victim of a gross parody of justice, and second, that he was innocent.

The first charge is proved to the hilt. Lonergan was convicted by the press within hours of his arrest. His trials (the first was declared a mistrial) were Roman circuses in which bombastic Irish lawyers played juggling

tricks with the law. The whole sickening spectacle is a salutary reminder of how far American civil rights have progressed since the 1940s.

Perry is less successful in demonstrating Lonergan's total innocence. While he knocks substantial holes in the prosecution's case and points out glaring weaknesses in Lonergan's disavowed confession, he fails to provide a satisfactory alternative solution to the crime.

What Perry has achieved is a presentation of the sort of defence Lonergan should have received at his trial. He has done this with no cooperation whatsoever from Lonergan himself. The result is an anti-climax. Lonergan is clearly not "guilty beyond a shadow of a doubt." But it is still not clear that he is innocent beyond a shadow of a doubt. So we're back where we started. Those cocktail-party guests can go on being titillated by shivers of uncertainty when they see Wayne Lonergan pop an olive in his mouth and lower his elegant frame into a far-from-electric Sheraton chair. □

PARTS VERSUS WHOLE

FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL DIPLOMACY The Making of Recent Policy in Canada

Edited by RICHARD SIMEON
University of Toronto Press
cloth \$10.00; 324 pages

reviewed by Peter Desberats

IF AN UNRESTRICTED choice of reviewers for this book were possible, I would pick Sir John A. Macdonald.

Canada's first Prime Minister and the other Fathers of Confederation, never for a moment envisaged the need for extensive federal-provincial negotiations in the Dominion of the future. As Richard Simeon points out early in his book, the British North America Act contains no mention of the federal-provincial conference which has assumed such an influential role in modern Canada.

"It was not expected that the various governments' functions would overlap much," he recalls, "and, in case they did, the constitution tried to

make sure there was no doubt who would win by granting Ottawa the power to disallow provincial legislation, to appoint senators, and to appoint lieutenant governors."

What would Macdonald make of Simeon's description of the apparatus which historian A.R.M. Lower has described as perhaps "a new governmental form, a government of governments"?

I suspect that once the initial shock had worn off and he had settled down for a good read with a glass or two of port, Macdonald's reaction would progress through fascination to professional approval. As an extremely practical politician, he couldn't help but ad-

mire the way in which a set of extra-constitutional and extraparliamentary institutions has grown "gradually like a coral reef" over his original mechanism. But at the end of the book, he would probably be worrying over the same questions as those raised by Simeon about the implications of the system for Canada's future.

Editor John Meisel states in his foreword that this book is the most apposite of the studies included so far in the series of books on decision-making sponsored by the Social Science Research Council of Canada. (The four earlier studies are Porter's *Vertical Mosaic*, *Canadian Labor in Politics* by Gad Horowitz and two books on defence policy and international diplomacy by James Eayrs.) Certainly the decade of the 1960s chosen by Simeon is a fertile one for his examination. It was a period when the growing power of the provinces, evident in the first half of the decade, was confronted in the second half by a federal government with a firm conception of its role. Intergovernmental activity was at a high level — in 1967, for instance, there was a total of 159 federal-provincial meetings at various levels — and the results were particularly important for Canadians in the three areas selected by Simeon for special study: pensions, finance and the constitution.

Simeon avoids entanglement in the usual discussion about the "morality" of this kind of executive government within a parliamentary system. He quotes another student of federalism, William S. Livingston, as saying that "the essence of federalism lies not in the institutional or constitutional structure but in the society itself." In Canada, "the need to develop a set of institutions within which adjustment could take place became crucial" in the context of "the failure of parliamentary institutions to provide a satisfactory forum for the adjustment of differences" between various governments, regions and ethnic groups in Canada.

Arising in response to conditions in Canada, the mechanism of federal-provincial diplomacy reveals many aspects of the Canadian personality. While Canadian-observers frequently lament the absence of more formal procedures for coordination between federal and provincial governments,

the fluidity of the current system is obviously attractive to Canadians "in a system which is continuing to undergo major changes." It functions because Canadian politicians and civil servants accept certain norms that emphasize "discussion" over coercion and some "national" interests over particular concerns. Another revealing ingredient in the mix is "the emphasis on secrecy . . . consistent with norms of secrecy which are strong within other areas of Canadian government, and which seem to stem from an emulation of British governmental practices and from a suspicion of public involvement in policy-making."

These are only a few examples of the way in which Simeon exploits his theme to reveal a constant succession of useful insights into Canadian political practices and attitudes.

Simeon is cautious about the future because "the system itself is constantly changing." But he states that "ultimately we may expect the shape of a revised constitution itself will be profoundly affected by the decision-making mechanism used." His study of the constitutional negotiation of the 1960s leads him to look with some concern on this prospect.

The constitutional debate was influenced strongly by the fact that it "began and remained an intergovernmental affair" and that "the participants wished to restrict the degree of involvement of other actors." One effect was that the debate was conducted in "pragmatic unemotional tones" and "there was no sense that the participants were the latter-day fathers of a new confederation."

Simeon attempts to combat a Canadian tendency to smugness toward the end of his book with the reminder that the debate on the constitution, finance and pensions in the 1960s "would have been very different in other settings, and with other points of view brought to bear." Federal-provincial diplomacy in Canada may be the result of necessity but it is not necessarily the end result.

The inconclusive constitutional negotiation that Simeon describes underlines the imperfections of the system, at least as a method of achieving specific results.

While this summary indicates the outline of Simeon's work, it cannot give any idea of its complexity or vitality. A good part of the interest, for the general reader, lies in the wealth

Four for Spring

This month Hurtig Publishers add four noteworthy titles to the Canadiana Reprint Series, including a contemporary prose classic by Hugh MacLennan. Winner of the 1949 Governor General's Award for nonfiction, *MacLennan's Cross-Country* (\$5.95) is a collection of articles written shortly after the Second World War; remarkably fresh and vivid today, they reveal how much and how little our basic obsessions have changed. This edition features a new introduction by Mr. MacLennan. *Hudson's Bay* by R. M. Ballantyne (\$8.95) captures the fur trade during the critical years of the mid-nineteenth century; George Woodcock sets the scene in a new introduction. *The Voyage of the "Fox"* by Francis Leopold McClintock (\$8.95) describes the 1857 expedition that solved the most universally intriguing of Arctic mysteries, the disappearance of Sir John Franklin and his party. *Alexander Ross's Red River Settlement* (\$8.95) is a lively account of life in the colony, one whose theme of the "savage and civilization" provides an illuminating background to the Riel Rebellion. Like the other twenty-three titles in the Canadiana Reprint Series, these four volumes are precise facsimile reproductions. For a complete list write for a copy of our new spring checklist: Hurtig Publishers, 225 Birks Bldg., Edmonton, Alberta.



HURTIG

of original material that Simeon acquired in a comprehensive series of interviews with participants in federal-provincial negotiations, both politicians and civil servants. Glimpses of Jean Lesage apologizing to the other premiers, in advance, for the public histrionics that he would indulge in after a conference, and of W. C. Bennett saying "with a huge smile that perhaps something could be worked out if only the premier and the prime minister (Pearson) had a private lunch together" are typical of the "inside" information that enlivens and validates the theoretical framework of the book.

Simeon has made an essential contribution to the study of federalism in Canada that will be useful, as intended, to any student of federalism in general. □

PETER DESBERATS, author and broadcaster, onetime editor of *Parallel*, is Ottawa correspondent for the *Toronto Star* and a regular contributor to CBC-TV's *Weekend*.

CAUSE THEY WERE THERE

YUKON EXPEDITION

Edited by MARNIE FISHER
Thomas Nelson
cloth \$14.95; illustrated:

reviewed by Peter Kelly

WE HEAR a great deal lately about the Great Leap Forward but we have almost forgotten about the Great Leap in Every Direction which characterized Canada's Centennial. School children by the thousands hopped, stepped and jumped their way to good health and centennial badges. One gentleman roller-skated from coast to coast, others pushed peanuts, or skittered across the straits of Juan de Fuca in modified bathtubs.

