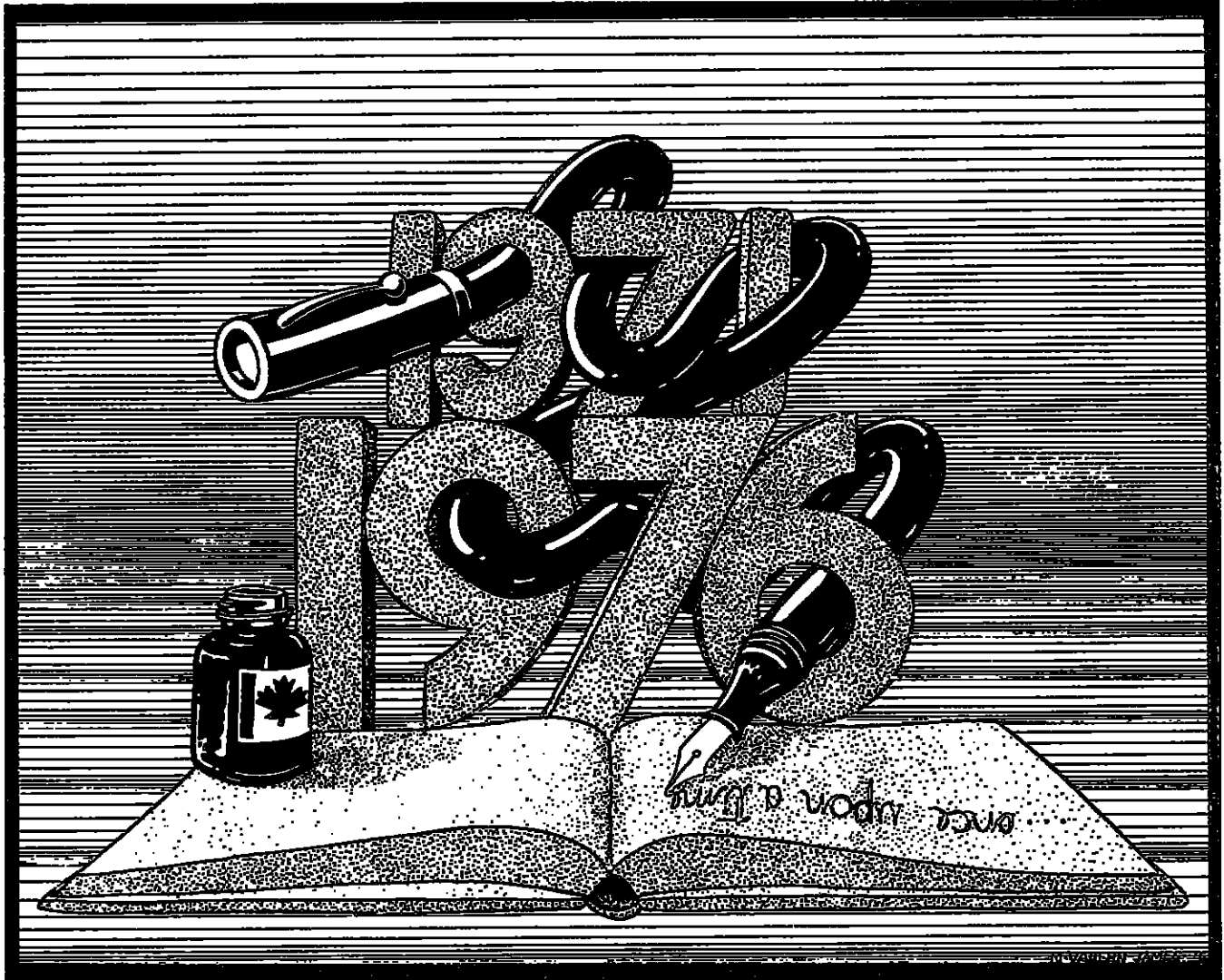


BOOKS *in* CANADA

a national review of books

VOLUME 5, NUMBER 5

MAY 1976



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BOOKS in CANADA

Vol. 5 No. 5

May, 1976

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FLOWERS FROM THE COMPOST

'A guest editorial reviews CanLit's progress — and ours — in the past five years

By ROBERT FULFORD

ANNIVERSARIES LIKE this one produce thoughts **about** the past, and in this case I think not just of the immediate past — the five years *Books in Canada* has been publishing — but of the two decades or so in **which** I've been involved **with** literature as a journalist, a critic, and **an** editor. During this time the central problem for all of us, however we may have separately defined it, has been the creation of a literary community in English Canada.

Literature springs from many sources but surely the **most** necessary one is a lively community of readers and writers, editors and **publishers**; what the film people longingly call "**an** industry," in various ways. *Books in Canada* has been addressing **itself to** this issue since the day it was founded.

The problem is as old as Canada, yet it presents itself in each generation in a different shape — and calls forth from each wave of ivriters a separate response. My generation, the one that reached its **20s** in the **1950s**, approached it in

What has happened is that serious literature in English Canada has built, for the first time, a structure to con&in its activities.

the way least likely to bear results. (I can claim **only** hindsight knowledge: I didn't know at the time how wrong we were.!) Our mistake was to set **our** sights far **too** low. We were modest, inoffensive young chaps: we didn't want to impose our views on anyone. We didn't expect much from Canadian society and we didn't really think that Canadian society could expect **much from** us. Ours was the **literary/**journalistic equivalent of the Quiet Diplomacy practiced by **our** cousins and uncles in Ottawa. We **wanted** to be *liked*, or *at least tolerated*, but **we** never imagined we could impress anyone.

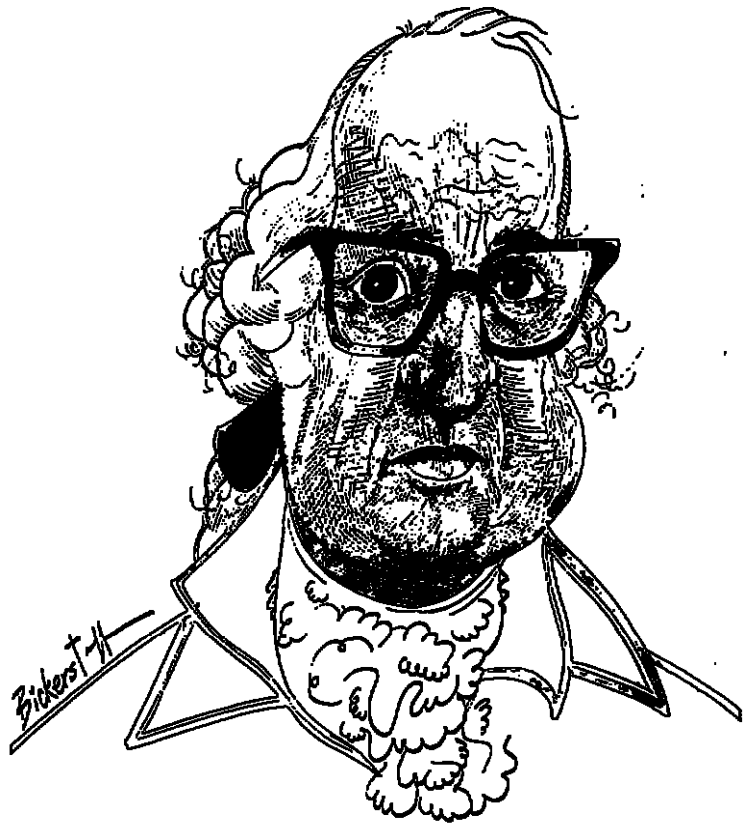
If we were academics we accepted the rigid structure of **Academe** and the slow but steady — and inconspicuous — rise towards tenure. If **we** were journalists we accepted the nearly totalitarian conditions of big-corporation newspapers and magazines, whose goal was always an agreeable and profitable blandness. If we were **creative** writers we accepted whatever few crumbs might be granted us by the publishing houses or the CBC or the **theatres**. We wanted, above all, to prove we **could fit in**.

Of course this is self-parody and **of** course there were magnificent exceptions, like **Mordecai Richler**; just as there were exceptions in earlier generations, like **Earle Birney**, and Irving Layton. These people never accepted meekly the **role** of occasional entertainer offered to them by an apathetic Canadian society but instead asserted boldly their individual selves. Such was the tone of our literary life, however, that these towering figures failed to influence most of those **around** them. They were sports, and their careers were to be admired but not emulated.

It's no news that all this changed **sometime-late** in the **1960s**, but it's still worth pointing out that the change has not yet been entirely understood and is still a **long** way from being assimilated. What changed fundamentally was the attitude of literary people **toward** their own **lives** and their own work, and toward society as a whole. **These changes** came slowly, in bits and pieces — there never was a **manifesto**, **an** inconvenience for future historians — and it's hard to track them. Yet I know as well as I know anything that the very air we breathe as literary **people** has changed in the last decade and that in recent years we have embarked on something fresh and new.

What has happened is that serious literature in English Canada has built, for the first time, a structure to contain its activities. The structure **remains unsound**, of course. From time to time bits of it fall off. There is no way of being sure, **when you** wake up in the morning, that the House of **Anansi** or the *Malahat Review* or CBC **Anthology** or the University of Toronto writers-in-residence program **will still be there**. **But the structure exists** and it seems to me that its outlines at least are permanent.

It came about not because a few clever men and women dreamt it into being but because a variety of social and cultural forces converged at one point. One of these was **nationalism**, which was both a cause and effect of the new literary situation. Another was the Canada **Council**, handed down to us by aristocratic **ancestors** like Vincent Massey and



Louis St. Lam-em. expressing the guilt of a rich but uncultured society. Another was the remarkable **persistence** of a thinly spread senior generation of literary men — principally lack McClelland. Robert Weaver, George Woodcock,

The men and women who are running most of the publishing houses today realize that the rules have changed and that writing and publishing are now a much more natural and commonplace aspect of Canadian life. ...

and Malcolm Ross — in planting seeds, year after year, in what must at times have seemed very stony ground. Still **another** was the courage of a few young **writers** who, faced with a literary climate they couldn't tolerate, set out to build their own publishing houses and **create**, if necessary, an audience for the Canadian literature they believed should be published: here Dennis Lee and Dave Godfrey were **first** among dozens. **But** perhaps the most influential force **of all** was the astounding growth of serious writing and reading that followed the introduction of mass university and college education in the 1960s. Even if **the** universities barely noticed Canadian literature, they introduced hundreds of thousands to the serious possibilities of fiction and poetry: and this naturally encouraged, in a few thousand students, the tendency to look around at their own culture and seek **out** the literary inspiration to be found there.

The result is that vastly more books are **written** and published now than anyone could have imagined a dozen years ago. When I wrote a daily book column for the **Toronto Star** in the early **1960s** I tried to review every serious novel by a Canadian published in English; **and** some seasons I nearly succeeded. Today it would **take** a platoon of critics to attempt the same task.

There is now a widespread feeling that the publishing movement may have gone too far, and that there's probably not an unpublished **manuscript** left in anybody's bureau drawer. The people who hold this view are, almost without exception, members of an older generation trained in a more constricted literary atmosphere. The men **and** women who are running most of the publishing houses today realize **that** the rules have changed and that writing and publishing are now a much more natural and commonplace aspect

There is a very great difference between a serious book publisher and a cultural bureaucrat, and it's disquieting to see that distinction being lost.

of Canadian life than in the **1960s**. **They** realize also that literary excellence, when it comes, will be most likely to appear **as** a singular and **exceptional** part of a larger literary movement. Fraser Sutherland said it well in the first issue of **Northern Journey**, four years ago: "Much written about Canadian **culture** and identity is garbage. Yet out of it all a **Gogol** or a Tolstoy may emerge who superbly synthesizes the muddleheadedness into excellence. **flowers** require the compost heap."

Exactly. But there is a more critical issue facing the young publishers who have appeared in the last five years: how **far** can they go into politics before they lose **sight** of their responsibilities as publishers? **I** don't mean Marxist politics or **electoral** politics — those are as likely as not to

PENELOPE'S WEB
Some Perceptions of Women in Western
Civilization

N. E. S. Griffiths

Penelope's **Web** shows that while there has **always** been some prejudice against women in the **past** — and against Jews, Blacks, slaves, **and** other minority **groups** — the real discrimination **against women had its roots in the seventeenth century, and that only during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries** did discrimination become **widespread** throughout all aspects of **society**. Yet during this period there was strong resistance to social pressures **on** women, a resistance that has all **too** often been overlooked. After outlining some of the events that produced the **present** organization of western society, **Penelope's Web goes on to suggest** the questions that **must** be examined by the women's **liberation** movement — questions about the **position** of both men and women in **our** society.

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For the first time at the Montreal International Book Fair 1976.

produce **great books**, and the books may well be of **great value** to the country. I mean cultural politics, the endless round of **grant-grabbing**, the squabbles **over the IPA** and the CBPC and all the other alphabet-soup organizations created to provide organizational support for publishers. There are times when these loom so large in the publishers' lives that the books themselves are forced to take second place. There is a very great difference between a serious book publisher and a cultural bureaucrat, and it's disquieting **to see** that distinction being lost. In this sense **the situation** may grow worse as government agencies cut back on their grants and the political infighting grows more desperate.

For the last **five years** *Books in Canada* has played an increasingly central role in the English Canadian publishing movement. Since its first issue the magazine has been a highly welcome if also a rather unsteady guide to the in-

creasingly complicated world it **covers**. I've never seen an issue that seemed to me to reach the level I wanted it to reach, at the same time I've never seen one that didn't hold my interest in **several** places. *Books in Canada* occupies, of course, a unique position, being **neither** coterie literary journal **nor** mass magazine nor trade paper. It speaks neither to specialists nor to those readers interested only in a few best sellers. Its editors seem to assume, rightly or wrongly, that there is a substantial **community** of readers whose interests in Canadian writing are both broad and serious.

At its best the magazine has engaged our attention (not least, of course, in the ritual bloodletting of the **letters column**) and has **thus** fulfilled its most **important** function. If the magazine has a central message it is this: **out** there, in Canadian writing, there is a vast world of **interest** and **value**. It conveys that message very well. □

UNSTRANGE LOVE

How a bibliophile learned to beat inflation 'by collecting the atomic bomb

By AL PURDY

IN THIS AGE of **inflation**, the safest things to buy are supposedly gold, diamonds, real estate, and maybe an oil well or two. What about books? (The question is prompted by the annual **Toronto** Antiquarian Book Fair, which is upon us again: it will be held in the King Edward Sheraton Hotel May 12-14.) If you're in no hurry to make a fast buck, **consider** that antiquarian books **have** kept pace with and in some **cases** exceeded the 12 per cent national inflation rate. **Cogitate over** the fact that Bartlett's *Canadian Scenery*, published in England in 1842, was worth perhaps \$20 in the 1930s, but now sells for 5600 to 5800, depending on condition and binding. Consider **Heriot's Travels in the Canadas**, published in England at the beginning of the 19th century, **which** is about the **same** price. And **Robert Gourlay**, once involved in the Upper Canada Rebellion of 1837, later wrote books that sell for **nearly \$1,000**. Early **explorers** of Canada and the Arctic **run** much higher than that. For

There is a hunting instinct to all this, also common to bird-dogs and women in search of second husbands.

instance, Captain James Cook, the globe-girdling explorer **who** merely touched the coasts of Canada, fetched a price of more than **\$5,000** the last time I saw his books **catalogued**.

However, things aren't as simple as that: **you don't** pick up Cook or Champlain or John Ross's 1819 Arctic voyage for **peanuts**. Antiquarian booksellers know their business. But you **can** be lucky occasionally, and sometimes unearth dusty volumes worth 5100 or so at an ordinary **bookshop** — particularly in the U.S. and England where they can be a bit careless over Canadian books. For instance, I paid 53 for *A Hundred Years Afellin'* in a Florida junk shop. The dealer charged too much for what he thought it was, and didn't know the book's real worth. I didn't rush to tell him. **Written** anonymously by Charlotte **Whitton** it amounts to an

early history of lumbering in the Ottawa Valley, and sells for upwards of 575 in Canada. Another time, at an Oxford **bookshop** in England, I noticed *Ranching with Lords and Commons* by John Craig. (It deals with turn-of-the-century ranching in Alberta.) I reached for the book with trepidation and tingling nerves. That Oxford bookseller was an antiquarian dealer who should have known his prices. But he didn't, at least not in this case. Craig's book cost me 30 shillings, about 54.50 at the time, and was **even** then worth 5100.

The best buy in terms of percentage increase over the original **price** I ever found was a book about early British Columbia coinage and currency, published by the province. It was **priced** at **five** cents and worth some 535. I found it in an "opportunity shop," thus trespassing on the antiquarian dealers' own hunting preserves. Such op shops — Sally Ann stores, St. Vincent de **Pauls**, Crippled Civilians stores, and so forth — are a **source** of endless enjoyment for treasure hunters like myself. I found a signed copy of Frederick Cook's *My Discovery of the Pole* in one of them for 25 cents. Market price: 535.

The first question that might come to mind for a neophyte treasure hunter is: How do you know what a book is worth? The basic tool is a dealer's **catalogue**, in fact a lot of **catalogues**. Sooner or later **you are** liable to find every Canadian book listed — description and price — in these **catalogues**. But the masons for high prices? There are all sorts of them. If an early explorer wrote his own book about his adventures (as Henry Kelsey did in bad **doggered** verse), that book is worth much **more** than a later description by somebody else, of what our **man** did. (Incidentally, **Kelsey's** manuscript was discovered — I think in Ireland — in this **century**; hence its value is relatively low.) In other words basic books, those that return to original **sources** of information about place or subject, are valuable. As are books in small editions by **well-known** writers, numbered, signed and fancied up for the bibliophiliac trade. However, the limited and signed edition is a much more recent development of publishing — and generally done in **literature**, of which more later.

There is a hunting instinct about all this, also common to bird-dogs and women in search of second husbands. In some cases, you don't even know why you pick up a book that isn't an old county history, and might even be a tract on raising aphrodisiac mushrooms. Some Four years ago in the U.S., I bought an American government publication outlining the various mathematics connected with the atomic bomb. It was dated 1945 or '46 as I recall. I picked it up with a slight curiosity, not much tingling of the hunter's antennae. And why not pick it up? The book was only 25 cents. Since I do some horse-trading in books, I took the atomic bomb tract to a Toronto dealer. He didn't know what the book w&worth either, but kept it and said he'd try to find out. Last summer I got a note from him mentioning casually that I had a credit of \$150 at his store any time I wanted to call. The book's real value was at least \$350. and perhaps much more. (I paid for the dealer's knowledge.) It had a basic scientific relation with the first horror bombs exploded over Japan in 1945. The Manhattan Project was mine for 25 cents.

In a Philadelphia bookshop at a later date. I noticed a decent copy of D. H. Lawrence's *Lady Chatterly's Lover*. Now I love Lawrence, and think him one of the three or four modern poets I've learned most from. But many many editions of *Lady Chatterly* have been published; the book has been banned, expurgated, taken to court, and probably been burned at one time or other by some small-town Presbyterian or Catholic. However. this copy has been published in Florence in 1928. *Aha-aha*, I said to myself in italics with antennae-quivering violently: 1928 would have been around that book's publication date in Italy, since at the time English and U.S. publishers were afraid to touch a book with such explicit descriptions and language of the sexual act. Therefore, it might just be the first edition of a modern classic. Anyway. I bought the book for three bucks.

Here is all that remains of proud D. H. Lawrence, dissolute Dylan, plus the long parade of little-known scribblers, male and female transmitters of passion and prophecy to paper.

and snuck furtively away from the counter hoping the lady clerk wouldn't notice what I had.

As it turned out, I had very little. *Lady Chatterly* had been pirated by fly-by-night publishers several times during its first year of issue. But you'd need a bibliography to know my book was pirated. and who carries one of those in hip pocket or purse? My *Lady Chat* was worth about \$15. And I'm still searching for a copy of *Birds, Beasts and Flowers* by Lawrence. I've read all the poems in it already. but such is my esteem for Lawrence that I still want to own a first edition. That's love, not bibliophilia.

As for Canadian literature, any novel or book of poems is automatically worth \$5 once a dealer catalogues it. The most valuable item is probably Morley Callaghan's *No Man's Meat*, a 500-copy edition, signed and boxed, published in Paris in 1931. But more and more of these books have been turning up at dealers lately; I'd suspect Callaghan of squirreling them away if he weren't so rich already.

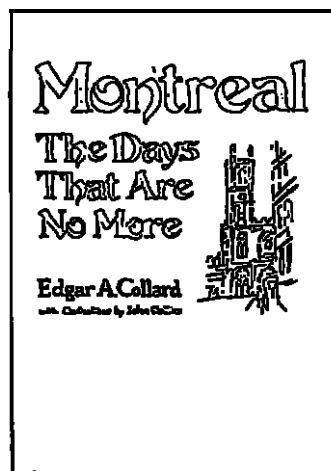
Limited, signed editions are almost a fashion these days. and their scarcity a selling point for dealers. I once received a catalogue from a Cleveland bookseller describing a book by Irving Layton: "Unsigned — rare in this condition." And I generally tell anyone who wants a book I've written signed that it knocks 50 cents off the value. Which is true. in my case.

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Anyway, let's sum up this small treasure-hunter's manual. The **forementioned** opportunity shops and dusty hole-in-the-wall junk shops are the best places to pick up books cheaply. Canadian books were generally published in small editions, **apart** from such writers as Ralph **Connor**, Gilbert Parker, and Hugh **MacLennan**. That's one of the reasons why their five-buck price **tag** remains constant. And you have to know the names of Canadian authors. For instance, Frank Packard, **Hulbert Footner**, H. Bedford-Jones, Martha **Ostenso**, and many others were published in the U.S. and Britain years ago. They **are** Canadians. But how would the ordinary book-buyer know that without extensive **bibliophilie** knowledge?

The **reasons** for book collecting are many and varied, but the best reason for me is that it's a lot of fun. Of course I

don't read all the books I pick up, since my own interests run to modern literature; but book-lined walls make a congenial background, and give me a pleasant feeling of being at home with things I know best. The generations gather, the past converges, the world **collects** itself in name **after** dusty name on my bookshelves. The **coloured** bindings of cloth and leather each signify weeks, months, and years spent in research and wiling. Here is all that remains of proud D. Ii. Lawrence, dissolute Dylan, plus the long parade of little-known scribblers, male and female transmitters of passion and prophecy to paper. The failures might seem slightly pitiful now — but they too took their chances and lived the writing lives they wanted to live. I will join them myself, **not, long** from now. □

HOW NOT TO QUINCE WORDS

A translator reflects on Jacques Ferron, the political doctor who writes with a scalpel

By RAYELLENWOOD

JACQUES FERRON bears witness, never separating his own life as a political **animal** and physician **from** the collective mythology he creates in his tales, making no concession to what we might expect from him. Readers who best like his flamboyant wit and fantasy might be disappointed at **first** glance with *Wild Roses* (translated by **Betty Bednarski**, McClelland & Stewart, 123 pages, \$6.95 cloth), such a gentle tale about a bemused, innocently egotistical man unable to cope with his wife's suicide, his guilt, his daughter. The story's unabashed sentimentality is, as usual, undercut by the pace and incision of the telling and besides, one of **Ferron's** great virtues is his ability to show the significance of what seems unheroic and commonplace (or the commonplace **in** what seems heroic).

