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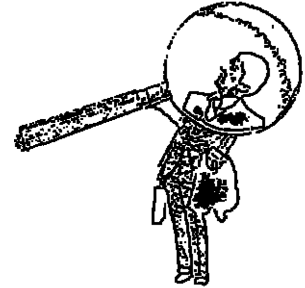

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BLAISE OF GLORY

Breaking from a strong field, Clark Blake gallops home to win the $1,000 purse for the best first novel of 1979

THE FOURTH ANNUAL Books in Canada Award for First Novels goes to Clark Blaise for *Lunar Attractions*, published by Doubleday and now available from Seal in paperback. In a year that saw several remarkably accomplished first novels. Blaise's powerful story of a young man's struggle toward maturity in an alien and often terrifying moral and sexual landscape was for the majority of the panel a clear winner.

Them were more entries for 1979 than for either of the previous two years, and the quality. from top to nearly bottom, was superior. The judges (Sheila Fischman, translator and literary columnist for the Montreal *Gazette;* Robert Kroetsch, novelist and teacher at the University of Calgary; Sandra Martin, Toronto critic; David Stimpson, manager of the University of Toronto Bookroom) worked fmm a short list prepared by *Books in Canada*. It included, besides *Lunar Attractions: Mrs. Job*. by Victoria Bmnden (Clarke Irwin); *Peckertracks*, by Stan Dragland (Coach House): *A Man Without Passion*. by Florence Evans (Clarke Irwin): *Everything in the Window*, by Shirley Faessler (M & Sk *Random Descent*, by Katherine Govier (Macmillan); and *Crossings*. by Betty Lambert (Pulp Press). The worth of these books should not obscure the merits of another half-dozen novels, any one of which would have been a contender in the lists of I978 or *1977*.

Thirty-odd first novels is a respectable number. if one considers that a similar contest in the United States in 1978 received only 125 submissions. And fully 90 per cent cd those. according to interviews with the judges, were purely commercial and mostly junk — fiction that simply could not be judged by literary standards at all. This was emphatically not the case with cur books. Even the mass-market thrillers -such as Needles. *Troika. and The Wave* — were competently written.

Before we become faint with self-congratulation, we should remember that first novels alone do not a healthy literature make. It's second novels -and third and fourth — that count, es David Stimpson's remarks imply. Novelists will need support, both financial and cultural, for their careers, not just praise for their initial productions. They will need a readership that can recognize and sustain genuine development and ignore hype. On the evidence of 1979. the situation is at least promising. Hem are the comments of the judges:

Sheila Fischman: None of the first novels I read for the 1979 award impressed me as much es Joan Barfoot's *Abra* did lest year. I enjoyed reading *Mrs. Job* by Victoria Bmnden because the narrator (and presumably the author) has a sense of humour. It's a competent work, with an attractive central character and a satisfying, if sometimes improbable plot. The religious thread seemed to me rather awkwardly woven into the fabric though. and the allusions to Job end his plight that give the novel its title somewhat forced.

Everything in the Window was a great *disappointment:* it's an interesting social document, particularly because it describes a kind of Jewish immigrant community other fiction writers haven't dealt with at length. But the characters were both thin and unbelievable, the wiling not particularly distinguished. *Random Descent*, in contrast, is very well written indeed, with great intelligence. This time. though, the story of Jenniferand her search for roots so failed tc capture my interest that I found it a teal chore to finish the bock. The flashbacks. the device of having grandparents talk about the pest in greet and tedious detail, were boring. The author had obviously done a great deal of research into everyday life for the period coveted by her novel, but the details didn't make either the period or the characters come alive for me.

I find it hard to say anything at all about A *Man Without Passion:* if there's merit in successfully evoking the depressing life of a depressing men — and then tossing in some melodrama lo keep the reader awake — then this novel has some merit. But 1 didn't like it. I did like Crossings but find it flawed because the author failed to convince me about why her attractive female central character should have been so drawn lo such an appalling men.

The deliberately provocative title of *Peckertracks*, end the elaborate apologia enclosed with it, irritated *me.* but when I was able to overcome that first reaction I found the bock a treat. The pangs end misfortunes of sensitive adolescents have been done to death by fiction writers-especially Canadian ones, I think-but Percy Lewis is well realized. I particularly liked the structure of this novel: many of the sections could almost stand up on their own as smell prose portraits. The phonetic rendering of rural speech was very distracting, though it was en interesting experiment.

Thirty-odd first novels is a respectable number, if one considers that a similar contest in the United States in 1978 received only 125 submissions. And fully 90 per cent of those . . . were mostly junk.

And then them was *Lunar Attractions*, which caused me no end of trouble. It's a splendid novel, as good es one would expect from the author of two equally splendid collections of short stories. It's undeniably the best novel in this gmup, the only one deserving of the prize. But I think ifs most unfair that first novels by untried writers should have to compete with this mature work by a seasoned writer. Some of our finest fiction writers write short stories: I strongly recommend that collections of stories be made eligible for this award.

Robert Kroetsch: I find myself having tc choose among three strong contenders. *Clark* Blaise, in *Lunar Attractions, is* tempted to mad his life es a paradigm for the Western world, its history, its predicament. But that huge vision turns the novel into something static, an escape from the process of our living. All has happened. Nothing happens. The novelist as a latter-day Tiresias. What saves

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For Blaise, desire turns to memory. For Stan Dragland in *Peckertracks,* desire keeps the world fresh, keeps everything present. The possibility of grand design is gone, the possibility of a coherent life is gone. The voices, the anecdotes, the scraps of language. the abrupt takes on boyhood exist in tbe present tense of a prairie morning. Dragland refuses to coerce his materials into Meaning.

Betty Lambert, in *Crossings,* announces the ferocious mating dance of intellect and lust. Her writer-heroine recalls. not la *belle dame sans merci* of male fiction. but the beautiful bastard without mercy. The ex-convict, the Vancouver male, as muse. She recalls (and uses) without illusion the man, tbe need, the having. the being bad. The form of the telling is flexible, daring: Lambert is tempted at once by the meaning and tbc meaninglessness of our lives.

Which novel takes home the prize? Having to choose, I would pick *Crossings.* Its nervousness, its rawness, its edge.. its style make me reread.

David Stimpson: There has been much written about tbe fragile state of literary publishing in Canada but it is not reflected in this year's short-listed novels.

My nomination is *Lunar Attractions,* a superb novel of great power. It contains some terrifying scenes and manages to say

This has been my fourth . . . year as judge. I have read 26 first novels and only three of the 26 authors have appeared in print a second time.

something new about adolescence, no mean feat. The first part set in Florida was particularly good and the scene of first sexual encounter was brilliantly handled.

An honourable mention to *Mrs. Job* and a mention to *Crossings* and *Random Descent.*

This has been my fourth and last year as a judge. I have read 26 first novels and only three of the 26 authors have appeared in print a second time. I look forward to more fiction from Clark Blaise and Victoria Branden.

Sandra Martin: In first novel contests, as in beauty pageants, the results depend as much on the idiosyncracies and sensibilities of the judges as on the merits of the participants. One can impose arbitrary rules and standards, but inevitably tbe final choice is a question of individual taste. Having said that, I must add that for me *Lunar Attractions* by Clark Blaise was the obvious winner. AU these novels are about the Gordian quest for identity and self-definition. but Lunar *Attractions* was *the only one* that consistently escaped the confines of the author's own past and made connections to a larger world.

I liked *Everything in the Window* by Shirley Faessler both for ifs boisterous evocation of 1930s Jewish Toronto and for the sensitive and knowing way in which Faessler grappled *with* Sophie's infidelity and guilt and her aimless thrashing against the emotional and moral perimeters imposed by her husband and family. But the focus kept shifting and the pace was bumpy and. in truth, this was not a novel, but a collection of short stories.

Mrs. Job by Victoria Branden was weird and contrived and funny and engaging in its attempt to deal witb the hapless stumblings of a person out of synch with her own generation. Too often, however, Branden settled for being merely amusing.

Crossings by Betty Lambert was brash and energetic and sincere. Lambert's novel is about a young woman struggling to write an autobiography in which she has pared away the layers of deception and misunderstanding until the absolute and clinical truth has been exposed. It is a noble and courageous purpose and mainly it was well done, but Mo often the technique swamped the material, and, my God. I am tired of reading about orgasms and abortions.

The others have merits. but for me their shortcomings won out. □

A STAGE OF OUR OWN

Canadians now recognize that indigenous drama reflects a deeply rooted human need. The result: more and better plays

by Richard Plant

WHY PUBLISH Canadian plays? Few people read them and no one publishes plays for the money in it. Playwrights and publishers would go broke on that. Some people even contend that a play exists only on the stage. that to commit a script to print is ridiculous. No one, they say. can catch the fleeting magic of a live performance and make it permanent.

But where would the world be if the plays of Shakespeare, Chekhov. or Albee had never been printed? "Praise the Lord." I heard a strident nationalist say. "There'd be no Stratford Festival." Someone else merely muttered: "Oh. but Shakespeare's different." Few of these nay-sayers can conceive of a theatre of the mind where lively, imaginative productions of plays take place as we read them. These same people overlook the fact that theatres have to get their plays somewhere. Not every show can be an original script. Also ignored is the stimulating. creative force engendered by the critical discussion that naturally evolves around the printed play.

Is the publishing question only academic, then? Hardly. I *have* heard it raised often in one guise or another. In the past, a negative response to indigenous plays, or the lack of any response at all, has kept the question implicitly and insidiously alive. Fortunately, more Canadians now are responding positively; more are even reading plays. Canadians are beginning to understand and accept indigenous drama for the deeply rooted human need it represents. Partly because of that, we have seen an in- in the quantity and quality of plays over recent years. The output of 1979 mirrors that, and demonstrates a further development of our playwrights' dramaturgical skills and of higher publishing standards for drams.

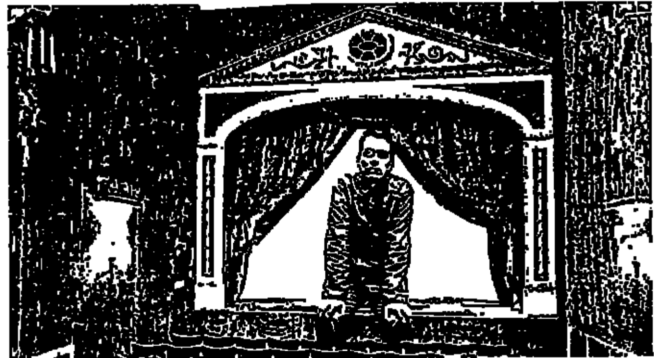
One of the most *welcome 1979* plays is a handsome, paperback edition (Simon & Pierre) of Antonine Maillet's La Sagouine, translated brilliantly into English by Luis de Céspedes (see page 13). During the past two years, with the vibrant Viola Leger in tbe part of a perceptive, philosophical old Acadian scrubwoman, *La Sagouine* has played to standing-mom-only in English and French theatres across the country. As a result, Maillet has seen her play sell over 85,000 copies in French.

If it's quantity you want. Playwrights Canada, formerly Playwrights Co-op. brought out 43 titles in 1979. For an organization that sees its function chiefly as a service to member playwrights, their mimeograph format is first an inexpensive means of making scripts available to theatre for production. Recently, however. because of the range of more than 300 titles in the catalogue, schools have been using the scripts. This has boosted sales and suggested a need for a slightly different publishing policy.

Among this year's mimeographed scripts are The Trojan Women by Gwendolyn MacEwen, Mark by Betty Jane Wylie, *As* Loved Our *Fathers by* Tom Cahill, The Gayden Chronicles by Michael Cook. and Hasid by David Rosenfield. That's a mixed and representative bag of tricks, for MacEwen's, Cahill's and Cook's plays (the latter done at the Eugene O'Neill Centre last year), have something to recommend them, whereas the other two do not. It's a real puzzle why Stratford ever bothered doing *Mark* in 1972, and *Hasid* is an example of the introverted, navel-gazing stuff that followers of Grotowski often write. Also included is Eight to the Bar, the musical that has. been warmly received in Toronto lately. However. there is no question that the virtues of a strong cast are all that rescue this piece in performance, because it is one of the weakest scripts I have read in a long time. Sight Unseen by Steve Petch, while stronger than *Eight to the Bar, is* more a playwright's exercise than a full play. It shows a dramatist with promise. Victoria, also by Petch, was commissioned by Stratford this past summer. Again some promise, but stereotyped characters and shallow pyschology undercut the potential-hisplayed.

So *where's the* quality? In addition to the mimeograph format. Playwrights Canada has three new books that rival the best-designed paperback's anywhere: Ned and Jack by Sheldon Rosen; Zastrozzi by George Walker: and a collection of Brian Wade's early plays headed by Blitzkrieg, his study of a slightly kinky relationship between Hitler and Eva Braun.

Walker's play, after receiving mixed reviews in a small Toronto theatre in 1977. is beginning to draw international attention with



productions in London and New York. It's about Zastrozzi, a "master criminal of Europe," who, merely on a whim. seduces virtuous maidens and kills good men. In this play. he is driven by his desire for revenge on Verezzi. a "feeble-minded impressionist painter" who earlier killed Zastrozzi's mother. The play is highly entertaining as a modem melodrama in which Zastrozzi is the embodiment of all that is evil. Verezzi an ineffectual artist figure, and Victor. his guardian and Zastrozzi's real opposition, a pragmatic "emissary of goodness in the battle between good and evil." But when the play consciously moves into "the larger moral concerns of all literature." as William Lane tries to suggest in his muddled introduction, *Zastrozzi* gets beyond its compass. The symbolic qualities ascribed to the characters and action strain the thought instead of making it profound. Nonetheless, Walker writes

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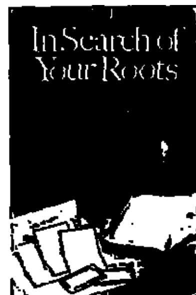

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with a clear sense of what will work on the stage. He at least attempts to write a thoughtful play and meets with a good measure of success.

Ned and Jack is the play about Ned Sheldon and Jack Barrymore that received a Stratford Festival workshop in 1978 and a short-run Avon Stage production this past summer. It is also off to the U.S. this winter. In it we we Sheldon, the early 20th-century American playwright, trapped by a fatal illness, and Barrymore, the great actor, by the role he has allowed other people and his theatrical life to make for hi. The play, for all its having the flamboyant Barrymore in it, and a few No many gratuitous theatrical moments, is a quiet, subtle piece that shows another skilful playwright at work. To be sure, it is over-written, and has an opening scene between Sheldon sad his secretary that is dramaturgically clumsy, even though thematically important. But the play's carefully constructed patterns of imagery and its revelation of two interesting characters coming to grips with their responsibility to creativity and their inner selves make this a valuable work all the same.

The growing skill Rosen shows in *Ned and Jack* is also evident in recent work of other playwrights, including George Walker. David French's *Jitters* is another case in point, although nor everyone will agree here, especially those who seek an intellectually meaty drama. French's light comedy, implicitly a perceptive, if too brief, glimpse of our theatre community, is clearly a move in the direction of commercial theatre. But why should we criticize a playwright for wanting to live by his craft on more than wieners and beans? The Canadian playwright has subsidized our theatre too long already.

Jitters concerns the opening of a new show by a young Canadian playwright. A middle-aged Canadian-born actess has returned from New York to play *opposite an actor* who is *equally famous*, if only in the Canada he won't leave. Their egotistical squabbling, and that of the cast, crew, director, and nervous playwright move the play along on a plane of hilariously sarcastic dialogue. The situations on which the action turns — an actor who nearly misses *the opening and the resignation next day of the* leading actress who is the only one to get panned — have, a potential for comedy that French seizes with a firm hand. Undoubtedly it will be a great loss for Canadian theatre if French does not return to writing more thoughtful material than *Jitters*. But when and if he does return, he will do so with a stronger command of dramatic construction and witty dialogue than he showed before. He will probably have more money, too.

Which brings me N another topic — the appearance of new foreign plays, or old ones for that matter, at our small theatres. It suggests a broadening Of vision. And when those same theatres also include Canadian plays that are satisfying, the theatre public should be able to sense a new-found strength in native theatre and drama. Not that the best plays of the early 1970s, such as Reaney's Donnelly trilogy, were weak and insular. Far fmm it. But we must now acknowledge that the nationalism that surrounded them came close N obscuring the real worth of many plays and was necessary only N pave the way for the less self-wnscious attitude prevailing today.

The broadening of horizons has been apparent in drama publishing as well. Talonbooks, for more than 10 years the foremost publisher of quality Canadian drama, has added the plays of Sam Shepard, the controversial writer from the U.S., as well as those of his *countryman, Israel Horovitz*. These complement *Ashes* by the English David Rudkin. Talon has also become distributor for 40 contemporary Australian plays and an even greater number from small English houses.

Clearly in Talon's case, this attempt N create a wider perspecrive and financial base has been a mixed blessing for Canada. Although Talon has the rights to six important new Canadian plays, including *Jitters* and Balconville (this year's Chalmer's Award winner), the house has not had money enough to publish them. This is most noticeable with *Jitters because* it was printed by playwrights Canada shortly after its stage opening. The PC script has been withdrawn from sale because Talon now owns the rights.