One of the least chronicled, yet surely one of the most spectacular events of that year was the Yukon Alpine Centennial Expedition. Jointly sponsored by the Alpine Club of Canada and the Territory of the Yukon, this Expedition set out to climb not

one mountain, but a whole range of mountains; one for each Province and Territory and, for good measure, one for Centennial and one to cement U.S.-Canada relations. The mountains lay in the largely unsurveyed St. Elias Range, about 90 miles west of the Alaska Highway between the Chitina and Walsh Glaciers. YACE was the biggest venture of its kind ever planned and 250 climbers took part.

Yukon Expedition is a detailed and interesting account of the hazards, the planning, and the victories of the climb. What was planned to take two weeks in fact took as many months — delays were caused by foul weather, rotten rock, and avalanches — but it is a tribute to what Lord Hunt calls a "masterpiece of generalship" that all the members of the expedition survived. The book is also a strong reminder that some of the most exciting mountain scenery in the world is right here in Canada. There are some fine photographs but I do wish it had been possible to print more of them in colour.

Personally I quarrel with the principle of naming mountains after provinces (or people, for that matter). I mean, Mount Prince Edward Island is a bit of a mouthful, isn't it? And in no way does it describe or evoke the magnificence and splendour of the wild mountains of the Yukon. One is tempted to ask if the St. Elias mountains didn't have Indian names long before they were climbed and re-christened? I don't mean by this to belittle the expedition in any way. It is just that to my mind Mount British Columbia will never have the ring or the romance of Annapurna, Jungfrau or even Great Gable.

To sum up, this is a fine illustrated record of a brilliant Canadian Expedition; most interesting to climbers and those who already find joy in the wild beauty of this spectacular country, but perhaps it is more than that. Perhaps it is a challenge to all our armchair athletes to get out there and take a look for themselves. □

PETER KELLY, an executive producer with CBC-TV Features, has filmed many programs in the North and Northwest, the most recent being *Two Arctic Tales*, broadcast during March.

GROWING PAINS

PANDORA

SYLVIA FRAZER

McClelland & Stewart
cloth \$7.95; illustrated; 255 pages

Reviewed by Merle Shain

FOUR YEARS ago when the *Star Weekly* folded, their best writer, Sylvia Fraser, an award-winning journalist, went home to start a novel. When it didn't appear on the stands after a couple of years people began to talk. Where was *The Book*? Was she having trouble? Sylvia rarely surfaced during this time and when she did she tried to avoid questions about *The Book* but periodically she was heard to say, usually with accompanying wild eyes, "I seem to be writing more than one book."

Pandora, the first of what now seems to be a possible four novels, has recently been published. (*The Golden Amazons*, now almost finished, will likely appear within the year). Perhaps the best novel about children to come along since Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye*, *Pandora* is an enchanting book about childhood society, a book which catches the vulnerability and impotence of childhood as well as its power-seeking and power-playing. At times horrifyingly painful and at times terrifyingly funny, it shows us what made us what we are.

It is set in the naive wartime self-righteousness of the 1940s, and the heroine, a seven-year-old girl named Pandora, is raised to hate the Germans and to fear authority. Her mother, a tragic figure whose stoical acceptance of the female submissive role has made her impotent as a mother, and her father, a cruel and insensitive man with a meat hook for a hand, shut her out while trying to bind her in. The family is poor and being poor is God's way, according to Pandora's mother, but to Pandora none of this ways seem very much fun. (To Ms. Fraser as well apparently because the bad kids are named, with obvious symbolism, Jessie Christie, Howard Ghostie, and Godfrey

Trumps). At home Pandora tries to keep out of her parent's hair; at school she learns to conquer and be conquered. Playing Red Rover is not unlike seeking membership in an exclusive tennis club. Powder-blue pencil-boxes and long crayons are necessary to keep up with the Joneses. The school yard has its pecking order intact. We are reminded what it was like to be ashamed of your present for the birthday child, to fear being asked to sing alone in class, or to be low man on the valentine popularity contest and, horror of horrors, how it felt to lose bladder control in public. In being reminded we somehow become aware as well that life is not appreciably different now that we are adults, although most of us have learnt to cover our fear of ridicule a little better.

In one hilarious scene, Pandora visits the recreation room of her Jewish boyfriend (before her mother tells her she can't marry him because he won't be going to heaven) and is given (very funny symbolism here) his plastic dog poop as a gift, carrying it off on a paper napkin marked 'To The Bride'. He tries to wrap it up, saying *Bar Mitzvah* on it first, but Pandora makes him change that, pointing out that her mother is "death on saloons".

There are perhaps times when Ms. Fraser, in attempting to examine the roots of adult society within child society, makes observations with the voice of a sociologist. These are few, but should have been nipped out in the editing. For the most part, this first novel succeeds admirably (where most writers have failed) in expressing how much children perceive that is beyond their power to communicate and how they are at once the victims, and the manipulations of adult fears and limitations. Beautifully printed, with lyrical drawings by Harold Towne, *Pandora* is a delicious book, a book worth waiting for. □

MERLE SHAIN, is a Toronto writer who contributes features to *Chate-laine*, *Toronto Life* and *Cosmopolitan*; she is at present at work on a book about the heterosexual mystique.



TO THINE OWN SELF...

I DON'T WANT TO KNOW ANYONE TOO WELL

NORMAN LEVINE

Macmillan

cloth \$6.95; 160 pages

reviewed by Isaac Bickerstaff

NOT POETRY nor bravado, but deliberate honesty, makes this collection of stories by Norman Levine, Canadian expatriate, worth reading.

Levine's belief is that "When you go to a writer's work - it is his personal world you enter. What he is doing is paying, in his own way, an elaborate tribute to people and places he has known." Whatever its general application, this sentiment certainly informs Levine's own short fiction, which to an unusual degree seems directly based on scarcely embellished incidents, carefully selected, in the past of a writer whose interest is in the ordinary and unremarked.

Twelve of the volume's 15 tales are recounted by a mild-mannered

narrator who himself figures in the action and who, though occasionally assigned a different name or change of profession by the author, is generally consistent in his sensibility and his mode of address. When he remarks of an acquaintance, "And again I felt that curious feeling of tenderness emanate from him and with it the sense that it was impersonal. It was the kind that one usually gets from a doctor." we are reminded that it is the narrator who in the course of the story becomes a doctor and whose gentle and detached bedside manner lends the book its chief appeal.

Quite as cynically as entrepreneurs, journalists who specialize in feature material exploit the unwary, converting

them into readable type then promptly relegating them to a scrapbook graveyard. In what is perhaps the most imaginative of his stories, "The Man with the Notebook," Levine takes this notion one step further. An old man who makes a living writing feature pieces about his neighbours in a small Cornwall village stops when he realizes that everyone he writes about dies soon after: "Weeks passed. The cheques stopped arriving. He tried to write of places he had never seen. But he knew that they were not right. He had always used the notebook and these attempts, to write imaginative pieces, he knew were lifeless." This story may be taken as an allegory of Levine's own predicament as a literalist. The narrator's conclusion, that "it is hard to write — or live for that matter — without hurting someone. Even if it would only be himself," reveals the extreme crises of conscience that a writer of Levine's sensibility, unable or unwilling to embroider his reality with invention and fancy, must at some point undergo.

Almost without exception, the individuals that Levine's narrator meets and portrays are solitaries. A dipso-

maniacal doctor in a mining camp north of the Soo remarks, "What does any one person matter. They come into your world for a while then leave it just as quickly as they entered." In "A True Story," a tubercular young woman muses, "I don't know . . . I don't seem to know how to behave with other people . . . They see me once . . . but they don't see me again . . . I don't have friends . . . I don't seem able to give enough." Even a wealthy gadabout, the central figure in "By the Richelieu," is perceived by the narrator as essentially alone: "Certainly the impression of an irresponsible playboy did not bear out in what I knew of him."

Though it is true that most of these stories have appeared elsewhere, their publication in a single volume is welcome. Together they treat sympathetically the loneliness that, though it so cruelly pervades the human condition, is rarely acknowledged in contemporary fiction.

ISAAC BICKERSTAFF (who in odious reality is Don Evans), former teacher and newspaperman, now writes and caricatures in Toronto.

THE MAKINGS OF CANADA

PIONEER GARDENS AT BLACK CREEK PIONEER VILLAGE

EUSTELLA LANGDON
Holt, Rinehart & Winston
cloth \$7.95, paper \$3.95; illustrated; 63 pages

MAPLE SYRUP

R. D. LAWRENCE
Thomas Nelson
cloth \$5.95; illustrated; 74 pages

reviewed by Judy Stoffman

THE PAST is like a foreign country that we know only from travel brochures. We know the "sights" there, the important cathedrals, palaces and art museums to visit, but how the people live, what makes them cry, what makes them laugh, what they eat for breakfast remain a mystery.