Wild Roses deals with isolation and well-meaning oppression. The young housewife, completely alone in the suburbs of a petroleum **civilization**, is as out of place as the wild roses-uprooted, domesticated love- that block the sunlight in her bedroom window and stifle her with the

He regards so-called mental patients as modern lepers whose forced isolation only aggravates their problems. They are a major concern in a number of his works.. .

sweet scent her husband associates with conjugal bliss. A child who apparently hates her only completes her depression. The husband, called Baron, functions perfectly as a rising executive but is bewildered by his wife, nor does he have any **real** contact with his daughter once he sends her to be kept by a **chiac** family in New Brunswick. His idealized and guilty love of the wife-daughter excludes any other woman. The child **Rose-Aimée**, in turn, is not allowed to be a **chiac**, nor can she fit into her father's lonely.

businessman's bilingual Montreal life. When the **child-**turned-woman finally rejects Baron, a life-long obsession that his wife has not committed suicide but is touring the world from a base *in* Casablanca finally takes complete hold of him and, confined to the asylum of Saint-Jean-de-Dieu, he writes a long series of love letters that he sends to her there, and which his daughter is surprised to find waiting for her when she arrives by chance in the city. Rushing to Montreal, she is too **late** to stop **his** own suicide.

A central **scene** in the book, where **Baron** visits **Rose-Aimée** accompanied by beautiful Miss Higgitt, **reluctant** child of Maritime Anglo-Saxon **aristocracy**, is at first **puzzling** because it seems so gratuitous. Why does **Ferron** turn it into a lesson on regional history, a commentary on relations between English and French, **Québécois** and **Acadien**, *an essay on Moncton?* **Because** clearly that city and region represent a point of confused intersection between French and English, a no-man's land that results at best in the creation of artificial institutions like the **University** of Moncton, at worst in the complete death of French.

On this vast continent where all Europe united under England's command to conquer Asia, friendly Indian peoples have succumbed to brutal genocide and subtle but equally efficient ethnocide. The victor has felt the need to perpetuate his racist instincts, extending his policy of ethnocide to European immigrants, Québécois, Acadiens, little suspecting that in so doing he is creating in their place Americans more monstrous than himself. And under such circumstances no form of resistance can every be condemned, though in order to survive it may be necessary to resort to ruses which are far from honourable, I know.

So speaks Baron in a moment of lucidity, much against company policy. He intends to tell his daughter such things when she is older, but never does because, in fact, he is walking evidence of the slow **death** he sees in Moncton. Why do we have a brief account of Louis **Hémon**? Because, like Baron, he is a pathetic character who isolated himself, after his wife went mad, from his daughter and his people, to die alone in Canada. These are the kinds of connections Ferron often makes-between social forces and individual

suffering. between **stories** of individuals and the history of a people. The well-grounded folk in *Wild Roses* are the two **chiac** families who have retained their sense of family. and (more or less) of language and culture.

The actual story is followed by another seemingly **gratuitous** document: a love letter **from an** inmate at **Saint-Jean-de-Dieu** asylum to her **husband**. **Ferron** speaks **elsewhere** of "**Aline Dupire** who went mad at **Sorel**, far from the indispensable company of her people," and **here** he writes a long introduction to **her** letter. He regards so-called mental patients as modem lepers whose forced isolation only aggravates their problems. They are a major concern in a number of his works and in his life, since he worked at **Saint-Jean-de-Dieu** asylum. His crusade against the **Papa-boss** psychiatrization of helpless people (who is more mud. Baton or **Aline?**) cannot be dissociated **from**, say, his crusade against misuse of **the police**.

So *Wild Roses* **treats** a number of themes found elsewhere in **Ferron's** writings, **but** in an understated way, giving a **clear** sense of the compassion that underlies even his most ferocious polemic. Betty **Bednarski's** translation is careful, fluent, and self-effacing. Her quietly formal style seems particularly apt for this book. I think so, even though the observation is not my own, but Dr. **Ferron's**.

Wild Roses adds to what is now a **respectable** beginner's collection of **Ferron** in English, a **taste** of his 1.5 or so volumes of plays, stories, essays and "novels," **together** with an enormous correspondence to newspapers and journals of various kinds, all interconnected pieces in the large, corrective, and inspiring **historo-mythology** of the **Québécois** written with the thorn he pokes in their sides. The **first** English translation of his work was also done by Betty **Bednarski**: a selection of the **Contes**, published by Anansi as *Tales From the Uncertain Country*. In the last three years we have had English versions of *Cotnoir, Le Saint-Elias* and *L'Amélianchier (The Juneberry Tree)*, the

He looks uncommonly like Alice's mock turtle except for the eyes, glinting up or sideways, more mocking than lugubrious, from under bushy brows.

first two by Pierre **Cloutier**, the last by Raymond Chamberlain, all **three** Harvest House publications. My own versions of *Papa Boss* and *Les Confitures de coing (Quince Jam)* appeared in *Exile* 1.3 and II. 1. There have been other translations of **short** pieces by various people in various places.

TRANSLATION IS A tricky business, and especially so with Jacques **Ferron**. He has writer's stoop and a small **pot** belly. His neck **projects** forward and up **from** a carapace of unkempt **grey** suit as he shuffles quite gracefully in his (**year-round?**) sandals. His nose is large and hooked. His **eye-brows** are very animated, but at rest they **slope** down like inverted commas. He looks uncommonly like a **metamorphosis** of Alice's mock turtle except for the eyes, glinting up or sideways, more **mocking** than lugubrious, from under the bushy **brows**. Face-to-face, you still feel he is looking back to see if you can follow. It's hard work to hold the thread of allusions, gentle jokes, jibes. The voice is quiet and often swallowed in a smile as rising, **questioning**, "u u u hm?" His conversation seems easy and rambling, but nothing is **gratuitous**. You must always be

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FROM CANADIAN COLLECTIONS



ROGER F. GARDINER

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Text: Roger F. Gardiner, Fine Arts Librarian, University of Western Ontario. Analysis: Max Allen, Curator, Canadian Museum of Carpets and Textiles. Photographs: Peter MacCallum.

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ready to do a double-take. The same applies in translating his books, but we don't have recourse to voice and eyes.

Being much concerned with the purity of his French (his identity), Ferron seldom uses puns and never invents words. On the other hand, he enjoys discovering old terms with legitimate pedigree, long out of use. So it was with "gueurlite" which appeared in *Confitures* in the phrase "suns avoir trois couilles et deux gueurlites comme Lord Acton." "Couilles" means "balls" (testes), so I can guess at the meaning of their accompaniment, but a translator must (ideally) be sure. Ask one's *Québécois* friends — nobody knows. Write the author? Seems logical. Reply by return (translated here, naturally):

I was wondering what you meant by that Lord Acton. I don't know who he is, but he is disagreeable to me all the same because the immodest Pierre Trudeau (the Holy Ghost only did it once) and Claude Ryan seem to like him. Luckily, I reread Les Confitures de Coing. Two "gueurlites," they hang down, they're good for nothing. Just to please you, I'll say that they can't be translated by one of your good old four-letter words.

A few days later, I receive a page torn from a book on which is written a poem by one Marc Cerisier, apparently in the Poitou dialect, entitled "Paur Gueurlite!" He (it) loved a "gueurlite" but, like a poet, never had the courage to tell her (it) outright before Death came to announce that his time was up. A scribbled note says, "No need to search any longer for the origin of gueurlite." That's not what I was after, but I'm confident enough to let it stand as "three balls and two pricks." Of such stuff is literary history made.

In that same book there is a little poem which echoes some of the central motifs having to do with following the *Rivière du Loup* uphill to its source, back to innocence and the loss of it, back to a place analogous to Eden. In it I met the lines:

*On fait les foins pendant que le pois
de la gaudriole
Fleurite aux flancs du coteau.*

The problem is the word *gaudriole* which in my Larousse means a "broad joke" or "coarse jest" and everywhere else I looked suggested some kind of ribaldry. The poem itself is lightly erotic, so I made it:

*Haymaking starts, while the sweet peas
of dalliance
Flower on the hillside.*

A nice touch, I thought, having even considered a more Wife-of-Bathish "dalliance". But Roy Chamberlain tells me *gaudriole* is an old Canadian word meaning "oats."

En revanche I insist that Mr. Chamberlain's rendering of Ferron's epithet for the language (*ouhonnedeurfoule-dé!* *Ouhonnedeurfoule-dé!*) of Mr. Northrop, metamorphosis of Alice's white rabbit (*The Juneberry Tree*, page 9), as "his forest-language" (for "*sa langue forestière*") is quite unsatisfactory, as this comment from the original author will show:

It was Raymond Queneau who decided that English was a "*langue forestière*," no doubt because people used to light big bonfires on the beaches to announce their arrival. There are some very loose associations in any language, loose yet pertinent. So it is with this



series to conjure on: *langue forestière* — *bûchers* (wood piles) *habits rouges* (red coats) which used to end up, every month, after a few days visiting the ladies, in what they called *la descente des Anglais* (literally "the descent of the English," but *descente* can also mean a military incursion, a police raid, a moral come-down, stooping, not to mention detumescence.)

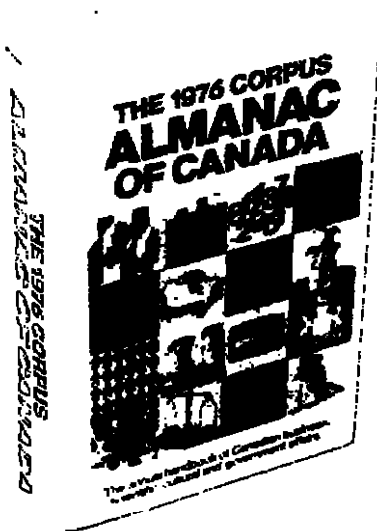
I offer this correction in all modesty for the good of our profession.

Dr. Ferron is a self-confessed plagiarist who delights in unacknowledging his sources. Especially when I know he has pillaged an *anglais*, I feel obliged to restore the original, but it's not always easy. He says the passage from Frank's *Gotha of Quebec in Confitures* is stolen from Samuel Butler. I can't find it, so the readers of *Quince Jam* have a translation from English to French re-translated into English, with who knows what ludicrous results?

Readers of the half-dozen versions mentioned earlier are getting basically accurate and readable renderings. The subtle question of style and tone is something else. They must realize that if there is only one Ferron (a debatable question), there are at least four slightly different ones in translation. Betty Bednarski's is correct, somewhat British around the edges ("But I shan't see you again! Go on, off with you, he said indulgently. And off I went." — *Tales*, page 20); Pierre Cloutier's sometimes slips into *Français* ("Well, don't come and tell me you've just been launching a cow, Father" — *Saint Elias*, page 14); Ray Chamberlain's is sometimes stuffy ("And so we go, fortunate the while to know where we come from" — *The Juneberry Tree*, page 8). If I knew where my own ticks were, I'd scratch. There is no saying what is right or wrong, especially with a writer

like Ferron, who so carefully walks the knife edge between the colloquial (never falling into slang and jargon) and the formally rhetorical (never descending to pomposity): it's a question of taste. We all have trouble with those long sentences that look so awkward and self-indulgent until you try to break them up or rephrase them. We all try to deal with them in our own way.

My own judgement of a translation, after its basic fidelity and readability have been established, will depend on the precision of the rendering. I know how tempting it is to accept the first word that comes to mind, or the circumlocution that avoids problems with a specifically chosen word. Betty Bednarski and Ray Chamberlain seldom indulge, but Pierre Cloutier does on occasion. In *The Saint Elias*, where Ferron's character explains how they built a ship "*pour briser l'érou de notre pays*" and then shouts "*que soit brisé l'érou du Golfe!*", Cloutier's says "we wanted to be free" and "Let the Gulf release us!" (page 15). The meaning is there, but the original forceful image of bursting out of jail has become generalized. Cloutier's Father Tourigny says that His Excellency Bishop Lafleche's opinion "is irrelevant" (page 23); Ferron's Father Tourigny mentions also that it is about as important to him as the good Bishop's blowing his nose. This may seem petty, and I am sure similar examples can be found in my own work, but in principle such imprecision needs pointing out because it causes the translation to lose a subtle sharpness of focus that the original had. Of course, who knows what has been done to Cloutier's work by an editor capable of advertising *The Saint Elias* as "a Canadian 'Fiddler on the Roof'" and "just a good yam"? □



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THE CHURCH MORBID

Three Jews have 'lit a fuse under the bum of Christendom' and a fourth supplies the fireworks

For My Brother Jesus, by Irving Layton, McClelland & Stewart, 128 pages, \$4.95 paper (ISBN 0-7710-4847-5).

By ERNEST HARRISON

THIS REVIEW IS by a bourgeois Wasp who has never written a line of poetry in his life. Is it possible, from a background that represents the seed-ground of Jewish persecution, to assess the poetry of *For My Brother Jesus*? This new work proclaims Layton's dedication to himself as a Jew in a more powerful and uncompromising manner than anything he has written. He stands on the kitchen table, waving his fist at his persecutors, his neighbours with the pinched Christian lips, the robbers of the Messiah. The reader, at Layton's unequivocal and unambiguous challenge, is grabbed by his soul, his mind, his artistic sense, and his balls; and he finds himself hypnotised. Here is the Jew at his best, his most forthright, his wittiest, and his most frightening; realistic, humble, and dictatorial; loving and bectoring all at once.

It would be easy to accuse Layton of picking up old themes, and no doubt this will be done. Yet the poet, when legislating, is entitled to focus on those universal themes that start with the Garden of Eden. "I wish," he says, "we

could go back to the beginning" where there is only God and the poet. This wistful desire occurs at the start of the collection. By the end, the daydream is shattered and we all know where we are, in a blood-letting world of smashed humanity. Here, however, the poet balances Eden with Paradise and the victim is "finally at peace forever with the violent life."

Throughout the creative and all-embracing middle of this anthology, we meet the man called Christ. For a Jew, the name matters grandly and Layton is concerned that we understand. "My name is Jeshua, not Jesus," curses the Man throughout, a Jew of the Jews and for the Jews. I have taken part in many hundreds of Christian study groups and asked members to set down their picture of Christ. The combined portrait was always a reflection of the group, a mosaic whose dominant characteristic was Western, clean, middle-class, and Catholic (or if 'you like, Protestant; the words are usually interchangeable). He was never perceived as a real Jew. Even when we were aware of the trap and protected ourselves, he was a cleaned-up Jew. We were, of course, bound to fail in our task. Only a Jew can see Jesus whole and it is an astounding fact that Layton is the first Jewish poet to scream the true agony of the cross, the Jesus who knew that he would be impounded by a group who would use him to scourge his racial brothers:

*I curse you, Saul of Tarsus,
I curse you, O epileptic Hellenized rod,
For I who preached God's love and justice
Who brought the glad tidings to make Jew and Roman free
See how from your sick converts my people must hide and flee.*

There is nothing intellectually new here, of course; many Christians have pulled back from Paul's embarrassing malice. But the emotional note is new, because it is authentic. It is impossible for those who kill the heretic to understand his agony or speak with his burned tongue. The madness of the Church can best be understood by its victims:

*Sometimes, brother Jeshua, I wonder
whether you know
what imbecilities have been said and done
in your name, what madneses.*

Perhaps the most severe madness that the Jew suffers is that the Christian Church has so often destroyed him in the name of Love:

*One pontiff invented the ghetto;
more tender and loving, another commanded
shivering ghosts to wear out the cobblestones
warmed by the yellow star of David.*

The destructiveness of the Christian Church has, since the days of Jerome, been rooted in its distaste for sexual humanity and for women, a prejudice that continues unabated, as may be seen in the present flood of polemic streaming from the Vatican. It is, therefore, no accident that the middle of Layton's work is sexual. It starts with Jeshua. "If I wed, it won't be a ghost," cries Crazy Jane to her Yeatsian Bishop, "But a man with a toot, a large up-



standing one." Her brother Jeshua had "an eye for Mary Magdalene." Layton, of course, runs a grave risk in talking like this. In the early 1960s, I wrote a silly little book in which I skated lightly over some deep lakes. In that book appeared a single line that asked: "Did Jesus have sexual intercourse with women?" and a short Footnote that repeated a Conference question: "When the woman wiped Jesus' feet with her hair, she performed a highly sexual action. Did Jesus at that moment experience an erection?" Four lines out of 6,000. Yet, of the abusive letters received in response to the work, four fifths attacked my "views" on Jesus' sexual activity. Layton, being a poet, is much braver. He addresses Jeshua as a Jewish male "who, like myself and my cousin Heinrich, dangled between your legs a Jewish prick." Jesus is a passionate, exuberant Jew.

Yet the power of the Church remains. But it is doomed, like an arch, to sink into a soft ground, crushing the remnants of humanity until, like the Cheshire cat, it becomes a "fading grin. It is done For, it's had its day." Moreover, the verdict has been pronounced, the doom made inevitable, by three Jews: Spinoza, Marx, and Freud, who "lit a fuse under the bum of Christendom."

The catalyst that has forced the truth upon us is the concentration camp. "The seminal and searing experiences of our time have undoubtedly been Auschwitz and Gulag," Layton declares in a magnificent preface. "The acids and poisons from them have eroded not only old-time religions and moralities but almost all the literatures which their innocence infected. Any writer who today ignores them both as fact and symbol condemns himself either to retelling Fairy-tales or to spouting trivialities heavily seasoned with

violence and/or sex, and finally to entering that oblivion which awaits those who have not been touched by the large moral and 'psychological concerns of their epoch." The harrowing note is struck throughout and I find myself unable to respond adequately. Twelve years ago, a Jewish surgeon said to me. "We walk carefully, for the holocaust may come tomorrow." He spoke truly, for we could staff the concentration camps of Canada from the writers of letters to the editor. Nobody reading the present attitudes to prisons, hangings, wars, and abortions would be hard pressed to echo the King of Brobdignag's verdict on Gulliver's race: "I cannot but conclude the bulk of your natives to be the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth." Once more, we can identify intellectually with the product of our vicious and fearful hatreds, but — unless we are Jews—we are denied the immediate sense. I have read Layton's earlier work with pleasure, but little more: this time I found myself weeping and wishing. For a moment, that I could be a Jew — though only, genuine Wasp that I am, for a moment. Layton never falters in his vision that Auschwitz was a product of the "anti-sexuality, anti-life bias at the heart of Christianity." * The year, he says, "is haemorrhaging badly. Europe bleeding to death with its murdered Jews. Finis." Europe, of course. But, surely, North America cannot escape his anger. It is, therefore, odd to find Layton perceiving the hope of his race as lying in the United States. "Yet look! Beyond the tourist museums Columbus." Perhaps, for once, a Wasp may sense more readily that the hatred that screams "Crucify! Crucify!" is the same hatted that screams "Hosanna!"



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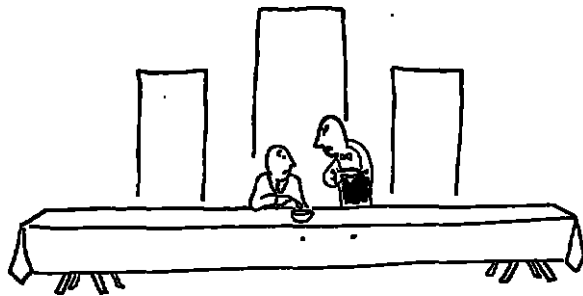
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Despite the hurtful truths proclaimed, Layton's anthology is neither pessimistic nor divisive. Being a Jew, he does not, even in the midst of the agony, cease from jesting. That awful fragmentation, which Augustine imposed on Christians in the name of unity, does not affect him. Life is seen whole and so humour is a necessary part of wretchedness. A witty reversal occurs when he solemnly assures us that some of his best friends are Christians. It flatters him that we have selected a Jew to worship and he has no doubt but that Jeshua will, in return for our prayers, throw in a well-deserved bonus. Yet he cannot embrace the faith. "How can one Jew believe in the divinity of another?"

This book of poetry, welling from the heart, is properly structured, the poems selected carefully and in order. We are pressed from three well-chosen epigraphs, through a resounding foreword, to a poetical pilgrimage from birth to death, and possibly beyond. There is nothing here of Layton's usual, sometimes perverse, rendering difficult of things simple. His thought is clear, beautifully balanced, and true.

The only wish I have is that he would understand women

as he understands Jeshua. There are necessarily many love poems here but the women in them remain shadows, more prostitutes than friends and lovers, more the presenters of flesh than real females of equal stature with himself. There is a touch of arrogance and harmful fantasy, for example, in the *Playboy nonsense* that pictures the rare loving of a woman, who

*When packing her panties and pills
Knew when to take herself away.*

This is unworthy. Even so, his Edda is "a woman of wit, charm, and liveliness" and his heart bears the image of "the dear absent girl who hallows all." But why *absent*? It is hard for a battered Wasp to know when a Jew is serious and when he is joking.

Yet this is nit-picking. The poetry remains, well-wrought and strong, aware of love and hatred at the heart of man: There must be, said John Wain, a spot that is the saddest on the earth's entire crust, the locus of torment. Layton has offered us that spot. The gods are desperate and, as we read Layton's verse, we can share their desperation.

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Purdy's petrels

Storm Warning 2: The New Canadian Poets, selected by Al Purdy, McClelland & Stewart, 159 pages. \$4.95 paper (ISBN 0-7710-7204-X).

By FRED COGSWELL

IT IS A RARE but beneficent event when a commercial firm of the size and scope of McClelland & Stewart gives exposure to young Canadian poets. Many of them are, of course, familiar to the followers of small presses and little magazines. but the distribution, facilities of M & S can make the work of these writers available to readers whom small presses and little magazines cannot reach. That is why *Storm Warning*, edited by Al Purdy and published in 1971, provided such a useful service to Canadian poetry. That it was a judicious selection both the quality of the work and the subsequent careers of so many poets included in it — notably Gail Fox, Gary Geddes, David Helwig, Pat Lane, Dennis Lee, David McFadden, Tom Wayman, and Dale Zieroth — bear abundant testimony.

Against this background of achievement. I opened the pages of the new *Storm Warning 2*, also edited by Al Purdy. with the anticipation of considerable delight, for I knew that the current crop of young poets was as varied and exciting as that which had been present in 1972. Delight, however, was gradually transformed to a certain disappointment. which it is the purpose of this review to explain.

To begin with, there are some fine individual poems in this anthology. No editor need be ashamed of the following choices: "Grease for the Wheels of Winter" and "The Alders," by Peter Trower; "Smoke Drift." by Hugh Anderson; "One Picture Worth a Thousand Facts." by Rosemary Aubert; "Both Eyes Were First" and "The Naming of Numbers." by Brian Bartlett; "Honesty," by Audrey Conrad; "Flies" and "Angels" by Don Domanski; "Anna." by Rolf Hervey; "Death in Autumn." by Tom Howe; "Lifeguard", by Lawrence Hutchinson; "When It's Too Late It's Too Late." by Hans Jewinski; "I Carry in my Arms the Ashes." by Terry McCormack; and "Famous Two-Step." by Wayne MacNeil.

Moreover, despite the jejune attempts at cleverness by some of the poets in their biographical statements, they are all serious practitioners of their art who feel that they have something to express and who have developed their techniques to a degree where their efforts are an embarrassment to no one. They know how to handle a free-verse line, how to cluster a wealth of associations about an object or an experience, how to exploit the rhythms of the spoken language, how to avoid establishment platitudes and abstractions except for satirical purposes, how to use the Canadian landscape and the Canadian past for approved states of the Canadian soul: they are seldom pompous and rhetorical, and they are almost always human.

I do not, however, find the work of most of these poets exciting or terribly original. It seems to me that most of them are ventriloquists who have not yet found a poetic voice of their own. Too much of what appears in *Storm Warning 2* strikes me as being too like what has already been done better by such established poets as Irving Layton and Purdy himself.