One thing this points to is the time lapse between stage produc-

tion and publication. In addition to those mentioned already, the gap is evident with Jack Gray's Billy Bishop Goes to War, John Murrell's Waiting For the Parade, end Paper Wheat by Twenty-Fifth Street House Theatre. Clearly. the most advantageous situation is for a script to appear in print es soon es possible after ifs stage debut. When the gap is long, the play's initial impact is lost end we have to wait For a process of assessment to occur that will cell the play back into circulation.

Certainly that's not the case with every play produced. Take, for example, Tom Walmsley's Something Red (Virgo Press), about two couples so screwed up they can't sort themselves out. An affair between one of the men (a psychotic druggie) and his Friend's girl leads the men into a game of Russian roulette. The loaded gun creates what little tension the play holds. But in the end, who cares? The characters. end the action. are just not arresting or significant enough to matter.

What about publishing in areas surrounding the drama? There are still no comprehensive end reliable works of a critical or historical nature to support theatre activity and to create a climate that Fosters good play-writing. However, that is slowly changing. A three-volume history of Canadian theatre is in preparation, es are several major studies of Canadian drama. When they will be out depends, to some extent, on many of the factors mentioned in this article.

In 1979, CTR Publications continued its valuable journal, Canadian Theatre Review, and moved further into en area larger houses are afraid to venture: publishing historically important Canadian plays, la 1978, CTR brought out the first volume of Canada's Lost Plays, The *Nineteenth Century.* in a bold undertaking that has drawn favourable response end hns led to a second volume. Entitled Women Pioneers, and edited, es was the first, by Anton Wagner, ii contains six plays dated es early es 1840 and es recent es 1955 (see page 12). Expectedly, they are uneven with Patricia Joudry's *Teach Me How to Cry* and Gwen Ringwood's *Pasque Flower the* strongest. *Yet.* in all. the collection is an invaluable addition to our understanding of Canadian drama, past, present, and future.

As well as these books. CTR published its fifth Canada on Stage: CTR Yearbook. One of the most useful tools in charting our theatre experience. the *Yearbook* contains photographs end production information For professional shows all across Canada. Unfortunately. the book is es unsuccessful financially es it is successful in other ways, and it would be a shame For ii to fall by the wayside. Only a thoughtful Few would lament its passing et the time, but countless would suffer in future.

Chautauqua in Canada (Alberta-Glenbow Institute), an attractive, well-illustrated book by Sheilagh Jameson, provides a meaty text describing the history and importance of the Chautauqua circuit, particularly in the West. And 1979 also sew Playwrights Canada publish a Supplement to A Bibliography of Canadian Theatre History. A fundamental tool in studying the subject, this book adds 1,000 new titles of books or articles to those listed in its Forerunner.

In short, what do we see from 1979? First, theatrical activity moving in the diction of larger, more challenging fields, even toward measuring success in commercial terms. More plays. such es Ned *and Jack, Zastrozzi,* and *Jitters* are being tried out on en international audience. The young playwrights involved have made significant improvements in their dramaturgical craft, end simultaneously, have developed the confidence to face the world out there. AU these are healthy signs. Less obvious are phys such as *Billy Bishop Goes to War* end *Waiting for the Parade,* which have had highly successful performance lives. both at home and abroad, bet which are not yet in print. We must look forward to their appearance, and to a shortening of the time it takes to put a play into print. Undoubtedly, that means a change in the priorities of some publishers, playwrights, end of the theatre public. For without scripts being available on a broader market, future productions of them are less likely. The development of a supporting literature, of a stimulating exchange of ideas, end the Formulation of a strong critical base will not take place. And since these matters are all integral elements in the evolution of an active, exciting theatre, we are in danger of stagnating without them. □

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How film's filter affects literature

by Jeff Miller

"Alright, I need a dybbuk, I'll become a golem. I don't care, it doesn't matter! Breathe in me! Animate me! Without you I'm a clay pot!" Bereaved, he yelled, "Translate me!"
— Cynthia Ozick, *Envy*

WITH THE CANADIAN film industry suddenly booming and Canadian publishing plunging deeper and deeper into bard times. young writers here may well feel their living and names are to be made on the screen — if at all. Although the film industry is gaining muscle on material that is often only nominally Canadian and substantially Hollywood, more than a dozen of ik films now in production or near release began as books by Canadian authors. Among these are The Kidnapping of the President and Act of God, both fmm novels by Charles Templeton: Stone Cold Dad, from Hugh Garner's *Sin Sniper;* Four's a Crowd. from N.O. Mitchell's *Back to Beulah; Mr. Sam,* based. somehow, on Peter C. Newman's The *Bronfman Dynasty; Alter Ego* (Patrick Watson); Halfbreed (Marie Campbell); Agency (Paul Gottlieb); The Birds of Prey (John Ralston Saul); and, perhaps most notably. Surfacing. Margaret Atwood is reported to have "turned down a better U.S. offer to give 'a Canadian woman' a chance" to produce the film. But the woman in question, Beryl Fox, has so far mortgaged her house twice, worked three years without pay, and liquidated her savings for the project's sake — which should be fair warning to any would-be sellers of film rights whose work betrays the slightest literary pretension.

Not that good literature necessarily. or even often, makes good film. As the earliest serious study of the subject shows, a film and ik literary source may be related phenomenologically but not aesthetically. In *Novels Into Film,* a book published in 1957 and adapted fmm the author's Ph. D. dissertation, George Bluestone suggests that "the film becomes a different thing in the same sense that a historical painting becomes a different thing from the historical event which it illustrates." When a film-maker works fmm a literary source, he doesn't convert the novel at all:

> What he adapts is a kind of paraphrase of the novel — the novel viewed as raw material. He looks not to the organic novel, whose language is inseparable hum its theme, but to characters and incidents which have somehow detached themselves from language and. like the heroes of folk legends, have achieved a mythic life of their own.

The language of cinema ("percepts"), argues Mr. Bluestone, does not have the "connotative luxuriance" of the literary trope ("concept"). To emphasize the distinction between the two sorts of "seeing," he sek against one another remarkably similar and contemporaneous credo-statements by pioneering director D. W. Griffith and Joseph Conrad.

"The task I'm trying to achieve," said Griffith in 1913, "is above all to make you see." In his preface to *The Nigger of the Narcissus (1897)* Conrad wrote: *"My task* which I am trying to achieve is, by the power of the written word. to make you bear, to make you feel-it is, before all. to make you *see."* But "structures, symbols. myths, values whiih might be comprehensible to Conrad's relatively small middle-class reading public," concludes Mr. Bluestone, "would, conceivably, be incomprehensible to Griffith's mass public."

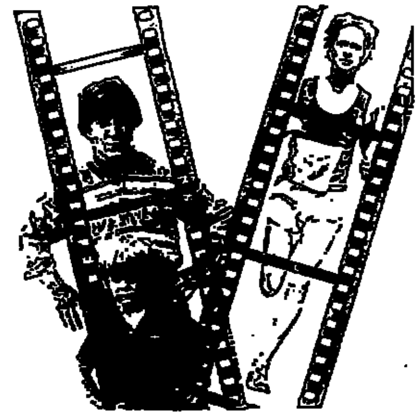
Yet in the age of Apocalypse Now. of increasing and extravagant sophistication of both the cinematic trope and ik audience, the distinction no longer applies in this way. In Francis Coppola's blustery allegory we find, ironically, Conrad's vision coupled with the moralistic approach of Griffith, and filtered bumptiously, even insipidly, through any number of other antropo-literary references. At the speed of light Coppola would crowd us with imagery both visceral and arcane into perception and conception all at once.

So it is no longer (if it ever was) precisely a matter of the "connotative luxuriance" of one form over the other. Film, to borrow Peter DeVries's example, may be unable to make us see Jeeves enter a drawing-room as "a procession of one." But it is boundlessly plurisignative in at least the sense that actor and camera leave us free to interpret movement approximating that description, however less delightfully, in any number of ways — as pomposity. righteousness. neurosis, constipation.. ..

And it is tbis increasing sophistication *of* the "paraphrase." tbii slicker translation of literary tropes into cinematic ones, that may constitute a real threat to serious literature. As the phenomenological crux, the bridge between tbe two forms, it is where the distinctions are blurring and whereby tbe intellectual needs of many tight and well-educated people are now largely met. In college English departments across tbe continent film courses are regularly offered, along with those on Chaucer and Shakespeare and Joyce, for full credit. Everybody has seen Outrageous! But who has read Margaret Gibson's "Making It." of which *Outrageous!* is an extrapolation — an extrapolation, however good as a film, that forces an immediacy, an "in-timeness," on a short story that was before more suggeslive and reflective because of ik epistolary narrative style, untranslatable on film? IF their phenomenological difference has so far kept literature and cinema both separately and mutually vibrant. will their evolution toward certain functional similarities "select out" the older of them?

Since the Canadian film industry has found Hollywood-mainstream profitable, will its growing influence on the literary establishment, ik hunger for the popular. further discourage the publication of other than mainstream literature? (Michael McCabe, the newest director of the Canadian Film Development Corporation, describes the CFDC's new approach as an improvement on the old in that "we took a different view and said. 'If we're going to have an industry, we need industrial production'.") Or could this already profitable outlook free more capital for risk-taking in both industries?

At least once recently. in the United States, the symbiotic relationship worked



eminently well, although the risk was minimal, witb a film adaptation and simultaneous publication of the collected Maples stories by John Updikc. The danger in the success of the film. the rights for which surely fetched more than even *The New Yorker pays* for fiction; is that a future John Updike will not bother trying first to find a magazine market (which. For serious fiction. is already lousy and getting worse); will feel it reasonable or necessary to head straight for the script department at Gulf & Western.

Sensitive scripting. directing. and acting gave dimension to (For instance) Updike's chilling "Your Lover Just Called" — a brilliant story. so nicely adaptable on film because built, itself, on a theatrical sort of tension (a preponderance of bitchy dialogue) and visual and aural "tropes" (the piercingly reverberative use of tbe telephone; the long. ambiguously horrific and banal scene in which Richard Maple stands hidden on his front lawn, in a

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suddenly deafening silence, watching a window where his wife snuggler with their dinner guest). But the masterfully constructed pathos and irony of "Here Come the Maples" was too much for the camera. It had no really effective way of showing that. as Richard collects the documents necessary to divorce Joan — among them a copy of their marriage licence — his life seems to hinge on an incident now visible only to the mind's eye. "a suspended detail of the wedding":

> In his due. his sleepiness, in his wonder at the white creature trembling beside him St the altar, on the edge of his awareness like a rainbow in a fog, be had forgotten to seal the vows with a kiss. Joan had glanced over at him. smiling expectant: he had smiled back. not remembering. The moment passed, and they hurried down the aisle as now he hurried, ashamed, down the City Hall stairs to the street and the tunnel of the subway

Suddenly "the forces of nature" (a carefully developed conceit in the story, impossible to show concisely on film, built around a pamphlet Richard carries in hi pocket) conspire against the facts of life ("Now come Richard F. and loan R. Maple and swear under the penalties of perjury that an irretrievable breakdown of marriage exists" -here come the Maples), leading to a desolating, irresistible, immutably literary irony — a heartbreaking final sentence in the Maples saga. The divorce concluded, the lawyers speculate in "merry legal chitchat . . . about the future of no-fault.":

> Obsolete at their own ceremony, Joan and Richard stepped back from the bench *in unison and* stood side by side, uncertain of how to turn, until Richard at last remembered what to do; he kissed her.

It is at that careful semi-colon that the heart tightens. I shudder to think of this complex of simples, this fragile web of words, as a "shooting script." □

On the glory that was CBC-TV drama

by May Jane Miller

LAST SUMMER I viewed the kinescopes and videotapes of more than 250 plays produced by CBC-TV between 1954 and 1970. Thus this year's review of current television drama is coloured to a fat greater extent than usual by fresh memories of glories past. Ironically, much of the 1979-80 TV season also bad a *déjà vu* quality to it. The few new offerings by the CBC seemed dominated by Canadian versions of tried-and-true Hollywood formulas, fmm Alfred Hitchcock to Rod Serling, from *Perry Mason* to *I Spy*. (In fairness I should add that this is being written before the spring season, which holds out some promise of creativity, has properly started.)

There have been some bright spots. In popular entertainment, A Gift to Last (up to its rather abrupt conclusion) continued to provide interesting characters, fascinating glimpses of our social history. pathos and comedy and melodrama. all beautifully written, designed, acted. and photographed. The Great Detective also continued on its ever-more bizarre journey. richly overripe but entertaining.

Ontario's Global-TV made a hiihly marketable series in Matt and Jenny, placing the rather tired quest formula in pioneer Canada. Haunted characters, well-meaning school marms, and other video-kid adventures resulted in amiable plot lines of no marked interest or invention. The CBC's Beachcombers also continues its blend of slapstick and predictable farce, lit by occasional flashes of inventive characterization or situations, in a successfully marketable format. (CTV has not invaded the international marketplace since *Starlost*. In 1977 it had two hours of made-in-Canada adult drama for the year; last year, one half hour; this year nothing.)

Two new CBC sitcoms appeared for a few weeks: Floppers, where a Montreal speakeasy in the 1920s is owned by a dizzy dame called May (get it?): and Nelly, Daniel, Emma and Ben. in which four personable and competent elderly actors are caught weekly in a remarkably predictable and silly mishmash of farce and polemic on society's neglect of the elderly. The stereotypes that plague old people are indeed overdue for sharply satirical treatment. Characters with some sense of a past of their own and some potential for growth and change could help. Other offensive stereotypes are routinely introduced for the sake of cheap laughs and the occasional wry line cannot rescue the limp plots. But the curious lack of rapport between the four actors is at the heart of the pmblem. They simply don't relate to each other that well. All in all, one wishes the execution had matched the original idea.

Under the umbrella title Marquee, which signified the formal drama series of thii season, the CBC seems to be testing pilots for series N replace *The Great Detective* and A *Gift to Last*. Will it be ghost stories told by a portentous voice-over, full of creepy camera angles. mysterious cats, enigmatic slit-eyed housekeepers. bodies in the flower beds? Do you believe that "on the night of the Northern Lights . . . bizarre and unexpected things happen?" Well it *was* a neat little thriller. deftly told. Or perhaps the series will feature a Robin Hood called Kilroy who masterminds a heist from a nasty sheik bent on shooting up our peaceful streets in an intermittently exciting but completely incoherent triple-cross about oil and gold. Jump cuts, hype music, and clipped dialogue made the style all too familiar.

How about the problems of two kids from the Prairies who want N make it in show biz? They play and sing quite well. How about a young lawyer-repotter hungry for justice? Or was that one about the largely featureless victim of police indifference? On the other hand. the last contenders for the slot. The Phoenix Team of Don Francks and Elizabeth Shepherd, placed the skills of those two seasoned actors at the centre of a pair of pretty predictable yet muddled tales of espionage. However, unfamiliar comers of Toronto as settings, dialogue with a little subtext, and veterans such as Mavor Moore and Amelia Hall put this one a few lengths ahead of the other entries.

Earlier in the fall. the combination of Claude Jutra and Mordecai Richler should have been "special." Instead The Wordsmith was a mildly satirical portrait of an artist as refugee in a hot Montreal summer of the 1940s. Beautifully designed and photographed, the production was a perfect demonstration of Richler's lines: "A Jew is not poor. Having a bard time sometimes, in a strange country always, but never poor." The pmblem was that the themes and characters — the housewife's dreams of better things, her crush on the boarder. the child's growing pains. the young writer's attempts N lose his virginity — were overly familiar. The play suffered from a leisurely, sometimes flabby script. Saul Rubinek's performance as the writer also lacked energy. The best moments were the scenes between Janet Ward. as the wife, and Peter Boretski, who gave a strong, detailed. sympathetic performance as the husband who struggles to restore his precariously balanced household to normal.

A more successful collaboration of writer, director, producer, and lead actor made One of our Own a better play — its unusual circumstances aside. No allowances were required for David McFarlane's portrayal of a teenager born, as he was, with Down's Syndrome. The family's difficulty in finding a place for David that would allow him to leave home safely could have been another exercise long on information and short on human dimensions. Instead the play showed us David's normal conflicts with his sister, his hesitant encounters with a new room-mate, and the family's ambiva-

lent attitude to his absence. At one point, we see the world from his unique perspective, represented by an empty department store shot entirely from David's point of view and showing what interests, scares, delights, and baffles him.

Produced with sympathy and without sentimentalism, One of our Own was the latest in a reties of fine docudramas that over the years have included *Je Me Souviens, Cementhead, Ada, Dreamspeaker,* and *Maria*. We do that kind of play very well indeed. When the CBC allows itself a little more scope, it is rarely dull: it may be infuriating (*Riel*) or overwrought (*Jalna*) or brilliant (*Freedom of the City*) but never pedestrian.