A brilliant sequel
to *The White Boar* for
devotees of superb
historical novels

The Wrong Plantagenet

by Vancouver author
Marian Palmer

Rousing action, a passionate love story and the glamour of a lost cause thread through this incredibly realistic story of a pretender who came very close to winning back the English throne for the Plantagenets. Extraordinarily well-versed in the history of this period, the author solves some of its mysteries and brings on stage some of its greatest characters. \$7.75

NOW AT BOOKSTORES


If you remember growing up,
you'll probably never forget
this book.

Raisins and Almonds

Fredelle Bruser Maynard
recalls the bitter and the
sweet of her early childhood
in small Prairie towns.

This remarkably talented writer has made each page a gem of remembrance. The wonders of opening the latest Eaton's catalogue. The confusion of being a child of the only Jewish family in town. Nostalgic and sentimental, it is a warm and witty collection of reminiscences. \$6.50

NOW AT BOOKSTORES

 Doubleday

Our historians are like the writers of travel brochures. They tell us about wars and treaties, assassinations, rebellions and the building of railroads, but about the struggles and triumphs of daily life as lived in centuries gone by by the vast majority of men and women they have nothing to say.

The key to the small mysteries of life in the past can be found in unexpected places. Eustella Langdon has found it in the garden. Her unpretentious little book, *Pioneer Gardens in Black Creek Pioneer Village*, makes use of research done by members of the Garden Club of Toronto in preparation for planting the gardens at Black Creek Pioneer Village, an authentic recreation of an Upper Canadian settlement before Confederation. The settlers had little time for the sort of ornamental gardening we do today. They grew fruit trees, vegetables, flax for linen, sunflower for oil, chicory for a coffee substitute, broom-corn for making brooms, flowers and every kind of herb for making medicines, dyes and cosmetics. They even grew marijuana to alleviate the pain of surgery.

Ms. Langdon describes hundreds of plants, their names culled from old seed catalogues and nursery lists, on which the settlers' very survival depended. A stark picture emerges of just what it means to live "off the land." It is interesting to note that many of the plants the pioneers cultivated have disappeared. No one knows what happened to most of the 85 varieties of apple trees offered for sale by Charles Barnhart, proprietor of the Toronto Nursery in 1837, or what a "yellow turnip-radish" was exactly. And teasel, bitter tansy, sarsaparilla and borage are not usually found in kitchen gardens any more.

The book is plentifully illustrated with charming old drawings and water-colours of plants and gardens, and with rather unnaturally coloured photographs of Black Creek Pioneer Village today by an anonymous photographer. One wishes for more of the former and fewer of the latter type of illustrations.

Pioneer Gardens is the first in a projected series of books sponsored jointly by the Village and the Metropolitan Toronto and Region Conservation Authority. It is to be hoped that

subsequent volumes offer similarly pleasant excursions into our social history.

Maple Syrup by R. D. Lawrence is surely the ultimate Canadian book. The author admits he didn't know a maple from an elm when he bought a farm on which there were 80 acres of sugar bush. This is the story of how he learned to identify a maple, and how, with the help of the former owner of the farm, Mr. Pierce, of an antiquated evaporator christened Ernie, and of various friends and neighbours, he went on to tap thousands of trees, to gather the sap and finally to boil it down to syrup. There are nice sepia-coloured photographs illustrating the whole sugaring-off process and a collection of uncomplicated recipes all of which make lavish use of maple syrup. Maple Nut Pudding, Maple Rice Delight and Maple Pumpkin Pie sound especially tempting.

Readers 10 to 14, for whom the book is apparently intended, will learn more about maple syrup than they ever wanted to know. □

JUDY STOFFMAN, who was formerly with CBC-Radio's *Ideas*, is now a freelance writer and broadcaster.

ORDINARY ODD FOLK

TALES FROM THE UNCERTAIN COUNTRY

JACQUES FERRON
(Translated by BETTY BEDNARSKI)

Anansi
cloth \$6.50, paper \$2.95; 101 pages

reviewed by Beverley Smith

TEN YEARS after his "official" consecration by Ottawa as one of Quebec's most prolific story-tellers and folk-writers, Jacques Ferron (winner of the 1962 Governor General's Award for *Contes du Pays Incertain*) can be appreciated by English-speaking Canadians in this translation of the tales from Anansi.

Such recognition of Ferron's talents and popularity is long overdue. For Ferron is one of those rare writers whose work, rather than appearing impoverished in translation, seems only



RIEL: A Poem for Voices
by Don Gutteridge

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RUNNING BUFFALO

by Madeline A. Freeman
This story about a Blackfoot boy captures the essence of life among the Indians on the Canadian prairie early in the 1800's. For children 8-12. Well illustrated in 4-colour and line art.
\$3.50 paper. 96pp.

Van Nostrand Reinhold Ltd.

READ CANADIAN

Edited by Robert Fulford,
David Godfrey and Abraham Rotstein

Interest in Canadian books is growing all across the country. People are looking for Canadian history books, Canadian novels, Canadian books on women's liberation, politics, the media.

Read Canadian is for them. It is the first wide-ranging guide to the world of Canadian books, a helpful handbook with 29 articles by distinguished contributors introducing readers to the books to read in a wide variety of areas.

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& Samuel, Publishers

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UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO PRESS

more enhanced by it. His audience need not be confined to the boundaries of "La Belle Province". His appeal is universal, as Betty Bednarski's admirable English rendering of the "Contes" confirms.

Though it is from his medical practice among the poor and down-trodden that Ferron draws inspiration for his stories, the tales he spins speak to mankind in themes common to us all: death; the loneliness of old age, the nostalgia of broken dreams, these motifs haunt his writing.

But if "black" is one of the dominants of Ferron's universe, Gallic wit and humour rise to the surface also, whether in the form of a somewhat naughty rendition of that old favourite *Little Red Riding Hood*, in the humorous anecdote of "Mélie" whose husband is displaced in her affection by the family bull, or in the (perhaps autobiographical) incident of the new country doctor, vainly attempting to make an impression on the local *habitants*, only to be followed by a group of grunting neighbourhood pigs who have taken a liking to him.

For all the quirks and foibles of the common folk that Ferron uncovers for us, he displays a certain sly sympathy. And he delects in a bit of satire against the clergy, when he sends a calf to the seminary of Quebec, to be "educated" and "humanized", with the blessing: "Ali baba perfectusse babame".

Aside from presenting to English-Canada a writer of great talent, known previously only in Quebec, one of the outstanding achievements of *Tales from the Uncertain Country* is that it has successfully preserved both the flavour and the rhythms of Ferron's speech, which form so much a part of his appeal – whether it be in echoing the directness and bluntness with which he deals with human misery or death, or in rendering the colloquial or picturesque folk-spirit of his writing. While the country of which Ferron speaks may, in his words, be "uncertain", the reader of his tales can only conclude that the mastery with which he wields his writer's scalpel most definitely is not. □

BEVERLEY SMITH, who has studied French literature in Quebec and Paris and has taught French, is a freelance writer in Toronto.

READ CANADIAN
continued from page 1

tion" and "Modern Poetry" can offer a good selection of readable, reasonably-priced books. This paucity is made even plainer by the overlapping of lists: John Porter's *The Vertical Mosaic* appears on seven summary bibliographies.

What's needed in almost every sphere is a thorough, intelligent and intelligible survey in a paperback edition. In this, it would be too much to look for the lucid expertise of Porter on Canadian society or Donald Creighton on Canadian history but sound workmanship at least is possible. One need is for a competent, inexpensive study of Canadian popular culture. Another, even greater need is for a full-scale social history.

If such books are commissioned and written, the right distribution to stores, libraries and schools must also be present, and this Dave Godfrey and James Lorimer point out in their concluding essay. As might be expected, the pair call for federal legislation "requiring that all book publishers operating in Canada be one hundred per cent Canadian owned by 1977."