The poems of *Storm Warning 2* fall into two groups. One is the personal response to life in an urban subculture based on the kinetic response of the author to immediate particular experience. It is difficult for a poet in this milieu to realize how like he or she is to thousands of other people — including hundreds of other poets — within the same milieu. and that what is new and exciting to himself or herself is apt to seem limited and commonplace to the reader of poetry who has encountered it all before. In other words. unless a poet can. through knowledge or imagination, get outside his own experience and his own milieu he is in constant danger of paralleling rather than enlarging experience in his readers and of establishing new clichés that are. in their own several ways, as limited as the old ones he had rejected in order to write the new poetry.

By far the greater number of poets in *Storm Warning 2* are poets who ruminate — usually at considerable length about objects or beings in the landscape or about events in Canada's past. They usually attempt the same blend of tenderness and toughness in attitude. of colloquial down-to-earth language combined with metaphysical images of a daring but homely and "non-literary" nature that is the hallmark of the work of the book's editor. This sort of poetry, unless prompted by

great emotional pressure and shaped by ruthless pruning, is apt to seem more contrived than natural at its climax & and diffuse and wordy in the long stretches between. Too much of it, even by Purdy himself, is bound to pall on the reader. There is too much of it in *Storm Warning 2* and, with the exception of Peter Trower's poems, little of it is up to the personal standard of Purdy's own work.

I do not, then, think *Storm Warning 2* is as good an anthology as the original *Storm Warning*. largely because in it the editor abandoned the eclectic policy that was one of its glories and indulged himself too much in his own individual taste. At the same time, I cannot say that there is a writer in this volume who does not deserve respect for either his or her achievement or promise. Some. most notably Peter Trower, Rosemary Aubert. Brian Bartlett, Don Domanski, Lawrence Hutchinson, Terry McCormack, Wayne McNeil, and Fraser Sutherland (though not represented well here) have my respect for both potential and achievement. □

Gay in not so jocund company

Common or Garden Gods, by Ian Young, Catalyst Press (315 Blantyre Ave., Scarborough, Ont.), 79 pages, \$3.95 paper.

The Salt I Taste, by Henry Beissel, DC Books (5 Ingleside Ave., Montreal), 54 pages, \$2.50 paper (ISBN 0-919688-06-3).

Explorations, by Laurence Hutchman, DC Books (see above), 45 pages, \$2.50 paper (ISBN 0-919688-07-1).

Epigrams, by Louis Dudek, DC Books (see above), 52 pages, \$2.50 paper (ISBN 0-919688-08-X).

By PIER GIORGIO DI CICCIO

FOR SEVERAL years now Ian Young has been one of the sanest, most intelligent lyricists in Canada. And for years now he has established a notoriety for himself in spite of his good poems. I say "in spite of" because Young is a gay poet, one of the best in North America and naturally the Canadian houses have not seen his work as either manageable or marketable. So it is that Ian Young

appears in many of the **better anthologies**, while the bulk of his work is not always available except through the American presses or his own Catalyst Press.

The poems in **Common or Garden Gods** will find their way into **more** anthologies for perfectly "respectable," reasons. However "gay" the poems are (a matter, finally, of little aesthetic concern) they have a **control** of voice, a quietness, and a refusal for grand **gesture** that is refreshing in a time of verbal pyrotechnics. If Young experiments **structurally**, you can be **sure it is well** thought out. When the poems assert, it is believable. The images **are** no more and no less than appropriate for the poems. What emerges is a willingness on the part of **the reader** to listen, to avail himself of the poems, to be moved, without being exhausted by **any** reforming spirit. The personality in the poems is strong and flexible, capable of dealing with any subject clearly and without fuss. Young is certainly material for the beginning poet seeking directness in his or her work.

The **Salt I Taste** is one of **the** last books to come from DC Press. It is a **melange** of **five** poems, the **first** of which is far too **long**. Its choppy **verse** lines spread over 17 sections and are dissipated over a meditation of what appears to be the sea. Part of the poem has been understandably published in **sections**. But there is a singular lack of control **where** line units are concerned. "**Quintela**," the shortest **poem**, is more controlled and sustained in line length; it is complete, but painfully absorbed with the concept of time. **Beissel's** concern with **time** succeeds best in "Midwinter Moon Over Montreal," in which the St. Lawrence becomes an **analogue** for **the flux** and change of events. Otherwise this is **precisely** where **Beissel** fails; he does not **establish** referents for his abstracts or remind us often enough of what he's **going** on about. The result is that all his **description** achieves a transparency by which the poems suffer. "Midwinter Moon Over Montreal" must be singled out, however, as one of the surest meditations on the temporal in a very Canadian context.

Explorations is the best of this lot from DC Books. Laurence Hutchman's verse forms are precise, insightful and accomplished. **As in Ian Young's** work, the personality **in the** poems is assured, and within a **recognizable** voice the poems display a range of subject matter. **Hutchman** is far **more** adept with a punchline. He is far **less evoca-**

tive and more intent on leading the reader by the hand. **Fortunately**, his foothold is always **sure** and the payoff **arrives** with every **poem**. The book is exhaustive in **its** ability to handle the facts of experience and their **permutations**, whether they be travelogues or portraits. **There** is a penchant for specificity, but one wonders what the poems would dare to do beyond that.

Epigrams is something less than a **provocative** book, and the **assumption** that might save it is that of a popular household figure who will interest all by **the mention** of a few generalities. These are indeed **52** pages of epigrams, all **authorial**, some dull, some genuinely interesting and many more that **are** simply **baffling**. There is also plain misanthropy: "If the truth didn't matter **I'd** say Layton is a damn **good** poet." Some editing might have been useful, **or more patience** in compiling the book. But like many a book of epigrams, the thoughtfulness in the **occasional gem** makes much of the reading sufferable. Certainly, for **Dudek** fans, \$2.50 is not much for a glimpse of the master's mind. □

Kitsch and kin

Daisies on a Whale's Back, by Carol H. Leckner, Fiddlehead Poetry Books, 60 pages, \$2.50 paper (ISBN 0-919197-88-4).

Landscape of Kin, by Jayne Berland, Fiddlehead Poetry Books, 40 pages, \$3 paper (ISBN 0-919197-85-X).

By DIANE ALLISON

THE POET **labours** under a distinct advantage; when the reader can find nothing to appreciate in his **poetry** he **immediately** **blames** himself for being shallow or obtuse, scarcely considering that the poetry itself might be empty. **Carol H. Leckner's** Daisies on a **Whale's** Back has had **surprising success** considering that **behind** the child-like, unadorned **verses** lies little substance.

Her poetry deals with mundane aspects of life: bus trips, lounging in fields, street games, divorces, lost kittens. The choice of subject matter is not open to criticism. It is her banal **treatment** of **it**, her lack of fresh and **enlightening** depiction, her lifeless choice of

words. So insensitive is she to the rhythm and music of words, that it is questionable if the collection has **even** earned the status of poetry. **It is really** simple prose, arranged on different lines. Take for example "After the Battle of Algiers":

*I look over my poems
and wonder if
they will ever be regarded
as subversive literature.*

Rather an **inflated** title for so vapid a **poem**.

This collection seems more the product of a self-conscious English major than the fruits of a disciplined, acme, and skilled poet.

There are, however, a select number of Canadian women authors who are gaining **the** reputation for gutsy, down-to-earth **writing**. Jayne **Berland** joins their ranks with her first book of **poetry Landscape of Kin**. Her **poetry focusses** primarily on the family members that encircle her life: sons and daughters ripening **unselfconsciously** to maturity, plucky aged mothers, experience-worn grandfathers, women giving birth. A portion **of the** collection deals with features of our **20th-century** malaise — **war** and urban technology — but these **poems** are balanced in tone, neither cynical nor sentimental.

The visual clarity of her words, the tangible images she **uses**, appeal to the **reader** on the grounds that they **are** familiar and easily grasped. The development of an adolescent daughter is **pictured** in the "hard, **brown, bud-tipped branches**" of a tree in April. The harsh impersonality of machinery is captured in a locomotive's "wail of wheels on rail."

Jayne **Berland's** poems are honest and objective, **but** not clinical. What impresses **us** most is the personal warmth she holds for **the** characters that people her poetry. □



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Love in a crisis climate

The Glass Knight, by David Helwig, Oberon, 192 pages, \$8.95 cloth (ISBN 0-88750-184-2) and \$4.50 paper (ISBN 0-88750-185-0).

By DENNIS DUFFY

IN HIS NEW novel about Kingston during the October Crisis, David Helwig continues his exploration of the connection between private experience and public events begun in *The Day Before Tomorrow* (1971). The earlier work treated a hippy-dippy budding weatherman starting to grow up, but its chief interest rested in the journal of his brother, John, a civil servant turned traitor. There was an underground-man nastiness, a cold Rockcliff Park spite about the man that removed him entirely from the genial barbarities of his brother Jake. While John's analyses of the Cold War and our ass-kissing role in it were perceptive, the reader stayed quite removed from the man making them, thus engaging his sympathies more firmly on the side of Jake.

Robert Mallen, the glass knight of the limp pestle, lacks the bite of John and the bark of Jake. He has fled to a university-press job from the pressures of commercial publishing in Toronto (I suspect the greatest pressure there is to keep from dying laughing). A decent man who wants to live, and with a woman, he cannot master his weaker side sufficiently to bring this about. He cannot abide his double-breasted wife and during the novel becomes entangled with, and loses, an Upper Canadian ice-person. The War Measures Act is invoked while Robert and Elizabeth's affair flops, and a few photos are all that remain.

Helwig's best fiction — the novella that titles the collection, *The Streets of Summer* (1969) — deals with a girl who can't say no at the same time that she can't stop maiming the men in her life. A Joyce Oates heroine? Perhaps; a low-key version of that type, let's say, but without any melodrama in her make-up. With the sort of firm insistence on the commonalities of everyday life reminiscent of Hugh Hood's stories, Helwig refuses to inflate Sonya into the Earth Mother of Toronto's Annex. Though she swamps the lives of two contesting males, killing the one and cramping the other, her story is

not another misogynist fable. Rather, it deals with the matter of Aesop: the clay pot that collides with the iron one. If the cripples of the world insist on dating dancers, they're going to fall and hurt themselves; hard truths, well told.

The Glass Knight misses this complexity, this reversal of the reader's sympathies. The female is life-haling. (She's had a fetus killed in the past, a credible gesture; what bewilders is how she acquired it in the first place.) She is one of those Lady of Shallots (she looks at pictures and stares out her window a lot) who can be found 'in EngLit courses, bookstores, and tweed skirts. just the sort of woman for a man on the rebound from sex. Robert can no more rescue Elizabeth from the dragon of frigidity — that smoke coming out its nostrils is from dry ice — than he can cross swords with the Knight of the Unbleeding Heart, the lapel Rosenkavalier. The Government and People appear no less cold and remote than Elizabeth, while Robert himself funks the rage of his dying father and the sickness of his boss. He is last seen (at the novel's retrospective opening) poking through a photo album, while Elizabeth has taken up with another woman, a result that is credible only if you assume that personal warmth is unnecessary in homosexual relationships.

Can such people be made to interest? No, unless they, like the narrator of Hood's *Swing in the Garden*, are graced with a liveliness of mind making them good essayists if bad characters. Of course, as the career of Dickens shows, dull central characters needn't spoil a story. Surely the bleeding country of October, 1970, offers an exciting subject.

It was, after all a time of terror and no pity, rumour and mendacity, Constipation enthroned and Paranoia stalking public places. Since most of English Canada still cannot face up to the at-times craven role it played then, it isn't surprising that our literature has taken this long to confront that period. In David Helwig, one suspected, lay intelligence and wit and spirit enough to get a purchase on those events and to manhandle them into literature. One was wrong this time; the whole crazy affair gets summed up in a few asides at parties and bars, except for an encounter between Robert and a contemporary who became a Government MP. Here is where the conventions of realism let the author down, because the argument between the two couches itself in the clipped snottiness characteristic of two such correct Old Boys. However, as a

vehicle for the expression of passion or moral conviction or even the sheer nuttiness of the values Our Leaders and we stood up for then, it's a bit deficient. You really **can't** get disturbed over a brawl between ghosts. The glass knight of the **story**, a stained-glass window **figure**, becomes another bit of literary symbolism rather than **a** window on the world.

It has to be politically significant that no major piece of fiction — beyond what came out in **Hansard** — has dealt with the October Crisis and that **this** particular effort remains unsuccessful. That fact reveals much about the thinness of **our** culture and the inflexibility with which that scrawniness is maintained. Unfortunately, the respect in which we have **to** hold any **English-Canadian** writer with the grit **to** attempt to come to terms with the War **Measures** Act cannot conceal the **weaknesses** in the effort itself.

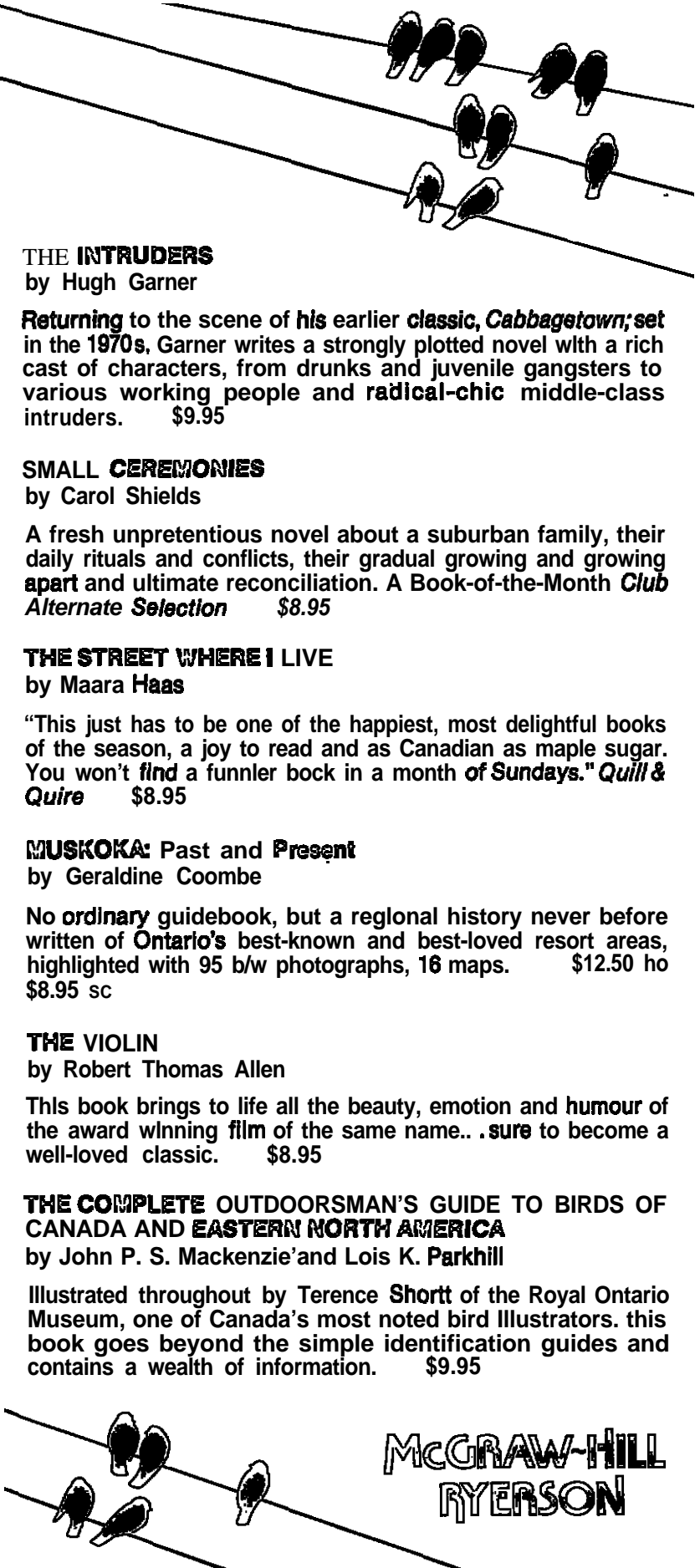
It would be too easy **to** write that **Helwig** is best at depicting deeply private situations and ought to leave the real stuff of human associations to others. Thank heavens, he tries for broader themes. and **The Day Before Tomorrow** demonstrates his potential for social fiction. I would hope it has not been checked. Any Canadian fiction writer trying to handle public matters (as opposed to the angst suffered by misanthropes and **outcasts**) within a realistic (as opposed to the canned-archetypal) convention deserves all the encouragement anyone **can** give him. □

Vde of tiers

The Intruders, by Hugh Garner, McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 300 pages, \$9.95 cloth (ISBN 0-7082229-1).

Ry SANDRA MARTIN

LIKE **A PAIR** of aging lovers or a **wino** with his bottle, **Toronto's Cabbagetown** and Hugh Garner enjoy an affection based on long association and a sense of mutual need and dependence. As in so many similar affairs, one partner has emerged over the years as the prop and the other the **propped-up**. While Garner has continued apace, maintaining a steady entourage of fans **both critical and popular**, **Cabbagetown** has fallen on hard times. Once heralded



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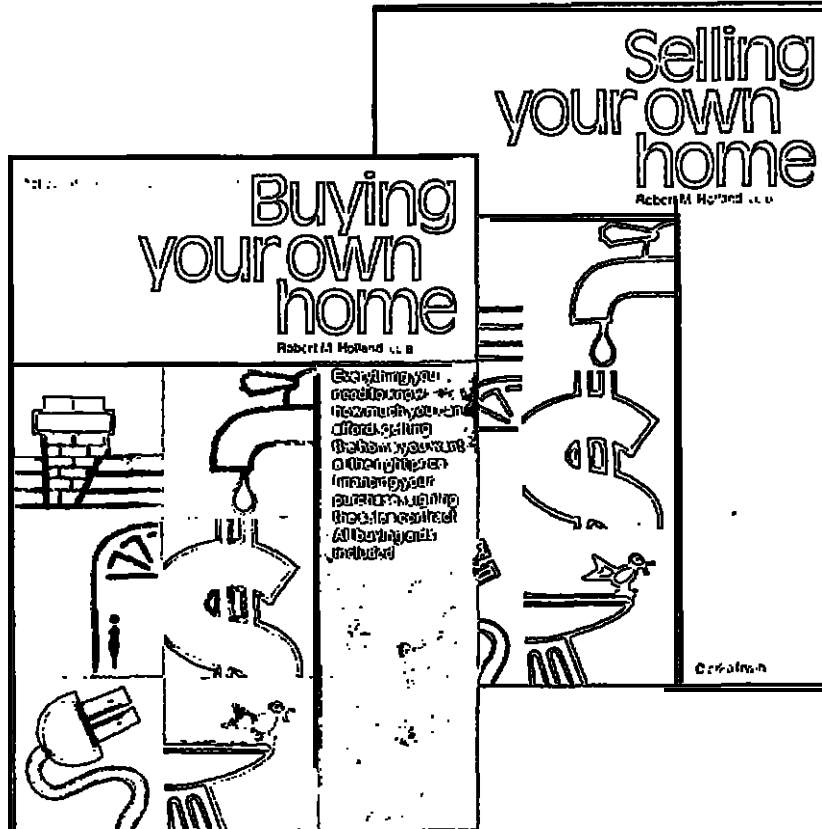
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AT BETTER BOOKSTORES EVERYWHERE

— mainly by Garner himself— as the largest Anglo-Saxon slum in North America, Cabbagetown barely exists nowadays. It has been overrun by developers, subsidizers, and renovators. And even Garner's latest book, ostensibly on Cabbagetown, is really about Don Vale, another reformed ghetto slightly to the north of its more illustrious sister.

The Intruders is more a lament than a novel, a Funereal dirge for a lost way of life. To Garner, old Cabbagetown represented simple virtues where people led poor but mainly respectable lives in concert with their neighbours. Suffering from the roseate nostalgia that eventually engulfs us all, Garner has forgotten the misery, degradation, and despair he himself depicted in his earlier works.

In this new book the stability of the community has been disrupted by the infiltration of suburbanites, criminals, freaks, developers, and time-wasting bureaucrats. By far the most serious threat comes from the first group, represented by Len and Bonnie Rawley and their Friends Sheila and Gord Harcourt. Rawley is a corporation lawyer who sports pre-faded denims and aldermattic ambitions, drinks too much, and has the sensitivity and perception of a pregnant frog. He wants to organize the community — to his own ends. Ultimately he comes to his senses, abandons his postures (and his bottle), and moves back to suburbia with his wife. But they sell their recently tarted-up house to a couple of homosexual interior decorators — little if any improvement, at least in Garner's terms.

The suburbanites are in the vanguard of a migration of well-heeled Fags, Foreigners, and religious Freaks, who are buying up real estate and thereby inflating property values and forcing the natives off their own turf. It is a deplorable situation and the reader must sympathize with Garner's perspective. But Garner handles his themes rather heavily and lapses more often than not into an irritating preachiness.

Corrupting the local youth are the criminals, essentially a band of slow-witted delinquents led by the psychotic Ralph Kappek (originally from the Prairies). Kappek commits the ultimate intrusion by raping and finally murdering a local drunk, Lil Croydon.

Ranged against the might of these evil forces are a hardy band of stalwarts, namely Syd Tedland, Elsie Dales, Jim Travis, and Jenny Croydon. Of these the most formidable is Ted-



land, a man remarkably similar to Garner in age, outlook, and attitude. Tedland is a former newspaperman turned printer, a regular guy who abhors phonies and sycophants, and who knows the ways of the world. Still, he is no match for progress and slowly the loyal troops desert until finally the community association Tedland founded with Elsie Dales is disbanded for lack of support. Jenny Croydon marries her employer's son and Elsie Dales sells her house to The Sons and Daughters of Cosmic Light and moves away. What else can she do? Her son Billy is rapidly turning sour under the influence of Kappek and his gang. Indeed, what can any of them do?

Garner's flat descriptive prose and journalistic style maintain a sharp balance in a novel that could easily slide into maudlin sentimentality. The result is a sociological study compelling in its honesty and sincerity. The characters don't emerge in a monumental fashion, but then they are intended as illustrations rather than portraits.

Finally, there is an error in the manuscript, at once so obvious and so insignificant, that it is a reviewer's delight. Garner (or his editor) has Bonnie Rawley take off her slacks and sit in her half-slip. A slip under slacks! Not even a suburbanite would do that. □

Ouija loud and clear

Kelpie's Burn, by John Latimer, **Musson**, 165 pages, \$4.95 cloth (ISBN 0-7737-0021-8).

By **DuBARRY CAMPAU**

JOHN LATIMER has written a thoroughgoing ghost story — psychic, not psychological. Even if you don't swallow it, it makes for not a bad, skin-crawling, midnight read.

Kelpie's Burn is a pseudo-Gothic novel and the title is also the name of a

pseudo-Gothic farm house, set somewhere near Stratford, Ont. A man and his wife, both of them actors at the Shakespearian Festival, are its tenants and they have employed a pretty young school teacher to tend to their boy and girl through the summer.

She is, naturally, one of those witless, had-I-but-known types, who wanders about at night inevitably running into manifestations of a couple of former inhabitants, a Russian brother and sister who were victims of murder and suicide. She also runs into a handsome, young — and live — actor and their romance is both swift and smooth.

Latimer creates a thoroughly spooky, scary atmosphere, which he contrasts with cheerfully realistic dabs of local colour in Stratford, St. Marys, and other nearby towns. There is even a quick trip to Toronto where his characters must be the very first to have had lunch atop the CN Tower (the view, he indicates, is quite as great as we are led to expect it will be).

But it is in a prettily decorated and sunny upstairs library, back at the Burn, that Latimer gives us his best mood-chilling bits. It is here that an ouija-board not only spells out messages with the speed of a telegrapher but also induces eerie trances in the users of the plinnchette. In this room, too, flowers roll over and die within minutes and, no matter how warm the day, the heroine shivers and shakes.