But where, oh where, are the ice palaces of yesteryear? Television is ephemeral and yet somehow the kinescopes have survived. Let me remind you or introduce you to some of the highlights of CBC-TV drama in the golden age before 1970, starting with performances: Frances Hyland's Duchess of Malfi with Lloyd Bochner as Ferdinand; Kate Reid, Lorne Greene, and Jack Creley in *The Unburied Dead:* Leslie Nielson, John Drainie, and Doug Campbell in *The Crucible;* Frank Peddie's Wullie McCrimman: Peter Donat as Hjalmar Ekdal and Norma Renault as Gina in *The Wild Duck;* Frances Hyland, Kate Reid, and Michael Learned as *The Three Sisters:* John Drainie as Jake; William Hutt as Vanya; Douglas Rain as Matthew the hermit and Under

Milk Wood's narrator, as Bosola and Ginger Coffey: the original cast of Gelina's *Yesterday The Children Were Dancing:* Don Harron, Rosemary Harris, and Helen Burns, deft and funny in A *Phoenix Too Frequent;* Mavor Moore's self-destructive Dr. Ragin in *Ward Six; Eric* House in *Dock Brief and Sammy:* Don Harron's wenchingly truthful *Reddick;* the haunted, obsessed characters that Neil McCallum and Paul Massie created in *Private Confessions of a Justified Sinner;* Barry Morse as Didi; Leo Ciceri's Cardinal in *The Prisoner;* as well as Martha Henry, Diana Maddox, Genevieve Bujold, Toby Robins, John Vernon, Zoe Caldwell, Budd Knapp, Gillie Fenwick, Hugh Webster, Sylvia Lennick, Susan Clark. Remember John Colicos as Galileo, Kate Reid as Mother Courage? And then there were the guests: Dame Edith Evans, Antony Quayle, Nehemiah Persoff, Jack Klugman, Fritz Werner, Lou Jacobi, Franchot Tone, Joan Hackett, Brett Somers, Gwendolyn MacEwen, Kathleen Widdoes, Melvyn Douglas, and Keir Dullea.

In those days there was also a bit of money and a willingness to experiment: *Pictures in a Hallway, Point of Departure, Close Prisoner, Childhood, New Bottles New Wine, Crossing Paris, The Basement, Flipside, Dream, Reddick, Let me Count the Ways, Labyrinth, Noises of Paradise, The Paper People, The Open Grave, Pale Horse Pale Rider, David Chapter II.* There were several original musicals including the first version of Anne *of Green Gables.* Do you remember the series that broke new ground by using local or topical stories, new locations, gritty realism, credible characters who developed with the series, and fresh colloquial dialogue? *Wojek, The Manipulators, Cariboo Country?*

And then there were the directors. We enjoyed, among others, the varied but recognizable personal styles of Paul Almond, Mario Prizek, Harvey Hart, David Gardner, Daryl Duke, George Bloomfield, and Eric Till.

In a country thinly populated with theatres outside of major cities, we were introduced to adaptations of much of the world's great drama. Favourite playwrights in that period? Anouilh, Pinter, Clive

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Both the CBC and individual sponsors commissioned original plays for television as a matter of course fmm playwrights such as Mac Shoub, M. Charles Cohen, George Ryga, Jaques Languirand, Rudi Dorn, Ron Kelly, Paul St. Pierre, Patricia Joudry, Arthur Hailey, Charles Israel. Bernard Slade, Philip Hersh, Mordecai Richler, Lister Sinclair. Mavor Moon. Hugh Gamer. Eric Nicol. Al Purdy, George Salverson, Len Peterson. David French, and Monroe Scott — most of whom are no longer asked to write for television.

Perhaps you remember the other actors, playwrights, directors, producers, and designers who helped to create the CBC flagship series such as *Scope, Folio, Festival:* experiments such as *Q for Quest, Explorations, Programme X:* popular drama in *First Performance, GM Presents, Ford Startime, Playdate, The Unforeseen, The Serial:* series such as *Corwin, Quentin Durgens, McQueen:* or even the brave disasters such as *Radisson.*

Now think about *Flappers or Nelly, Daniel, Emma and Ben* and about out current ration of two half-how sitcoms, one one-hour play (perhaps) once a week. and one one-hour ration of serious dnma late in the winter if the hockey playoffs don't intervene. Then judge for yourself. □

Fair maids, foul plays

Women Pioneers. edited by Anton Wagner, Canada's Lost Plays series. Volume II, Canadian Theatre Review Publications. 272 pages. $13.95 cloth (ISBN 0 920644 46 5) and 51.95 paper (ISBN 0 920644 48 1).

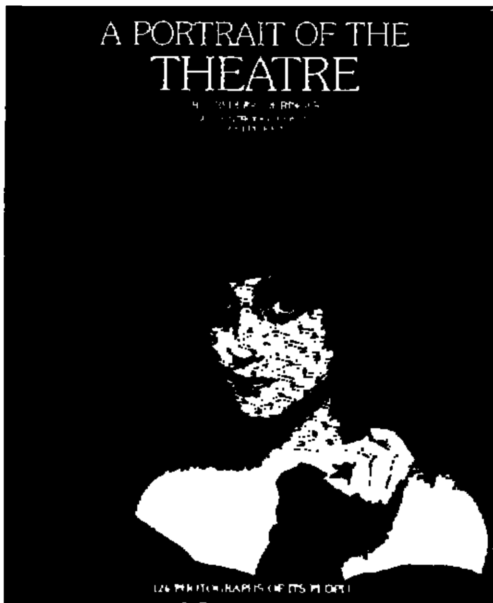
By BOYD NEIL

THE LIVES of Blii Lanesford Cushing, Sarah Anne Curzon, and Catharine Nina Merritt are more interesting than the plays they wrote. Cushing was an American writer who moved to Montreal in 1838 and wrote a tiresome moral lecture disguised as a tragedy called *The Fatal Ring.* Curzon was a member of Canada's first women's rights group, the Toronto Women's Literary Club. A frequent contributor to Canadian journals and newspapers, she published *Laura Secord: The Heroine of 1812,* "to rescue from oblivion the name of a brave woman and set it in its proper place among the heroes of Canadian history." Merritt, an actress, producer. and writer, was a patriot of a different sort. Her play. *When George the Third Was King.* written in 1897. is a vexatious ode to the "glorious" British Empire and a disapprobation of the American Revolution.

. A religious evangelist, a political propagandist, and a United Empire Loyalist — they wrestled with the philosophy and policies that formed Canada before and just after Confederation. They were pioneers, not in art, as editor Anton Wagner might like us to think, but in a distinctively energetic and eclectic Canadian brand of social activism. Their dramatic works included in the second volume of the Canada's Lost Plays Series make it. lii the first, a curiously eccentric record of this activism.

Having written and published plays, Cushing, Curzon, and Merritt have become part of our literary history. But their plays aren't part of a Canadian dramatic tradition in any meaningful sense of the term. Hugo's *Hernani* ruptured the French classical tradition. André Antoine's ,Théâtre Libre and the plays of Zola, Becque, and Porto-Riche announced the death of the romantic tradition. There is no comparable concern for theatrical art in Cushing, Curzon, and Merritt. For them, style was secondary to lesson. Their plays offered no message to writers about the form Canadian dramatic literature should take, so no one following them was pressed to do anything but continue to write plays for literary societies and amateur theatrical troupes.

It is surprising, then, that so accomplished a playwright as Gwen Pharis Ring-



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wood should appear in the 1930s. Ringwood studied theatre at the University of Alberta but knew nothing of her women predecessors. Her influences were her professor Elizabeth Haynes and Frederick Koch. From them she learned her technical knowledge of theatre and the concept of "folk drama." She combined both elements to write plays that stand out in Canadian literature of the 1930s and '40s. In *Still Stands the House*. *Dark Harvest*, and the 1939 play *Pasque Flower*, Ringwood shows professional sensitivity to the demands of the stage and tenderness towards the lives of Prairie farmers. It is only because there were so few opportunities for professional productions in the '30s and '40s that Ringwood's plays have largely and unjustly been forgotten.

Patricia Joudry suffered a similar fate in the 1950s. Her plays were often presented in the U.S. and Britain, but could not find a stage in Canada. Even the sentimental period melodrama included here, *Teach Me How to Cry*, which was subsequently presented in Britain and turned into a film starring Sandra Dee. had to open off-Broadway before it was staged in Canada. Her plight, and Ringwood's, demonstrates the single most important feature of Canadian theatre history after the First World War -the absence of professional theatres demanding Canadian plays.

As with the first volume in the series, this book will interest theatre historians and should be required reading for theatre critics. With tbe exception of Ringwood's and Joudry's inclusions. reading these plays is an exercise in devotion to the theatre. If there is to be another volume in the series (How about *Lost Canadian Critical Essays?*), I would suggest that Wagner devote less of the introduction to defending non-existent literary merit in the works and more to investigating the effects of British and American values and amateurism on our dramatic literature. ☐

Salt-caked irrepressible

La Sagouine, by Antonine Maillet, translated from the French by Luis de Céspedes, Simon & Pierre, 183 pages, S6.95 paper (ISBN 0 63924 100 7).

By MARCY KAHAN

THIS BOOK consists of 16 monologues delivered by La Sagouine, a 72-year-old Acadian washerwoman, "the daughter of a cod fisherman, a sailor's girl, and later the wife of a fisherman who took oysters and smelts." Its publication is of particular interest to those fortunate theatre-goers who witnessed Viola Léger's portrayal of the character. The book will also be of general interest, since Antonine Maillet's subsequent novel, *Pelagie-la-Charette*, the Englii version of which has not yet appeared, was the surprise winner of France's Prix Goncourt last year.

La Sagouine is an unsentimental document that details the annual rituals and unorthodox perspectives of Acadian culture with exuberance and humour. Maillet has skilfully introduced an entire community inm this one-woman show, with ik hardships, personal rivalries, and special legends. It is a community of have-nots who subsist on pancakes and beans, celebrate Christmas as a spectator sport, and patiently endure an enforced isolation from their more privileged neighbours in church and school. These people measure the worth of the passing year in terms of "a winter of mild weather, a summer of clams 'n a fall of elections."

Yet La Sagouine is not merely a stoical survivor. She is also a gifted raconteur, with the shrewd eye and profane tongue of a natural satirist. Her account of the tribulations of Frank à Thiophie, who wins $100,000 in the lottery, is especially memorable. Hapless Frank is sold a tractor and a combine before he acquires land to plough; he buys a washing-machine, a fridge, and a gramophone for a house without electricity; his dentist fixes him up with three rows of gold teeth, so that Frank can hardly move his jaws: he takes out insurance for his children, although he is still a bachelor; his neighbour, Dominique, sells him a second-hand Buick. but forgets to tell him where the horn is. Frank dies. solitary and penniless, back in his old fishing-shack. But Antonine Maillet is too assured an artist to moralize. La Sagouine ends the tale on an ironic upbeat: "Well. don't you wait fer me, now. I'm goin over to see Jos à Polyte that jus' won tie lottery."

La Sagouine's personality is set in relief by her continual references to two characters: La Sainte and Gapi. Eve" in the old days, when La Sainte was a "sailor's girl" like the other young women in the village, she enticed her clients with religious medals and rosaries. Her manner has remained insufferably holier-than-thou. a source of perpetual irritation for the unpretentious Sagouine. The latter takes a notably unchristian delight in recounting how La Sainte was hindered from purchasing her own church pew on credit.

Gapi is La Sagouine's husband (as well as her first cousin) and by her own admission, is "an ol' grouch." He sew as a splendid foil to La Sagouine's irrepressible idealism and enthusiasm. When Gapi refuses to believe in Christ's resurrection, La Sagouine wams him not to rely on her to resurrect him on the Day of Judgement, against his will. When Gapi insists that everyone must know their place (including La Sainte), and expect help from no one. La Sagouine points out that "they ain't no bishop that ever spoke different." When La Sagouine delivers a lyrical panegyric on the coming of spring, we can almost hear Gapi muttering derisively in the wings.

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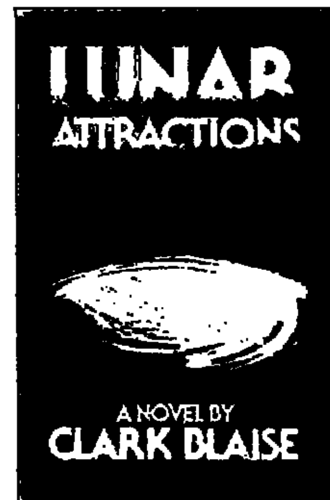

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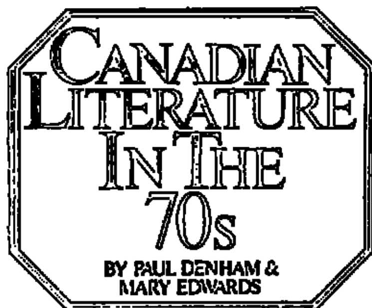

A GLITTERING ARRAY OF POETRY, DRAMA, ESSAYS & FICTION

March
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HOLT, RINEHART & WINSTON OF CANADA

La Sagouine's account of the census that government officials took in her village is a glorious send-up of the tiresome search for a national identity. One by one, the available categories are eliminated in en attempt to label the community: American, Canadian, French. *Québécois*. When the villagers come up with Acadian, the census-takers refuse to acknowledge tbe word as a description of nationality. Finally, they lump the Acadians with that other unknown quantity, the Indians.

But ultimately, and inevitably, La Sagouine's folk-wisdom transcends the *gaucherie* of clergymen, bureaucrats, and capitalists:

> Well, a person's gotta take 'mself for what he is, 'n not try to talk 'n walk like other folks. When you 'n yer forefathers have been walkin fer two centuries on rows of red soil, or on pebbles 'n shells. you can't have wobbly legs 'n springs In yer feet; 'n when you've been forced to face the winds of tbe open sea, you jus' can't have skin that's white 'n soft; 'n how can you talk fancy with all that sea salt in yer lungs 'n throat?

This is a book that must be read aloud to be fully appreciated. At a time when economic exigencies are forcing theatres to 'rely on the resources of solitary actors, *La Sagouine* serves es a superb example of the imaginative scope end depth that may be encompassed in a one-woman show. □

North Atlantic Squawdron

The Last Canoe, by John Craig, PMA, 128 pages, $11.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88778 196 9).

By DuBARRY CAMPAU

THIS NOVEL is es direct end simple as a tale told around a campfire. Craig's prose is unadorned, but with his gift for selecting the short, vigorous words that move his story forward without sentimentality or melodrama, he has created a style that is perfect for its content.

The setting is en almost-abandoned Indian reserve in the Kawartha Lakes. The Indians on it had, by treaty with George IV, the rights to the hunting and fishing in the surrounding area end bad built up a busy, prosperous community et one time. But bureaucrats decided that the reserve could be better used as a national perk then es the base for the Indians' livelihood. They found, in the phraseology and small print of the treaty, a loophole or two that seemed to permit just whet they had plumed. Predictably, the Indians' way of life was destroyed, and they gradually learned to resort to welfare and alcohol for their needs end pleasures.

Arthur Nogawa is almost the only men still on the reserve with the courage and intelligence to resent the deterioration of his community. After failing to provoke the interest of any branches of the federal government, he decides on a ploy that will. at the very least, call attention to the situation. He announces that he is going to peddle hls canoe across the Atlantic Ocean and go tc London to speak to the Queen.

Neither he nor his family believes he will have to carry through this impossible plan — their hope is that the very bravado of it will cause the government to alleviate a condition that was so grave es to create in one man's mind such a foolhardy fantasy. The news media co-operate fully -editorials are written; TV cameramen film his preparations; the nearby town gives him a gala send-off, which it combines. handily, with Us own Dominion Day celebrations — but the government remains stolidly unmoved by one Indian who is willing to give his life for his fellow men. And. of course, Nogawa must go — after the hoopla there can be "o backing down. His painful journey, from the Kawartha Lakes to Lake Ontario, down the St. Lawrence. and into the open water of the gulf is documented in Nogawa's dii. found wrapped in waterproof cloth in the wreck of his canoe on the Avalon Peninsula.

Nogawa's odyssey might have bad no effect on bureaucracy, but it does on his son Leonard. He manages to rehabilitate the spbik of the remaining Indians with a plan to organize them in a re-enactment of bis father's voyage. Together they work for months building long-distance canoes, filling them with provisions and equipment, end, a year from the day of Nogawa's departure, the first canoe of the armada sets forth. Every few days another leaves until all of the men, women, and children of the reserve have heeded for the wide, open see. Ultimately, the flotilla disappears, just es lemmings dc on their similar fruitless excursions.

But the lest few pages of this short book have a splendid twist-all the better for the continuing low-key prose that Craig uses throughout. He is a consummate story-teller who is es effective between herd covers as he would have been around the campfire that seems so appropriate for the legend he has created. □

Shaman and Superman

by Phil Surguy

Spirit Wrestler, by James Houston, McClelland & Stewart, 307 pages. $14.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7710 4250 7).