Most of *Read Canadian* is taken up by introductory essays, each with a bibliography, written by writers and scholars: thus we have Mel Watkins on "Economic History," Dennis Lee on "Modern Poetry" and Barry Lord on "Art and Architecture." In each, the informed reader will find plenty with which to disagree. For readers not so knowledgeable, the essays are uniformly helpful though somewhat dull – Lee, Lorimer on "Poverty" and W. H. New on "Modern Fiction" are lively exceptions. But then again, it's hard to be witty about a subject like "Federalism and the Constitution."

As well as revealing certain gaps in our publishing, the guidebook provides a few of its own. Some of these Robert Fulford apologizes for in his introduction – there are no lists of children's books, the literature of ethnic minorities or popular fiction. One could add the general area of "Communications": from Edward Sapir to Harold Innis to Marshall McLuhan, this is one field in which Canadians have excelled. But

these omissions are excusable, since the editors hope to update *Read Canadian* every year.

Less excusable is the absence, in the lists, of books by writers such as Peter Newman, Pierre Berton and Farley Mowat. "Their books are omitted," Fulford says, "because these are so obviously valuable and so easily available in libraries and elsewhere." Apart from the strange logic of not listing certain books because they are valuable, it seems niggardly to exclude them simply because they happen to be available. Regardless of what one thinks of these writers, they are Canadian and it is up to *Read Canadian's* contributors to assess them as such. The failure to do so makes one suspect that behind the cheerleading lurks a curious kind of snobbery. □

FRASER SUTHERLAND, journeyman writer and critic, finds his home in Montreal and co-edits *Northern Journey* in Ottawa.

FORE PLOY

CONTRACEPTION

LIONEL GENDRON M.D.

Harvest House

paper \$2.00; illustrated: 154 pages

reviewed by Robert H. Wesley

THERE ARE few really useful books for instructing the general public in contraception. This is one of the few. What is particularly important is that this small book presents the subject totally, and in an interesting fashion. Perhaps the major criticism is that it is too complete and too complicated for the average lay reader.

Dr. Gendron's opening chapters on anatomy and physiology are excellent and readable. He knows exactly what to include or omit. The descriptions of the various contraceptive methods are excellently done, with superb tact, and an obvious sense of sympathy. The brief note on the history is necessary and must be revealing to many. His

opinions are those generally held in Canada, and show a deep understanding of the subject.

I think it was wise to include a section on sterilization, although the emphasis on male vasectomy is perhaps unfortunate. I have always felt that operating on a rooster did not necessarily protect the chickens. Modern vaginal tubal ligation is very little more complicated than vasectomy.

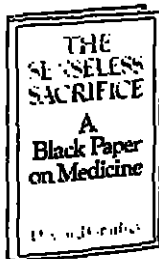
Directing the book to married couples is correct, but perhaps contraceptive advice is even more important for those who are not married.

At a time when children are not wanted, coitus is carried out for mutual pleasure, and Dr. Gendron wisely stressed those methods of contraception where no great motivation is necessary.

All in all, a very useful book, which has lost little if anything from an excellent translation by Jane Brierley. □

ROBERT H. WESLEY M.D. is head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at Toronto's Sunnybrook Hospital and an Assistant Professor at University of Toronto.

ISSUES / PEOPLE



The Senseless Sacrifice

A BLACK PAPER ON MEDICINE

Heward Grafftey

If you plan to be sick at any time in your life, you owe it to yourself to read it.

... "a wealth of gory detail leading to the conclusion that we need a complete and fundamental overhaul of the whole system." - Michael Barkway/The Financial Times. "Every doctor will want a copy - if only to burn it." - TIME Magazine.

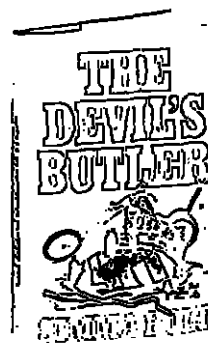
- TIME Magazine.

The Canadian Condominium

Thomas Hockin

In June 1971 a panel of Canadians and non-Canadians met to discuss Canadian external relations and domestic developments for the '70's. Sponsored by Georgetown University's Centre for Strategic and International Studies, the meeting exposed Canadians to perceptions of Canada held by non-Canadians. Professor Thomas Hockin, Political Economist at York University, was a member of that panel and asks: How much freedom of action is possible for Canada? How much is even desirable?

McClelland & Stewart
The Canadian Publishers



The Devil's Butler

Simma Holt

This is a book that won't let you hide or run-away. It is a true, incredible story out of the North American under-culture. It details the outrageous violence and bestial abuse inflicted on a young transient held captive by the Satan's Angels motorcycle club in Vancouver - the subsequent capture, trial and conviction of his tormentors.

ISSUES / PEOPLE

AT GOOD BOOKSTORES EVERYWHERE



clusion that we need

DE LA ROCHE JOB

It is clear that the reviewer of *The Secret of Jalna* by Ronald Hambleton in the February 1972 issue of *Books in Canada* did not read the book, and it is shocking that such a complaint should have to be brought against a journal that was created for the sole purpose of making up for the inadequacy of existing book review services.

The reviewer says that Hambleton has gutted his 1966 biography of Mazo de la Roche. How could the author avoid using material from his earlier book when it is the only authoritative biography, and why should he try? As a matter of fact, about one-half of the information in *The Secret of Jalna* is new and what was used from the earlier book was fully integrated, but in a different framework focusing attention on the Jalna phenomenon rather than on the life of Mazo de la Roche. The reviewer says that the reader is left to draw a lot of his own conclusions. How could this be otherwise in the circumstances? He says that the very design of the book generates confusion and that he has the impression that "galley proofs have been arbitrarily hacked up into page-size lengths without the slightest regard for the relation of text to pictures." This is where he reveals that he did not read the book. I have helped to edit and produce upwards of 500 books of all kinds during the last 15 years and, of all these books, the one in which pictures and text are most carefully and precisely coordinated for the reader's convenience is *The Secret of Jalna*. If he had read the book, the reviewer would have recognized this feature of the book which has been commented on favourably by other reviewers. The text was written to fit a layout dictated by a fixed number of illustrations, to provide a coordinated alternation between pictures and text in a continuous stream and without the interruption of white spaces. The reviewer also says that it is a slapdash production, flecked

with typographical errors. It is said that every good book has at least one error in it as a reminder of the notorious complexity of book production work. *The Secret of Jalna*, which was written and produced in less than three months, contains six typographical errors, none of which seriously interrupts the reading.

I trust that the review of *The Secret of Jalna* is not a true indication of the calibre of reviewing that we may expect in future issues of *Books in Canada*.

T. C. Fairley
Managing Editor
General Publishing Co., Ltd.
Toronto

Sir:

Douglas Marshall's review of Ronald Hambleton's *The Secret of Jalna* criticizes its author for not providing a "frank discussion . . . coming out and saying things plainly." Yet Mr. Marshall's discussion about Mazo de la Roche is no plainer or franker; he relies on sneers and innuendoes about "sick-love" to convey his point.

Miss de la Roche, he tells us, "never made it beyond the emotional age of fourteen," was not "a normal woman" and had a "central sexual hang-up." Homosexuality — and that is what Mr. Marshall is talking about, although he seems afraid to utter the word — is neither a hangup nor a sickness. The fact that Miss de la Roche chose to spend her life with a female companion makes her no more or less healthy or developed than the "normal" married woman. That she enjoyed a long and devoted relationship with her cousin and raised two adopted children as well as turning out a large and interesting body of work seems refutation enough of the claim of emotional immaturity.

Perhaps she did compromise in her writing. If so, the prevailing standards in Canada at the time demanded it. This has been the dilemma of many artists. It is an interesting dilemma, and deserves something more than a sneer. At least Miss de la Roche lived her life as she wished. She made no concessions there. How many of us can say as much?

Ian Young
Scarborough, Ont.

Sir:

In your February 1972 issue, Douglas Marshall states in effect that I know as a fact certain details about the private life of Mazo de la Roche which I cannot prevent myself from alluding to, though I know they should be kept secret; that I substitute for such factual details "tittle-tattle and gossip"; and that therefore my work is not as "honest" as another's work could be.

The words "gossip" and "tittle-tattle" are almost exact synonyms, but Mr. Marshall is not content to limit himself to only one of these words; he uses both, perhaps to make sure that his point is not lost. Both words mean "idle, trifling talk," but "tittle-tattle" has the added connotation of "scandal-mongering."