There is an impression of hasty writing in the book. Latimer lingers quite lovingly over the supernatural scenes but hurries through the practical passages. At times his paragraphs need to be untwisted by the reader.

And there is one astonishing inconsistency, the actor who has rented the Burn for just the summer season has brought with him several hundred books and four horses, including a dangerous stallion. This is the sort and amount of luggage that probably has not accompanied many members of the festival cast to Stratford.

The very end of the book has an unusual twist, which can cause a cynical reader to wonder if the young heroine might, by chance, be an extraordinarily sly girl with an eye out for a good piece of real estate. After finally convincing her employers and their neighbours that the house is well and truly haunted, its value plummets. But she, for reasons not made quite clear, decides that *Kelpie's Burn* has been miraculously exorcised, picks it up at a bargain, and lives there, with her love, happily ever after. 0

prairie BIRDS in color

by doug gilroy

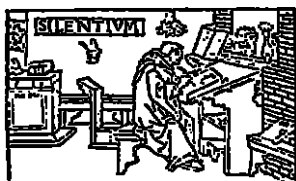
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Oiling the wheels of fiction

André Tom Macgregor. by Betty Wilson, Macmillan, 162 pages. \$7.95 cloth (ISBN 0-7705-1329-8).

The Mind Cods. by Marie Jakober, Macmillan, 165 pages, \$7.95 cloth (ISBN 0-7705-1328-X).

Adrift, by Randal Harker, Macmillan, 247 pages. \$7.95 cloth (ISBN 0-7705-1327-1).

By DAVID WILLIAMSON

OIL GIVES Alberta many advantages, some of which spill over into the arts. A few years ago that province established a literary arts branch that eventually launched a contest to find a new Alberta novelist. With the Alberta government's necessary financial help, the first winner and two runners-up were published two years ago by Macmillan. The recent appearance of a second winner and two more runners-up indicates that Alberta wants to make this an annual event, come hell or High River.

While it is heartening to see a province use some of its wealth to foster new writing talent, one can only wonder if the quality can be so consistent that there will be three worthy first novels every year. Furthermore, with the emphasis on "new" talent, are the more established writers being overlooked? And just how much guidance do the publisher's editors give to contest finalists chosen by people other than themselves?

One of this year's runners-up, *Adrift* by Randal Harker, cries out for judicious editing, if not rewriting. The story "of a young man who hates work and loves drugs. *Adrift* runs on and on about pot smoking and LSD tripping. It is the sort of thing many American writers were producing 10 or 15 years ago—possible evidence of Canadian subculture lag. There is lots of fatuous philosophy ("The world revolved as the world would revolve.. Tomorrow's events do not exist"). Joycean diction ("breezeswayed," "bellyempty," "waistcoatbulge") and hallucinatory perception. Cops are pigs and insurance men are money-hungry squares (can there be only one Wallace Stevens?). There are some

good descriptive passages, but the conversation is dull. One might accept the subject matter if the tone weren't so deadly serious! A line from the book sums it all up: "Drugs in these quantities must ultimately hnvk a negative effect but the paranoia passed and as the edge of the stone dissipated I was left feeling hollow and weary."

Where *Adrift* is badly over-written, the other runner-up, *The Mind Gods* by Marie Jnkober, seems to" concise. This science-fiction yarn tells of life in outer space in the year 2350 when the planet Janus declares war on a primitive colony. Vilna. Narrated by Colonel Tanya Rastov, nubile Chief Research and Data Control Officer, the pared-down prose reads like a better-than-average comic book, featuring a stereotyped super-hero named Christopher Barry ("Here was a man who radiated power. His face was drawn in stark, simple lines.. His eyes were dark, intelligent and unceasingly alert"). Between strategy meetings, Tanya and Chris make it together, though the sex passages could easily receive a "General" rating. Best thing about this novel is its ironic twist: Tanya and her buddies are materialists trying to rid the world of mind-manipulators whose strongest weapon is faith and whose leader, Roger Caron, bears a striking resemblance to Christ.

As laconic as *The Mind Gods* but much livelier in content is the competition winner, *André Tom Macgregor* by Betty Wilson. It concerns a teen-aged Métis lad who, guided by a priest named Father Pépin, graduates from high school and, against great social odds, tries to succeed in the white man's world. André leaves to seek his fortune in Edmonton. Brushes with pimps, whores, and vicious landladies wear him down, but in his naively exuberant way, he keeps getting back on track. Through Father Pépin's help, André starts a course at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology and moves in with a kind and well-organized family. Then along comes Dolores.

Betty Wilson uses a mark, tough-talking style that perfectly suits her sometimes ribald, sometimes tragic slyry. Action is presented in straight-ahead sentences, without moralizing and without distracting subplots. André is completely believable, as are his new-found city friends who try to take advantage of him, and his primitive parents, whose squalid home he really misses at first. All scenes are brief but many are vivid: the clash between

André's parents and Dolores is beautifully done. There are also some inspired touches; André names his pet budgie Gabriel Dumont. What is more, in the face of so much nihilistic fiction these days, *André Tom Macgregor* shamelessly offers a happy ending.

And so, prosperous Alberta adds three more new faces to the ever-growing CanLit gallery. The big test will be to see if we ever hear from any of them again. □

'PegLit in pigtails

Corner Store; by Bess Kaplan, Queenston House, 263 pages, \$8.95 cloth (ISBN 0-919866-10-7).

By MARVIN GOODY

IF CANLIT is a genus, 'PegLit is a thriving species and novels about growing up in Winnipeg a distinct subspecies. Two previous examples that spring to mind are Dorothy Livesay's *Beginnings* (recently reissued in paperback by New Press) and Paul Kligman's *It All Ends Up in a Shopping Bag*. Bess Kaplan's *Corner Store* is the latest addition to the group, and a very creditable one.

The novel encompasses a year in the life of Rebecca Devine, daughter of Russian-Jewish immigrants who operate a corner grocery in Winnipeg's North End. The year is 1936 and Rebecca is nine. Despite marginal economic circumstances, her life is stable and secure. It revolves principally around home and schools—the public school and the chader, or Hebrew school, which she and her younger brother Saul regularly attend (and which she hates with an intensity with which I can sympathize from personal experience of that, at the time, medieval institution). At night in her room she records her thoughts and feelings in scribbler after scribbler (which she cadges from her father on the pretext they are needed for school), all the while nurturing an ambition to become a writer. Then, uncertainty—Mama is chronically unwell; next, joy—Becky is going to have a baby sister (she is positive): followed by misery—Mama and the baby are both gone (Mama should have gone to the doctor long since, as she had been repeatedly urged to do). Mama is barely cold in her grave

before the relatives are parading a procession of aspirants for the vacancy for papa's dismissal or approval while Becky consoles herself that they will all prove to be "hopeless cases," like Miss Blustein of the panicky eyes and maidenly blushes, or horse-faced Mrs. Markle. This hope is shattered with the advent of Miss Cohen, and Papa remarries with what seems to Becky indecent haste (she thought 10 years — read "forever" — an appropriate interregnum). Though Sylvia is warm, wise and understanding, the very antithesis of the nasty stepmother of folklore and fiction, to Becky she is the usurper. In vain does Papa explain that it was Mama's dying wish that he should not remain alone and that children need someone to care for them. Although brother Saul deserts to the enemy and Becky wavers, Mama's shade appears to her in dreams in the aspect of a fearsome and vindictive primitive deity who bullies her into keeping faith on pain of death. When she is at last prevailed on to reveal the cause of her evident distress, the ghost is quickly and unspectacularly exorcised by love and logic. We leave her — now 10 — with the crisis surmounted, her universe once more set in order and no doubt unfolding as it should.

Livesay's work has a hauntingly nostalgic quality, of looking back through corridors of time at that distant child, another person really, whose "soul had not opened." Bess Kaplan's book, though also written in the past tense, creates a striking sense of immediacy. Partly, of course, this is because the story is told in the first person, but there is more to it than that. Almost at once we are immersed in Becky's world, see things through her eyes. Think her private thoughts. This illusion of being inside a nine-year-old girl is skilfully sustained throughout the book. Although a highly developed adult sensibility and intellect are at work here, they contrive for the most part to remain unobtrusive. What I think contributes most to the verisimilitude is the author's flawless ear for the speech patterns of her characters. The dialogue never strikes a false note. Combining this gift with a fine descriptive talent and a quiet but effective sense of humour, she creates a collection of clearly individualized personalities. Becky herself is naturally the most fully developed, followed by her father; but even the cameos are sharply etched: Uncle Morris, who picks his nose in company; scheming, ever-smiling cousin Nankie; Papa's customers,

some a little crazy: the hopeful would-be stepmothers. The passages where the latter are put on display like merchandise at an auction are perhaps the most deliciously amusing in the book.

Having been a contemporary of the author's in Winnipeg during this period, I am struck by how curiously constricted in certain ways Becky's universe is. She might for all the world be still in a little Ukrainian village, transplanted into a suburb of Winnipeg but cut off from the larger city by some impalpable barrier. I miss some of the familiar experiences of my childhood: the drama of the frequent summer thunderstorms (described early on in Livesay's book); the vastness of Portage Avenue; the thrill of riding an old double-ended Winnipeg streetcar as it got beyond the built-up district and sped swaying and wailing like a bereaved banshee into the outskirts (I doubt it was going over 30 but it seemed like 90); the parks and the river. As a consequence, there is little sense of place or local ambience: the locale is almost anonymous.

But rather than cavil about what may be missing, I would suggest that you read *Corner Store* for what it does have, a rich and convincing self-portrait of a young girl passing through a crucial period of her life, and with a little judicious help and her own considerable resources, emerging whole.

Bess Kaplan has persuaded me that Becky achieved her ambition. □

Angels on cowback

The Burning Wood, by David Williams, House of Anansi, 204 pages, \$10.95 cloth (ISBN 0-88784435-9).

By MICHAEL FUHRMAN

WHEN JOSHUA CARDIFF, the young protagonist in *The Burning Wood*, takes his first look at an Indian reservation and sees relics of his own "white" civilization—arrusty old car and a dilapidated government-built house — quietly collecting weeds, abandoned by their Cree owners in favour of "more traditional basic amenities (rents and horses) that these now-discarded "improvements" had supposedly made obsolete, his surprise is as great as the reader's. Having been

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raised on a particularly virulent brand of fundamentalist preaching in which the Indian figured as a dark and satanic being, the boy was expecting something much more mysterious. For the reader, a similar kind of ironic inversion has already been a source of surprise and delight. Earlier in the novel, following much scriptural expostulation on heathen savages (variously described as the damned, the dangerous, and the ungodly), Williams presents the image of an Indian urinating in the snow, taking

his unrelieved time about it, sending up a great cloud of steam above his head, catching the last of the sunlight, so that he began to resemble the picture of an angel alighting in an old illustrated Bible.

The sight at the reservation is not only typical, in a way, of the sort of witty humour we find throughout this novel, it also points more seriously to the book's central theme of native cultural integrity. How is one to approach the problem of recovering a distinctive Indian culture that is independent of white society? The whites around Nisooskan, Sask., approach the problem with racial fear and hatred, which is to say they ignore and exacerbate it. Joshua is the only one who seeks some comprehension of the Indian lifestyle, who attempts to communicate on unbiased terms with Indian people.

He befriends a young Cree boy, Thomas Singletree, whose unregenerate resistance to Christianity is played against Joshua's willing acceptance of Indian culture. At a son dance, Joshua makes the Painful decision to sacrifice his own cultural heritage that otherwise would effectively block any true integration. And later, out of a desire to see Indian culture recover its lost dignity, Joshua proposes his scheme of a buffalo hunt — only with domestic cattle as the buffalo and with bloc-ribbon Clydesdales (stolen at dawn from a local farmer) serving as mounts. The whole affair turns into a game, a riotous farce, until an unexpected tragedy occurs. Thomas is accidentally killed.

The ending to Joshua's scheme illustrates its wrongheadedness from the start, and thus seems almost inevitable. Joshua understands this — for when we see him later, much older, his decision to marry an Indian and to live and work (as a teacher) on the reservation constitutes a markedly different approach to what he sees as the Indian cultural problem. His disownment by his grandfather, the patriarchal head of the family, is also inevitable, since "consorting" with the Indians carries the ir-

revocable curse of eternal damnation. Incidentally, Williams makes a point of showing that the religion that unhesitatingly condemns Joshua and his pagan comrades contains both prejudice and hypocrisy. Joshua's father reveals his own self-concern, rather than charily to others (even of his own race); during a boundary dispute with his neighbour, he replies to a preacher's appeal for Christian ideals by saying, "I was saved at my mother's knee when I was six years old and my soul's been secure ever since."

There is much to think about in Ihii novel. Comparisons with Gone Indian arise almost automatically, but they soon become irrelevant when it is realized that Williams' novel is much subtler, more provocative. The language of the book is often beautifully suggestive and always full of drama and excitement. For any novel — but surprisingly, perhaps, for a first novel — *The Burning Wood* is extremely well written and on the whole, an important achievement. It unquestionably signals the presence of a promising new Canadian author. □

Romdn à clay

The Case of the Cold Murderer, by Ellen Godfrey, Musson, 156 pages, \$4.95 cloth (ISBN 0-7737-435-9).

By PHIL SURGUY

A YOUNG novelist is found dead in a locked mom at Chinook, a small publishing house in Toronto. Apparently he killed himself. However, his lover, a pushy woman who has just engineered a takeover of the company, doesn't believe it and she asks Rebecca Rosenthal to investigate. At first Rebecca goes along with the suicide theory, but then someone driving Chinook's communal Volkswagen tries to run her down. She gets mad and the investigation begins.

The story takes place in 1969 (and Chinook is situated at the old location of House of Anansi, which at that time was publishing the work of the author's husband, novelist Dave Godfrey). Rebecca is 67 years old, a financially independent widow, a noted anthropologist and an amateur sleuth. She tells us she has solved more than a

dozen murders. including that of her husband. So. although this is **the first** of her cases to be made **public**, it's clear that more Rebecca **Rosenthal** stories are in the works.

For her **first time out** Mrs. Godfrey uses most of the traditional elements of the classic mystery, such as a gathering of the suspects at an **isolated country house** and a policeman friend who disapproves of meddling amateurs. All the pieces are there, but the central puzzle is too easily solved without much actual detective **work**, and it is quite obvious who the murderer is. Moreover, the characters seem somewhat constrained; all are unique hut they are given little room to strut their stuff. This lapse is a surprise and a disappointment, considering the author has **probably** witnessed more than her share of these **kind of** people playing the terrible **snakes-and-ladders** games **that** go along with marginal publishing.

However, the book's flaws are largely mitigated by the depth and strength of Rebecca Rosenthal. The author has created a truly original **detective**, without the usual gimmicks. Unlike so many fictional **sleuths**, Rebecca is **an** interesting person in her own right. She is involved both practically and emotionally with her suspects, and her concern is what brings them to life for the reader.

Ravmond Chandler. who loathed the pasteboard characters **and** situations in conventional mysteries. **once** said that the ideal of detectiw-fiction writers would be a work that can be read with satisfaction even **if** the final, **revelatory** chapter is missing. Mrs. **Godfrey** seems capable of doing just that. and mystery fans should welcome her first novel and eagerly anticipate her next one. □

IN BRIEF

THE KEY LINE in Norman Hartley's irritating thriller, *The Viking Process* (Musson, 285 pages. \$8.95 cloth. ISBN 0-671-22198-1). comes soon after the obligatory **opening seduction scene**. Our hero is a mild-mannered expert **on** counter-terrorism held in **thrall by an** SLA-type band dedicated to the destruction of **multi-national corporations**. His chief tormentor is a super-cool Madame who presides over the world's first **24-hour** orgy **parlour** with a more than clinical interest. She titillates him (and us) with this **warning**: "You're going to learn more about

what the twentieth century is really like than you ever have before." Hartley makes **good** on the **promise**. As the plot spins from Montreal to London to New York, we are **introduced** to such **fiendish** devices as the graffiti bomb **and** the phosphorous sprinkler system for crowded **supermarkets**. The **writing** is **pedestrian** ("You're absolutely insane," **1** said through clenched teeth"), the structure is episodic, and in the end both hero and reader are crawling up the wall. But Hartley's vision of a corporate and technical malignancy blotting out our **tomorrows** lingers on in the mind. Social masochists will find it all delightful.

DM

A **FIRST NOVEL** by Saros Corasjee, *Good-Bye to Elsa* (PaperJacks, 153 pages, \$1.95). is an amusing story of Tristan Elliot, an Anglo-Indian history professor. Blind in one eye, Tristan comically relates his life's misfortunes (unhappy marriage to **Elsa**, dislike for his son, sexual exploits, army experiences) to the grocer's **daughter**, Marie. However, the **humour** occasionally borders on the juvenile and slapstick. His **biting** satire, though, is **reserved** for the **pretences** of university life (tenure, professor-student relations, **staff-meetings**, Faculty Wives' Association) and the prejudices surrounding **Anglo-Indians** in Canada. Hating all that he comes to know, Tristan, armed with a **22-calibre** rifle, **retreats to** a farmhouse on the outskirts **of Kamloops** where he plans his death and its consequences with imaginative precision. **The story** is a series of **good-byes** — **first** to his wife and son, his mistresses, his tenured **job** at the university, and finally, **to** himself. **This is an** entertaining arid promising novel.

MARY MOROZIUK

IN 1949, British librarian Dr. Edgar Osborne presented his collection of 1,800 early children's books—one of the **finest** such collections in the world—to the Toronto Public Library. Over the years, the **Toronto** Public Library and various private **donors** added to the collection and in **1958** a first catalogue was published. It was reprinted in 1966 with minor corrections, and recently went **into** a third printing with further corrections. Now we have *The Osborne Collection of Early Children's Books 1476-1910: A Catalogue, Volume II*, prepared by Judith St. John, Dana **Tenny**, and Hazel **Mactaggart** (\$30, available **from** the Osborne Room, Boys and Girls House, 40 St. George Street, **Toronto**). **Volume II con-**

tains 2600 new entries, subdivided as in Volume I into **16** categories **from** fabulists to almanacs and birthday books. Like Volume I, the catalogue, which has been printed by **U of T Press**, is handsomely illustrated with drawings and engravings **from** the books described. Many of the descriptions are **in themselves a delight over and above their bibliographical interest**; frequently **we're given samples of the contents**, as in the following snippet **from Ruthless Rhymes for Heartless Homes (1899)**:

*Sam had spirits naught could check,
And to-day, at breakfast, he
Broke his baby-sister's neck,
So he shan't have jam for tea!*

This two-volume catalogue to the Osborne collection is an invaluable reference work for anyone seriously interested in early children's literature.

MORRIS WOLFE

SOME OF our novelists are prolific writers, but others write so few **books that** a critical study becomes. **essentially**, a look **at** only one or two works. That's **really the issue** in the two latest **monographs** in McClelland & Stewart's Canadian Writers series. Alec Lucas's *Farley Mowat* (64 pages, \$1.95, ISBN 0-7710-9616-X). and Alan R. Young's *Ernest Buckler* (64 pages, \$1.95, ISBN 0-7710-9622-J). In order to deal with Mowat's large and varied output, Lucas **takes a generic approach**, dividing his book into evaluative chapters on **Mowat the crusader**, **historian**, **mariner**, and **creative writer**. On the whole his approach works well, though I found the final section on Mowat the creative writer less convincing than other chapters. This difficulty of having to discuss many works in a short space, however, is exactly opposite to the **problem facing Alan Young** in his study of Ernest Buckler, a writer whose reputation rests mainly 'on the novel, *The Mountain and the Valley*. Hoping to show that **Buckler is not a "one-novel" writer**, Young ranges widely into Buckler's radio scripts, articles, and short stories: he quotes often from various biographical sources, and gives us some interesting bibliographical material. And though Young's **comments** are occasionally a bit repetitive, he manages to **provide us with a sound critical analysis** of Buckler's major works. His book, and Alec Lucas's *Farley Mowat*, **ate excellent introductions** to two Canadian writers who have not yet received the critical attention they deserve.

RODERICK W. HARVEY

Cree de cœur

Strangers Devour the Land. by Boyce Richardson, Macmillan, 330 pages, \$13.95 cloth (ISBN 0-7705-1370-0).

This Land Is Not For Sale, by Hugh and Karmel McCullum, Anglican Book Centre (600 Jarvis St., Toronto). 210 pages, \$3.95 paper (ISBN 0-919030-10-6).

By DOROTHY EBER

PUBLIC OPINION now anticipates that the federal and provincial governments during the next few years will negotiate land claims with the Indians and Inuit and make fair settlement. What is fair settlement? That is a difficult question and one that is likely to command our attention for some time to come.

Boyce Richardson's book, *Strangers Devour the Land*, tells the story of the Cree of James Bay, the campaign they waged against the James Bay Development Corporation, and what seemed to southerners the massive settlement (\$1.50 million in cash and royalties and other considerations) they were eventually offered where nothing had been offered before.

To tell his story, Richardson must manipulate a cast of thousands and to do so he makes use of the techniques of the "new journalism," that non-fiction style of writing explained and used with marvellous effect by Tom Wolfe. It's a good model. Richardson writes in the first person, making himself one of the book's personalities. As he zeroes in on several hunting families and the Crees who negotiate for their people, he quotes real-life characters in the vernacular, presumably having recorded much of their comment. He changes venue frequently, hopping back and forth between the bush and Montreal. He intersperses his text with sections of the court record, and injects a great amount of minute detail on animals, Indians, and court procedure.

The book is written from a strongly held point of view. During the years he worked in Canada — he has now returned to New Zealand — Richardson earned a well-justified reputation as a polemic journalist, supporting all the popular causes without much objectivity. (Here he loses Tom Wolfe. The spokesman for the new journalism has

never believed in commitment. He says it gets in the way of the facts.) Richardson argues that the James Bay project is redundant, that the energy needs of the people of Quebec and the East Coast can be met without it. But he doesn't convince me. However, his picture of the degradation that results when the 'white technological society overpowers the hunting culture is impressive. There are many distressing vignettes of people caught in the squeeze between two cultures. On one occasion, Richardson describes what happens when he shares his rum. He himself is part of the problem, not of the solution.

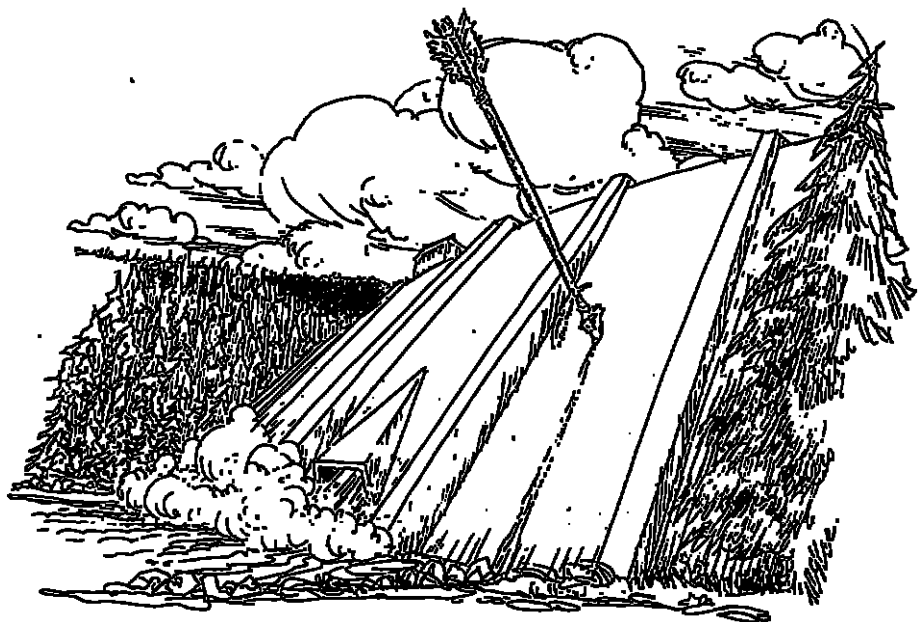
A drawback to Richardson's book is that it is a very large package indeed. Presumably he wrote much of it from notes he made while covering the story from 1969 until 1974. We often feel that every day of his involvement is recorded in the book, and that we're rereading things we've already read before. *We are*. Richardson repeats himself and so do the people he quotes. His good book would be better if his editors had encouraged him to chop rather than condense.