JAMES HOUSTON, who was raised in Toronto and now lives on a Rhode Island farm with his wife. spent 1948 tc 1960 working among Eskimos in Canada's Arctic. For nine years he was a northern service officer and then was appointed civil administrator of West Baffin island, an area of 63,000 square miles. He played a paramount role in introducing Inuit art to the world at large, and his Arctic experiences have. so far, been tbc inspiration for 11 adult and children's books, as well as many sculptures, drawings and engravings. He is the consultative director of design for Steuben Glass.

His 1971 novel, *The White Dawn.* is set in the 1890s and based on the true story of three crewmen from a New England whaler who, after being cut off from their ship by a sudden fog, were rescued from certain death and taken in by a Baffin Island Eskimo community which before this had never had any direct contact with whites. The Eskimos cared for and put up with the whaling men for a year and then, because the New Englanders' very presence was destroying d&delicate social order, killed them.

In the novel. the whalers are helpless puppies who couldn't survive a day without their hosts' protection and support. But. being true sons of the 19th century, they can only regard their benefactors as somewhat gihed children; when they benefit fmm the Inuit's free sexual attitudes, their condescension is tinged with contempt.

Houston does a fine job of contrasting the unbridgeable differences between the Eskimo and American world-views, and the great strength of *The White Dawn* is that& whalers are not made out to be villains. They are simply men of their time. AIthough the batch of homebrew they make. the effect it has on tbe community, is the immediate cause of their deaths, Houston makes it clear that this and other disruptions of the Eskimos' lives are the result of ignorance and innocence. Early in the story, for instance, the whaling men, in a spirit of good will, show their hosts how to play soccer and the Eskimos are severely shocked by what they see as the violence of the game. The *White Dawn*, in short, is an excellent. indirect illustration of the idea that the native cultures of North America would still have been doomed, even if every European who came here had had the motives of a saint.

Houston's latest novel. *Spirit Wrestler*, is almost a mirror of *The White Down.* It's largely the autobiography of a shaman named Shoona and is set on Baffin Island in the 1950s.

The Eskimos still live a precarious hunter's existence. but they now hunt with rifles and are greatly dependent on food and goods obtained from the trading post around which they spend their summers. That is, most of the Eskimos are hunters. Shoona and the three older shamans who initiated him into the mysteries live off the hunters, who feed, clothe, and house them royally in return for their healing tbe sick and generally keeping the spirit world at bay. The secret truth. however, is that Shoona and his colleagues are simply magicians. their supernatural powers elementary sleight of hand.

Which isn't tc say that the spirit world doesn't exist. Shoona at least seems to have some access tc it. At times he even appears to have a sort of involuntary power over the spirits. But for the most part he is as afraid of them as anybody else is.

Indeed, Shoona is quitecontent to live the Imdt equivalent of the life of Riley with his wife Elisapee and not worry about the spirit world. But into the community comes a white man named Morgan, an anthropologist who may have genuine supernatural powers. At any rate, be seems tc know more about the mysteries than Shoona does. The Eskimos call him Kayaker because of his near-obsessive interest in kayaks and the now almost forgotten art of constructing them. In fact, Morgan can handle a kayak belter than any Eskimo (because they don't use them anymore). His conflict with Shoona comes tc a climax when be attempts tc roll aver in his kayak, submerge and. in the manner of the Greenland Eskimos, come up on the other side, something the Baffin Islanders say can't be done with their style of craft. The test becomes an exciting battle between Shoona's powers and Morgan's.

Or maybe there is no magic involved at all. Houston presents the supernatural elements of Shoona's story ambiguously and often comes close to underplaying them too much. This is because his primary interest, as it was in *The White Dawn.* is in taking us into the Inuit culture as a whole, having us experience it in the context of the normal run of human passions. vices. virtues, and everyday life. His Eskimos are neither exotics nor cuddly little *National Geog mphic* creatures.

Houston also delights in giving us many ironic glimpses of the whites and their ways through Eskimo eyes. In the following passage. Morgan is finally forced to greet a recently arrived missionary. The two men have been avoiding each other because, as Shoona ii told by Elisapee (who once lived with whites and learned to dislike them). each resents not having the Eskimos all to himself:

> They stopped and nodded. and then. because we were watching them. they shook hands violently, as though they planned to break each other's bones. We are shocked when we see white men shake hands like that.
>
> Elisapee told me later of the words they spoke. I like to hear the strange things that foreigners have to say. especially when one white is speaking to another. When they talk to us they almost always use the simple words of children. but even in translation, their talk with one another sounds quite adult to me -except when they talk about the weather. Unfortunately, these two began by speaking of the weather.

Houston's narrative method is the exact opposite of that of Ruby Wicbe, who in *The Temptations of Big Bear* deliberately constructed a difficult. foggy prose style to match a Cree world-view that couldn't understand a lot of what was happening to it under the onslaught of white culture (see Books *in Canada,* February. 1980). Houston's Eskimos don't understand every thing they see, either. But, in both *The White Dawn* and *Spirit Wrestler*, their perceptions of their own world and details of European ways are razor-sharp. Houston's depiction of the Inuit and the Inuit world-view often has a near-documentary quality about it. In a note at the end of *Spirit Wrestler* he suggests that his characters and events, both magic and "real," have a factual basis. Yet it is always apparent that he is making fiction out of his experience of a culture that has had a profound. lasting effect on him. The result (even with the mystery surrounding Shoona's death left unresolved) is an informative, satisfying novel.. □

IN BRIEF

The Year the Expos Almost Won the Pennant, by Bmdic Snyder, Virgo Press, 232 pages.. $2.50 paperback (ISBN 0 920528 12 0). Two errors in the opening paragraph! This would be a terrible bock if it was about anything but baseball. But it is redeemed for fans by its subject, a series-by-series account of the Montreal Expos' brilliant 1979 season in which they had the third-best team record in major-league baseball. If Snyder's spelling and grammar are as erratic as Ellis Valentine's base running, his eye for trivia (the arthritis in relief pitcher Woodie Fryman's 80-year-old left arm "locked like somebody's necktie";

Fryman says he pitches well because he has good legs) is as accurate es Valentine's strong right arm. If the Expos are more attractive than the Blue Jays, it isn't simply because they win more games. It's that the whole club seems more human. No funny blazers, cc hair-cut rules, much individuality. "We don't have bed checks." says manager Dick Williams. "I don't think you should have a Fuhrer looking over the players' shoulders. By and large, major-league players should know how to take care of themselves. Their play on the field will show that. Anyway, I'd rather have a whiskey drinker on my club than a guy who drinks milkshakes. A guy who has a few belts is going to fight for what he believes and the other guy might be a pantywaist." Many fine sentiments Iii this are expressed by all and sundry. Good illustrations by Montreal political cartoonist Aislin, and 1979 and lifetime teem statistics et the end. A most bathroom bock for those moments between innings this season.

—GERARD McNEIL

Where have all deflowerers gone?

The Emperor's Virgin, by Sylvia Fraser, McClelland & Stewart, CCCLXXXIV pages, $XIV.XCV cloth (ISBN 0 ĽMMX MMMCLXXV. 0).

By I. M. OWEN

AS A GENERAL rule, I think it better as well as kinder not to review a bock as feeble as this, but to pass it over in silence. However, when three previous books have presumably established a public for the author, some comment does seem justified. Also, it's a historical novel and I happen to like writing about historical fiction. If I were ever N give a course cc the subject, I might include *The Emperor's Virgin* as a how-cot-to-do-it book.

The setting is imperial Rome in the lest year of Domitian's reign, A.D. 95-96. Domitian reigned for 15 years, for the first half of which be seemed to be well-meaning according to his cot very bright lights. Then a rebellion of the troops in upper Germany under Antonius Saturninus seemed to transform him, and be became an insane tyrant on the pattern of Caligula and Nero. After be had put to death his cousin Flavius Clemens and banished Clemens's wife cc suspicion of being soft cc Christianity, Domitian was murdered by a freedmen of Clemens.

What makes the historical novel an especially demanding form is that it must aim at two quite separate kinds of excellence: to be a good novel in its own tight; and to be historically convincing. On the first count, *The Emperor's Virgin fails* easily. The central character, Maximus Marcus (not, I think, a possible Roman name). has all the personality of a cigar-store Indian and the plot is a string cc which hang a series of anatomically detailed copulation scenes of various kinds but uniform dreariness, the big set-piece being the emperor's defloration of tbe chief vestal virgin. A sentence from one of these scenes gives the flavour:

> She felt him penetrate then pierce her, not at first an easy size nor a convenient rhythm, mck-hard. foreign, too much of him, she too full of him, and now the. familiar beginnings of panic. of smothering, of strangling, unable to catch her breath ... the desire to throw up, beat him off her with ha fists, too much ... feeling his sweat dribble upon her. and the crush of grass and rotting brown petals. too sweet. against kr bare back. then -when she might have pulled away—giving in Instead. her body catching his rhythm, his fire, his need, his desire, adding a pulse end a frenzy of her own, feeling his sex as a root grounding her, clinging to it with tendrils sprouted from her own flesh, his emu no longer clamps but vines leafily wrapping ha around, protecting her, no longer afraid of the cave inside of her, no longer in terror of the catacombs, no longer trembling on the peak of Delphi in her vestal robes, unwilling to gaze down into that black hole in the earth that moaned with prophecy, no longer even aware -with his arms enclosing her and his sex inside her—of the loneliness of the cave.

If Harlequin ever enters the porno market, such lushly banal passages could serve as models for the style.

In a historical novel, some deliberate alterations of fact for the sake of the plot may sometimes be justified — as here, perhaps, the moving of the rebellion of Saturninus fmm the middle m neat the end of the reign. Crass historical errors are another thing, especially if they are going to be so obvious to readers without special knowledge as to destroy all possibility of illusion. A Jewish ambassador complains to Domitian that his soldiers are desecrating the Temple — which, of course, had been destroyed by Domitian's big brother Titus one quarter of a century before. And (a classic howler this) a statue of Domitian is inscribed "Born: October 24, 51 A.D." (Even the Christians hadn't invented the numbering of the years of the Christian era yet.)

But above all the author should be able to imagine what it was like to live in a period when many of the assumptions that were taken for granted were quite different from cur own. For example, Tacitus, a contemporary of Domitian, remarks in his account of Titus's Jewish War: "Various portents had occurred at this time, but so sunk in superstition are the Jews and so opposed to all religious practices that they think it wicked to avert the threatened evil by

sacrifices." Such clear statements of the enormous differences between then and now are inevitably rare: the author must imagine them, in a way that convinces us. So unaware is Sylvia Fraser of this necessity that she has a Roman, complaining of the numerous nationalities in Rome, say: "We've become a city of mongrels." Now, quite apart from the fact that Rome had been cosmopolitan for a very long time, what she has done here is to impute toe first-century Roman a post-Darwinian notion of racial purity that would never have crossed a Roman mind. Sylvia Fraser would have done better to stick to 20th-century Toronto. □

I saw, I conquered, I came

The Bloodied Toga, by W. G. Hardy, Macmillan, 510 pages, $14.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7705 1828 1).

BY J. A. S. EVANS

IF I WERE writing this review 50 years ago, I could have said that Julius Caesar was a came every schoolboy knew. All Gaul is divided into three parts, he wrote, and Latin students stumbled over this sentence of his almost as soon es they learned how to conjugate. When the late George Hardy was an Ontario schoolboy, before the First World War, Julius Caesar was staple diet, end in spite of the magisterial prose of Caesar's *Commentaries*, which read like a government document (and, in a way, it war). Hardy lost none of his fascination with the period. He went on to study classics et the University of Toronto, end. thence, with an interruption for the war, he went to the University of Alberta, where be taught classics from 1920 to 1964. I met him once, before he retired, in the salon of the American School in Athens. "He produced some good, sound articles in his time," said one of the scholars there. But by then. Hardy's interests bed shifted from learned articles to writing *fiction* about the ancient world.

How does one write a successful novel about ancient Greece or Rome? Obviously it has been done successfully: witness *Ben Hur* and *The Last Days of Pompeii*, which fascinated our grandparents, or *I Claudius*, where Robert Graves took his Tacitus, rewrote him, end assigned the result to the emperor Claudius's pen. Or the evocations of Minoan Greece or classical Athens by Mary Renault, who is the most successful practitioner of the art et the moment. Hardy's books belong to a different artistic level. The historical detail is generally sound. but the spice that gives them zing is sex. It is generally good. healthy, hetero-

sexual sex in large doses: Caesar had his taste of homosexuality early in his career, with the king of Bithynia, according to our nose-too-reliable sources, but Hardy assures us in passing that it was a political affair. Moreover, Hardy's formula works. His *City* of *Libertines*, which uncovered the bedroom life of the Rome of Catullus, sold one million copier. His latest, The *Bloodied Toga*, published after Hardy's death last year, will sell well. to".

The Bloodied Toga is a sequel to *The Scarlet Mantle* (1978) which gave us Caesar's conquests in Gaul, and created the Roman soldier. Fadius, through whose eyes we saw much of it. *The Bloodied Toga* takes *up* the *story with* Caesar marooned in the royal palace at Alexandria, along with Cleopatra, who uses her time so well that she has a son by Caesar. It continues past Caesar's assassination on the Ides of March. 44 B.C., to the battle of Philippi, where Caesar is avenged,. and hi grand-nephew and heir, Octavia", begins his ruthless rise to the top. Fadius's role is diminished: his sexual appetites are undulled. but he loses his mistress in Alexandria. and after Philippi, when he is demobilized in Italy, he settles down on a little farm "ear Verona, given to him as a discharged veteran, and marries a cousin. The fighting and wenching are over.

Stirring stuff. this history. and if Hardy's prose plods a bit, it nevertheless carries the reader along. It is a lively piece of work by a sprightly academic. □

Provenance cloudy but outlook fine

Sequences, by Ralph Gustafso". Black Moss Press, 149 pages, 57.95 paper (ISBN 0 88753 OS3 2).

By DAVID MACFARLANR

NOBODY SEEMS VERY sure of what to make of Ralph Gustafso". Critics wander in. confusion somewhere between the enthusiasm of Louis Dudek ("Gustafson is by far the best technical craftsman we have") and the ungenerous but by no means thoughtless assessment of Frank Davey ("Certainly Gustafso" is a dextrous, if uninspiring, verbal technician"). Even Gustafson himself nods briefly in the direction of his detractors: "I would be less hortative/ As my critics ask, but less/ The man . ." And although his verse has, in fact. bee" tempered over his long years of writing. Ralph Gustafson deserves considerable praise for sticking to his "deliberately idiosyncratic" guns as much as he has. His successes have justified his apparent belief that diminishing his style would only diminish his art. Anyone who can write poems as assured and beautiful as "The Walk in Yoho Valley." "The Bestiary," and the haunting. Audenesque "Giovanni Bellini" (all included in the present volume) is a poet who knows exactly what he's doing. Gustafson, with few misgivings. can be ranked among the very best of our poets.

Sadly, misgivings about Gustafson's latest collection. *Sequences,* are *not* so easily over-ruled. Certainly it contains some of the author's best work; in many ways it is a welcome and revealing selection. As a whole. however, Sequences purports to be something quite other than what it is, and Gustafson's heavy-handed introduction must bear the blame for the failure of the poetry to live up to the over-blow" and arbitrarily applied scheme of things. These poems are no more sequential than any *collection* born of the imagination of a single ma". Indeed, since the bulk of the verse is drawn from various extant collections, the selection at hand is less of a pattern than most. Gustafson's introductory invocation of Pound's *Cantos,* Eliot's *Four Quartets,* and Wallace Steven's *The Blue Guitar,* if excusably immodest, is inexcusably irrelevant. For the most part, this is a Selected Gustafson. and the selector should have bee" straightforward enough to have said as much. .

"Some of the sequences in this book have been taken from editions limited or long out of print; some are new," writes Gustafson. In fact, *most* of the sequences are reprints,

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some of them easily available. "Phases of the Present," for instance, a group of nine poems, appeared in *Corners in the Glass*. published by McClelland & Stewart in 1977. "This." continues the author, "is the first appearance of Rocky Mountain Poems in entirety." A look at the original Klanak Press edition of *Rocky Mountain Poems* (1960) shows that "in entirety" means the addition of a single poem — a good poem, to be sure, but why the veiled exaggeration? Nor does Gustafson make any attempts to inform the unwary reader of the previous incarnations of "Ariobarzanes" or the "Soviet Poems." To what purpose are we so misled?

This misinformation by way of absent information is. perhaps, a minor flaw. Under the present circumstances, a poet's struggle to get any verse, new or otherwise, into print is nothing for readers to ignore. It would have been nice. however, had Gustafson been less slippery about the book's origins. His introduction is. at worst, an irritant. a false note amidst a largely impressive chorus.

Among the best of the collection are the aforementioned "Rocky Mountain Poems" and "Soviet Poems." Both of these "sequences" ate travel poems that never lose track of the reasons they were conceived as poetry: they evoke their settings and characters with vivid immediacy and never become merely specific. The indifferent magnificence of the mountains is captured in Gustafson's step-to-step rhythms and steady eye. If the size of the Rockies is beyond him. as it is for all of us. he remains profoundly aware of his own stature. "The crests snowpeaked above/ Us, *ten* thousand feet,/ Eleven, westward to/ The Ramparts. the greatness cragged/ And broken, lying on the mind/ Until the mind gave in." And although the "Soviet Poems" seem weaker by the exclusion of the explanatory notes of the 1976 Turnstone Press edition, Gustafson is seen here in admirable control:

The woman this morning sweeps the pavement
Of Knibysheva Street,
Branches of spring tied to an old stick,
Brushing along last night's bits
Of paper, cigarette ends, dirt,
Keeping the city clean for this morning's
Traffic. By night it will have to be done
All over again.