The word "honest" has the dictionary meaning of "upright, just, equitable; characterized by integrity or fairness and straightforwardness in conduct, thought, and speech; free from fraud, guile, or duplicity; not false." Further, "honest" expresses the absence of intent to deceive, and implies candor, fairness, and straightforwardness. In the Dictionary of Canadian English, the definition is: "Not lying, cheating, or stealing; fair and upright; truthful."

We also have Mr. Marshall's established use of the word in an earlier review (of George Hendricks' book, *Mazo de la Roche*) in which he says that Hendricks and his publishers hoped to carry off their share of the de la Roche "gold-mine" by their timing of publication, and Marshall adds, "That's not honest prospecting; that's claim jumping." We easily take Mr. Marshall's meaning; and it is not pleasant.

I am not going to argue whether or not there are degrees of honesty, but when Mr. Marshall uses the comparative and says that we need "a more honest . . . examination of Miss de la Roche's curious, tortured life," he can be suggesting one of two things:

(1) that my work is indeed honest, and lives up to the definitions given above, but now there should be written an "examination" that is *more* than 100% fair, upright, straightforward, trustworthy, equitable, and just; one that has in it less than 0% (that is, a negative amount) of lying, cheating and stealing. Apparently there really

is, to Mr. Marshall, a "whiter than white." Not to me. Or:

(2) that my work has in it elements of lying, cheating, and stealing; that I had an intent to deceive; that my work lacks candor, fairness, straightforwardness; and that neither I nor my work is free from fraud, guile, and duplicity.

Which of these does Mr. Marshall adopt as his meaning?

Ronald Hambleton
Toronto, Ont.

Mr. Marshall replies: *Mr. Fairley is mistaken. Not only did I read the book, I read it three times with increasing incredulity. Mr. Hambleton's laboured semantics seem beside the point. It's not his honesty I'm questioning but the book's. Mr. Young's argument is well taken.*

COMMUNION MORE OR LESS

Sir:

I'm a nationalist.

But, please Lord, save us from the "little Canadianism" of the Sheila Kierans of this world.

Graeme Gibson is one of the most exciting new novelists in Canada. Unafraid to experiment. Unafraid to build on the work of others. And destined, I believe, to achieve some kind of greatness if he hangs in there.

But *Communion*, his most recent novel, is not, in my view, successful. Interesting, but not world-shattering.

Your reviewer, Don Evans / Isaac Bickerstaff, quite legitimately – and very wittily – entertained your readers at the expense of Graeme Gibson and *Communion* in your January issue (Bickerstaff's verbal attack was, I think, balanced by his witty and sympathetic caricature of Graeme Gibson that accompanied the review; the gentle caricature showed clearly that malice was absent from Evans' mind as he contemplated Gibson and his works).

And Sheila Kieran foamed at the mouth – publicly, in your February issue – and cancelled her subscription to *Books in Canada*.

With friends like Sheila Kieran, believe me, Canadian literature doesn't need enemies. She admits she hasn't read *Communion*. So she has no way

of knowing whether Don Evans' evaluation of the book is fair or not. Therefore, one must conclude that Ms. Kieran is defending Gibson and attacking Evans only because Gibson is A Canadian Writer and shouldn't, by virtue of that fact, be roughly handled.

And this, I submit, is characteristic of the worst possible threat to the growth of Canadian letters.

If we handle our writers with kid gloves, see them through rose-coloured glasses and smother them with kisses simply because they are Canadian, then we are doing a great disservice to creative writing in this country. Sheila Kieran thinks, on the evidence available to me, that we should do so. I don't.

So far I don't believe any of your reviewers has given a wholly favourable review to any of the books produced by my authors. Of course, as a publisher, I gnash my teeth and call curses down on your head when you attack my books, my authors. But that's part of the game, and an important part of it. I'd rather see honestly critical reviews, as you are publishing, than a surfeit of what generally passes for book reviewing in this country – an exercise in uncritical adulation which usually consists of rearranging the publisher's dust-jacket blurb.

Tough, and perhaps even unfair, critical standards are necessary in a mature literary culture. Sheila Kieran would like to eliminate the tough, even unfair review.

I'd rather eliminate the Sheila Kierans of this land.

Chimo!

Peter Martin
President,
Peter Martin Associates
Toronto

Sir,

Personally, this reader sees no lack of "intestinal fortitude" evident in Isaac Bickerstaff's review of *Communion* by Graeme Gibson; however, I believe Sheila Kieran has perpetrated exactly the attack on a man's character of which she accuses, wrongly, Isaac Bickerstaff. Mrs. Kieran's letter, a harvest of hyperbola bearing witness to nothing but conscientious foraging in a thesaurus, succeeds in being even more ridiculous than Gibson's novel.

I've met Don Evans the same number of times Mrs. Kierans has met Graeme Gibson and on neither of the three occasions did I find the reviewer to be a "pitiful creature" nor did I see any indication of a "fetid" or "obscene" mind, although on one of these meetings I caught him reading Kenneth Clarke's *The Nude*.

What annoys people about Bickerstaff evidently is that he doesn't subscribe to the attitude, all too prevalent in Canadian letters, of you scratch my back, I'll scratch yours; you review my book, I'll review yours. He speaks his mind and if something's lousy he says so, and says so with style. More power to him and let him continue. He displays in all his work the guts so often lacking in our polite art and letters. Mrs. Kierans excoriates Isaac Bickerstaff's "raging psyche" – now if there were only a few more Canadian writers with the same problem!

Jim Christy
Toronto, Ontario

Sir:

Since you were good enough to inform your readership that you sent me a cheque for \$9.95* when I cancelled my subscription, perhaps you will also let them know that I (a) phoned you to find out why in hell you would send me a cheque for more than I paid – a call you did not have the courtesy to return and (b) I threw your cheque in the garbage. (Your distributor being as efficient as your reviewer is clever, I received your most recent issue, despite my cancellation.)

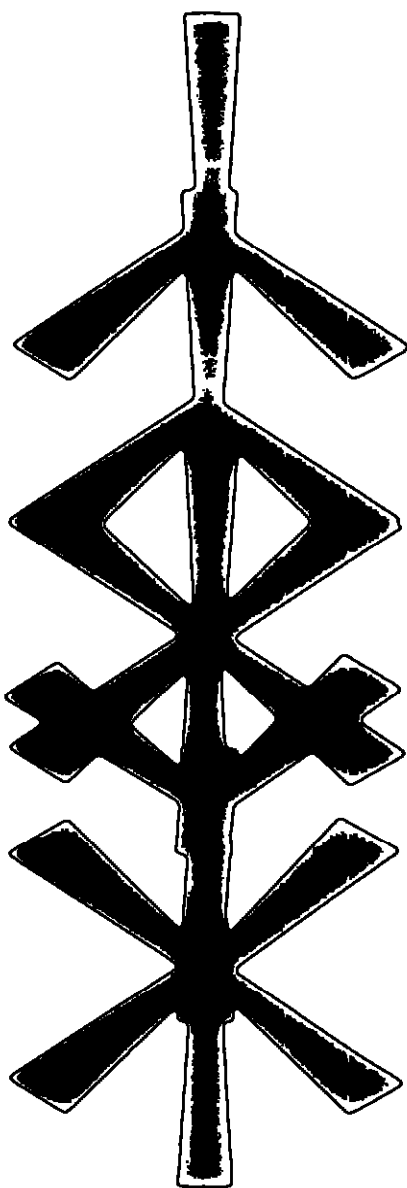
While reluctant to continue this little uproar (getting into literary rows is likely to ruin my well-earned reputation as a low-striving-for-middle brow), I must take exception to the decidedly insulting tone of your footnote and editorial. The implication of the former is that I made a great fuss about Evans' identity when, in fact, you were only too willing to give his real name. That, as you know, is not the truth: you refused, in the course of our phone

continued on page 18

(*City of Toronto garbage collectors please note: Our subscription rate is and always has been \$9.95.)