This Land Is Not For Sale by Hugh and Karmel McCullum is also obviously written from a strong point of view. It has been financed by six churches in Canada — Anglican, Lutheran, Mennonite, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic and United — all of whom support the principle of just settlement of the land claims. The book is a survey of land claims and where they

are at; the authors declare that in the past the native people have received only "heads and blankets" for their lands and suggest they will now negotiate for continued title to their traditional lands and participation and royalties rather than "land extinguishment," a convenient phrase coined by the authors.

To write their book the authors travelled across much of the North and have dug up some interesting material. For instance, the Nishga battle to retain their land began 100 years ago, and as early as 1909 the Nishga paid a lawyer \$500 for a legal opinion on aboriginal title. The McCullums are competent writers and order their material well, but I find the sympathies of the writers so pronounced that their book often seems off balance and sometimes naive. And although they warn that northwest British Columbia has the potential for violence, they do not demonstrate a real understanding of the enormity of the social problems caused by the massive influx of whites in the North during the past two decades.

In their final chapter, the McCullums call for a new deal for native people: the rewriting by the native people of the Indian Act; reassessment of treaties signed before 1923; and scrapping of the land-extinguishment approach. Only legal title to their traditional lands, and the right, to use the lands as they wish, will give native people the "secure economic base" necessary to their future well-being.



Can a secure economic base improve the chances of Inuit and Indians as they cope with the effects of the white technological society on their lives? Perhaps. But it cannot bring back what an old Eskimo woman once told me were happy days. "the days before there were too many white men." In those times, she explained, "we were always happy to see the white man." Unfortunately, there appear to be many problems which even the most generous of land settlements may not solve. Speaking of the young Cree in *Strangers Devour the Land*, Boyce Richardson writes: "These youngsters are trapped: though most of them are great drinkers, they know that as drink becomes more easily available, the Indian family will degenerate and the social life of the village will be destroyed; though most of them are locked into the white man's cage of mortgage payments, wage packets, utility bills, they know that as the white man arrives in great numbers, the quality of Indian life will plummet: though they are but part-time hunters, they know that in full-scale competition on the white man's labor market they cannot compete, that only by living the Indian way could they really command their own lives. And they know that for them this is now impossible." □

Department of Stealth and Warfare

A Man Called Intrepid: The Secret War, by William Stevenson, Langman, illustrated, 512 pages, \$14.50 cloth (ISBN E-156795-6).

By GUY STANLEY

THIS insider's history, webs of war-time intrigue described from the spider's side. Intrepid, code name for William Stephenson (now Sir William), Canadian inventor, industrialist, and film mogul, First World War air ace and friend of Churchill, was apparently connected with nearly every major Western intelligence coup in the European theatre. Author William Stevenson, no relation, a former Toronto Globe and Mail reporter, and author of seven other books, was a naval combat flyer and Stephenson's

associate director of operations at British Security Co-ordination, Intrepid's New York "firm" during the war, which supposedly co-ordinated all British secret activities. Stephenson has had full access to BSC papers. Despite a spate of recent books on British war-time intelligence, he has much to put on public record for the first time.

We learn, for instance, that Roosevelt allowed Americans to fly on maritime patrol with British aircrew and encouraged joint Anglo-American intelligence activities while the U.S. was still at peace.

We learn how King George VI used his constitutional prerogatives, unknown to Prime Minister Chamberlain, to enable Churchill to collect information on Hitler's war plans and growing military strength.

We learn how Stephenson's business contacts helped Britain find out about the Enigma coding device and how Britain obtained a copy of the machine used by the German high command (thus giving the Ultra secret — advance warning of German plans).

As head of BSC in Rockefeller Center, Stephenson occupied the apex of the North Atlantic intelligence triangle. Across his desk or through his facilities passed the details of such triumphs of clandestine or political warfare as the anti-government coop in Yugoslavia in March, 1940, that helped delay Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union; the use of Enigma to defeat the Luftwaffe over England; the terrible decision not to warn Coventry of a coming raid so that the source of that foreknowledge — Enigma — would be protected; the assassination of Reinhard Heydrich, Hitler's Butcher of Prague; the demolition of heavy-water plants in Norway and the rescue of Danish atomic scientist Nils Bohr.

A major part of the book is devoted to Stephenson's work in the United States during the dark days between the fall of France and America's entering the war. Unleashing a laundry bag of "dirty tricks," including betrayal, wire-tap, planting of fake information, and occasionally murder, he and BSC discomfited powerful American appeasers, isolationists, and friends of the enemy.

Perhaps for the sake of comprehensiveness, several better-known incidents involving Stephenson are also included: Intrepid's activities in breaking up Axis espionage in Mexico and Brazil; the amorous exploits of Cynthia, who seduced secrets from her lovers while they bedded her; and dou-

ble agent Dusko Popov's fruitless attempts to warn FBI chief J. Edgar Hoover of Japanese plans to attack Pearl Harbour. Camp X, a spy training camp near Oshawa, Ont., is also described. But little is added to earlier accounts in *The Quiet Canadian* and *Cynthia* by H. Montgomery Hyde and in Popov's autobiography.

Fascinating and riveting as some of these episodes are, it is questionable how much this book contributes to an understanding of the conduct of intelligence during the war. There can be no doubt about the critical importance of Enigma, the key to intercepting German operational orders. But Stephenson says little about how it was used and how it affected Britain's reception of information from other, more conventional sources. As well, considering Intrepid's tribute to resistance fighters who served under him, there is remarkably little about resistance in the book. There is also less information than one would like to know about Canada's role in BSC and clandestine operations generally.

Perhaps connected with Intrepid's rather inconclusive introductory remarks about secret services in democracies, there is a tendency to downplay more conventional attempts to sway public opinion. Perhaps Roosevelt's greatest coup against isolationists was his destroyers-for-bases deal behind which lay Intrepid's encouragement of "Wild Bill" Donovan's inspection trip to London in July, 1940. It was on the basis of Donovan's favourable report that Roosevelt decided to go ahead with the deal. By trading a few old warships for British bases in the West Indies, he edged the U.S. closer to war and met a long-standing isolationist demand for acquisition of bases in the Western hemisphere. As one U.S. senator put it at the time: "Listen, you can't attack a deal like that... the voters won't stand for that. Roosevelt outsmarted all of us when he tied up the Iwo deals."

These shortcomings of oversimplification are intensified by Stevenson's old-fashioned style which, like that of Waker Winchell or Adolf Menjou in *The Front Page*, is better suited to a less complicated age and subject. There is an old story about the diplomat who, on being informed by his host at a party one evening of the death of one of the senior members of the diplomatic corps, murmured to himself, "Now what does he mean by that?" Intelligence gathering, even the most overt variety, turns upon nuance. In ignoring this, Stevenson has chosen

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to write a spy story with few shadows, upright as a John Buchan thriller. His characterization of Chamberlain and Halifax are one-dimensional; and surely American co-operation with BSC was also a good way of keeping an eye on the British spooks. *A Man Called Intrepid* is a sensational read for those who like their war stories purged of ambiguity. It will disappoint those hoping for more. □

Heat in the boiler rooms

Swindle! A Decade of Canadian Stock Frauds, by Roger Croft, Gage, 198 Pages, \$8.95 cloth (ISBN 0-7715-9934-X).

By NICHOLAS STEED

AS CANADIAN youth enters manhood, a curious rite of passage occurs. Aged in his early 20s, newly married, and launched on a promising career, the neophyte is ushered into the office of a stockbroker. What happens next is an experience most of us would rather not remember.

For the hard truth is that stock markets in Canada have been for suckers. This unpalatable fact is at odds with the conventional wisdom that sees the stock exchange as the great heart of the capitalist system: Alas, it is not so. For most investors in the last 10 years, Canada's stock markets were a crap game with odds favouring the house that would embarrass even a Las Vegas mobster.

Who among us can say he hasn't, at some time or another, lost money on a penny mine, a "junior industrial," or a mutual fund? And how we rationalised the loss of our hard-earned cash. Ashamed of the cupidity that prompted our speculations, we write off the loss to experience and silently go about our business.

But now, at last, times are changing. Many economists, not the least being John Kenneth Galbraith, tell us that stock markets have at best a marginal role to play in the financing of industry. And the prime minister warns, however cryptically, that the free-market system may be failing us, and may have to be replaced. In the light of its track record, the predictably outraged screams of the investment community must be compared to the indignation of the high-

wayman who finds himself on the wrong end of a gun.

The fact is that Stock markets in Canada have always consisted of a symbiotic alliance between the Establishment and sleazy promoters. The Establishment had it made; all it had to do was shuffle around the huge chunks of capital that it controlled, taking its cut off the top every time it did an underwriting. Risk was anathema to it. So cautious was it that over the years most of our productive economy fell into the hands of risk-taking foreigners.

Yet the Establishment needed the underworld. The crooked promoters served the essential purpose of allowing the little guy to feel that he too was a part of this wondrous process. Thus stock markets in Canada could be given a surface patina of egalitarianism. When accused of hogging the show for itself, the Establishment could always point to the plentiful opportunities for the modest investor to try his hand. It turned a blind eye to the fact that these markets were invariably crooked and seldom, if ever, resulted in the formation of productive new enterprises.

In the 1960s, this cosy arrangement started to go wrong. It became difficult to tell where the Establishment ended and hucksterism began. In fact, as this book shows, the two became inextricably bound together. It was no coincidence that the greatest operator of them all, Bernie Comfeld, chose Canada as the official domicile of his ill-fated Investors Overseas Services.

Croft's book gives us a rehash of IOS and its aftermath, the Atlantic Acceptance Corp. collapse, the Raçan Photo-Copy swindle, and assorted other sleazy episodes of recent years. It is, at best, an adequate recounting of what are, by now, old stories. It provides no new research or insights into how these massive frauds progressed so far, and it offers no solutions for prevention of repetitions other than a ritualistic warning that stronger securities legislation can never replace *caveat emptor* as the investor's best defense.

Ironically, Croft must also stand convicted of the same obfuscation and omission of fact so beloved by the swindlers of whom he writes. On the dust-jacket he is described as the former editor of the *Financial Times* of Canada when, in fact, he was merely a more lowly employee. He fails to mention altogether that he left journalism to work as a flack for the infamous Irving Kott, a promoter whose many problems with the law could fill another book.

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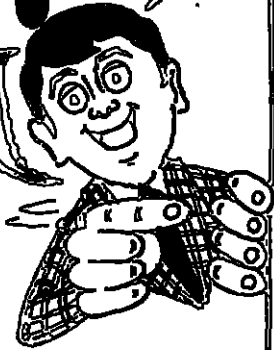
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Croft aside, the book leaves too many basic questions unanswered. No less a speculator than John Maynard Keynes once mused as to whether stock markets are really necessary at all for a healthy capitalist system. Perhaps it's time that a hard-nosed and disinterested student asked the same question of Canada's convicted but unrepentant market system. □

Colonial déjà-vu

Friend and Foe: Aspects of French-Amerindian Cultural Contact in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries, by Cornelius J. Jaenen, McClelland & Stewart, 207 pages, \$10 cloth (ISBN 0-7710-4394-5).

By PETER SUCH

AS CANADIAN scholars begin to dig themselves out from the numbing avalanche of mediocre quantification and sterile categorizing that second-rate American academics have dumped on our universities, slowly there resurrects that unique interdisciplinary approach to our physical and social environments that distinguished our pre-colonial scholarship under giants such as Innis, Bailey, Frye, and others. Such scholarship still has a hard time receiving recognition in universities that continue to act as academic branch plants. Has anyone even dared pose the suggestion that the drop in enrolment at our universities relates directly to the irrelevant, arrogant ethnocentrism of predominately American faculties that have no understanding whatsoever of our cultural predispositions? When Jaenen, in this extraordinary prize-winning book, which took three years to find publication by M&S but which should have been accepted immediately by any academic publisher, tells of Indian boys constantly fleeing French schools until no one school remained open, one cannot help drawing a somewhat otiose parallel, especially since multitudes of French youngsters freely chose the Indian ways.

The heart of the matter is that culture clash between empire and colony, between metropolis and hinterland, has the same pattern of winners, losers, compromisers, and survivors whether

in the 17th century or today. Canada's uniqueness as an alternative North American society and the way it became so makes this country one of the most fruitful bases for meaningful cultural scholarship in the world. The fact that we have an ongoing culture clash, buffered with uneasy compromises with the U.S., puts us much in the same situation as the Indians with the French. Like the Americans, the colonial French needed the Indians to produce the resources to do business with, depended on them for many necessities of life, used them as exotic material, and yet, of course, held them ultimately in low esteem because they could not wield the strength of empire.

Part and parcel of the American way is to stereotype, categorize, and pigeon-hole, to control and manipulate data so that it becomes academically digestible rather than meaningfully engage with it. Although he is predisposed as a historian to give one the sense now and again that the file-cards are flipping over, Jaenen has that quality of involvement that shines through so much Canadian scholarship and prevents it from being purely a descriptive exercise. Let's face it, the era of "value-free" scholarship, particularly in the humanities, was simply an abrogation of responsibility, an unwillingness to commit oneself in the face of a seemingly cool and sophisticated academic bureaucracy where success depended on a non-threatening style. Jaenen is not quite so expressive as one would wish, but the commitment is there and he understands the interdisciplinary thrust of Canadian scholarship, mentioning in his introduction that historians have largely given over to professional anthropologists and ethnographers. He might also have mentioned geographers such as Conrad Heidenreich of York, a previous winner of this Sainte-Marie prize in history sponsored by the Ontario Department of Natural Resources — a department, incidentally, that has rocked archaeology in that province by its extraordinarily creative work in provincial parks and elsewhere.

Where Canadian scholarship has its roots is in the study of cultural forms and communications — two "naturals" for us that express themselves in such diverse personalities as Marshall McLuhan and Margaret Atwood. The focusing of such studies into our burgeoning Canadian Studies departments is one of the most encouraging signs that our academic resources might yet be repatriated.

As to the work itself, one can say that its **apparently** circumscribed **area** of research is belied by its significance as a means **to understanding** the ongoing process of **cultural** contact that marks Canadian **society**. It will **serve to** dispossess those who have previously been isolated in disciplines other than the study of **cultural** forms of simplistic notions **about** the French presence in North America. It **also helps to confirm** Canadian scholars in many of their heretofore entirely **correct, but somewhat** data-limited, notions of the **importance** of this contact period. The general reader will find valuable **anecdotal** material here as **well**, which will help him **to overcome** traditional notions of Canadian Indians as uncultured savages. The French alliance with the Indians **grew** out of series of uneasy compromises more destructive to the resourceful and independent native peoples of **the** North-East. This **predominantly Algonkian** population represented a uniquely sympathetic portion of the Indians on this continent, and it **was** their **generosity** and hospitality **that** not only kept the French fact **alive** in early times but also contributed greatly to **the** humanist **traditions** of Europe, ultimately directly influencing



creation of frog adam

such landmark events as the French **Revolution**. A society based on an organic symbiosis of man and **nature**, in which property was held in common, where children and **old** persons were functional integers, a **society** whose leadership was never hierarchical nor inherited but **was spontaneous** and **co-operative**, held a mirror to the undemocratic, non-libertarian **elitisms** of Europe **with** its hypocrisy, **corruption**, and **poverty**.

Territorially, **the French threatened** their **native** contacts far less than the English, a **point often made in their favour in Indian negotiations**. **The area** the French settled seems to have been in dispute and devoid of meaningful

sovereignty, as well as containing a nomadic population **with little sense of property**. French settlements were small and their desire mostly limited to trading for furs rather **than** destroying **forest** tracts for dense agricultural settlement. Nevertheless, the French thought the Indians' nomadism **expressed** inherent **laziness** and **attempted** to convert them into sedentary agriculturalists. Missionaries had some small success influencing the native **population at first** because Indian social **structure** had a strong visionary and religious matrix binding it. Although this matrix seems to have been largely **invisible to** the French, sometimes a common chord was fortuitously struck and converts resulted, especially with those sects (not the Jesuits) who believed in sharing and communality. But as Amerindian knowledge of France and the French increased, it was plain **that** Christianity was merely a separate component of a fragmented style of life that could cheat, lie, steal, and generally (to the Amerindians) deceive **itself** with its own hypocrisy.

So missionizing, enforced education, and agricultural reservations failed, since **it** became obvious to the Indian **that** to become a Christian, to

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become *literate*, or to become a farmer would involve giving up the cultural web woven by his people in symbiosis with his environment over thousands of years. Only disease and alcohol could break the integrated fabric of Indian culture. One might note that these were the tools hereafter used to "conquer" the West. Jaenen's sad conclusion is that any cultural exchanges that took place involved the transferring of the worst characteristics of both sides.

As we now move into a rational view of "Space Ship Earth" as an ecological global village, perhaps it is no accident that our own scholars and our own literary community are trying to learn and to embrace what only the *courier-de-bois* among the French realized was this country's greatest offering. When the cultural history of this continent is written a few hundred years from now, it may come to be seen that present-day Canada, like those couriers, was in the vanguard of a humanist reassertion against the predatory forces of empire-building in North America. Read and weep for the chances that were lost, but rejoice that this work marks another milestone on the way to our own zestful understanding of each other. □

The hearth of the matter

Rent Control: A Popular Paradox, by M. A. Walker, F. A. Hayek, Milton Friedman *et al.*. The Fraser Institute, 212 pages, \$3.95 paper.

By WALLY SECCOMBE

THE GHOST OF Adam Smith is apparently alive and well, in residence in the Fraser Institute in Vancouver. Smith's undiluted disciples are hard at work in *Rent Control: A Popular Paradox* (the institute's first volume in a series on housing), arguing that there is absolutely nothing wrong with the housing situation in Canada that a return to the "free market" would not cure. Now if you happen to suspect that a housing market already exists where developers and landlords are only too "free" to make a killing, please be informed by Messrs. Walker, Hayek, Friedman, *et al.* that you have been brainwashed by scheming socialists after being softened up by misguided liberals. Please be further informed that the poor de-

velopers and landlords are being driven right out of business by punitive government interference and are taking their capital elsewhere. *That* is the cause of the housing crisis, the Fraser Institute's assembled authorities cry in unison. Ergo, the solution — raise rents, ban all controls, and if the poor cannot afford to line the pockets of absentee landlords, give them a subsidy to do so. Higher rents will reap fatter profits, attract more investment, lead to more construction, and thus "solve" the housing supply problem.

To believe, of course, that reality really does work this way requires a complete suspension of all one's critical faculties and several acts of voluntary amnesia. Forget, for starters, that the days have long since passed when Canada had anything faintly resembling a competitive open housing market. Ignore, while you are at it, the basic tendency for capital to concentrate — resulting in an urban land market that is decidedly uncompetitive, where prices are set far above value, and supply is restricted to protect monopoly prices and reap windfall profits.

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mentioning the rapid monopolization of the urban land market and the development industry that has occurred in Canada in the past 20 years. Contrast this "study." for instance, with the recently baked one by Peter Spurr (commissioned for the federal government's Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation), which thoroughly documents the monopolization of marketable residential property in Canada's major cities. Meticulously, Spurr demonstrates that more than one half the price of new housing lots in 1972-73 in Toronto and Vancouver was siphoned off by developers and speculators as pure profit. He calculates that the major development firms presently own sufficient acreage in and around cities to supply housing at the current rate of construction and density for the next decade.

Rent Controls is ostensibly about rent controls but the subject is really only a convenient means to the end of projecting the uniformly ultra-conservative vision of its authors. The politics of this right-wing current within the economics profession deserves some comment. The free-marketers (whose current project is defending the Chilean junta's "re-privatization" schemes) have long fought a rear-guard action against the central proposition of the Keynesians — that the state must intervene in the economy to stimulate demand and thereby to prevent the periodic tendency for capitalism to slump and go into crisis. In the heyday of the post-war boom (1946-1971) the Keynesians appeared vindicated and the unrepentant followers of Adam Smith were discredited and marginalized within their profession. Fundamentally, they had no answer to the fact that the "invisible hand" of their cherished market had convulsed in the Great Depression, nearly burying the entire system with it. The Keynesians, at least, had faced the fact (demonstrated by Marx a century earlier) that the market could not make it on its own.

But in the 1970s, Keynes' answer has met its Waterloo, like Smith's before it. The current recession has not been halted by government deficit-spending, which instead has provoked skyrocketing inflation. Palpably unable and unwilling to reconsider the merit of the system *in toto*, the Keynesians, in all their varieties, are giving ground once again to right-wing economic theory. State intervention is fading as "the solution" and is increasingly part of "the problem."

If this is merely couched as a debate between the liberal and conservative defenders of capital, then the conservatives will score some points. Yes, it is true that rent control is not "the solution." In the absence of measures by government to provide more housing, controls will tend to decrease housing supply. Yes, it is also true (as the Urban Development Institute has argued in Toronto) that reform city councils have restricted land use and thereby made their own contribution to the scarcity of housing, low vacancy rates and soaring rents. The current popular push for rent control has the same weakness as the drive to toughen up zoning by-laws that preceded it. Both are single-pronged state interventions in the economy that *constrict the market without undercutting it*. The result is that the most visible problem recedes at one point only to crop up as an "unintended effect" (as planners call it) elsewhere.

In these circumstances, it is not surprising that the citizen groups and tenant organizations in the early 1970s have now become discouraged. They would do well not to give up hope (as the Fraser Institute would wish), but rather to round out their partial line of attack into a more comprehensive program. Let us begin by stating unequivocally that we consider decent housing to be a right, and its construction must not depend upon luring private capital with the promise of higher profit rates than can be made elsewhere. The price of housing is intolerable because the supply is chronically inadequate and the market is monopolized. Urban land is a fixed, location-specific commodity of finite supply — and these characteristics accelerate its monopolization and drive up its price. Therefore a comprehensive program based on human need and not on profit must stand with massive public land-banking and the prohibition of speculation where the price of property is bid up endlessly without any tangible improvement in its use value. Secondly, governments must enter the development industry to build low-cost housing on a mass scale instead of continually sugaring the carrot for developers by subsidizing their profits, as is presently done in the limited-dividend schemes. Thirdly, we need a public mortgage bank.

If rent control were accompanied by such a program, then the developers' threat to withdraw capital if rent controls are imposed could be given the Bronx cheer it so richly deserves. □

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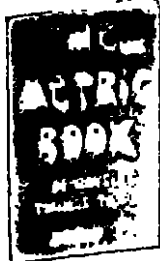
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Bachman-Turner Overdrive: Rock is My Life, This is My Song, by Martin Melhuish. Methuen, 178 pages. \$4.95 paper (ISBN 0-438-91730-3).

The Led Zeppelin Biography, by Ritchie Yorke, Methuen, 192 pages, \$4.95 paper (ISBN 0-458-91740-0).