With the notable exception of "Nocturne: Prague 1968." the series of poems gathered under the title "Themes and Variations for Sounding Brass" is less successful. What makes the "Nocturne" so compelling a work is its simplicity of language and perfectly limed ability to turn sudden. shocking comers: "In Ruzyne Street / a cat tipped over the pail of garbage. / A tank knocked down a lamppost." The rest of the poems are protests. shouts of anger, cries of outrage that deal with Kent State, Vietnam, Bangladesh, and the October Crisis: Gustafson's tortured sense of morality, in all of these instances, is more prominent than his language. These poems do not quite keep track of themselves or their reasons for being poems, and the net result is one of overwhelming futility. No one of any sensitivity would ever say that these are merely dated subjects. Still, Gustafson's *abiding* concern is no illumination. A flip through a newspaper will teach us es much. possibly more. about the privilege end decadence of out condition.

The long, exquisite poem "Ariobarzanes" is an example of what distinguishes Gustafson from his Canadian peers. No poet in this country is more firmly ensconced in the tradition of modernism. Gustafson is no prisoner, and it is fashionable, in the wake of the avant-garde, to see this as a shortcoming. The fact remains. however, that few poets today would have sufficient skill to work successfully within a tradition. In "Ariobarzanes" the echoes of Pound are undeniable. bet given the beauty of the poem, they hardly seem to matter. The same might be said of *Sequences* in its entirety. Far more than satisfactory, the individual poems fall just short of being wonderful. □

The fuzz who liked fairies

by Chris **Scott**

Kowalski's Last **Chance, by Leo** Simpson, Clarke **Irwin, 200** pages; $12.95 cloth **(ISBN 0 7720 1281 4).**

LEO SIMPSON'S THIRD novel is a charming moral fable that defies classification. Like the earlier *Peacock Papers* (1973), the action unfolds in the mythical small town of Bradfarrow, Ont., somewhere near the real-life Kaladar (which appears in this novel, typographically transformed as Dalakar). The didacticism of that earlier novel is mote restrained here; Simpson's savage indignation at the world-shrinking McLuhanatics has mellowed into a more charitable view of human foibles.

Joe Kowalski, genial dunderhead of the town police force, has captured and bandcuffed the Montreal bazooka bandit Seamus Riordan outside the Ventura Motel. While the pair are waiting for the arrival of the provincials, Riordan tells Kowalski that his name is really Hanrahan end that, far from being the bazooka bandit. he is actually a leprechaun.

Kowalski is sceptical — at first. "The kid was working on 'his insanity verdict. he supposed." Humouring his prisoner. he observes that leprechauns are supposed to be tiny. Riordan-Hanrahan responds by

Leo Simpson

saying that since coming to America and taking their vitamin pills, leprechauns have grown to an average height of five feet. Moreover. there are many leprechauns in high places: "We're a sort of benign Mafia. Well maybe not so benign at that."

"A man needs some magic in his life." Riordan remarks. and Kowalski *is* oddly touched. He is near retirement, has seen enough, and CM only think that the kid will wind up in Ontario's Millhaven reformatory. And so he lek his prisoner go, even helping him start his balky Camaro, just es the Ontario Provincial Police arrive to see their prey escape. They, it is no secret, do not believe in leprechauns. Neither does Kowalski's boss, the egregious chief of police, Frank Williams.

Williams. however. does remember that if you catch a leprechaun he'll lead you to his pot of gold. The police chief suspects that Riordan has bribed Kowalski with some or all of the $10 million loot from the bazooka robbery, and so he sets the quisling patrolman Redmond Ryan to spy on his fellow officer. In Ryan's official eyes Kowalski is certainly behaving like a man with $10 million. Inspired by Kojak fantasies, he arrests the proprietor of the Magic World toy store, one Sieracki, a Dracula look-alike with pointy ears, on suspicion of being the Swedish nurse murderer August Amunsden. More dangerously Kowalski refuses to kowtow to the chief of police's wife, and lectures her on the impropriety of using town policemen to do chores around the house.

Meanwhile. certain legal difficulties occur with the title to the Williams's house, which is in the swankier end of town — Regency Gate. Neighbouring houses ate demolished by an Italian wrecking competty. and the deed on the 50-acre estate is redeemable for "two hundred strong oxen, no more than four years old, one thousand rails of straight cedar . . . twenty-five gold sovereigns, fitly hundred weights of wheat

flour. milled fine. and forty hogsheads of Newport rum" to be diskibured among the various property owners. The moving force behind the demolitions is an outfit called hlini-People Incorporated (children's clothiers. transmontane conspirators, and leprechauns); and when a truck beating four oxen arrives at the Williams residence and officer Ryan discovers that Kowalski holds the title to the Regency Gate estate (which is going to be turned into a sheep farm), the stage is set for a mock epic confrontation before the Bradfarrow police commission.

Leo Simpson is a writer of great comic talent. The seventh chapter of tbii novel. in which Redmond Ryan is lashed to a sacrificial barbecue altar by Helen Letretsky, the predatory anthropologizing niece of Mrs. Williams. and in which the chief of police falls into a contractor's tub of concrete and has to remove his rapidly stiffening clothes -a scene that culminates in a nude chase sequence through the ruins of a neighbour's house — this chapter is comedy well done. brilliantly done.

Them ate elements of the farce hère, of the picaresque novel. of fantasy and wish-fulfillment. The good guys — the little people — win in tbe end. It is a tribute to Simpson's art that the question of disbelief does not overcome the narrative. If you don't believe in leprechauns, read *Kowalski's Last Chance. You just* might by the end. and you'll be the merrier for it. ☐

Circles within boxes

The Nemesis Casket, by Ved Devajee, Square Dal Press, 315 pages. $7.00 paper (ISBN 0 920076 19 2).

By NANCY ROBINSON

WHAT IS *The Nemesis Casket* "about"? The story line is not clear. but it is about a love-triangle (in fact more than one); it is about interrelationships, family history and its influence on the present (its nemesis); and it isobliquely and in a confusing fashion about CIA-Syndicate plots. the FLQ, Third World revolutionary groups, and the paraphernalia (bugging equipment. etc.) of espionage. The elaborate intertwining of relationships, past and present, and the elusive espionage elements are perhaps mainly important for developing tbc sense of nemesis of the title. The episodes are often bizarre and confusing, the personal relationships almost incestuous. Yet ultimately the book is about the nature of human knowledge.

Reading *The Nemesis Casket* is like piecing together snatches of conversation overheard on a bus. In an appendix the author compares the style of the book to that of a public-affairs program: "Shows like As *It Happens* deal with the way the world is, with squadrons of unrelated fans.. ., Think of *The Nemesis Casket as* an extended news report." One implication, then. is that human knowledge is essentially fragmentary, incomplete, and subjective. In fact. the narrator leads us to believe that he is giving the reader more knowledge than is normally accessible because he is privy to secret RCMP files as well as tapes and videotapes made with great subterfuge.

The fragmentary style poses problems for the reader. Characters are not introduced in any orthodox manner. and relationships between characters are not always clear. The reader gleans details only as *result of the building of the collage of comments, snatches of memories, letters, etc., and often must be his own detective. Possible subsidiary meanings in the book occur. Arc the names Faith and Grace — wife and mistress — deliberately symbolic? "Faith" begins a search inm the mysteries of her aunt (discovered. to be her mother). "Temple" enlists the help of "Grace." who is described as her "new won votary." Are they all connected to the threads pf religious allusion?

The author himself is a shadowy figure, reputed to be a senior civil servant in Ottawa who must work under a pseudonym because "Then was information in *The Nemesis Casket* — top secret RCMP documents. for example — that had never before seen light of day." In fact, one can only assume that the real author is Réshard Gool, editor of Square Deal, who. as a final irony. has created an elaborate spoof, a fictional author presenting his characters and events as reality. (photographs of characters are appended, with explanatory notes and dares.) That creation is eminently suited both to the labyrinthine quality of the book and to the questions of illusion. truth, and human knowledge that it raises.

Time has almost no meaning at all. There is very little real progression in a chronological sense. and there is little indication of the sequence of events. The episodes move backward and forward in time, and the connections behvccn past and present — in that sense the "nemesis" of the title-are slowly worked out. The connecting threads are like threads of a spider's web. circular in implication, rather than linear, like links in a chain.

One of the unanswered questions remains: What is the "casket"? It is described as a physical object, a 17th-century box with drawers in which letters have been kept. During this century it became the property of the two Establishment families in the book. the Gardhouses and the Leasinghams. The mad scientist. Vestinghuis introduces electronic taping devices into it. Yet, as the author observes, "As one penetrates deeper into matters of the casket . . . the casket itself seems to recede further and further into a non-existent vanishing point. Has the medium become the message? . . . Perhaps it is nothing more than . . . the book you now hold between your hands. . . ." ☐

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Dutiful dreamers

Contemporary Surrealist Prose, Volume I, edited by Dona Sturmanis and Ed Varney, Intermedia, illustrated, 88 pages, $12.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88956 079 X) and 57.95 paper (ISBN 0 88956 080 3).

By LEN GASPARINI

IF ANDRE BRETON, an exponent of surrealism, were alive today, he'd probably issue a manifesto declaring that the purest form of creative expression is a somniloquy . Taking into account the selections from the three surrealist writers in this book. the act of talking while asleep seems preferable. For the cautious reader who likes to taste the cake before eating it. I would define surrealism as a literary style of this century that stresses the subconscious or "on-rational significance of imagery arrived at by automatism or the exploitation of chance effects, unexpected juxtapositions, and symbolic objects.

Three practitioners of this intellectual legerdemain are H. C. Artmann, Michael Bullock, and Rikki Ducornet. I" this exclusive volume, their whimsical effusions are surrealistically illustrated too. The obvious drawback to this kind of surplus is that the book takes on a certain preciosity for its own sake. and the writing wobbles under the weight of so much imagery. It's as if the language existed only as a metaphor; and maybe it does for those who do not mean what they say.

Surrealism, or the irresponsible UK of it, often rebels against logic and sense. And when there is no sense, there is nonsense. The passages from Artmann's "Green-Sealed Tidings" are unintelligible. They are serial anecdotes that play on the theme of numbers, wirh frequent plunges into oneiromancy and the lii. Artmann's translator, Derk Wynand, compares them to the montage techniques of the expressionists. He may be right, but I'm talking about writing — not Dadaist painting. What all this gibberish boils down to is perfectly exemplified by Artmann's "90th dream." He says: "You have never dreamed what I dreamed, and I never dream what you dream, and you will never dream what I will dream. for I dream my dreams and you dream yours." Well. bully for him! Why bother?

Michael Bullock's 18 prose poems suggest surreal landscapes that unintentionally reduce nature to cliché. His pieces aren't even half as vivid as those of the "Country Diary" series in the Manchester *Guardian*. Pathetic fallacy permeates his work. The lyricism is too contrived. There is not enough emotional wrench in it. Consequently, it's like a sponge: it absorbs images but doesn't reflect them. I" spite of that, three of his prose poems somehow manage to evoke a particular grace — "The Knowledge of Trees," "Autumn Rain," and "Dancing."

Rikki Ducornet's surrealist prose style is very much in the manner of Hoffmann, that German master of queer tales. She exhibits a peculiar talent for transforming real scenes and people into a fantastic and sinister *Marchen*. Her imagination seems to dwell in a region infested with fever, where the unconscious has full sway. This release of the unconscious is what surrealism is all about. After so much psychic exploration one yearns to get back to the real world. □

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Pro Tely colon found period stop plot unfollows

The Rosedale Horror, by Jon Ruddy, PaperJacks, 224 pages, $2.95 paper (ISBN 0770101194).

By MARQ de VILLIERS

I DON'T KNOW how long Jon Ruddy has been living down there in Mexico (it hasn't been that long, though — five or six years?), so it's hard to tell whether the wonderful period flavour of this little gripper is deliberate or whether he is simply out of much. But it is wonderful — a" authentic historical romance. His newspaper characters are authentically archaic. They indent in ems, they use slugs — all the lovely newspaper jargon of a bygone em. Why. they actually use typewriters! Ruddy cap-""es, partly through caricature, a feel for the newspaper days of the 1960s, now two technological revolutions and umpteen sociological lurches ago. It's one of the strong points of a book that hasn't many.

There's also his attitude towards one of his main characters, a Ryerson journalism student named Melody Bowker. It's one of the fond myths of very former young people that the young of today are somehow more ... relaxed ... towards life than their predecessors. This relaxation, in the writings of these VFYP types like Ruddy, usually takes the form of a fondness for casual sexuality. Alas, my years of teaching journalism students at Ryerson very unlike Melody Bowker don't bear out this somewhat tropical fantasy.

In some ways this book works. It certainly rattles along, and Ruddy gets off some good lines, usually against journalists. But in other ways it's very irritating.

No one is asking Ruddy to write CanLit, but it's not so much to ask that a book be plausibly plotted. Ruddy has come up with a cunning device called The Perishing Narrator, wherein tbe point of view shifts every so often because the narrator Gets Hi (or Hers). The problem with this is that once the reader has got the hang of the device itself, it's easy to tell from the table of contents who gets what when. and who's the villain, which rather spoils whatever suspense there is left.

A plot summary is fairly easy: funny goings-on in Rosedale mansion: dumb journalists investigate; some get wiped. And that's about it, except that Ruddy offers us two quite different endings, which may appeal to some readers. but if I'm in any way typical of consumers of escapist fiction. I want to be *told* *what's* happening, not challenged to Think. . .

Not all is a loss. Many Ruddy characters, while superficially implausible. are instantly recognizable to anyone who put in a few years at the old Toronto Telegram; the essential loopiness of that paper's editorial management shines through. But tbe main villain I don't believe in for a moment, which doesn't help — a thoroughly implausible mix of Retreaded Basic Parapsychology, Rosedale matron, harridan, and slut. Which would be okay, except that when I hear someone who has. supposedly, never been near a newspaper office refer to an article as a "wire service story" I know I'm in the presence of a journalist with a tin ear.

I wish also (though this is a personal carp) that he'd left those of us who don't believe for a moment in the "Power of the Mind" an out; I'm not asking for complexity. but even a little ambiguity would have done. To hedge on the parapsychological aspects wouldn't have spoiled the story for those who believe in such things, and would have nudged the rest of us over an otherwise unclimbable hump.

Conclusion: some nice lines, some sharply drawn sketches. some funny bits, generally a waste of a talent. ☐

Pro Star colon found war stop carnage follows

If You Don't Like the War, Switch the Damn Thing Off!, by Jack Cahill, Musson, illustrated. 207 **pages, $13.95 cloth (ISBN 0 1737 0043 9).**

By GERARD McNEIL

WITH MOST newspapers now practising what reporters call "disco journalism," fewer correspondents are being sent abroad. This means that Canadians are getting their perspective on world events from others. And the others, Cahill says, are sometimes members of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency or the Soviet KGB. Furthermore, be says, "some U.S. foreign correspondents depend almost entirely on their embassies, and thus indirectly the CIA, for their information.. .. It is thii information, with its American slant on world affairs, that eventually fills much of Canada's and the Western World's news space."

Rising costs — the Toronto Star paid 510,000 a month in insurance premiums alone while Cahill was in Vietnam — and "isolationist ignorance" have meant that even fewer Canadians are reporting from abroad. And Cahill says the result is a distorted picture of the world in this country.

The author, an Australian-born fireplug who brings to mind the bellicose workers in *Punch* cartoons, *spent* much of the 1970s as the *Star's* man in the Far East. He was among the early boat people, sharing a cramped U.S. Navy freighter with 5.000 Vietnamese in the Saigon evacuation in 1975, and he earned and won a National' Newspaper Award for his reporting on this grim episode. He also chronicled the Cambodia disaster.

Among the many fascinating chapters in hi book is one dealing with the continuing armistice talks at the Korean DMZ line. Cahill covered these endless talks for a while, and recounts a chilling personal confrontation with some North Koreans. In an even more chilling aside, he says the Americans plan to use nuclear weapons on North Korea if war breaks out there again.

The title of the book is drawn from the decision of television networks to stop coverage of the Vietnam war after Henry Kissinger announced in the early 1970s that peace had been achieved. The war went on until the fall of Saigon in 1975. Cahill's

Marcel Horne, 1942-1980

MARCEL HORNE was a writer. a criminal, an obsessed adventurer, and probably the world's foremost disciple of firebreathing. He was born in Leamington, Ont. He died early this January in a town near Tampa Bay, Florida, where he was staying at the winter quarters of a carnival. He was killed in a hit-and-run incident that is still under police investigation. He was 37 years old.