BOOKS FROM CANADA

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XVII U.S.A. International Book Exhibition, Chicago,
Illinois - June 1972

24th Frankfurt Book Fair, Frankfurt, West Germany -
September/October 1972

International Book Production Exhibition, London,
England - October/November 1972

5th International Book Fair of Brussels, Brussels, Belgium -
March 1973



Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce, Ottawa, Canada
Ministère de l'Industrie et du Commerce, Ottawa, Canada

A CLEAN PAIR OF WHEELS

THE CANADIAN BICYCLE BOOK

Edited by **KEN SMITH**
D. C. Heath
paper \$3.95; illustrated; 128 pages

reviewed by **Colin Harris**

FOR THE last few years, popular interest in bicycles and bicycling has been growing at a steady rate in Canada, and in North America generally; during the last two years it has erupted into an overwhelming craze. There undoubtedly is much about the current interest that is faddish and fashionable; whether or not it will last remains to be seen, but a belief in the bicycle as an inexpensive, reliable, convenient, healthy, non-polluting mode of transportation certainly outweighs fashion as the primary determinant of the present feverish bicycling activity.

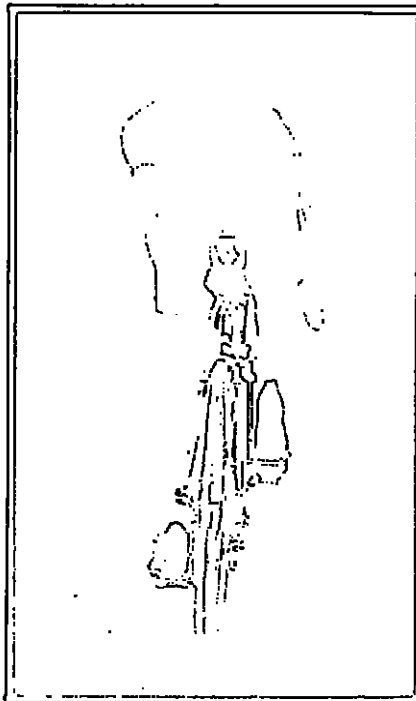
It is unfortunate that many of the recent converts to cycling have known little or nothing about bicycles, and have relied for advice upon people with little more knowledge than their own, for example, bicycle salesmen in department stores. Aid has come in the shape of several books on cycling that have recently appeared in Canada, almost all of them from the United States. Most cycling technology and practice is, of course, universal in its application, but American books can confuse the Canadian reader about availability and prices of bicycles and parts, and are irrelevant about cycle paths, tour routes, etc.

The Canadian Bicycle Book, edited by the Executive Director of the Canadian Cycling Association, is excellent as a general introduction to all aspects of bicycles and bicycling for Canadians, and yet the fact that it includes a little bit of everything is both its major virtue and its major fault. It includes a brief history, and a very good and useful account of the basic types of bicycles and of the differences

between them, although such recommendations as "this is the ideal bicycle for the housewife who wants to do more than just travel to the store or the shopping centre" are not particularly useful. It includes also many very sound tips on actual bicycle riding, which if they are pure common sense still need to be emphasized. Brief chapters on racing, touring and bicycle clubs are both interesting and informative. Perhaps the most important single chapter is that on maintenance; it is very useful for the beginner and, I am pleased to say, uses excellent photographs, rather than sketches and drawings. But the chapter only goes so far; we are told, for example, that a wheel running slightly "out of true" can be lined up with a spoke key, and that a broken spoke is not difficult to replace, but it does not tell *how*. Since the book is really intended for beginners, this should have received attention.

However, most beginners will not complain about that shortcoming. The book is full of welcome information to them; the photographs are excellent; coloured pictures, such as those in the chapter on racing, are pleasant if unnecessary luxury, yet the price is reasonable for a very useful and attractive book. □

COLIN HARRIS is Librarian at the Finch Campus of Seneca College, Willowdale, Ontario, and an instructor of bicycling.



OURS IS THEIRS

A HISTORY OF CANADIAN WEALTH

GUSTAVUS MYERS
Jame Lewis and Samuels
cloth \$7.95, paper \$2.95; 400 pages

MINETOWN, MILLTOWN, RAIL TOWN: Life in Communities of Single Industries

REX A. LUCAS
University of Toronto Press
cloth \$15.00, paper \$5.00; 448 pages

GALT, U.S.A.: The American Presence in a Canadian City

ROBERT L. PERRY
The Financial Post
paper \$3.95; illustrated; 137 pages

Reviewed by **Michael D. Levin**

FOR THOSE concerned with Canada's economic state and how it got that way here are three books that give the problem historical depth and contemporary meaning. Gustavus Myers' *A History of Canadian Wealth*, long out of print and hardly known in Canada, is the most important. It reveals the promotions and deals of businessmen and politicians — often the same men, changing hats as they moved from legislature to boardroom and back again — that lie behind the rose-coloured "great deeds" of the past. The greed that built North America straddled the 49th parallel. Myers begins with the French seigneurial system, the Family Compact and reminds us that as early as the mid-19th century Chief Peguis of the Saulteaux Indians of Manitoba complained of the unpaid obligations of Lord Selkirk.

Lord Selkirk, establishing a Canadian tradition, as well as the ill-fated Red River Colony, had already sold his "rights" to the Hudson's Bay Company. Private gain through public manipulation was a 19th-century phenomenon which somehow we believed could not take place in dull, staid Canada. Now we know that Canadian capitalists were just as adept robber barons as any of the more famous names to the

south, yet, more successful in that they maintained their privacy, their distance, and to an extent their identities from the people whose funds they used and whose labour they exploited. James, Lewis and Samuel are to be congratulated for bringing this classic of Canadian political economy back to light and for inviting Stanley Ryerson to write the informative introduction.

In *Minetown, Milltown, Railtown*, Rex Lucas studies the same social system but from the bottom and from a sociological perspective. Here we have careful analysis of the social environment — miners, wood workers and railwaymen in one-company towns, living out their lives dependent on one boss with many faces, far removed from the opulence that surrounds the “creators” of these companies, and suffering human and real hurts to build others’ fortunes. At a time when social scientists are grasping at any straw of Canadian content, Lucas’ work will no doubt draw attention, but one wishes for a little of the passion and conflict that even subtle movies like *Mon Oncle Antoine* portray about the hostility to “the boss” in such towns. Amazingly Lucas writes only about the ways conflict is limited and controlled, not about strikes, violence, danger, or arbitrary managerial power.

Galt, USA gives some life to the often turgid debate on foreign ownership, foreign investment and the limits of Canadian entrepreneurship. *Galt* is a dispirited town dominated by American investment: its citizens feel their lack of independence and despair. Yet they believe that they cannot live without American capital despite the evidence in their own town of successful companies who have developed internationally competitive products of the latest technology and have hurdled the problems of competing in the financial markets with the big multinational corporations.

Based on a series of articles originally published in the *Financial Post*, this is an engaging introduction to the many effects of the branch plant presence on business and daily life in a typical Canadian industrial town. □

MICHAEL D. LEVIN is an anthropologist who worked in West Africa, now at University of Toronto.

THOSE WHO CAN DO...

THE NARRATIVE VOICE: Short Stories and Reflections by Canadian Authors

McGraw-Hill Ryerson
paper \$4.50: 277 pages

Reviewed by Leo Simpson

WE’RE NOT dealing with altogether original material in this book, which is primarily intended for high school and university libraries and courses. For example, the stories by Alice Munro, Ray Smith, Rudy Wiebe, Max Macpherson (Harry Bruce?) and Margaret Laurence have all appeared previously in collections, some of them published quite recently. But what makes the book of interest to the general readers is that each writer was required to record his thoughts about the contrivance of his art. Pandora’s box flies open, and out comes a rush of nonsense windy enough to blow any plodding reviewer off his feet. Floccinaucinihilipilification isn’t a word I use lightly, and I don’t think anybody should, but it was the one that kept occurring to my mind, honest to God, while I read gifted writers trying to give a rational account of what is fundamentally an act of mystery. “What process occurs?” asks Shirley Faesser. “I can’t understand it”.