By GERALD LEVITCH

THE STANDARDS of rock journalism totter indelicately between press-agent puffery and *cinemavérité* investigative hanging-out, with a loving side-long glance at the dolorous literature of self-confession (*née* self-aggrandizement). The two volumes under review obviously lean toward the former pole of cheerful flackery (known in the trade as "fan books"). There is nothing necessarily wrong with an *a priori* positive bias, but it makes rather dull reading. Both volumes bear the *imprimatur* of their respective subjects. They are "authorized" in every sense of the word. Indeed, Messrs. York and Melhuish may have broken through the pretense of "biography" into a new category of rock journalism—a subspecies of Official Company History.

Treating a rock band in terms of corporate history isn't really far-fetched. The "bottom line" is the top of the charts in the rock business. And intangibles, such as artistic merit, aren't quantifiable. Nor are they especially negotiable. Melhuish writes more about "points" than art. Percentages, publishing, mechanicals, advances, and airplay royalties constitute the heart of the drama. To be sure, there are real people making all this money. Wasn't every company president born in a log cabin? And every rock star was a struggling young musician once. How long he struggled is the only variable. And even that lacks tension because you know how it's all going to turn out. The poor musician becomes a rich one.

There have been some excellent books on the rock scene: for example, Bob Green's account of Alice Cooper on tour, called *Billion Dollar Babies*, and the autobiography of Clive Davis, former president of Columbia Records. These books give some real thought to the phenomenon of rock and its extra-

ordinary commercial success. But Yorke's biography of Led Zep is another matter. Using interminable interviews by the band members, he chronicles one tour after another, one album after another, and the gripes and complaints that the media don't appreciate them. Ultimately, even success sounds boring when there's so much of it — unrelieved by internal tension, death, the occasional divorce, or the usual noisy desperation. Aficionados of bloopers may relish the following bit of misinformation: "Howlin' Wolf, the legendary Chicago bluesman whose real name is Willie Dixon." The late Howlin' Wolf's real name was Chester Arthur Burnett; Willie Dixon is Willie Dixon. It's small reward for trudging through the self-advertisements and fatuous prose.

The differences between Led Zeppelin and Bachman-Turner Overdrive are considerable on the surface — Randy Bachman may be a Mormon and super-straight (little booze, no drugs, no chicks in hotel rooms: B-TO's groupies are mostly chartered accountants, anyhow) — but essentially, they are both bands composed of hard-working rock musicians. B-TO are notorious for crassly admitting that they're only in it for the money, but who isn't? And Randy Bachman's also rather candid about how the B-TO formula is a carefully calculated pop equation based on years of first-hand market research. It sounds cynical, and it is. But it sells millions of records, and that's not just a matter of magic. Maybe a little luck, but the rest is good book-keeping. Instead of building factories or railroads, B-TO and Led Zep produce hit record albums and go on tour. And while that may seem glamorous to a 15-year-old, it doesn't hold a candle to the old robber barons. Compared to old John D. or J. P., Randy Bachman or the bass player in Led Zep are just a bunch of parvenu punks. □

They blue it

Policing in Canada, by William and Nora Kelly, Macmillan, 704 pages, \$27.50 cloth (ISBN 0-7705-1334-4).

By HANS JEWINSKI

POLICE IN Canada have no mandate from God. But they receive their pow-

ers from the public, they do make mistakes, and they are held responsible for their actions.

If William and Nora Kelly had written *Policing in Canada* with that in mind, then perhaps they would have written something useful about Canada and how the country has been, and is being, policed. As it is, their book seldom rises above the level of a text book for community colleges.

The writing is far too pedestrian: "Much police work is done by policemen acting alone and with no immediate help available, not only in lonely hinterlands but even in urban areas." That is the mundane and obvious level of expression and thinking that runs through much of the book.

Another example: "The criminal investigator must have a good knowledge of the criminal law, especially of his powers under any particular statute, and of his general powers as a peace officer, which include powers of arrest and search of places and persons." This reads more like padding for a first-year cm-and-paste essay than an intelligent inquiry into Canadian policing.

Interesting and provocative subjects are again and again marred by this *precis*-like approach. The discussion of the way a radio station acted as a go-between for police and public in the Pierre Laporte tragedy is squeezed into two paragraphs. Dr. Kirkham's social education as a Jacksonville, Fla. police officer rates a mere eight Paragraphs. Both of these subjects give deep insight into the obstacles and prejudices that hamper police work: but as the paragraph counts indicate, neither is given its due.

There is a bright side, if the reader is a student. The Kellys do a wonderful job of writing up the regular essay subjects. There are chapters on municipal & icking, discretion&y powers, victimless crime, and police and the 'news media.

There is also a 34-page appendix including (among other things) a chart on CRIME, Percentage Of Offences Cleared By Charge. Cleared Otherwise. And Not Cleared. Canada, 1973. Now that is real police talk! And if you are of the curious kind, then you can turn to page 665 and ponder the fact that in 1973 Prince Edward Island had more than 1,400 municipal by-law offences (per 100,000), while no other province topped 600.

What is ultimately more curious is the Kellys' statement that "police re-

sponsibilities are regarded first as the prevention, and second, the detection, of crime." It seems ironic that after all the platitudes about police work, the Kellys do not know the first and most fundamental police responsibility: to keep the peace. □

Nobody's Baum-proof

Religion and Alienation: A Theological Reading of Sociology, by Gregory Baum, Paulist Press (Griffin House), 2% pages, \$12 cloth (ISBN 0-8091-0205-6) and \$7.95 paper (ISBN 0-8091-1917-X).

By MARJORIE BOYLE

THE FREE-MARKET system and the injustice that prompted Pierre Laporte's murder are scored as social sins in this cutting analysis of ideology and pathology. This is the book for those who assume the Canadian critique of religion ended when Berton emptied the last pew. With authority and insight, Baum forges a "critical theology" to detect the hidden social consequences of religious doctrine and make the churches responsible again.

"One of the best ideas I ever had." Baum confides, was a leave-of-absence from teaching religious studies at St. Michael's College in the University of Toronto to study sociology at the New School for Social Research in New York. Through Marx he discovered a liberating exposé of religion as a sanction of evil social structures that diminish human life and distort the collective imagination. He equally recovered, from atheistic sociologists such as Durkheim and Weber, a respect for religion as a powerful promoter of the creative social process. Assimilating this ambiguity, Baum has adopted a perspective in which religion's share in social sinning is confessed and corrected by religion itself. In the great world religions Baum finds the only institutions that, despite their complicity in human alienation, can obey a summons to criticize themselves and urge themselves prophetically forward. This summons is issued by God — not the heavenly stranger to human predicaments, but God as the mysterious matrix within human life and history whose energy and wisdom can be tapped to renew the earth.

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The **urgent** task of critical theology, **Baum** writes, is to **"deprivatize"** the **gospel**, to **uproot** that excessively individualistic interpretation of salvation that has sanctioned an atomistic social order and an economic system of each man for himself. In defining sin as deliberate, personal violation, theology ignores land so makes legitimate) the **group** egotism that erupts in collective, **evil**. It contributes, for instance, to pegging Laporte's murder as the **private** sin of the FLQ instead of to confessing it as Canadian social sin. Social **sin**, **Baum** says, is unaware collective involvement in destructive action. It is, **first**, institutional injustice; then, the ideology that reinforces that; then, the **false** consciousness created by both, which **involves** people in destructive decision and action. The sinner is all of us: hell-bent **on achievement, revelling** in individual and competitive spirit, arrogant in our collective **self**-understanding with its implicit racism. **We are all** blinded by the flawed institutions and ideologies that we perpetuate with taxes and tithes in exchange for a little creature comfort.

Conversion, **Baum** argues, must then be a **collective** deliverance from the oppression and alienation inflicted by the social structures of domination. Citizens must begin to reflect **on** their social history to detect the **alienating** ideologies it has, and **more especially**, to recover the significant, **positive** symbols that once **produced** life and vision and that could, if reinterpreted, generate new social imagination and new social order. This will be a hard conversion for Canada, **Baum** fears. "What this **means** for Canada has rarely been formulated; the unequal union between the English and the

French was so problematic from the beginning that it is not certain whether Canadians **actually** share in any common symbols derived from their **history**." He promises a theological essay on Canadian **society**, a promise in which he should be encouraged, for **Baum** has been too long neglected above the border, although praised **below** it.

A book to be threshed in the academy and the church, it is also a meditation for **Everyman**. **Baum's** style is bell-clear, a **distinction** among theologians, and will tutor any willing reader. (The obfuscating divines will pass their hells hotly parsing his syntax.) **One** caution: generic female **pronouns** spring **unsuspectingly** from the prosy thickets, a concession to the silliest demand of feminists, whose struggle for liberation **Baum** of course regards earnestly. □

The Grit who liked to quit

Edward Blake: **Leader and Exile, 1881-1912**, by Joseph Schull, Macmillan, 266 pages, \$13.95 cloth (ISBN 0-7705-1325-5).

By J. D. LIVRRMORE


"**BLAKE WILL** neither lead nor be led." **Wilfrid Laurier's** judgment, written in 1891 in the **aftermath** of the latest of Blake's crises of conscience, is the main theme of the second and concluding volume of Joseph Schull's biography of Edward Blake. Beginning in 1881, a year after his assumption of the

leadership of the national Liberal party, it describes Blake's classic **but unsuccessful** confrontations with Sir **John A. Macdonald** over the **National Policy**, provincial rights, and the execution of Louis Riel. After a superb series of chapters **on Blake's** years as a "bystander" in Canadian politics between 1887 and 1892, it leads in short fashion **past his 15** years of self-imposed "exile" in the British House of Commons as an **Irish Nationalist**, and back **to Toronto, where Blake died in 1912** at the age of 78.

The heart of the volume is Blake's reluctance to lead the Liberal party, despite **his** obvious qualifications **and** the absence of others of similar merit. Seven years as leader saw him attempt **to resign** at almost every parliamentary session. Finally, sick, **weary**, and dispirited, he was allowed to **quit** after another defeat at the polls in 1887. Yet Blake's unwillingness **to** lead, as **Laurier** knew, was only one half of the story. When he returned **to full** health, **he refused** to follow the lead of others — not, as colleagues sometimes suspected, because he coveted the leadership-but because he felt compelled to be **true** to his own ideas and goals. As the Liberals drifted further from Blake's former policies in 1890 and **1891**, his anxieties increased, **as did his** reluctance to bend **to** the collective will of the party. Finally, with **the** Liberals folly committed to a trade policy antithetical **to** Blake's views, he **published** his West Durham letter, a post-election bombshell that demolished Liberal hopes in **1891**, when party **prospects** were brightening. The West Durham letter was rash, **almost** suicidal, and effectively **ended his Canadian** political career. It was also vintage Blake.

Leader and Exile is a **skilful** combination of narrative and interpretation that succeeds in bridging the wide gulf between academic and popular biographies. Although containing only small portions that are new or original, it displays a confident familiarity with current historiography and a deft ability **to summarize** complex circumstances and events in **succinct**, accurate phrases. And unlike the previous **volume**, which was frequently vague in both detail and analysis, the **second** volume presents a **strong**, interesting, and persuasive interpretation of Blake's intentions and actions, which **Schull** conveys largely in the subject's own words. The emphasis on personal factors that shaped Blake's response to events enables the reader to appreciate

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and understand the lonely, misunderstood barrister behind the slouch hat and steel-rimmed glasses.

Although in general sympathy with Blake's unending series of emotional and ethical dilemmas, Scholl recognizes their less noble origins. The West Durham letter grew out of Blake's legitimate fears for the fragile Canadian nationality. Yet it also grew out of a resentment at his waning influence in national affairs, a jealousy at Sir Richard Canwright's role in party politics, and an innate desire to control the destinies of his country, whether as Liberal leader or not. As Schull sees Blake's assault on party policy, it was another manifestation of "the petty, juvenile, sanctimonious egoism of the son of Catherine Blake." The portrait is as complex as the man, and probably fairer than the subject could have dreamed of in the retrospective moments of his final years.

In his last chapter, Scholl summarizes the personality of the man who has eluded the analyses of historians for more than 60 years. "The child born on the backwoods plot in Ontario had the wars and the changed religions and the griefs of Ireland in his genes. He had the guilts and prides of the gentry, the

sense of place and privilege, and the God of the Evangelicals to see that he kept his place. He had the Victorian Toronto establishment as his ever-surrounding ambience, and he had William Hume Blake and Catherine Blake as mentors. Driven, prayed, and provided for, seething with worth and duty, he rose in his own closed circle to his own conception of himself." Whatever Blake's accomplishments and reputation, this, surely, was the essence of the man. □

Ode to our Nightingales

Canada's Nursing Sisters, by G.W.L. Nicholson, Samuel Stevens Hakkert & Co., illustrated, 272 pages, \$12.95 cloth (ISBN 0-88866-567-9).

By CARLOTTA HACKER

"FAT DRUNKEN old dames of fourteen stone and over must be barred," wrote Florence Nightingale, when describing the kind of nurse she wanted in the

Crimea. Almost a century later, in the Second World War, the regulations for Canadian nurses on active service were equally bizarre, and sometimes less logical. True, the nurses had to be graduates of an accredited school of nursing and so on, but if any of them were so unfortunate as to become WOOF (Women of Over Forty) or — even worse — married, then they were immediately dismissed from active duty.

Colonel Nicholson's *Canada's Nursing Sisters* is full of such vignettes, many of which will be new even to the informed reader. Did you know, for instance, that in Troyes, France, during the First World War, Canadian nursing sisters got a bad name because the town's prostitutes stole their uniforms and wore them to attract clients? Or that in the Second World War the first casualty to be evacuated from one of the clearing stations was the doctor who had come to take charge of the hospital? He arrived tired and dusty, plunged into a stream to wash — and came out with a badly gashed foot.

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sent there, and No. 3 **Stationary** being sent all over. But this is a **history**, and it is only fair to read it as such. Its value lies in the careful accuracy with which the **author** has recorded the work of Canada's nursing **sisters** who have served with **or** in our armed forces.

Inevitably, the opening **chapter concentrates** on that non-Canadian, Florence Nightingale (it's almost impossible to write **about** any form of nursing anywhere in the world, and **not** begin with her), but the author soon shifts scene from the Crimea to Moose **Jaw**. There, in **1885**, a corps of **seven** women nursed the wounded during the **North-West** Rebellion. From Moose **Jaw** he takes us to the Yukon, then to South Africa during the Boer War, on to that **Great** War which was **supposed** to end all wars, and then on via yet **another Great** War and a Korean War to the work of the modern Canadian Forces Medical Service, both in Canada and abroad. If, in passing, we receive **a** message about the **stupidity** of killing one another on a large scale and in **an** organized manner, well, **that's** a by-product of the book and, I think, **an unintentional** one.

Obviously Nicholson's first purpose **was to put** the facts on record. His second was **to** make them readable. Unfortunately he hasn't been **100** successful with the **latter aim**, **in spite** of his many anecdotes. Of course, it was by no means **an** easy task to outline **what** all the groups of nursing sisters were doing when and where, **let** alone to record how much they were being paid, what they were wearing, what clubs they were forming, and still **to** hold the **interest** of the reader. But **I feel** this could have been achieved throughout the book, rather than spasmodically, if more insight had been given into **the characters** of some of the individual women. Too often they come across simply as names.

Fortunately, a good selection of photographs is included, and this certainly helps. **But** we shouldn't have to use a face in a photo as the main clue to someone's character. Besides, **the** illustrations aren't always **revealing**. **I** could get very **little** from the **portrait** of Margaret **Macdonald** who was **Matron-in-Chief** during the **First** World War. I've heard nursing sisters who served under her speak of her with awe and **sometimes** with affection, but neither the portrait nor the **text** have added anything to my knowledge of what she was like personally.

And how much are we told about Eleanor Charleson, the Matron who

"either inadvertently or **intentionally**" took a cook with her when she was posted to France in **1915**? A few **years** ago I was lucky enough to meet Matron Charleson, a sprightly **95-year-old** who spent **an** afternoon **entertaining** me with her war stories. Dedicated, determined, pragmatic, and extremely **witty**, she could never have done anything **"inadvertently"** in her life. It wasn't in her **character**. **But** it was very much in character for her to worry about the comfort of her nurses, to realize **that** tasty meals were good for morale, and to **outmanoeuvre army regulations** and **somehow** smuggle a civilian cook across the Channel in the middle of a war.

Nicholson states **that** this achievement was a "tribute to her ingenuity," which indeed **it** was, **but** he leaves **it** at that. Time and again he misses the **opportunity** to add the couple of **extra sentences** that **would** help us get to know the people whose actions he has recorded so carefully. For **many** of the readers of *Canada's Nursing Sisters*, this **won't** be a **serious drawback**, for they themselves will have been nursing sisters and a name alone will **be enough** to evoke memories that will **fill** many of the gaps in characterization. **But** for the rest of us, it is sad **that'** such a well-researched and historically valuable book shouldn't have broadened its **interest** and enlivened its pages by telling us more **about** the personalities of what were surely some very courageous, unselfish, and, in **some** cases, truly outstanding women. □

College graduates

Many Cultures, Many Heritages, edited by Norman **Sheffe**, McGraw-Hill **Ryerson**, illustrated, 544 **pages**, \$9.75 (ISBN 07-082277-8).

By **KEITH GAREBIAN**

THIS **BOOK** is **part** of McGraw-Hill **Ryerson's** Canadian Studies Program series **into which** has evidently gone much time and money. I find it **unpleasant** to report, then, **that** this particular volume — which I forced myself to stay with **through its 544 pages** — manifests the **conceptual** thinness so common and endemic to **Canada's** public schools. To begin with, the editor,

sets a confusing path — perhaps because he is himself confused about both the meaning and purpose of the cultural theme. His introduction is an example of what, at best, is superficial and glib and what, at worst, is patently pretentious and out of all proportion to the intelligence attempting to support the pretensions. Even granting, for the sake of argument, that Canada is a mosaic in John Porter's terms, how are we to accept the editor's view of tensions between an "existing Canadian culture" and the several imported "cultures"? To what degree is it proper to speak of an existing Canadian culture? When did this culture come into being? What makes it distinctively Canadian? And what, in fact, does the editor conceive of as a culture? Neither he nor his writers and consultants appear to have a subtle definition of "culture" for in this book culture is simply passed off as "a group of people who live together with common bonds of customs, language, and life style, people who recognize amongst themselves a kind of unity which is a result of shared similar experiences and backgrounds." This is the crux of the problem: what we have in a nutshell is the rattle of desiccant ideas. Culture is equated with sociopolitical group unity and a common sharing of similar values. But surely culture is neither simply the persistence of a group nor merely the sum of several activities. It is rather the organic, incarnational product and continuation of a way of life, obtained by a cohesive society aware of its traditions and world view.

One of the main purposes of this book is to set a direction for the future whereby each Canadian can look honestly and compassionately at his fellow countrymen and understand their needs and aspirations. A laudable purpose but miscarried here, I think. The several writers assume that culture is learned like a habit or language, and they reduce a difficult concept to a textbook formula. Their over-simplification is crystallized when they gratuitously consider the youth phenomenon a culture in itself, separated from a larger, feeder organism.

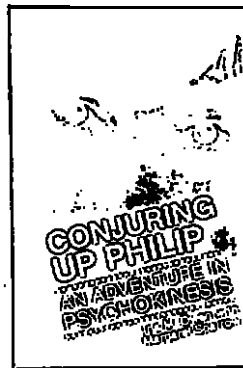
Time and again, we see how the writers' benevolent sentiments are done a grave disservice by their untenable presumption that the Canadian mosaic is an exciting ideal. They blandly ignore the abundant historical data that gives the lie to their skeleton treatment of many important events. Sensing, perhaps, that Canadian history in the raw is strong medicine on

occasion-t" strong for our students? -they add spoonfuls of sugar and produce a mixture that induces gagging. Many of the sordid chapters in our history are skimmed over, and controversy is frequently side-stepped as if it were dog's excrement. They do not mention the ghastly steerage conditions aboard the vessels that brought over many immigrants to pioneer Canada: they speak blissfully of a trade partnership between Indians and Europeans; and, not constricted by an ultra-nationalist policy of exclusively Canadian content, they venture into Caribbean history to report that although West Indian Federation failed politically, it was a success culturally — a report that will provide no little comic relief to V. S. Naipaul, if not, as well, to Louise Bennett.

Are these half-truths a case of simple ignorance? I'm not always sure, but I feel they are certainly manifestations of an uncritical approach symptomatic of rampant nationalist feeling. Everything that can be broadly construed as a document of culture is grist to their straining mills. Sometimes the grist is interesting — note, for instance, some splendid photographs of pushcart peddlars, sabbath celebrations, family pic-

nics, parades — but in the main it is mere fodder for amateur sociologists. On the surface the writers are up-to-date about events: the War Measures Act gets mentioned, as does Quebec's infamous Bill 22. But the prose is flat, and opportunities for intensive exploration are passed up for threadbare exposition — sometimes as a mereroll-call of names and facts. As is frequently the case with studies of popular culture, the proportion between the trivial and the significant is distorted. True, it is diverting to read recipes for such exotic fare as banana fritters, linzertorte, zimmes, zabaglione, and bannock; but discretion prompts me to wonder to what extent such recipes help us understand or improve the Canadian mosaic?

Despite an earnest attempt to escape the drab, clinical textbook syndrome, *Many Cultures, Many Heritages* fails to achieve genuinely novel methods of presentation. The book deals with 10 groups: the Blacks, British, French, Germans, Italians, Japanese, Jews, Native Peoples, Scandinavians, and Ukrainians. While each group is handled in a different way, certain general themes are explored in each section. But there is a spuriousness of presentation: in the French section, one of the



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case studies of push-and-pull factors is patently false; it's much too general to be truly relevant or even authentically apposite to nationalist feeling in Quebec. At times, too, the case studies are obvious concoctions: the example of a typical *filles du roi* transaction offers blatant evidence of mock history via mock documentation.

Added to the burdens of a deficient critical sense and some questionable techniques of presentation, there is also a haziness about the audience to which this text is presumably directed. The writers vacillate between two poles: they either expect the student to possess a considerable breadth of historical data or else they expect the student to be ignorant of some elementary facts.

Yet this inconsistency turns out to yield a positive side, for the book does compel the student to do a large amount of research, and it does this in two ways: by spurring his interest in trivia; and by deliberately telegraphing facts that require proper expansion and elaboration. And anything that succeeds in motivating school students to read books outside the curriculum serves at least one good purpose in our society.

All in all. *Many Cultures, Many Heritages* is a hodgepodge of material and methodology in a characteristically Canadian melange of blandness and glibness. The difficult and the controversial are ignored or reduced to their simplest terms, and the whole myth of the Canadian mosaic is platitudinized in an insufferable, high-school way. It's by our deficiencies in culture that we're haunted. □

Straight twigs and bent ones

The Adult and the Nursery School Child, by Margaret I. Fletcher, U of T Press, 96 pages, \$6.50 cloth (ISBN 0-8020-2167-0).

The Learning Environment: A Practical Approach to the Education of the Three-, Four- and Five-Year-Old, by Chris Nash, Methuen, 195 pages, \$7.95 paper (ISBN 0-4589-1330-S).

If I Tell You. Will I Feel Less Scared?; by Gregory Sass, McDonald House, 91 pages, \$5.95 paper (ISBN 0-88942958-8).

By JANIS RAPGPORT

IN THE INTRODUCTION to the second edition of *The Adult and the Nursery School Child*, Mary Northway of the

Brora Centre in Toronto makes a statement that is central to the theory set forth throughout: "Good human relationships form the essential groundwork from which growth in skills and personality is made possible."

The nursery-school plan, detailed in the ensuing chapters, is based on the "human security theory" of Dr. W. E. Blatz, who, for 35 years, was the director of the Institute of Child Study. Margaret Fletcher, the book's author, was the supervisor of the Institute's nursery school for 30 years.