As a writer. Home was commonly regarded as a literary disaster — or worse, a fraud. His only book, *Annals of the Firebreather* (PMA, 1973), was written as an autobiography, which prompted critics to question its validity. The story tells about quitting school in grade nine, running away with truck driven. becoming a thief. following carnivals across Canada, and doing time in various prisons. The unusual part begins when the author meets an old gypsy at a carnival in Saskatchewan. The gypsy befriends him and later teaches bim firebreathing in a desert of New Mexico. According to the book. there is no trickery involved in firebreathing: it is an art that requires intense concentration and a massive tolerance for pain.

The author learns what be can from the gypsy, then sets out alone to perfect his firebreathing skill and to earn his living by it. He does his first professional show in 1964, before an audience of painted ladies in a Phoenix whore-house. He bums himself during the show but. as Home relates:

> The girls thought it was the greatest thing they had ever seen and kept asking u my prick was as hot as fire. It was embarrassing. They sent me 0" with ten dollars and kept calling me Hot Lips.

For the next few years. Horne wanders around North America with a trunk full of torches ad gasoline, doing his act in carnival sideshows and night-dubs. His personal life is a chaotic travelogue of loneliness. violence, poverty. sex, and hilarious adventure. His career reaches its pinnacle during the late 1960s when he performs at the Electric Circus in Toronto and New York. and becomes somewhat of a cult hem among musicians, painters, and writers. Tke book ends with Home, now a father, escaping from a Moroccan prison in 1971.

His stay. dismissed as a tie or gross exaggeration, was also criticized on literary grounds: Horne's narrative was too harsh and brutal, his style too reckless. The book now is out of print. Its demise is as curious as the book itself: a man's life-story fails as apiece of literature because it is too wild and incredible. If the story was a lie, then Home's mistake was in not employing the correct literary devices to make his tale seem more plausible. But if the story was true, then surely it raises the questions: What is art and what is an artist?

Firebreathing has virtually disappeared from the civilized world. When it does appear, it is usually in Ike form of a stunt where the risk is minimal and the motive is to dazzle the audience. Home's show was quite different: he deliberately drew his audience into a realm of terror. lie achieved this by consuming the fire slowly, reverently, and without theatrics. The performance lasted about six minutes, which was enough time for Home to articulate the difference between living and dying into a single breath. The climax occurred when a 15-foot flame burst from his mouth and the audience, weeping or cheering, knew they were alive.

If the firebreathing was a hoax. then it fooled nobody more than it fooled Marcel Home. He spent 20 crazy, frustrating years trying to build a travelling sideshow around it. lie gave his final performance in a bar called the Dragoon Barracks in St. Augustine, Florida. It earned him twelve dollars.

Fortunately, there is more to life than art. From the time his book was published until he died, Horne tasted enough romance, tragedy, and adventure to qualify him as an old, wise man. He made numerous friends from every conceivable walk of life, including a strikingly large number of writers — hacks, pretenders, internationally acclaimed novelists. and award-winning poets. For some reason, writers were drawn to this man like moths to a light. I think it is worth considering why.

— BARRY DICKIE

account of Saigon at the end is memorable.

It isn't all gore. Cahill leavens the blood-and-guts with expert advice about where to buy bush jackets and five-mice wine, how to handle censors, and where to hire maids in the Far East. There is even a bit of sex, a small bit, however. because of Cahill's allergy to penicillin. □

SS-CAN: a moral thriller

by Paul Copeland

Men 'in the Shadows: The RCMP Security Service, by John Sawatsky. Doubleday. 320 pages, $15.00 cloth (ISBN 0 385 14682 5).

ON THE 18TH DAY of February. 1980, Canada, at least that part from Winnipeg east. returned to office a man who. during his previous reign, presided over the worst abuses and criminality committed by the police intelligence community in Canada. Pierre Trudeau appointed the McDonald Commission to remove those activities fmm public scrutiny and particularly to insulate the Liberal government from its involvement and complicity in those activities.

Because of Trudeau's return to paver, John Sawatsky's book. *Men in the Shadows: The RCMP Security Service.* is mandatory reading for all Canadians aitb a concern for civil liberties, the rule of law. and the preservation of freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, and other freedoms normally thought to exist in a liberal Western democracy.

Leaving aside recent fictional accounts of RCMP spy and counter-spy bungling and the October crisis, this book follows *The RCMP Against the People* by Dennis Lee and Ted Mann and *Nobody Said No* by Jeff Sallot in examining that part of the Canadian intelligence apparatus run by the RCMP.

Men in the Shadows is the most ambitious of the three books in that it presents a history of the RCMP intelligence operations from its origins with the Frontier Police in the 1860s, through the Dominion police established in 1868. the North-West Mounted Police established in 1873, to the present. Apparently systematic surveillance of radical organizations began in the fall of 1918. Prosecution of leftists as members of an unlawful association under Section 98 of the Criminal Code is recounted. This historical background makes an interesting comparison with the non-prosecution disruption techniques adopted by the Security Service in the late 1960s and in the 1970s.

Without comment, Sawatsky notes the change in name in 1970 of the RCMP intelligence apparatus fmm Security and Intelligence (S & I) to Security Service (SS). I have often wondered which public relations genius failed to remember that the letters "SS" stood for something very sinister. Of course in any study and exploration of security (insecurity) matters, second, third, or even fourth levels of conspiracies theory apply. Perhaps the genius noted the historical connection and intended it to strike fear in the hearts of the populace.

Lee, Mann, and Sallot relied heavily an official information and proceedings of tbe McDonald Commission and the Keable Inquiry. Sawatsky claims in the preface to his book that he deliberately avoided the use of such sources, an approach that led to some unfortunate errors in the book. Examining the Agence de Presse Libre du Quebec (APLQ) break-in, Operation Bricole, Sawatsky writes that Inspector Don Cobb, who approved the operation. asked why there was no warrant and was told that the Montreal police didn't get one. He says Inspector Cobb did not press the matter further and gave his okay. In the APLQ break-in, the combined anti-terrorist squad, made up of members of tbe RCMP, the Montreal police and the Quebec police. cleaned out the APLQ offices. Sawatsky concludes:

> Operation Bricole produced in the end very little advantage for the authorities. The information was effectively useless. Its origin was so obvious that the force refused to distribute it through normal channels and instead relegated it to a locked filing cabinet.

If Sawatsky had combined his diligent investigative journalism with official sources, he would have been aware of the telex Inspector Cobb sent regarding the break-in, a telex ultimately revealed at the McDonald Commission. The telex showed that the purpose of Operation Bricole was to have the effect of precipitating the disintegration of two political organizations. It was intended not only to steal the documents but also to plant them on some other group to cause further disruption. The police were aware that if the removal of the records could be traced directly to tbe police, it would be of no strategic value and therefore abandoned the idea of a legal search with a warrant.

Sawatsky provides some fascinating details of some SS operations. The documents from the APLQ break-in were transported to RCMP headquarters in Ottawa in a truck rented by the RCMP under the name of Robert Lemieux, the FLQ lawyer. The book examines in detail RCMP and CIA investigation of materials after the bombing of the Cuban trade mission in Montreal in 1972. The background story of the dismissal of Staff Sgt. Don McCleery and Sgt. Gilles Brunet from the SS is reviewed in great detail in a manner very favourable to McCleery and Brunet. McCleery was the man in charge of G4 in Montreal, whose members committed many of the more notorious illegal police acts in Quebec.

It was perhaps beyond the scope of the book to examine the question of political responsibility and/or authorization for the illegal acts committed by the police.. While Sawatsky makes reference to a February, 1971, top secret RCMP headquarters memo setting out the disruptive tactics to be used for G Section, he makes no reference whatsoever to the Liberal Cabinet decision of March 27, 197.5. in which the disruption tactics of the RCMP were authorized by the Cabinet. Nor does he make reference to testimony of former Solicitor General Warren Allmand before the McDonald Commission in April. 1979. At that time. notwithstanding inadequate questioning by commission counsel, Allmand did admit that the 1975 Cabinet disruption decision was based on previous disruption mandates that were included in the Cabinet memorandum which led to the March 27, 1975, decision.

Sawatsky lays out tbe factual basis of disruption operations in Quebec and one particularly nasty disruption operation in English Canada involving the Partisan Party in Vancouver. Red Morning in Toronto. and the New Morning Collective in Halifax. Little is said of other disruption operations in English Canada.

Joe Clark, during the 1979 election campaign and in his short-lived government, managed to make many conflicting statements about the propriety or impropriety of police lawbreaking and Cabinet authorization of that lawbreaking.

It is a theory of Anglo-American law tbat if you violate the law, you are prosecuted for the violation. In the United States, J. Edgar Hoover and the FBI as well as the CIA were involved in a number of disruption operations such as Cointelpro (counter intelligence program) whii sought to discredit and destroy the anti-war movement. Martin Luther King. Jean Seberg, and others. After widespread publicity and congressional examination, the FBI and the CIA have undertaken not to engage in those. types of activities.

In Canada, the RCMP Security Service, operating as a political police force authorized by the Cabinet. has engaged in many similar activities. They do not prosecute those people who they believe are engaged in criminal activities, but instead seek to discredit, disrupt, and destroy the political organizations.

Sawatsky does not deal with the ongoing battles and disputes between the dissident reactionary element of the SS and the Trudeau government. Leaks of confidential

documents to long-time SS friend, Toronto *Sun* editor, Peter Worthington, have sought to embarrass the government over surveillance of PQ members and over Russian intelligence operations.

Sawatsky does make some comments about Trudeau's involvement:

> Diefenbaker was unable to make the hard decisions required in security work. Prime Minister Pearson when possible avoided the files because he was a gentleman and detested the seamy side of the business. Pierre Trudeau proved different. He never shirked a tough decision. Be read the tiler and returned them with crisp instructions on what to do. which made him popular with the force.

Regarding the October crisis, Sawatsky writes:

> Cabinet ministers were livid when they later learned that the two FLQ kidnapping cells had not been in communication and that the operation was not a conspiracy. It was RCMP information and analysis that moved the government into invoking the War Measures Act unnecessarily. Prime Minister Trudeau and his staff were outraged. They bad no idea the Security Service's intelligence was that bad.

The source, inspiration, training and. in many cases. personnel, for both U.S. government and Canadian government disruption tactics came out of a secret war carried on before and during the Second World War that is described in great detail by William Stevenson in *A Man Called Intrepid*. In that book, Stevenson wanted about the dangers of intelligence operations in a democratic society not at war:

> Among the increasingly intricate arsenals across the world, intelligence is an essential weapon, perhaps the most important. But it is. being secret, the most dangerous. Safeguards to prevent its abuse must be devised, revised and rigidly applied.

It is only with books such as Men *in the Shadows that* Canadians can obtain the information on secret-police operations they need to decide on the extent of such activities. they are prepared to countenance. □

All roads lead to Nome

by George Woodcock

Rough Road to the North: Travels Along the Alaska Highway, by Jim Christy. Doubleday, illustrated, 224 pages, S11.95 cloth (ISBN 0 385 19224 8).

JIM CHRISTY (Bakunin bless him!) is one of the last unpurged North American anarchistic romantics, in love with freedom as the behaviour of men sometimes expresses it and as the splendour of great landscapes inevitably suggests it: a freedom that recognizes the necessities of existence and overleaps them. Nobody I can think *of* is better adapted to evoke the spirit of the last corners of the Canadian wilderness. Conversely, I can think of no part of the Canadian terrain. except perhaps some forlorn sections of our cities, more likely than the Alaska Highway, and that comer of land where the last Canadian and American frontiers come together at the meeting of Yukon and Alaska. to bring out hi special kind of writing about wandering men. It is writing in the direct tradition of Whitman, and of London at his best. and — in my view, at least — a good deal better than the overrated blatherings of Kerouac. Kerouac's roads were ways between cities and slaveries; Christy's are roads to the last strongholds of a freedom we once thought undefeatable.

So much for the romantic afflatus — mine as well as Christy's. *Rough Road to the North* is fairly accurately described by its subtitle, "Travels along the Alaska Highway." The frame of the book is a recent journey revisiting old places to remember old times. Embedded even deeper are fragments of history: the building of the Highway; the comic epic of the Klondike gold rush; the steady penetration of the land by trappers and mitten and strange half-geniuses Iii Bedaux; the creation of a northern life that became so sufficient in its satisfactions that the rest of the world appeared as the despised Outside. from which one came and to which one returned — though many did not — only when the North had burnt one out.

From my own much briefer visits to these parts I recognize as authentic much that Christy has to tell. I share his empathy with those who have immersed themselves in the life until they seem almost as indigenous as the Indians. I share his horror at the kind of mad consumerism that now has spread to such places as Whitehorse, Fairbanks, and Yellowknife. I feel a jolt of recognition when he writes about his first experience of the northland:

> There was a place to go, something to do, but when I saw that Far North land I was captured by its very presence and suddenly there didn't have to be anything to do and whatever I dii would be just fine. Being there and knowing the mountains were all around was what mattered.

But, "being there," Jim Christy uses his eyes and ears, and *Rough Road to the North* is a good deal more than a paean to freedom or a celebration of the grandeurs of unspoilt nature. Every frontier creates its own miniature society, small in numbers but rich in individuality, and hi book is full of sharply observed characters, of tensely described encounters, in a land where there is little history and less art to distract — as in the old world they so often do — from the human dimension.

In a way a frontier *society* actualizes Bernard Shaw's old image of the dregs and the scum. It contains plenty of people who have dropped out of civilized life from the bottom, but an even greater number who have floated to the top of the brew of existence. Its boilings have cast them on distant shores, where they germinate Iii seeds under a northern sun and produce vivid flowerings of personality impossible in other settings. No geniuses perhaps, but men and women of strange individualities and curious ageless ambitions, so that Christy meets both lost country singers and octagenarian trappers who have developed into amateur palaeontologists consulted by learned men the world over.

But all the time the theme of the "awesome country" returns, the sense that:

> No one has named the peaks, no one has ever seen them in their entirety: there are unimagined worlds beyond the first mountain, walls and hidden tarns where mountain sheep have come to drink for thousands of years.

There is that sense of being in one of the last parts of the world where one can still think, as old explorers sometimes noted in their diaries, "Tomorrow we proceed into the Unknown." There is the feeling of living out, far from political events, "the actual human history," and yet of being "the last of a breed . . . at the end of a way of life, the end of the very last frontier."

For if *Rough Road to the North* is in some ways a joyous celebration. we know all the time that the way of life it describes is passing quickly, and so it also takes on lbe grand melancholy of a threnody on something splendid and passing. This comes out especially in a paragraph towards the end, when Christy laments to a trucker the paving of the highway. The trucker replies that it will make his work easier and bring in more tourists and more business:

> Wayne has his view and as a Yukoner, a man whore work is dependent on the mad. he is absolutely right so I don't worry the point out loud. The mad will get paved of course and the Yukon will become a province but it won't be the same any more. The words themselves tell the story succinctly enough. It is precisely the difference between a province and a territory. Whose imagination was ever stirred by the word "province"; but "territory" conjures an image of unexplored, untamed land. the image of a frontier. Romantic? Sw. but romance is the currency of the Yukon.

Once romantic? Perhaps I am being super-romantic. but when I read books lii this I feel like that legendary mariner. coasting an antique land, who heard a vast voice call, "Great Pan is dead!" □

Battered from poll to poll

Political Choice **in** Canada. by **Harold D. Clarke, Jane Jenson, Lawrence LeDuc, and Jon H. Pammett, McGraw-Hill Ryerson.** 445 pages, $24.95 cloth (ISBN 007 082783 4).

Canadian Confederation at the Crossroods: The Search for **a Federal-Provincial Balance,** edited by **Michael Walker.** The Fraser Institute, 361 pages, 59.95 paper (ISBN 0 88975 025 4).

By ALEXANDER CRAIG

ELECTIONS, ESPECIALLY federal, aren't going to be with us again for quite some time. Yet how and why people decide to vote sill be of continuing interest for anyone trying to assess the ebb and flow of public opinion, and how politicians attempt to respond to it.

Political Choice in Canada is the first comprehensive book-length study of voting behaviour in Canada. This is remarkable in several ways. not least because whet the British snootily call psephology has been so bii for so long in the U.S. Indeed all four authors boast U.S. doctorates. Their study therefore has something of the Prussian-type meticulousness end concern with mechanical apparatus that U.S. universities have long encouraged.

A great amount of work (and, one assumes, a fair amount of Canada Council money) went into this extensive analysis of voting behaviour and political attitudes in the 1974 election. "Open-andclosed-ended questions" are posed. responses are, et times "trichotomized."

Only 33 per cent of Canadians, according to their sample. feel that "government and politics are not so complicated as to prevent them from understanding whet is going on." This is worked out by means of a "four-item political efficacy scale" used originally in the U.S. University scholars can use models fmm anywhere in the universe. but sorely if they are concerned about enlightening their readers they should give us some idea of what original responses were to the same questions?