We should stop right there, but unfortunately we have to read a piece called “Sober Coloring: The Ontology of Super-Realism” by Hugh Hood. Hood’s intelligence is hard and deep enough, but in my view it’s dangerously close to solipsism whenever it argues the relation of the sense or the imagination to externals. Super-realism is his term for the imagination at work, colouring or converting externals. He does not seem to have a capacity for reciprocity here, and, worse, when he talks in the Kantian manner of noumenal elements, he seems uninterested in the Kantian contradiction, phenomena. Hood under-

stands phenomena only, it seems, when they have already been converted by another art form. He admires the American painter Edward Hopper principally because Hopper’s conversions — his visions, by God — are useful to Hood professionally. Getting back to Hood’s super-realism, his imagination works best at a remove of one art form, usually painting. He likes Haydn, but I suspect that what he likes in Haydn is simply the discipline and the structure. He has a depressing academic fondness for *categories* in writing, and thinks of himself as a Romantic, and that the Romantic Movement is not dead. In my view he is a very intelligent romantic, if so, which means, philosophically, a Berkeleyan. but with no interest in Berkeley’s thought as a reaction to Locke’s. In terms of the familiar Berkeley limericks, there *could* be a tree in the quad (campus) while Hood was not around, but there would *only* be a tree in the quad while he was — unless somebody else in the artistic field had dealt with the tree first. At best Constable, at worst Joyce Kilmer. Indeed, while Hood thinks he is expressing a thoughtful and complex approach to his work, he seems to me to be expressing a rather serious inhibition of vision.

Margaret Laurence’s thoughts about writing are simple. We have Margaret Laurence talking about the time element in writing to a group of bright high-school students. From Robert Metcalf (a writer I respect as the author of a delightful novella called *The Lady Who Sold Furniture*), we get *rules*. Yes, numbered rules, a sort of extended decalogue for writing neophytes. His piece is called “Soaping a Meditative Foot: Notes For a Young Writer.” Here’s a quote: “Don’t write propaganda . . . (Read the bad poetry which came out of the Spanish War. Or, worse, the very bad poetry . . . which is coming out of the Vietnam War)”.

Question: Are the young writers allowed to read, while you are soaping your foot, *For Whom The Bell Tolls*, or Marx, or Victor Hugo, or Upton Sinclair, or Mark Twain, or — getting to the heart of the matter — Jonathan Swift, since satire is propoganda in its purest form?

Rule 3 (paragraph one) “Do not confuse your politics with your writing.”

Rule 3 (paragraph six) "Remember that all writing is political."

Rule 12 "Do not watch television."

Rule 17 "Read Jane Austen."

Question: Is it okay if the young writers also read the Brontes, Defoe, Fielding, Sterne, Coleridge and Peacock?

Rule 20 "Good films are cross-fertilizing."

Question: What the hell has this to do with writing? And does it mean that the young writers may watch films? (See Rule 12).

Metcalf's concept of poetry is astonishingly innocent. He quotes Huxley's *The Doors of Perception*, approvingly, in which occur the words and phrases: *glowing indigo, incandescence, blue fire, azure, unfathomable gentian*. Also, he thinks metal is good in poetry, and plastic is bad. One can see his point of view, of course, having been given an understanding of his mind. I mean, where's the poetry in a knight clad in burnished plastic?

There are very few things more depressing to my mind than reading a bad writer's excited explanation of his

philosophy and working methods. Ray Smith, in "Dinosaur", contributing to the general windiness, asks eagerly: "Isn't that what it's all about?" No, unfortunately, it isn't, it isn't. A writer has to be either crippled by literary dogmatism, or very naive, to ask such a question, and either condition marks a bad writer.

For instance, Alice Munro is certainly the best (I use the word deliberately, knowing how it enrages literary analysts) writer in Canada. She is also young and pretty, which seems vaguely unfair. In her piece, surgically and with characteristic lucidity, she removes all the pretension and pomposity from the dismal business of writing about writing. She says: "Writing or talking about writing makes me superstitiously uncomfortable." Her superstition, of course, is utterly justified. Writing is an act of magic, and of agony. □

LEO SIMPSON, who published a first novel *Arkwright* last fall, is pursuing a second at Madoc, Ontario.

UNSOUND EFFECTS

THE ABSTRACT BEAST

J. MICHAEL YATES

The Sono Nis Press
cloth \$9.95: 322 pages

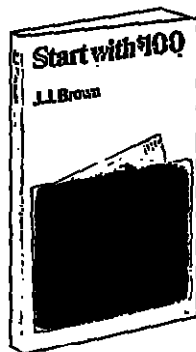
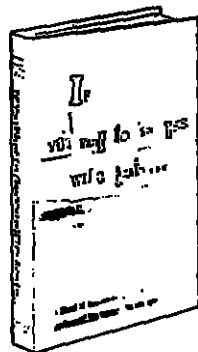
Reviewed by Chris Scott

THERE'S AN interesting and revealing story told by Kafka's friend, Janoush. He and Kafka were walking down the street one day when a little dog jumped out at them. Kafka drew back in terror. "Don't worry, Franz," said Janoush, "it's only a little dog." Kafka answered: "Some people would say it was only a little dog." Along with Janoush, I must confess to being one of those people.

Many of the pieces in Michael Yates' latest book (a collection of radio dramas and short stories) are pervaded with hallucinogenic imagery, a dis-

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tortion of line and perspective which produced in this reader a concomitant state of hypnagogic drowsiness. Perhaps this is because of the (figuratively) large white spaces between, and in between, Yates' sentences. Or perhaps it is because he lacks a sense of humour. Even the humour of panic is conspicuously absent from these pages.

Part of the trouble is that without the ubiquitous sound effects, radio plays do not come across on the page. But no amount of mood and miking can hide jejune thought. Hence in the title piece, a tendentious dialogue between A - The Mind, and B - The Body, the opportunity for exploiting: A - Dualisms Which Have Plagued Western Philosophy Since The Greeks, and B - Possible Psychopathological Cause of Said Dualisms, is lost as the author is hoisted by his own petard. Similarly in another radio drama, *The Calling*, an object neurosis is quite successfully evoked only to be thrown into ludicrous relief against a hyperbolic response and inflated rhetoric.

Yates' dramatic precursors include Pirandello and Ionesco, and there is even an element of the grotesque anti-

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allegories of Alfred Jarry. Were his intentions parodic or satiric, then there would be considerable justification for such rhetoric. After all, most contemporary philosophy and not a little contemporary fiction is worthy of contempt. But Yates, I fear, is too serious, and the impression received is that of a writer lost in an eclectic fog, searching for the true light of his own talent.

Some idea of Yates' fictional technique, for example, may be gained from the first story, "The Hierodule" (a Greek slave dedicated to the service of a temple deity), wherein the narrator records the conversation of a hideously disfigured drawing which is *either* the work of his friend, Monsieur Morse Clary, *or* belongs to the oeuvre of one Jonah Hitler. This factitious telegraphy (Hitler himself was an art student *manqué*) is made the more bizarre when we consider that talking works of art, not to mention labyrinths, animated statues, even hierodules, all play a part in the hermetic-cabalistic tradition of Renaissance Platonism. It is not surprising, therefore, to find Yates quoting (in another story, "De Fabrica," closely modelled after Borges' "The Library") Giordano Bruno's statement that "God is a circle whose circumference is everywhere and whose centre is nowhere at all."

It needs a lightness of touch, even whimsy, to probe the cortical labyrinth. And delicacy, like humour, is not a characteristic of this book, for the influences at work on Yates have yet to be absorbed by him. Indeed, the play which I found the most successful, "The Broadcaster," a savage attack on the kitch world of pop radio, is so far removed from those influences that I can only conclude that he speaks with some authority on the subject.

Lastly, an excellent design and production job has been done on *The Abstract Beast*, though at \$9.95 it is not an inexpensive book. And — on a matter of production — to blurb Yates as a subsistence fisherman and hunter, fiddling while Rome burns, or as Petronius fiddling while Nero burns, is to ask for a very large and very necessary suspension of disbelief. □

CHRIS SCOTT recently published his first novel *Bartleby* with Anansi.

WRITE ON

continued from page 13

conversation, to say who Bickerstaff really was and your weasling on that point in the footnote is disgusting.

Your editorial contains a piece of puffery as old as it is discredited. Please rest assured that one Toronto matron's cancelled subscription need not be confused (except by the self-important) with dreaded searches in the night or with any kind of censorship.

The hand being held up, dear fellow, is not to strike you but to stifle a yawn.

Ms. Sheila H. Kieran
Toronto

A yawn we welcome, but not, dear ms, not another deep breath. VC

Sir:

Isaac Bickerstaff writes moderately clever high school fantasy in the January issue of *Books in Canada*. Now that he has had his snide and irrelevant outburst, perhaps you will arrange for a review of Graeme Gibson's *Communion*?