The second edition of the book (which might be more accurately titled "The Teacher and the Nursery School Child"), based on the author's experiences of nearly 20 years ago, is a well-thought-out and carefully researched account of logical preschool practices that have not dated either in their sensibility or in their sensitivity.

An informative epilogue outlines the theoretical concerns of preschool teaching from the 1920s onward. A selective inclusion of case histories of "graduates" from this method of early childhood education would have provided a valuable addition.

With a structural analysis based on the components of the home-learning environment as isolated by Chris Nash (namely space, time, people, things) her practical approach to the education of three-, four-, and live-year-olds develops these concepts in an educational context.

Instead of dealing with the preschool environment in an integrated manner, as Margaret Fletcher does, Chris Nash's emphasis is on isolating relevant experiential factors. If one of the purposes is clarity, her aim is not always successfully achieved. Her outlook is eclectic but arbitrary. For example, she prefaces one chapter with an excerpt from Montessori theory, another by a sentence from F. I. Steele's *Physical Settings and Organization Development*, and yet another by a chunk of Jean Piaget's investigation of number concepts. Although the presence of these sometimes contradictory philosophies does not necessarily indicate the influence of a particular "school" on the author's considerations, it might nevertheless be useful to know why certain elements of various theories are either included or excluded.

In a chapter dealing with a practicality as basic as classroom space planning, the author confuses the reader with such nonspecific vacuities as: "In its development, the conceptual

framework came from psychology." In many instances the use of the first-person singular pronoun is obtrusive. The contemporary jargon liberally sprinkled throughout will soon be passé. In Chris Nash's world, as well as Margaret Fletcher's, all nursery-school staff would appear to be female and the children male.

Despite its shortcomings *The Learning Environment* does contain many potentially useful models and summary charts in which the wealth of detail is stripped to the essential facts.

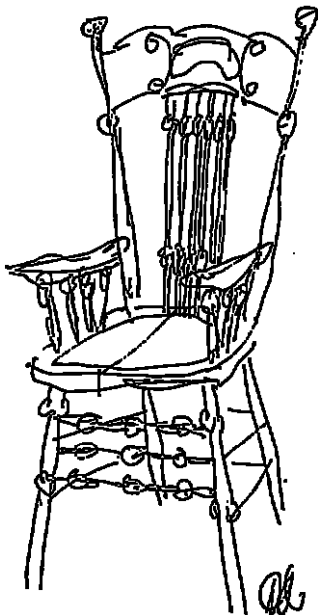
Whereas the concern of Fletcher and Nash lies with "normal" children, Gregory Sass deals with "disturbed" children who, for one reason or another, have been placed in "special" classes. Like the book's title, the chapter headings are constructed from the children's own words.

From the dialogue fragments (often a surfacing of subconscious emotions) that form the substance of the book, a clear impression emerges of the situation, from the inside, of eight boys in a "special" classroom.

A genuine and valuable point of view is presented here in a simple and direct way. The result is a moving and courageous testimony of a difficult learning environment. Suggestions for change are implied in the contrasting of the two teachers' attitudes and behaviour and in juxtaposing the "objective" evaluations of the boys with their actual thoughts and actions.

One hopes Gregory Sass will somehow, perhaps in an imminent sequel, present some workable solutions to the appalling situation he has depicted here.

All three books are illustrated in black and white. The line drawings in



the Fletcher book, from the original edition, are unfortunately more dated than the text they accompany and do nothing to enhance it. Those in the Nash book, though superficially "hip," are too mechanical in design (the people, disconcertingly, have blanks or black blobs for eyes). The illustrations in the Sass book are half-tone reproductions of the participants' artwork. The children's drawings are, of course, integral to the text as well as being highly meaningful in their own right. □

Home and School, then and now

Family School & Society in Nineteenth-Century Canada, edited by Alison L. Prentice and Susan E. Houston. Oxford, 294 pages, \$6.95 paper (ISBN 0-19-540246-4).

The Passionate Educators: Voluntary Associations and the Struggle for Control of Adult Educational Broadcasting in Canada, 1919-1952, by Ron Faris, Peter Martin Associates. 202 pages; \$12 cloth (ISBN 0-88778-120-9).

A Matrix for Modern Education, by John Bremer, McClelland & Stewart, 207 pages, \$5.95 cloth (ISBN 0-7710-1643-3).

By ROBERT STAMP

"AS CONTEMPORARY critics ... take issue with the assumption that education can only-or best-take place in schools, we are learning something that in a way everyone has known all along, namely that education and schooling are not necessarily the same thing." This statement from the introduction to *Family School & Society* is the theme that unites these three recent contributions to the literature of Canadian education.

Through an examination of documentary sources, Prentice and Houston analyze the clash between informal, family-based learning and institutionalized schooling that characterized much of 19th-century Canadian education. Ron Faris in *The Passionate Educators* shows how the Canadian Association for Adult Education avoided being "captured by the bureaucratic administrators and [having] its life sucked out of it." Finally, John

Bremer's personal statement of educational philosophy in *A Matrix for Modern Education* demonstrates the difficulty of persuading the contemporary educational establishment to accept less formal learning structures.

Family School & Society represents the revisionist interpretation that characterizes recent writing in Canadian educational history. Rejecting the "one path to progress" approach that equated the expansion of public schooling with the enlightenment of the human race, Prentice and Houston make skilful use of both public and private sources to document the smothering impact of creeping institutionalization. They examine the role of the family in early 19th-century moral, religious, vocational, and citizenship education, the powerful campaign for public funding and state control, and the relentless push for compulsory attendance that by the end of the century made schooling a fact of life for nearly every Canadian child.

When I was being indoctrinated into the teaching profession 15 years ago, the "public school triumphant" was presented as a success story of the first magnitude. Prentice and Houston ask us to reconsider it as a horror story. The book should be read by all well-meaning individuals who are considering teaching as a career.

Again, back in the early 1960s, Faris' *The Passionate Educators* would have been dismissed as a story of failure — the failure of adult education to establish itself under complete public financing and control. And certainly Faris' book is in pan a catalogue of short-lived projects, lost hopes, and repeated disappointments. But the CAAE and the CBC did get the social-action oriented "Citizens' Forum" and "National Farm Radio Forum", on the air during the 1940s; these accomplishments would not have been possible if adult education had been part of the school bureaucracy.

Faris takes us back to the turbulent inter-war years when traditional voluntary elitist associations and rural-based social-action groups struggled for control of adult education. Largely through the efforts of Ned Corbett, the CAAE's first director, the social-action emphasis prevailed through the years of radio broadcasting activity in the 1940s. *The Passionate Educators* is part educational history and part intellectual history, part social history and pan political history. The book-like the adult-education movement itself — could be criticized for not always

knowing where it is going. But isn't that very imprecision what has made adult education such an exciting and vital field For the past 50 years?

Unfortunately, Bremer's *A Matrix for Modern Education* is a story of failure. It explains why this concerned and humanistic individual—a "passionate educator" in Faris' terms — Failed in his efforts as British Columbia's Commissioner of Education to breathe new life into that province's schools. Bremer enjoyed earlier successes when his efforts produced concrete results — the Parkway Program (a school without walls) in Philadelphia and the Institute of Open Education (a radical approach to teacher training) in Cambridge, Mass. But his ideas do not have such power of persuasion when presented in the abstract — as here on paper or orally to the citizens and former government of British Columbia.

It's not that Bremer is such a radical. Granted, his ideas on open learning owe some debt to Illich's concept of a "de-schooled" society and to Postman and Weingartner's *Teaching as a Subversive Activity*. Yet they are ideas that many of us would support: every envi-

ronment has the potential to enhance learning; students need a combination of structure and unstructure; more attention should be paid to process rather than product: students should have more choice in learning; and we need a breakdown of the physical and psychological barriers between school and community.

But Bremer appeals to an earlier, pre-public school world, a world glimpsed in the opening sections of Prentice and Houston's *Family School & Society*. "Why is it," he asks, "that in some ways the students, the young, the immature, have to be removed, presumably from the contaminating contact with their parents, so that they may be brought up as citizens of this society? Why do they have to be separated?" His answer: "We must have though! that the young could best be prepared for membership in the Full society if they are removed from that society." That process of separation — with all its presumed advantages of equality and disadvantages of conformity — is ably documented in *Family School & Society*. How adult education escaped that fate is clearly presented in

Faris' *The Passionate Educators*. The 'neglect of Bremer's *A Matrix for Modern Education* by our current educational decision-makers' shows how much we have changed (and how much we have lost?) over the past 150 years. □

IN BRIEF

THE BUSINESS and laws pertaining to the arts have been long neglected. Our emerging film industry requires informed advice and guidelines to flourish. At last the rules of the game are set down in *Motion Pictures and the Arts in Canada* (McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 208 pages, \$14.95, ISBN 0-7-082298-0). A former producer and publisher, Garth H. Drabinsky is uniquely qualified as the author. Now a top entertainment lawyer, he writes with an informed precision on all aspects of the industry. Intricate logistics and legalities are compiled in a concise, readable manner. Using case examples in a jargon-free text, chapters explain copyright regulations, libel and slander, laws of obscenity, principles of contracts, and the roles and duties involved in the production, distribution and exhibition of feature films. The differences to American laws are noted, deftly illustrating our need to expand into international markets. The book is concerned with the commercial interests of artistic activities. Thus its application affects all who work in the arts. Businessmen planning ventures into productions will be enlightened by Drabinsky's material. The artist especially benefits, recognizing the protection and potential through which he may utilize his craft.

GODFREY P. JORDAN

If you haven't already joined the mass return to cross-country skiing, perhaps *Cross-Country Skiing: Touring and Competition* by David Rees (Copp Clark, 207 pages, \$4.95, ISBN 0-7730-4024-2) will win you over. First, the book gives accurate information on organized clubs and ski areas in Canada, touring events and competitions, and the skiing equipment commercially available here. Second, it's a mine of information on technique, from the rudiments for the beginning skier to the complexities of cross-country competition. The author is an impeccable authority on his subject. Rees has competed in skiing at the national level since the age of 12, was twice Canadian champion, was a member of the 1968 Canadian Olympic Team, and was a

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D. W. RUSSELL

PERIODICALLY SPEAKING

By LINDA SANDLER

IS THE CRITIC an obstructive middleman? Many writers would say that communication must flow unobstructed from the artwork to the audience — light into darkness. Critics, on the other hand, believe that without their intervention the flow of communication would resemble the passage of rainwater into a gutter.

Obviously, you don't need to read Al Purdy with a critical manual on your lap, and he wouldn't like it if you did. But what about the visionary "Fifty City" episode in Dave Godfrey's *Mew Ancestors*? Godfrey has said that he doesn't know anybody who understands that, bar Michael Ondaatje and Frank Davey, who are both writers.

What is a critic, anyway? And a reviewer? Do they write for other writers,

or for readers? These questions are raised and answered in different ways in a recent issue of the *Canadian Theatre Review* (Fall, 1975) and although they are discussed specifically in terms of drama, many of the ideas presented are relevant to criticism of the arts in general.

Don Robin, *CTR*'s editor, opens the forum with an investigation of the respective functions of reviewer, reviewer-critic (the educated reviewer) and critic. The reviewer, he says, is primarily a publicist. His job is to report on his experience of the play, and to get people into the theatre. The critic, on the other hand, is concerned with questions of aesthetics, tradition, and innovation. His function is to evaluate, and one hopes, to set up lines of communication between artist and audience.

Fair enough. You can't really quarrel with that. But Robin is categorizing, and look how he undermines his credibility:

The reviewer when confronted with Auschwitz might have reported on its size, shape and number of gas ovens. The reviewer-critic would have also mentioned the above but would have looked at the skillfulness [sic] of the design and the efficacy of the ovens. The critic, while evoking (as the

finest critics have) its actuality would have also questioned its very existence.

Rabin has borrowed the illustration from somewhere, but it's clear that he doesn't read the newspapers.

Nathan Cohen was the kind of critic who might have questioned the existence of gas ovens. He saw himself as Canada's first real drama critic ("All the rest are reviewers!") and, as David McCaughna says in his retrospective article, Cohen's critical attributes — a first-class mind and an acerbic tongue — had an immense influence on the standards of theatre audiences and of reviewers.

Cohen fits the popular stereotype of the critic as carping and revengeful. Psychiatrist Philip Weissman suggests that the stereotype is worth investigating. The decision to become a critic rather than a creator, he says, may go back to childhood Oedipal conflicts: "Coincidental and unevaluated is the fact that many renowned critics have also been biologically childless."

But Weissman is good on the relative uses of criticism by artists and critics. The artist, he says, has a lot to tell us about inspiration and about the creative process (this may be why Frank Davey understands Dave Godfrey) — he's not

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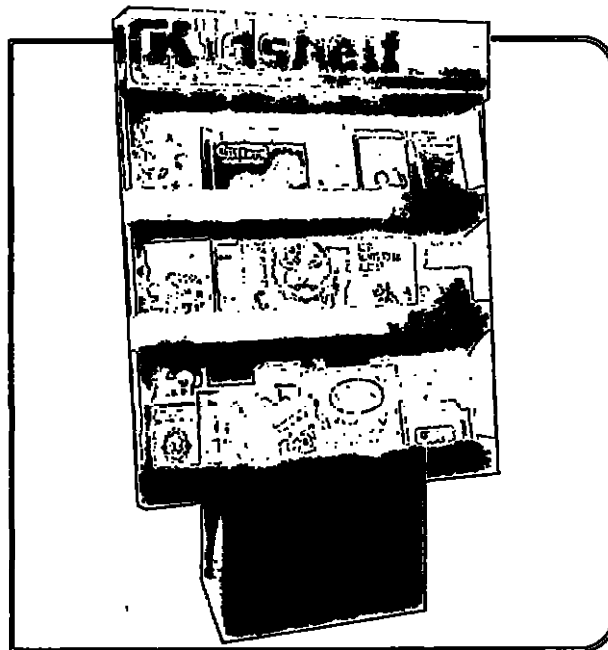
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so good at judging the finished work, because he gets hung up on the artist's intentions. The critic, who is an informed representative of the audience, can respond to, and evaluate, the final communication.

There's a general consensus that the critic shouldn't get too involved in the performance — he shouldn't enjoy himself. Harold Clurman, the American theatre critic, offers the following:

The critic is not the one who is drinking the Coke but rather the chemist who tells you what is in it and what the taste is like. He tells you what it can do to your system. Some plays are poisonous

Has Clurman left anything out? Bertolt Brecht would add that the critic's business is to expose the system that encourages people to drink poisonous beverages. (James Lorimer would ask, "Why are we importing Cokes?" And Jack McClelland would say, "Come on over to the Uncola!")

It may not have escaped your notice that Clurman is the first critic to suggest that art may be bad for social or psychological reasons, not just aesthetic ones.

Brecht was the most influential of revolutionary critics, and Clurman probably learned from him. Brecht, who was a great formal innovator, de-

manded that art be judged by its social effects, not by aesthetic standards alone. Did it affirm the status quo? Did it demand social change? Did it educate the people? For Brecht, the critic was the people's representative, and a mediator with a very special function. He had to educate the masses, and to unmask outdated (unrevolutionary) sentiments and ideas wherever he encountered them in art. Art for Brecht, you see, was not the playground of the leisured classes, but an instrument of social change. And as Ernst Schumacher points out in his article, "Brecht as Critic," Brecht believed that the critic must play his part in changing the consciousness of his society.

Well, are we getting this kind of criticism in Canada? Not a chance. Margaret Atwood, who does write for a wide audience, and who does have a sociological perspective, comes closest, but she directs most of her attention to the Canadian pan.

What kind of criticism are we getting? The following items found their way to the periodicals' shelf at Books in Canada.

Item: Frank Davey argues that thematic criticism, as practiced by Atwood and others, is a colonialist

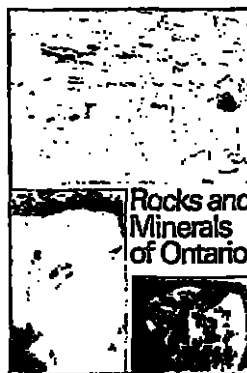
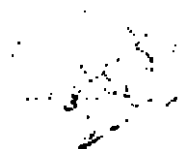
phenomenon, originating with writers like Callaghan and Richler who thought they were good enough to explain the nation to itself, but not good enough to write literature ("From Literature to Criticism: A Note," *Impulse*, Spring, 1975). What we need, Davey says, is a criticism that deals with writers as co-conscious artists, creating new forms for a new environment. If critics were to examine the forms of art, he adds, many of the puzzles about Canadian consciousness would automatically resolve themselves. How? Davey doesn't say how, but he clearly believes that the medium is most of the message.

Item: W.H. New, who has spent many years studying the evolution of Canadian consciousness, is increasingly sceptical about the quest for a national identity ("Canadian Literature and Commonwealth Responses," *Canadian Literature*, Autumn, 1975). But his advice is unappealing. For reasons that escape me, New is obsessed with ironing out cultural differences. His honesty gets in the way, somewhat, but still, he insists that real artists will now forget politics and focus on the spirit: "They seek their culture's imaginative soul, they seek to transcend the material landscape in order to be enfranchised in the discov-

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ery of spiritual illumination." If I didn't respect New's intelligence, I'd say that this sounds like so much obfuscating claptrap. New has perhaps taken the veil?

Item: Dorothy Livesay, like most of us, is not unduly impressed with current poetry criticism—consisting mainly, she says, of emotive praise and detraction, and some cursory reports in elitist magazines. And so she has founded *CVIII* (successor to Alan Crawley's *Contemporary Verse*) at the University of Manitoba, to be a national forum of serious analytic criticism. In her first editorial manifesto (Spring, 1975) she announces her preference for poetry "that best expresses our craving for confrontation with the real, with direct, day-to-day living." Her bias, it seems, is slightly in favour of regional and feminist poetry, slightly against introspective and experimental poetry.

OK. Let's see what the reviews are like. Here's George Amabile, reviewing Margaret Atwood's *You Are Happy*. Here's what he says about Circe: "Filled as she is with sexual coldness and intellectual savagery, it is not surprising that Circe should find that 'fresh monsters' are breeding in her mind" And *this* is serious analysis?!! Amabile's talking about Circe, not Atwood, but there's more than a little vindictiveness in his tone.

But *CVIII* doesn't go in exclusively for the carping, opinionated brand of criticism. Some poets, such as P.K. Page, are praised very highly indeed. In *Poems Selected and New*, says Arthur Adnmsen, "experience is incised with a chrySTALLINE clarity that is not always obvious or simple. But the complexities and obscurities are always a manoeuvre of incisiveness, usually brilliant, occasionally a bit awkward. But," he adds hastily, "even the awkwardness is attractive." In case you get the wrong idea, you know?

The anti-Atwood, pro-Page bias seems to be obligatory of late (if we can judge from recent issues of *The Canadian Forum*), but *CVIII* won't earn a reputation for critical rigour that way. It will have to do better than that. After all, this bias has nothing to do with analysis, and everything to do with fashion. And a very narrow fashion it is, being confined mainly to intellectuals. □



SCRIPT & FILM

By DOUG FETHERLING

IN JAN KADAR'S film, *Lies My Father To/d Mr.* there is a supporting character named Mr. Bumgarten. He operates a small tailor shop in Montreal in the 1920s. He is also the neighbourhood communist. Unlike most of the other characters in the film, Bumgarten knows the way out of the ghetto, or believes he does. As a communist he simply foresees the elimination of all such slums when workers take control of the state. He proselytizes once or twice but none of the others pay much attention to him. The interesting aspect of all this is that the character is played by Ted Allan.

Allan is not only the author of the screenplay and of the short story from which he's taken, he's also Canada's best-known communist, the co-author of *The Scalpel*, *The Sword*, the biography of Norman Bethune, his one-time comrade in the Spanish Civil War. Viewed at a distance this is all richly ironic since, as a writer at lean, Allan is not much for following communist doctrine. His production is geared for maximum profit rather than for use, as can be seen from the history of *Lies My Father Told Me* in its several forms. The latest form is the "novelization" by Norman Allan of his father's screenplay (Signet, \$1.50). It illustrates that Ted Allan is not above achieving the capitalist ideal of keeping his property in the family.

The original story, written nearly 30 years ago, set the pattern for everything that followed. It was a sentimental little tale, clearly autobiographical, about a young boy's attachment to his grandfather and also to the broken-down old horse that pulled his grandfather's junk wagon. What develops is the child's loss of innocence, which comes about in a double brush with mortality. First the grandfather dies: then the horse, which has been the subject of complaints from the neighbours, is sold and put to death. It's a plot notable not for its substance but for its telling, and the telling has changed considerably over the years.

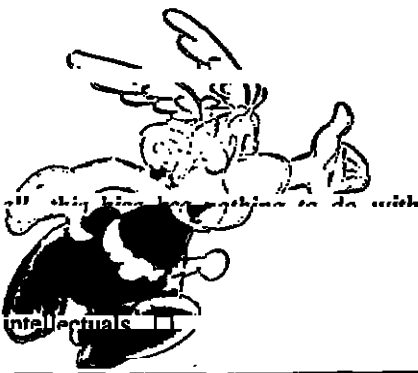
Also integral to the story arc are the boy's mother and father. In the original, the latter was a nebulous sort of character. But in 1954, when Allan

converted the story into a CBC-TV script, which he subsequently sold in a number of other countries as well, the parent became more clearly defined. He was now a successful man of business who supported his family without too much strain. His residence in the ghetto, it seemed, was more a matter of ethnic ties than of penury. This is in contrast with the film version, in which the same character, well played by Len Birman, is a gambler and a tinker with crackpot inventions. Here he resents the grandfather not only because the grandfather is closer to the boy than he himself is, but also because he must keep borrowing money from him.

But the grandfather undergoes the more interesting change. In the original story and in the TV play, he was not the lovable wise old man he is in the film. Instead he was a stern, orthodox authoritarian figure, a fact that made his grandson's admiration a little harder to figure out. The television version also featured a grandmother, a superfluous character dropped from the film. Neither the story nor the two dramatic versions contained Bumgarten or any one like him, perhaps this was because communists were lying low in 1954, even in fiction. Or, more probably, because Allan only later conceived the notion of including a figure who is himself in adulthood as much as the grandson is himself-when-young and thus of providing, in his own mind at least, a cyclical effect.

What is important, though, is that in the film both the grandfather, who was formerly so strident, and the communist, who once would have been depicted as threatening, are both laundered. They are both made to seem, in a word, cum. This is in keeping with the white middle-class idea that radicals, foreigners, and other riffraff can be made harmless by being made the object of gentle levity. If you can't assimilate 'em, distort 'em. This fact only contributes to the feeling that *Lies My Father To/d Me* is a son of ethnic Disney picture, what Howard Engel has called "a film for Jewish families of all faiths." If one watches it critically, in the light of Kadar's Czech films such as *The Shop on Main Street*, one succumbs to the same son of pity one feels watching the Westerns Fritz Lang made after moving from Germany to Hollywood.

That's if one watches it critically and in a cosmopolitan frame of mind. Watching it as a Canadian one is confronted with the double standard so troublesome for critics and audiences.