Polls. John Diefenbaker has said, are of use only to dogs. Like much of that ex-prime minister's dicta, there's some truth, mixed with just a little hyperbole. There's a considerable amount of value in this book. It indicates new ways of analysing voting (and non-voting) behaviour. It looks et a wide range of issues. such es the role of media lo campaigns. It examines in detail the effects specific issues. leaders. and candidates can have on voters and how these in turn affect the overall election result.

No indication is given of how the book was written, although at times it seems as if it were written by a committee. Yet sorely any academic group should have spent some time, even just a little, discussing the strengths and weaknesses of surveys such as this? After all, a large number of political analysts agree with the distinguished French political scientist. Duverger, that "the area covered by this scientific kind of politics is much smaller than that of politics as an art. based upon imprecise material that is not measurable but is intuitive and irrational."

Political Choice is meant, one assumes (*again.* nothing is said) for university students, and anyone else actively concerned about Canadian voting behaviour. *Canadian Confederation* is a much less academic, much more committed book. The two books are highly organized, but one wants to instruct the country, the other to change it.

The Fraser Institute is Canada's principal hotbed of young, radical neo-conservatives. These devotees of Hayek and Friedman are based appropriately in B.C. (British California, if some of them could get their way to introduce Proposition 13-type schemes), but with a few Eastern beachheads in Bay Street, the University of Western Ontario, and elsewhere.

Since the "New West" now has a power base in Ottawa, a book such as this warrants greater attention than in the past. Large parts bf it are narrowly economic but a fair pert of it is of much wider significance. If there is a single theme, it's the one summed up in its subtitle. In a sense Canada's neo-conservatives are giving other political groups a warning: in the jockeying and horse-trading prior to the impending constitutional shake-up what they want, and will posh for, is what they spell out here.

The contributors are for the individual and for economic freedom. They are opposed to government, particularly federal government. The now balance they seek will increase provincial autonomy . They are not explicitly-opposed to federal attempts at equalization: instead, they ask, Is diversity a bad thing, or is it unavoidable? One of their main recommendations is "provincializing all education."

Some of the articles offer interesting assessments of the oscillating conflict between federal and provincial governments that has gone on throughout so much of Canada's history. It thus provides useful viewpoints on the continuing debate on centralization versus decentralization, and on economic association and other alternatives to present arrangements.

There are occasional inconsistencies, but this is perhaps inevitable in such a wide-ranging assessment by so many (1 I) contributors. Overall, in fact they more often than not manage to show the interconnected nature of their case—of the importance, for instance, to use the title of one chapter, of "Preserving the Uniformity of Law.'!

Another chapter, by Pierre Lortie Of SECOR, a Montreal research firm, is on "Education, Broadcasting, Language Policy and the Provinces." He gives a good historical survey of federal and provincial regulation of these areas. but in addition

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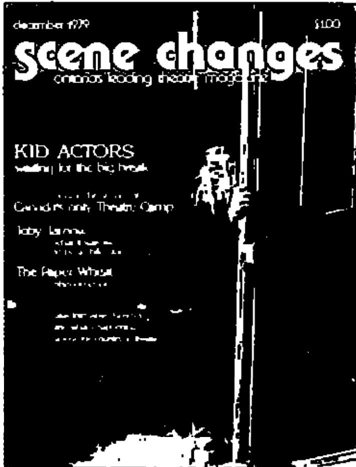

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pinpoints some of the rather serious difficulties arising from "the current maze of bureaucracies" in such fields as manpower training.

This is relatively uncontentious — or rather only the various levels of the public service and general inertia have to be contended with. More problematic is the main recommendation of this chapter, that the CBC should be "d&mantled pm. gressively (over three years) and its functions left to be pursued by private broadcasters."

The Fraser Institute book is bound to be influential among certain sectors of political and business élites across the country. Anyone concerned about the "renewed federalism" debate will find this collection of position papers a reliable guide to what the am-conservative lobby thinks and wants. □

Lies my grandfather told me

My Grandfather's Cape Breton, by Clive Doucet, McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 224 pages, $12.95 cloth (ISBN 0 70 77870 1).

By JANE W. HILL

HAVE YOU seen those write-ups in the travel section about farm vacations in Nova Scotia? Well, I have. and I've always wanted to go on one. The vision appears of bright red apples plucked from the tree. blueberry pies cooling in the window, meadow walks among the sheep end cows, good down-to-earth talk with the farmer as one follows bim in his dally mend — learning all the time as one also experiences a sense of work well done. of wholeness, a clear mind and well-earned rest at the end of the day.

Clive Doucet, whose first novel, *Disneyland, Please* was on the short list last year for the Books in Canada Award for First Novels, didn't just dream of a Nova Scotia vacation. At the age of 12, in 19.58. he went down to the west coast of Cape Breton to spend the first of many summers with his paternal grandfather, then 78 years old, but still fit and active, on his small farm in Grand Etang — a kind of farm that hardly exists any more. Clive, brought up in Ottawa. was bright but hadn't done well et school and was discontented and frustrated by pressure at home. His father, an economist with the federal government, had left the farm as a young man, as so many do, but had the good sense to realize that Clive could benefit from that same farm life that he had given up, and could learn especially from Grandpa William. Not merely French, which these descendants of the Acadians still spoke, bet lessons of life: of hard work in the outdoors and building a community, of giving and receiving help and also of self-sufficiency. of spontaneous fun and regulated discipline. Now, in his 30s, Clive Doucet has set it all down. has relived. for himself and for es, the day-to-day experience of that first summer in his grandfather's Cape Breton.

Those days turned out to be the most vital -in both senses-of his life. "Through it all, I have found that the confidence and optimism I gained during those summers on the farm have remained to guide me through the difficult business of growing up. I'm not quite sure how it happened. I just know that it did and I want to say thank you." Of course, there was not only Grandpa. There was Aunt Germaine, his father's spinster sister who was never quite happy as a girl, and who grew up to keep house for her widowed father; cousin Roland to shoot rabbits with early on Sunday mornings; Ti-Jean, the lighthouse keep& Danny Deveau, "horse trader, horse trainer and horse thief"; the neighbouring Chiasson family with their sympathetic daughter Anne: and eve" Grandpa's two horses, Nellie and old Donald. who bad personalities of their own. But always the centre of Clive's life was Grandfather William. patient, understanding, a loving and effective teacher and guide. the chief instrument of Clive's passage from unknowing, hesitant city boy to competent, confident working member of his farm family.

The story is full of charming and instructive incident. The adult Clive seems to have no difficulty in recalling and reproducing the conversations and moods, the sense of place and time, of that long-ago summer one feels that the picture. though perhaps idealized in memory, is a true one. Occasionally there are anachronisms. I doubt that old Ti-Jean would have said: "Remember Scatari Island? The stairs on that tower were something else!" But on the whole Doucet has succeeded in recreating the sights end sounds, end most important, his feelings and changing behaviour, of that formative summer in Cape Breton.

Perhaps one simple exchange between Clive end his grandfather may serve to illustrate their relationship and the Older man's character. Clive wanted to know which job Grandpa had liked best before he started fanning -he'd been a miner and a road crew foreman among other things. Finally Grandpa said that his favourite job had been driving horses in the races at Inverness:

> "That must have been great!" I said.
> "What was it like?"
> Grandfather shrugged and went back to his chopping.
> "What was it like, Grandpa?"
> "I can't tell you what it was lii became I've never driven in a race at Inverness."
> "I don't understand."
> "But it would have been my favourite job." smiled Grandfather.

Would that we all had been so blessed in grandfathers. □

Fruit of the flume

Niagara! The Eternal Circus. by Gordon Donaldson. Doubleday. 240 pages, $11.50 cloth (ISBN 385 12309 4).

By MARY LILE BENHAM

GORDON DONALDSON has given us an excellent history of Niagara Falls. written with wit and style. Regional history is trendy, but this book goes beyond the *regional to become* of universal interest. His research has been prodigious but the resulting barrage of information is enlivened by a most felicitous turn of phrase.

As James Michener's *Hawaii* starts with the sea hiccuping up volcanic islands. this book starts back in the days when North America had "for a million years been clamped in the Great lee Age [and] the continent had been scraped, gouged and flayed by the creeping ice-fronts. It lay dead and deserted, mourned by howling winds. Niagara Falls was no place for tourists." The first one probably arrived in 7000 B.C. The only litter he left behind for future generations to dig up was stone tools.

Donaldson moves rapidly through the

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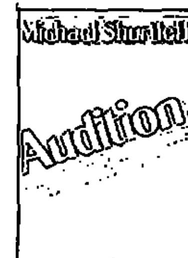

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centuries to the 17th when the giant waterfall was first seen by Europeans. From then on it became a cirrus — the fantastic waterflow itself the Greatest Show on Earth — attracting a continuous flow of "explorers, soldiers, stunters, inventors, poets and charlatans . performing feats of bravery and idiotic antics."

John Graves Simcoe. first Lieutenant-Governor of Upper Canada, established its capital in 1792 at Niagara-on-the-Lake. Mrs. Simcoe's diary gives .plenty of "delightful trivia and gently snobbish little thoughts" while soldiers were being flogged and deserters shot. Poles apart from Mrs. Simcoe was the tavern-keeper, Mrs. Hustler. She not only was the model for James Fenimore Cooper's heroine in *The Spy*, she also invented the cocktail. The mixed drink wy stirred with a rooster's quill --a new taste sensation.

Donaldson deals at length with the War of 1812, which he describes as "misdiicred. venal, unsuccessful and at times comic." The Laura Secord legend is included in this description.

The Tourist Trap was invented in the 1820s. From then on a procession of daredevils performed death-defying stunts for the titillation of enormous gasping crowds of tourists. The greatest of these was Blondin, who not only crossed 1,000 feet of tightrope time after time, but also crossed with a sack over his bead. walked on stilts, cooked a meal mid-tow.. and carried a friend (it would have to be a good friend) across on his shoulders.

The engineering feats in bridging the gorges were incredible. In order to get the first cable across the Whirlpool Rapids a kite-flying contest was staged with a $10 prize to the first boy to get a string from the American side to the Canadian. Fmm the winning sting were strung progressively heavier ones until there were 1.160 feet of iron cable stretching from one side to the other.

Only a ponderous academic could make the history of a natural circus dull, and Donaldson is fat from being that. His field is journalism and he tells his story with the appropriate flair and opinionated panache of a showbiz columnist. □

Hoist with his own baton

Solti, by Paul Robinson. Lester and Orpen Dennys, 168 pages, $9.95 (cloth ISBN 0 919630 72 3).

By DON SEDGWICK

ANYONE WHO IS haughty enough to tell the people of Chicago that "the city ought to erect a statue to me" is bound to take a few lumps from his biographers. Sir George Solti, conductor of the Chicago Symphony, is generally acknowledged to be one of the supreme figures in classical music and is often ranked with the mighty Herbert von Karajan of the Berlin Philharmonic. He won't be overly flattered by this critical biography, however. No attempt is made to hide his foibles.

Author Paul Robinson has an impressive Iii of musical credentials. Before he became Music Director of URT-PM in Toronto he studied conducting at the Mozarteum in Salzburg under Bruno Maderna. Robinson's radio station has attracted a devoted audience in Toronto as has the CJRT Festival Concert Series, which he conducts and directs. The present biography is the tbii volume in the Art of the Conductor Series, preceded by Robinson's studies of Stokowski and Karajan.

Solti is clearly a musical force to be reckoned with. Earning more than $250,000 annually fmm his Chicago conductorship alone, he is simultaneously musical director of the London Philharmonic. His earlier IO-year association with England's Covent Garden raised that musical institution to the heights of operatic acclaim and he performed similar miracles with the Paris Open.

Unfortunately he also hit a few clunkers in his musical career. Solti's stint with the Orchestre de Paris was a disaster. Witness his harsh comments on the performers' lack

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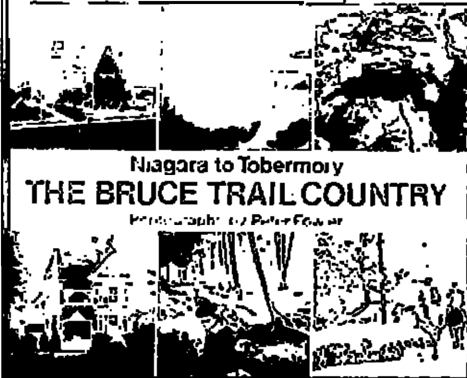

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of professionalism: "If an American musician makes an error during a rehearsal. nobody laughs, and one picks up immediately; in Paris that's funny and there's an uproar." The Parisians replied in kind, saying that Solti was never around when needed. He also had a run-in at Covent Garden with the renowned Canadian tenor Jon Vickers, who claimed that Solti "bullied" him. That was in 1961: they haven't performed together at Covent Garden since.

The appended discography of Solti's works, compiled by Toronto broadcaster and reviewer Bruce Surtees, stretches to a formidable 11 pages. But the subject of records brings us to a point of contention. Solti is the only orchestral leader who has won the coveted Grand Prix du Disque 11 times. yet Robinson concludes that "few of his recordings are truly memorable." Readers might find that Robinson's jabs with the baton increase as the biography progresses until he nearly pushes Solti into the orchestral pit.

Robinson has certainly written a well-researched biography; a valuable reference tool for any music lover. A careful rereading, however. suggests that Robinson's assessment of Solti may be somewhat harsh. The records speak for themselves. □

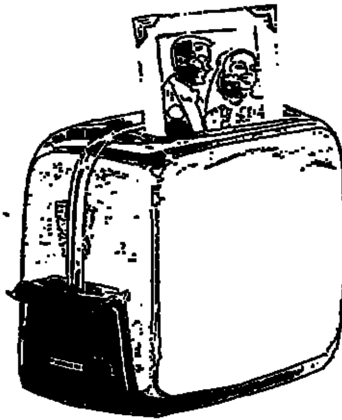
Notes in a minor key

Your Baby Needs Music: A Music-Sound Book for Babies up to Two Years Old, by Barbara Cass-Beggs, Douglas & McIntyre, illustrated. 144 pages, $9.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88894 213 3).

By ANNE SERVICE

IT IS A pity that the excellent suggestions in this comprehensive and practical book will be inaccessible to many people became of the way it is written. In the first plan. while stating that she keeps the baby's parents in the forefront. Cass-Beggs actually addresses herself to mothers. Chapter 12 is entitled "Suggested Music for Mothers." not Moms and Dads; Dad is treated as a sideline attraction who should be encouraged to participate. While realistically (and for some obvious reasons) more women than men look after children under two, this nevertheless seems to me to be a limiting approach to take towards writing a guide to the world of music and babies, particularly since Cass-Beggs is also aiming her book at day-care workers.

A second reason (and a very fundamental one) that *Your Baby Need; Music* falls down (to quote a baby phrase) is its split focus musically. The introduction is written to a reader who has little musical knowledge and is unfamiliar with the benefits of a



musical environment. Yet following the introduction and notes on breathing and singing. the written music begins, showing treble clef and melody line. I don't understand how someone unfamiliar with music can get page eight.

To a person who is familiar with (and who can read) music, on the other hand, it certainly does not seem far-fetched — as Cass-Beggs says in her introduction-that music is essential to a child's development. Nor is such a person likely to be unfamiliar with the sol-fa scale.

My last frustration with this book is the inconsistency with which songs are translated. All the initial lullabies (including one in French) are translated into English, but from Chapter 4 on, none of the numerous French songs are translated.

These things set tide. Your *Baby Needs Music* is a sensitive study, which depicts the general development of babies and the fun adults and children can have exploring music together. Music exercises a child's auditory discrimination, which benefits speech and reading development later in life. Cass-Beggs is convinced that rhythmical and soothing music increases a baby's sense of security both before and after birth. Music also encourages movement, which strengthens and develops the baby's body. Socialization skills can also be developed when young children play musically together.

The book is divided into sections according to the age of the baby, fmm before birth to two years old. with appropriate songs, rhymes, chants. and games for each period. There are lullabies; delightful finger. toe. and body songs; folk songs; nursery rhymes; action songs; and musical games derived from diverse sources. Cass-Beggs includes traditional English and French nursery rhymes and songs as well as Iroquois, German. and Latin-American lullabies, her own music, and songs from other sources. The book also includes chapters on making your own instruments, on records for young children, music for mothers. and suggested reading.

The person who can read music will be able to take full advantage of this book; for the reader who is unfamiliar with musical notation, I have one wish: that Cass-Beggs produce a tape or record to accompany the book, so that those who don't read music can participate more fully. □

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Where all we said is done

The Dictionary of Canadian Quotations and **Phrases, Revised and Enlarged** Edition. compiled by **Robert** M. Hamilton and Dorothy **Shields**, McClelland & Stewart, 1,063 page. $75.00 cloth (ISBN 0 7710 3944 5).

By MORRIS WOLFE

ROBERT M. HAMILTON'S pioneer work, *Canadian Quotations and Phrases, Literary and Historical*, was first published in 1952, the same year *Encyclopedia Canadiana* was begun, and a year after the publication of the Massey Report. The Depression and the Second World War now behind them. Canadians were picking up where they'd left off in the late 1920s in attempting to define who they were and in developing much needed, specifically Canadian reference materials. (After all, "international" reference works such as *Bartlett's Quotations* contained little or nothing about Canada.)