John Newlove
Toronto

Gladly. We seize this opportunity to invite John Newlove to apply his poetic and editorial perceptions to a further assessment of Graeme Gibson's novel. We will hold an equal space open and promise him our standard fee. VC

Sir:

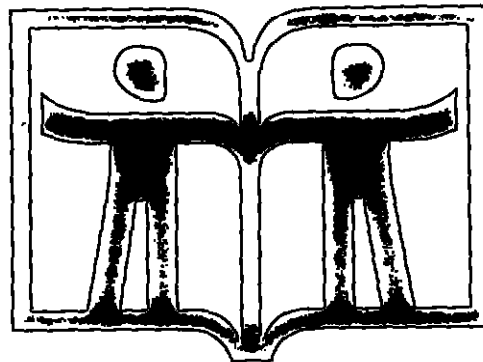
Sometimes a goof can be so ludicrously glaring that, by its very obviousness, it escapes detection from re-draft to re-draft.

Such was the case with the geographical gaffe contained in my review of Joe Rosenthal's book *Indians: A Sketching Odyssey* (*Books in Canada*, January 1972).

Rosenthal's odyssey "to the Bustling tourist centre of Banff, Alberta during its annual Indian Days whoop-de-doo" should read, of course, "to the bustling tourist centre of Calgary during its annual Stampede whoop-de-doo". (Honestly, Mr. Rosenthal, I did read the book through — twice, in fact.)

The very least that must be expected of a reviewer is that he get the facts straight and I've been dutifully flailing myself with a wet eagle feather ever since.

Joe Tarnic



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KNOWING POVERTY AND BEING POOR

THE DIRTY THIRTIES: Canadians in The Great Depression

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paper \$10.50; illustrated: 728 pages

THE WRETCHED OF CANADA: Letters to R. B. Bennett 1930-1935

Edited by L. M. GRAYSON and
MICHAEL BLISS
University of Toronto Press
cloth \$12.50, paper \$3.95: 199 pages

reviewed by Jim Christy

THE DIRTY THIRTIES is a collection of newspaper and magazine articles, RCMP reports, special commission surveys, speeches and reminiscences that make a successful economic compendium to the decade. It is hard to imagine a more thorough financial survey of the Depression. We learn how it affected everyone's pocket book — miners, bankers, investors, fishermen, farmers, schoolteachers, shop girls, the man on the street, and the National Hockey League. After reading the various contributions, it is easy enough to remember, in the case of those like myself who were born after it was all over, to

imagine the whole dreary tableau of those years — the harried investors, the bread lines, the "Bennett Buggies", hundreds of men perched on boxcars ricketing across the prairies, the dust-bowl nightmare, the young men forced into relief camps, the Oshawa Strike, the Regina Riots, the abject poverty, gaunt faces, the worry, and the hope inspired by communism, the CCF, Social Credit, The Union Nationale.

But for those who don't remember or can't imagine the bleakness of poverty or exactly how hard some people suffered, I recommend as an accompanying volume, *The Wretched of Canada: Letters to R. B. Bennett 1930-1935*. The letters often have the impact of a sledge hammer. They bring the awareness of the poverty and misery usually associated with other countries, in Asia or Africa for instance, and with yellow people or black people, but never here and never with white people: families of nine living for weeks on flour and cold water in an unheated one room shack in Saskatchewan in winter, a man in Manitoba who cannot look for work or collect relief because he has no clothes, a crippled 78-year-old man and his 68-year-old wife on relief in New Brunswick who receive one bag of flour and a gallon of paraffin oil each month, a man in Quebec suffering from tuberculosis who can neither pay for his hospital bed nor feed and clothe his seven children. On and on, a continuous tale of misery that can only be read a little at a time.

Incidentally, the extremely lucid introduction by the editors, L. M. Grayson and Michael Bliss summarizes a good deal of the material covered in *The Dirty Thirties*.

The Wretched of Canada fulfills its purpose, but *The Dirty Thirties* leads you to expect more than it gives. It leaves a question unanswered posed in the very first line of the preface: "How did people live through the Depression of the 1930s?" Unwittingly I imagine, it presents a strictly Marxian interpretation of the decade. How indeed did people live through it? Was everyone mechanically acting out their roles scripted by history or did they do *anything* which wasn't determined by economics? The book fails to re-create the intellectual climate and just as important the social life of the time. How did the people bear the severity of the 1930s? How did they escape? (Is it coincidence that the cinema of the time provided a trap door to fantasy and was in its glittering Golden Age?)

Although there are poems from *Social Notes* by F. R. Scott, an article by Hugh Garner about being on the bum, which should have been better, and a thoroughly unenlightening essay comparing the 1930s and the present by Hugh MacLennan, much more could have been included by poets and novelists to provide necessary amplitude.

The Dirty Thirties will probably be the standard economic text for some time but the decade remains largely unexplored. □

JIM CHRISTY, whose book *The New Refugees* was published last fall, is a journeyman writer; he has just returned from a hitch through Spain, Yugoslavia, Switzerland and West Germany.

PIONEER GARDENS

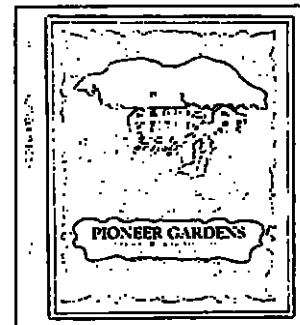
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A PLANET ECONOMY

ASTROLOGICAL WARNINGS & THE STOCK MARKET

THOMAS RIEDER

Pagurian Press
cloth \$6.95; diagrams; 116 pages

BULLS, BEARS AND SHEEP

JOHN G. DOHERTY
& TIMOTHY PRITCHARD

McClelland & Stewart
paper \$4.95; 120 pages

reviewed by E. A. Beder

MR. RIEDER in his study follows a quite respectable path. After all, wasn't it Jevons who advanced the theory that fluctuations in the economy were caused by sunspots? If only a fraction of the people who responded to Jevons should come to believe that the stars could lead to gains in the stock market then Mr. Rieder will be rich — merely as a by-product of his major aim.

The question is, can market players look forward to similar financial success if they follow the course of action or heed the warnings outlined to them in chapter and chart? That is, are they willing to accept the theory that there exists some form of correlation between the Sun, the Earth and the major planets and that Mars has a significant bearing on what appears on the tape in the board rooms?

The terminology is a little difficult to follow:

On March 31, 1972, Mars is conjunct Saturn and opposes Neptune within 2°19'. According to the criteria developed in chapters 5 and 6, such a planetary pattern has a negative value of -2, and thus is 70% likely to signal a bad market pattern . . .

A 70% possibility is not enough for your ordinary market player, used to the customary injunction, buy, sell or hold. He wants firmer stuff on which to make a decision.

Mr. Rieder has made a serious study of his subject, going back over a long period to bear out his theories, and the book contains numerous charts and

elementary lessons in astrology which won't hurt anyone. But to say that the market is ruled by the planets is just too big a claim to make.

Social and economic disturbances play a big part in market fluctuations and who knows when a strike or revolution may break out? Markets are influenced by faulty decisions on the part of management, crookedness on the part of insiders, abrupt changes in the demand for commodities and above all by unregulated capital investment. Surely it is not possible to space such regressive occurrences at the four-and-a-half-year intervals which Mr. Rieder sets such store by.

Still this is a fresh and interesting attempt to solve an age old riddle: How to make money in the stock market. If your market worries leave you free to absorb new ideas, have a go at it.

Bulls, Bears and Sheep is a more orthodox approach to getting rich in the stock market. In fact, it is billed as "a profit strategy for the small investor."

It begins by surveying the effect such measures as the White Paper could have on the financial institutions and their reaction: "Looking for stocks that would be most favoured the analysts began drawing up their lists of recommended stocks with the banks and trust companies, the steels and several other industrials."

This is probably a better way of understanding how markets move — they hardly wait for planetary influences — "The enthusiasm was contagious . . . reaction among institutional investors was almost immediate."

This show of strength brings in the small investor (but prices have now moved upward) and thus the little man gets "hosed" as they call it.

Such an imbalance between big and small investors is nothing new, and it is doubtful if there can be any way of righting the disparity. The people in a position to know (or guess shrewdly) who have the money to back up this knowledge, will always act first (up or down) and Charlie Chump as the small man is called here, will always be in the rear. □

E. A. BEDER, who has written and lectured on politics and economics, is a student of the stock market.

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D. C. Gillespie, illustrations by Garry Hamilton

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