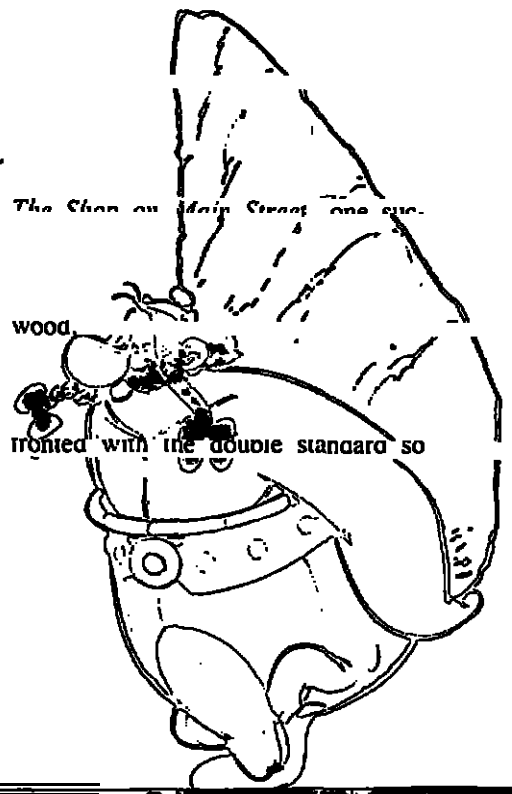
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fronted with the double standard so



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One turns off his mind and concedes that, yes, it's a well-constructed film, with good if postcardy cinematography and some fine performances. It thus becomes an ethnic film in quite another sense. One ends up saying that at least it will have a good effect on the perpetually anaemic Canadian film industry and that therefore it can't be all bad. This is where Norman Allan's novelization of the screenplay comes in.

Viewed from the standpoint of the ephemera that feature films leave behind them — novelizations and soundtrack albums — Canadian cinema has never been healthier. That is to say that the producers are becoming a bit more acute. By acting as though the situation were healthy for Canadian films, they are forming a mental attitude more receptive to that eventuality. They are also, of course, making a few petrobucks on the side for all concerned. What the novelization of *Lies My Father Told Me* points up, however, is the necessity of ceasing to look upon novelizations as the only kind of book for promoting and enshrining the feature film.

Most people who think about it believe the novelization, with stills from the production, is a recent phenomenon. It's not. William Wellman's 1927 film *Wings*, for instance, was novelized in the U.S. at the time. The publisher was Grosset & Dunlap. This firm published a whole series of such volumes in cloth, including a treatment of *Broadway Melody* by Jack Lair, the newspaper columnist who, later, co-authored the "Confidential" series of crime exposés with Lee Mortimer. Still, it's true that the novelization idea lay forgotten until recent years, when the mass interest in serious films coincided with the rise of the mass-market paperback. The published screenplay has had a shakier and more complex history.

It is generally assumed that the first screenplay published as a book was the script of *The Mighty Barnum* by Gene Fowler and Bess Meredyth, which Covici-Friede brought out in cloth in 1933. In truth, though, the socialist writer Upton Sinclair published *Hell: A Drama and Photoplay* 10 years earlier. It's true that the script was unpublished and that the book was self-published, as were most of Sinclair's: but it achieved an immense circulation for its day. (To give credit where it's due. Sinclair also conceived the idea of the book club before Harry Scherman created the negative option Book-of-the-Month Club in 1925.) Still, save for a few

anthologies and special cases, the screenplay was unpublishable until the 1960s because it was assumed that few people wanted to see a film more than once, let alone pay money for the scenario. No doubt the spread of film schools on this continent has helped change publishers' minds.

Among publishers, a certain critical attitude has recently prevailed toward films. This has resulted in the breaking down of published scripts into several categories. For instance, the scripts of classic films now are commonly issued either in quality paperback or even in cloth, both singly and in series. With films in current release, when the book and film can be relied upon to help promote each other, there is a further breakdown. It is generally only the scripts of serious yet commercially successful films that are published in pocketbooks. An example is Penelope Gilliatt's *Sunday, Bloody Sunday*, a serious film that did better than expected at the box office. For frankly commercial films, there are two other possibilities: a novelization; or a version of the script without camera angles and other stuff that interrupts the flow of the dialogue. A mill-more-recent

idea has the narrative in prose intercut with the dialogue in dramatic form.

Another type of book, increasingly common, is the behind-the-scenes volume, such as *The Godfather Journal* or *The Jaws Log*. This is the kind that would have been suited to *Lies My Father Told Me*, at least for the Canadian market alone, since the film was made and released only after one of those years-long backroom ordeals so common in this country. At least there might have been a published screenplay with a behind-the-scenes introduction instead of this novelization, which is in the worst tradition of such books, written at the level of a Harlequin romance.

Still, one should be thankful for even such small gifts as this. There have been until now few books keyed to individual Canadian films. One thinks only of Scott Young and George Robertson's novelization, in cloth and mass-market paperback, of *Face-Off* — of this and the "film editions," with stills, from the productions of *Duddy Kravitz* and *The National Dream*. Clearly the time is ripe for some enterprising publisher to undertake a series of Canadian screenplays with stills and critical introductions. The beauty of

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such an idea is that there is an assured educational market as well as trade sales and that the cheaper the books are produced— even unto unjustified type and paper plates—the more authentic they will look. Perhaps the reason this has not been done already is that the majority of Canadian publishers are, if anything, even more cautious and conservative than Canadian film people when it comes to putting their money where their mouths are. □

NOTES & COMMENTS

THE INTRODUCTORY issue of *Books in Canada* was dated May, 1971, and appeared — portentously — in early June. It was a handsome production on good matt stock — too good for our purse, as it soon turned out. The cover featured a review by Dave Godfrey of Mordcaai Richler's *St. Urbain's Horseman*. Inside we carried a profile of Robertson Davies, reviews by Al Purdy, Hugh Garner, David Helwig, Alden Nowlan, and Doug Fetherling, a drawing of two erotically electrified pigs by Foo (later to be revealed as Howard Engel), and a column about the trials of book-editing by Stet (never to be revealed as Doug Gibson). We also carried a small house ad saying we would welcome potential George Woodcocks as contributors. A week or so later we received our first friendly letter. It came from Vancouver and politely wondered whether, at a pinch, the real George Woodcock would do.

The real George Woodcock would indeed do, and his contributions have often graced these pages — as have those from many of the other names listed above. In fact, by happy coincidence, this fifth anniversary issue contains contributions from Purdy, Fetherling, and Foo, as well as reviews of the latest novels by Garner and Helwig.

The first really unfriendly letters began to arrive around the time of our first anniversary. They came from subscribers lamenting our infrequency of publication. We had promised 18 issues in the first 12 months. In the event, we barely managed to produce 18 issues in the first 2½ years. However, many of them were double and even triple issues. Loyal readers will remember our splendid April/May/June, 1973, issue, which appeared of course in early July of that year. It is quite properly a collector's item.

About that time our letters column became recognized as a convenient forum for the ventilation of literary rages — a tradition that continues to this day. Despite some recent excesses, we think it is a healthy tradition. And amid all the sound and fury, only one reader has become so incensed by a particular review as to write demanding that we cancel her subscription. We sent her back her \$9.95 by return post. Only later did she remember that she had never taken out a subscription in the first place, but had picked the magazine up free in a book store.

During the early years, the suspicion was voiced abroad that *Books in Canada* was being run by a monolithic literary clique. We scotched that rumour by presenting an editorial masthead that has been matched for volatility only by *Maclean's* in a bad decade. What with comings and goings and witchings around, we have been blessed with two editors, four managing editors, three assignment editors, and two associate editors. There have even been times when some of us have been all of them at once.

At one point we lost a managing editor for a whole week. He was found camping out in the stock room, a refugee from domestic problems. A little later we lost him for good. He got up from an editorial meeting to make a telephone call and wasn't seen or heard from again for six months. Evidently the phone call had led directly to a less-hazardous and better-paying job — in fact, to a job that paid, period.

Despite the editorial turnover, *Books in Canada* has evolved, within a remarkably consistent framework and maintained a clear sense of purpose. One reason has been the steady influence of our advertising, business, marketing, and art departments. They have borne a heroic burden.

The other reason is that every editor involved with the magazine, without exception, has agreed with and made valuable contributions toward realizing the fundamental goal set by Val Clery, the founding editor. We exist to promote the best interests of Canadian literature in an intelligent and entertaining way.

We have now been striving toward that goal for 44 hard-fought issues. Behind us lie nearly one million words of criticism by some 400 contributors (see page 2) reviewing more than 1,500 Canadian titles. The effort that has carried us to our present reasonably secure state has never been easy. But it has

always been rewarding and, in retrospect at least, it has often been fun.

* * *

LATE FLASHES on the GeeGees: as we go to press, we learn that one of the non-resident longshots featured on our April cover has captured the Governor General's Award for English fiction. The winner was Brian Moore's *The Great Victorian Collection*, reviewed in our August issue. The award for English poetry went to Milton Acorn for *The Island Means Minago* (December issue). *Hallowed Walls: Church Architecture of Upper Canada*, by Marion MacRea and Anthony Adamson (March, 1976, issue) won the non-fiction award. We reserve our comments until the next issue.

Incidentally, we must apologize to Sylvia Fraser for not listing her fine horse *The Candy Factory* among the 1975 contenders. Our understanding was that her book was actually published in 1974. If *Candy Factory* was indeed in the running for the 1975 stakes, we would have made it a co-favourite. And, as it turns out, we would have been wrong.

We also apologize to Morley Callaghan for listing his horse under the wrong colours on the April cover. A *Fine and Private Place* was, of course, from the Macmillan stable—not From M&S. □

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FEW HOSANNAS . . .

Sir:

Why do you allow your reviewer, Mr. Hubert de Santana, whom you describe as having "recently arrived in Canada," to pontificate and pass judgement on literature and publishing in Canada? In his review of three recent books from Valley Editions in the February issue of *Books in Canada* this man betrays the usual condescension and perfunctory treatment characteristic of persons who know little and appreciate even less about publishing in this country. Why must we suffer the perennial and pompous clichés about the Canada Council, Canadian writers and Canadian publishing from ill-informed backs who always seek to bolster their puerile judgements with quotations from "authorities" from abroad? Surely a national journal such as yours should either choose reviewers who are familiar with Canadian writing and publishing, or else severely limit the ability of the ill-informed to carry on vile judgements about the Canada Council in public.

Allow me to clarify for Mr. de Santana and your readers a number of points. Valley Editions is not the vain empire of Seymour Mayne as Mr. de Santana implies. A little careful research by this man would have revealed that Valley Edi-

tion is pm of a developing consortium of Canadian publishers who seek to reflect the diversified and culturally vibrant character of Canadian society. Mosaic Press, together with Valley Editions, is at the spearhead of this consortium which includes many other and active persons and groups. Our publishing programme reflects the culturally diverse character of this country. Mr. Slabotsky's book, *The Mind of Genesis*, may be inaccessible to the limited mind of Mr. de Santana, but it has received significant praise by many other, more intelligent and authentic Canadians. This book is a valuable expression of one of the cultural strands which constitute Canadian cultural life. Alas, Mr. de Santana ought to have read this book with some sympathy. I would only wish that he could write with a fraction of Slabotsky's freshness and imagination.

In this country we have become accustomed to a gross intellectual insensitivity which allows persons "recently arrived in Canada" to pass judgement on Canadian culture and writing. No other country in the world would tolerate this. It is a scandal that your journal gives such persons publication space!

Howard Aster
Senior Editor
Mosaic Press
Oakville, On.,

.. FOR DE SANTANA

Sir:
Now is no time to belch and complain about the quality of the reviews in *Books in Canada*. After all, I'm delighted that the content of Skelton's *Georges Zuk* impressed and perhaps titillated, even waggled the imagination of Hubert de Santana. And now is no, the time to quibble whether or not he is aware that all citizens of both Canada and the U.S. of A. are not just articulate and eloquent, on occasion, on paper. I, might interest him to know that some people on this continent are no, in the least, bit interested in writing or the written word. Let me suggest, though, that urbanization and, more specifically, TV tend to limit any oral tradition, and will do/have done so even in Dublin. Even before TV. Yeats remarked of at least some Dubliners: "I have passed awhile and said/Polite meaningless words." Those lines hardly suggest someone enchanted by Irish rhetoric. Ah, removed from context and an implied generalization but then when I asked an old crouny here in a pub today if he'd ever heard of a Hubert de Santana he said, "Nope, never laid eye or hand on a man by that name and I know just about every soul's ever lived in this damn rainhole." However, might I suggest that in a coastal, prairie or any small rural or local pub, for example, Mr. de Santana will undoubtedly find some person involved in fishing, farming, whatever, who is willing, prepared and able to set his ears ariving with that rhetoric he finds so attractive.

And hell, we all know that too much is being published in this country, but then I suspect Courts Hallmark and K-Tel provide us with some sort of balance and perspective for poetic quality. Nor will I complain about the comments of any individual who is concerned with the role of the IMAGINATION, through the celebration of language, as the basis for "some profoundly serious observations about the human condition." My god, it's heretical, if no, impossible, to imagine my poet concerned about much else!

Nor can I object to Mr. de Santana's criticism that the design and priming of the *Zuk* book is "shoddy." "lends an unwarranted cheapness to the text" and, finally, with all due apologies to Mr. Zuk and Mr. Skelton, has but sewed the poet and translator no less than "wretchedly." In fact, I must confess that I intentionally searched for a typeface that would, even to the most discerning

eye, appear to have been typewritten. And further, I even contemplated, even entertained the outrageous and wicked possibility of running some of the text off the page and printing some of the poems on a noticeable angle. Tilt! But fortunately, even my limited taste for design and a certain respect for Zuk himself prevented me from exercising this brief lapse into madness. I did, in spite of myself, manage to "squeeze" every word of the text on to one page or another. But then, you see Mr. de Santana, I was suffering from this terrible delusion that the *Zuk* manuscript was "comic," La, the *Zuk* collages which I obtained with great difficulty were more in keeping with Ike text than the available Dalis and that somehow *Zuk*'s own personality was to all appearances, I, leas, on occasion, shoddy in itself. I can't imagine what it is in Professor Skelton's Introduction or *Zuk*'s own wiling that misled me, created this impression.

O. I could plead as an excuse that the escalating cost of that expensive paper, the inflated cost of typesetting and so on, all to produce a book which retails at the low price of \$3.50, were the reasons for my rather desperate measures. But that would be, by my own admission, a lie. I admit freely, but obviously not without pangs of guilt, that I deliberately planned and designed the book, right down to the first, photograph even, taken of *Zuk* himself, to appear exactly as you have, with your own two eyes, beheld it. So, in all humility, I apologize for allowing my "funny hone" to intrude on the serious art of poetry. And, with all due respect, I must pay tribute to the finely boned critical and artistic sensibility, expressed in that apt and conclusive metaphor with which you, Mr. de Santana, so correctly wrapped my knuckles: "It's a little like finding a many-coloured jewel wrapped in a newspaper." Such poetic reflection, grace, such attention to the quality of the poetic craft can only lead me but to wonder.

R. Smith, Editor
Oolichan Books
Lantzville, B.C.

P.S. In case we should ever be fortunate enough to reprint Mr. Skelton's translations of *Georges Zuk* you may be assured Mr. de Santana that I shall request of Mr. Dali on one of his frequent visits to Nanaimo that he consider the opportunity to illustrate *Zuk*'s ms.

P.P.S. And I do realize how difficult it is to rap another person's knuckles with a metaphor!

UNSWEPT HOUSES

Sir:

I would like to submit a brief addendum to George Woodcock's review article ("Ancestral Voices") in the February issue of *Books in Canada*.

The spillover of the rebellion in the U.S. in the 1960s was in fact what created the rebellion amongst English-speaking Canadian youth. In the early 1960s, a demand for racial equality began in the U.S. By the mid-1960s, the war in Vietnam was being questioned and opposed by American youth eligible for the draft. Draft-card burning, desertion and draft-dodging became national issues, involving Canada because the disaffected American youth sought political asylum here. They brought their revolutionary ideas but what took root blossomed into Love-ins, Rock festivals, Student Power, dope smoking, drop-outs from high schools and universities and demonstrations on the American Embassy.

In Canada, the racial inequality and injustice has been directed against the Indian Nation in our midst. It is perhaps the self-consciousness of Canadians that the young rebels did no, take up the cause of the Canadian Indian and demand

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justice and equality where it has long been overdue. The French-Canadians had been preoccupied with their quiet revolution since the days of 1834 and finally in the early 1950s the FLQ emerged. Surprisingly, it did not catch the imagination of the English-speaking rebels either.

Thus we saw great gatherings at city halls who bussed down to the U.S. to join the march on Washington Monument, but not a placard for the Indians' demand for equality and justice and not even a whisper about the French Canadians. The rebellion of the 1960s in Canada was a free ride for Canadian youth ("Daddies to help one") on the buses of the U.S. bid for racial equality and the disengagement in an unjust war in Vietnam.

As in the 1930s, the Indians existed in Canada in all the human tragedy one can imagine, and so they have in the 1960s and '70s, but the Canadian self-awareness is still very much in an adolescent period where Canadians feel perfect and it is someone else's house that needs cleaning; first the Spanish and then the American. Perhaps in time Canadians will realize there are three, separate, unswept houses of Canadians: Indians, French-speaking, and English-speaking, and only in the joining of the three into one just house will the ghost of one's grandfather disappear and mother's womb can go into deserved retirement. By then the Americans and Spanish might even come to give us assistance.

Stephanie J. Nynych
Toronto

SHERMAN'S THANKS

Sir:

With regard to your "Notes & Comments" column on that subject of reviewing (March) — I would like to say that, as a direct result of Gary Michael Dault's sagacious, comprehensive and prototypical treatment of my *recueil*, *Chaim the Slaughterer* ("Garnet and Other Glows," February, 1975), I have given considerable thought to my stance as a poet.

Thank-you.

Joseph Sherman
Edmunston, N.B.

EC CORRECTS PS

Sir

Re: the review of John C. MacDonald's *Just Keep Dancin'* by PS on page 31 of the March issue.

Richard Furina's book, exactly 10 years old (Random House, 1966) is *Been Down So Long It Looks Like Up To Me* not "So Far Down It Seems Like Up To Me."

To paraphrase a review on page 23 of the same issue: ENOUGH TO MAKE YOUR HAIR STAND ON END. Is *Books in Canada* in such financial

straits that it can no longer afford to employ editors?

Back to page 31. The reference, in the opening sentence of "Notes and Comments," to a famous unsigned review. Just who the hell is PS? Peter Such? Paul Simon? Patty Hearst and Steven Weed together again? Phil Sarguy? Paul Stuewe? Plinius Secundus?

I read your magazine from cover to cover every month.

Eric Cameron
Halifax

P.S. Plinius Secundus is the author of "Curiae Canadenses; or, The Canadian Law Courts: A Poem" (Toronto, Rowse, 1843).

AUSSIE BIRD TALKS BACK

Sir:

Seeing that Mary Lawson, in her review of my book (March), considers me to be "intelligent, gutsy, and forthright" (although what character has to do with writing ability I'll never know), I had better apply these fine outstanding qualities to Canadianizing my next book, which concerns a family of mice who live in the attic of the old Globe Theatre in Elizabethan England and become entranced with Shakespeare's plays. Would it please Ms. Lawson and all those rabid Canadian nationalists out there if I changed the scenario to a family of beavers who live in the basement of the Tarragon Theatre and become entranced with David Freeman's *Creeps*? Since 21 years of residence in Canada still gets me called an "expatriate Australian." I've asked my intelligent, gutsy, and forthright expatriate Roumanian husband for guidance: but having lived in this country for only 64 years, he feels he's not qualified to comment.

While I'm at it, I should like to relieve Richard Dawkins (Letters to the Editor, March) from the burden of his incredulity concerning Apollinaire's considerable drawing abilities. As well as being a poet, Apollinaire was a fine visual artist with whose works Mr. Dawkins should immediately acquaint himself. Both he and Rowan Shirkie should also be complimented for learning so well from their master the useful art of obfuscatory prose.

Aviva Layton
Toronto

CanWit No.11

Higgledy-piggledy,
Benjamin Harrison,
Twenty-third president
was, and as such,

Served between Clevelands, and
Save for that trivial
Idiosyncrasy,
Didn't do much.

ONE OF THE more light-hearted intellectual exercises of the 1960s was composing double-dactyl verses. Note the form: there are two four-line stanzas; the first line is always a dum-di-di, dum-di-di nonsense line and the second a name or title; one other line (it doesn't matter which) must be a one-word double dactyl; and the last lines of each

stanza, which go dum-di-di-dum, must rhyme. The usual prize (see below) either for the best original double dactyl on a Canadian theme or for the funniest entry that begins:

Fuddledly-duddledly,
Trudeau and company. . .

Address: CanWit No. 11, *Books in Canada*, 366 Adelaide St. East, Toronto M5A 1N4. The deadline is May 28.

RESULTS OF CANWIT NO. 9

READERS WERE asked to help refresh the staid image of McClarkan & Newspider, the all-Canadian national publisher, by composing rejection slips in light verse. An avalanche of entries, most of which were remarkably vicious in tone. Many contestants failed to grasp that would-be authors remain customers; they will go on buying books even if they can't write them. If the thing they love must be killed, the astute publisher does it with a kiss rather than a sword. The winner is Ian C. Johnston of Malaspina College, Nanaimo, B.C. He receives a copy of the award-winning art book *John Filion* by Dorothy Cameron and John Reeves (Martlet Press, 519.50) for three rejection slips that would leave the recipient with at least a shred of self-respect:

We've read the book, Paris are fine.
But need one swear on every line?
I'm sorry that the rent is owing,
But pardon me, your slip is showing.

Your tenth epic in prose
Could be worse, I suppose.
Some scenes are quite quaint.
But Ulysses it ain't.

Thank you for Caught in the Shrubbery,
We're making good coin from cheap
thuggery.
The heroine's charming,
Her sex life alarming,
But the public's not ready for buggery.

Honorable mentions:

You must have worked for hours.
For many a night and day,
Which only goes to show you
That writing doesn't pay.
— Douglas R. Long, Melocheville, Que.

No thank you, my dear.
Your work is most queer.
— Elizabeth Hopper, Hopa, B.C.

We regret your incredibly ponderous prose.
Doesn't fit with our content our style.
So please roll it up in cylindrical form,
And sit on the thing for a while.
— Gerry Sheanh, Vancouver

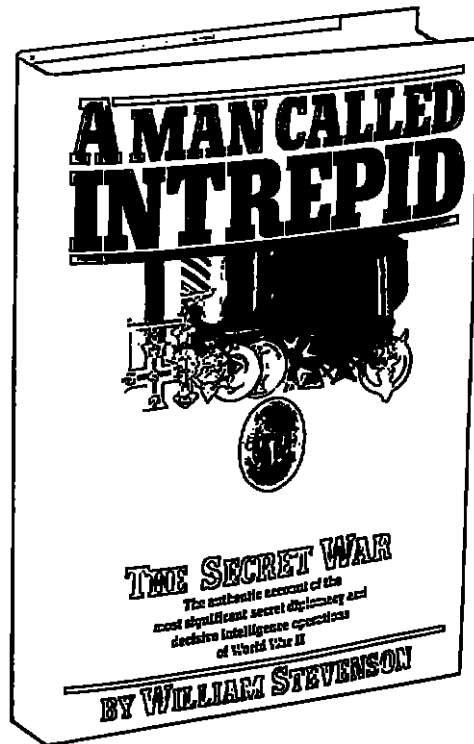
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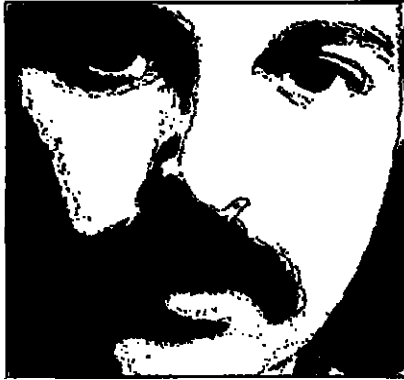
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