In a modest preface to ***Canadian Quotations and Phrases***, Hamilton **wrote** that he hoped his book might **"serve to some extent** as a supplement to the **standard dictionaries** of quotations. in **which** Canadians **for whatever cause**, arc conspicuous by **their absence." Bruce Hutchison** put **the matter more** emphatically. **We** Canadians he said, have gotten by for too long on legends that are untrue. **"Perhaps** the **legend of our** national dumbness is the most widely believed and **most** deceptive **of all."** Hamilton, he declared. **"has proved that Canadians have something** to **say** and **can** say it in a **fashion..** unmistakably **Canadian." *Canadian Quotations and Phrases*** became an important **part** of **any reasonably well-stocked** Canadian reference shelf. In **1965 M & S** brought out **a paperback edition. Its typeface was** small but legible. The **price:** a **mere** 95 cents.

When *Colombo's Canadian Quotations* appeared in 1974. I **assumed** that **was** the end of the Hamilton book **— except** perhaps as a **collector's** item. ***Colombo's* was** livelier, **bigger**, and **obviously** it **was** up to date. But as it **turns** out. Hamilton. **a** librarian **at** UBC. **had been working** away all those years with **colleague Dorothy Shields at enlarging and** improving ***his*** original book. **New entries** in **the** Second Edition. **which was** finally published in late **1979. trail off** in 1974. Hamilton and **Shields**, it **seems**, finished ***their*** book just when ***Colombo's* was** published. **(That's a nightmare editors always live** with.)

Most of what's wrong with *The Dictionary of Canadian Quotations and Phrases, Revised and Enlarged Edition* is the publisher's fault, not the editors'. The fact that publication was delayed for several **years** has obviously dated **the** book. And its **overblown size (eight inches by 12), typeface (12 point) and price ($75.00) lead one** to **assume** that **M&S,** given its continuing **financial problems, is just after the lucrative library market** with this **edition.** Few **individuals** will be able to afford it.**The** book is almost the same size **as** the one-volume ***New Columbia &cyclopedia.*** which contains **roughly 10 times as** much **material. *The typeface*** is ***so large one can read*** it **from across a room.**

All of **this** is **unfortunate because *The Dictionary of Canadian Quotations and Phrases* is a splendid reference book (to say** nothing of **just** being **a** joy to **browse in).** Although it includes **10,000** quotations to ***Colombo's 6,000.*** it's **more rigorous,** less **idiosyncratic** in its principles of **selection. There's** less that's simply **clever here.** There's far **more** poetry. **And** unlike ***Colombo's*, which** follows Bartlett's in **arranging material alphabetically** by **writer,** Hamilton and Shields is **arranged alphabetically** by subject. **The Bartlett approach** works **best** when **one** is dealing **with great writers. The fact is the two books complement** one **another** extremely well **and** I'm glad to have **both** on **my reference shelf.**

There isn't enough space **here** to **demonstrate my erudition** by **trotting** out **the** obligatory list of **writers** who ought to have **been *included*** and ***weren't*,** or **who** could **have been better represented by other quotations. And, as one might expect in so large an undertaking, there *are* errors of fact. (The** CBC, for example. is not **the** Canadian **Broadcasting Commission.) Suffice it to** say **that** Hamilton **and** Shields's book **deserves much wider distribution than it's going to get** at 575.00 **a crack.** I hope M&S makes the book available in **an** inexpensive edition as **soon as possible.** □

on/off/set

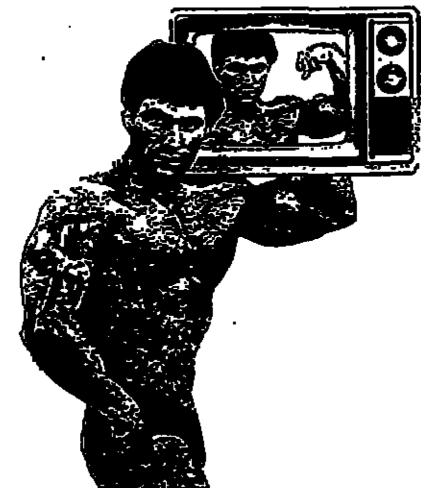
by Wayne Grady

Delivery from exile, kicking and screaming into the world of international literature.

TEN YEARS AGO Batty **Callaghan** was **a full-time professor** at York University, **a senior producer** of **a** CBC **public-affairs program** called ***Weekend*,** and **the literary editor** of the Toronto Telegram. In 1971 hc **resigned from** the last **two** of these positions, and found himself **at** loose ends. So **when** the **dean** of **York's** Atkinson College. **Harry Crowe, asked** him one day **over** cocktails what he intended **to** do with his **spare** time. **Callaghan** replied: "How would you like to have one of the two **best literary journals** in **the** world?" He didn't say what **the** other one was **(and** won't say now), but **Crowe** was **interested,** and ***Exile was*** born.

Exile sprang almost **full-grown** out of **the international literary** community **Callaghan** had encouraged in the Telegram's **book pages. The *second*** number. **for** example, carried poems by such familiar Canadians as Joe **Rosenblatt** and **Margaret Avison,** but it also had an **essay** by **Jerzy** Kosinski on **Kosinski's** first and most **important** novel. ***The Painted Bird.*** **Callaghan** had **reviewed Kosinski's *Steps*** in the ***Telegram*, Kosinski had written to thank hi and to ask if the review could be used as an introduction to the** French edition. The Telegram's book page also **ran** the **first** 2.500 words of Marie-Claire Blair's novel, ***Le Jour est noir,*** in English, and Blair's **writing —** accompanied by **Mary** Mcig's **drawings —** has appeared regularly in ***Exile.*** The magazine's **literary** network now spreads **around** the world: **Yehudi** Amichai of Israel **and** John Montague of **Ireland are** both contributing **editors.** "A **lot** of people **thought I used my** father's contacts," says **Callaghan, whose** father is Morley **Callaghan.** "But my **father** doesn't know **any** of **these people."**

Starting an international quarterly in the rabidly **nationalist early 1970s was a** bold **move. Callaghan** received some **personal criticism ("I was called a lot of dirty names, like 'Continentalist' and** 'Cosmopolitan' **")** but mostly ***Exile* was ignored in** Canada. Much of the **journal's** first **year's** budget was spent **on three** full-page ads **— one** in the ***New York Review of Books* and two in** consecutive issues of ***Saturday Night.*** The New York ad brought in 200 subscriptions; **the *Saturday*** Night ads **brought in six. Now abouthalfofthejoumall'sprintnmof2.200 copies is distributed outside Canada. "My**



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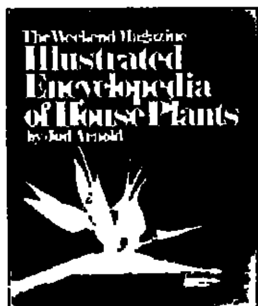

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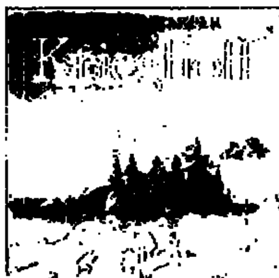

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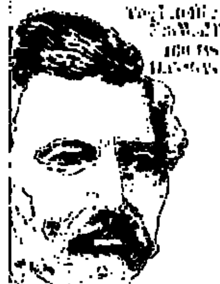

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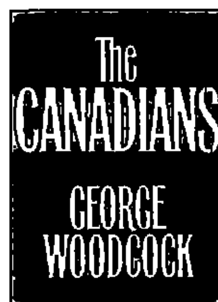

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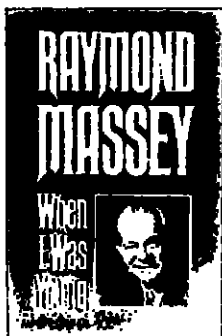

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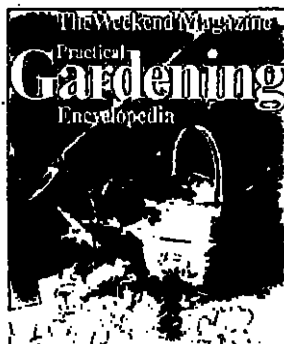

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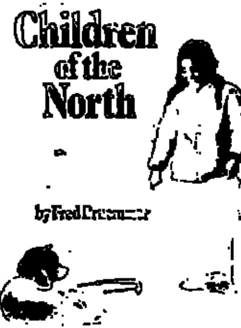

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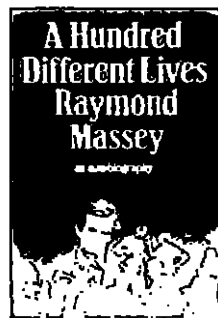

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attitude," says Callaghan, "was that the journal would appear in a cultural milieu that existed only in my own head. I think if you publish just for the councils and the library shelves, you should go out of business. If writers internationally want to make Toronto their Paris — and a surprising number of them do — then I should accommodate them. I've always found the kind of nationalism you see in *Maclean's*, for example, slightly comic — and you only have to examine *Maclean's* relationship with Macmillan to see how deep their nationalism goes."

Despite *Exile*'s continentalism — or rather, because of it — Callaghan has published. end in some cases discovered, some exceptionally talented Canadians. "I've "ever doubted for a minute that good Canadian writing was as good as any in the world, that a poet from Israel or New York or London would recognize what was good in Canada and be pleased to appear beside it." One of the areas of Canadian literature that *Exile* began IO mine early was French Canadian writing. Claude Gauvreau, for example, the *québécois* poet who died in 1971 and whose work is only now being praised in Quebec. was published in English in *Exile* before he appeared in French in Quebec. Other French Canadian contributors include Jacques Ferron, Roch Carrier, Rejean Ducharme, and Victor-L&y Beaulieu-whose novel. A *Québécois Dream*, translated by Ray Chamberlain, has also been published by Exile Editions. And a significant number of *Exile*'s foreign contributors have established roundabout links with Canada. The most recent issue, for example, contains a long poem by the Australian poet Jennifer Rankin, with whom Margaret Atwood stayed while visiting Australia: Rankin gave Atwood the poem because Ted Hughes had told her *Exile was a* good place to publish. and Atwood handed it onto Callaghan. That's how the network works. The same issue contains the Cm publication outside South Africa of Athol Fugard's play, A *Lesson from Aloes*, which enjoyed its world première on stage (outside South Africa) on Jul. 1, 1980, in the Centaur Theatre in Montreal, directed by Fugard himself.

Exile accepts unsolicited manuscripts (it leans toward the avant-garde but, as Callaghan says, "I don't want *Exile* to be one of those journals that fosters the kind of poetry I myself am trying to wife"). and it sometimes rejects solicited ones. Callaghan once rejected a story by Isaac Bashevis Singer because he thought it wasn't up to his standards. For nearly a decade *Exile* has consistently bee" in touch with world literature, which bar meant being dangerously ahead of its time in Canada. It has suffered a certain obscurity because of this, but perhaps its time has come. Canada es a nation is no longer as immune from global affairs as it thought itself in 1967: es a literary community it is even less so. "The imaginative writer, who can rely only on his own eyes, his own heart and sensibility for hi information, is .. in exile now," wrote Callaghan in his first end only editorial in *Exile*'s first issue. "There ought to be a small have" somewhere for such exiles." It is engagingly ironic that this particular small haven may have helped pull Canada's exiles kicking and screaming into the larger arena of world literature. □

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the browser

by Michael Smith

Yesterday's news, today's folklore: from the Lucan massacre to Clark's last stand

THE MURDER by vigilantes of five members of the Donnelly family on Feb. 4. 1880, near Lucan, Ont., has been the subject of almost as much speculative writing as Canada's other widely romanticized victim, Louis Riel. Treatments of the "Biddulph tragedy" range from Thomas P. Kelley's badly written, viciously anti-Donnelly The *Black Donnellys* (1954) to Orlo Miller's sympathetic history, The *Donnellys Must Die (1962).* and James Reaney's mythii dramatic trilogy, *Sticks and Stones* (1976), *St. Nicholas Hotel* (1976), and *Handcuffs (1977). On the* centennial of the Donnelly murders, Donald L. Cosens has unearthed contemporary newspaper accounts, mostly from the London *Free Press* and *Advertiser*, in The Donnelly Tragedy 1880-1980 (Phelps Publishing Co., 87 Bruce St., London, Ont. N6C 1G7, 48 pages, $1.95 paper). Published in facsimile. including the original wood-block illustrations, these breathless, sensational reports might have been enhanced only by more specific bibliographical details.

Though the Donnellys certainly had a bad reputation around Lucan, many of their enemies were so appalled by the murders that they instantly became Donnelly supporters. Even so, none of the 15 people arrested was ever convicted. By all accounts, much of the blame lay with the parish priest, John Connolly, who, in a misguided attempt to maintain law and order. set up the vigilance committee and publicly condemned the Donnelly family. ("The priest cursed them from the altar;' one vigilante told a reporter, "and as Catholics we were bound to believe that the curse of a priest would prove true.") The book contains two reports of

Connolly's sermon at the Donnelly funeral, during which he was overcome with emotion, and he later had to be relieved of his pmt. At the insistence of one of the surviving sons, William Donnelly. no charge was laid against the priest.

Warner Troyer's 250 Days: Joe Clark in Power (Personal Library, illustrated, 191 pages, $7.95 paper) is neither an insider's view of the Clark government, nor a particularly informed history, but an extended piece of journalism. It was written in just a couple of weeks after the Tory government fell-scarcely enough time to interview the "Clark-watchers, civil servants, Clark colleagues, journalists. paper-shredders, and cleaning staff" that Troyer claims his research embraced. Unlike a book of history, which examines the broad sweep of events. Troyer's narrative gets bogged down in details — such as a comprehensive listing of Clark's patronage appointments and a long-winded account of the Israel Embassy fiasco. This is because it's largely rewritten from news reports which, by nature of daily journalism, concentrate on minutiae. The book is poorly organized end badly written (Troyer mis-identifies Liberal Senator Keith Davey — perhaps Canada's best-known backroom boy — as Keith *Davies*). Dalton Camp's 11-page preface sums everything up more concisely.

Reminiscent of *The Boys in the Bus*, Timothy Crouse's 1973 examination of a U.S. presidential campaign. Clive Cocking's Following the Leaders: A Media Watcher's Diary of Campaign '79 (Doubleday, illustrated, 309 pages. $14.95 cloth) *made a curious companion to* news coverage of the recent federal election. Unfortunately, Cocking was so preoccupied with journalistic small-talk and his own reception aboard the respective campaign jets that his analysis is only superficial. The reporters' quips are mostly pedestrian, and their sexual and drinking habits are no more kinky than my own (that's not saying much). so why bother recording them? Cocking gives a better description of how each reporter looks than how tbey really think. And what are we to make of a media analyst who can? decide whether "media" is a plural or singular noun? cocking freely uses it botb ways, sometimes in successive sentences -an illiteracy that casts doubt botb on the writer and his editor, if he had one.

Tall Tales and True Tales from Down East (McClelland & Stewart, 171 pages. $12.95 cloth) is a collection of capsule items about. among other things, ghosts, Indian battles, sea serpents, and a giant frog, written in wry journalistic style by Stuart Trueman. Several of his subjects could have made books of their own. In a roundup of Maritime disasters, for instance, the Halifax Explosion is compressed to barely 500 words. Edith Fowke takes a more formal appmrch to folklore in Folktales of French Canada (NC Press, illustrated, 144 pages, $6.95 paper). These stories, legends, and jokes, many of which were first collected by Marius Barbeau, have been scrupulously translated to pmserve the style and phrasing of the original French. The preservation of cultural history also prompted From Our Lives (Mosaic Press. illustmkd, 21.5 pages. $10.95 cloth and $5.50 paper), by the Baycrest Terrace Memoirs Group. For some of these elderly 'Jewish immigrants only luck meant the difference between escape from Nazi Europe and death in the concentration camps: Today their stories are all the more horrifying, when told with such aplomb.

Finally. far those whose taste he appeals to, Craig Russell and His Ladies (Gage, 112 pages, $10.95 paper) is an affectionate photographic tribute by David Street to the well-known female impersonator, sometimes in drag (as Carol Channing, Marlene Dietrich, Mae West. Betk Midler, etc.) and sometimes out — even, for heaven's sake. needing a shave! Russell, who looks rather beefy and shows a lot of leg, puts me in mind of a professional wrestler: they both wear funny costumed out into the arena, and pretend they're something they aren't, and members of the audience either love them or hak them. I suppose it's possible to take flashy, stage-lit photos of professional wrestlers, too, though goodness knows why anybody would want to try. □

interview

by Boyd Nell

Straight dope from street-tough playwright Tom Walmsley on the intimacy of violence

TOM WALMSLEY is a hard-drinking, 30-year-old writer whose past exploits embraced heroin, armed robbery, and "break and enter." These now are the subject of his poems *(Rubies. Lexington Hem). novels (Doctor Tin,* winner of Pulp Press's Three-Day Novel Writing Contest), and plays (The *Jones Boy, The Workingman*). Formerly a resident of Toronto. be now lives in Vancouver and is currently working on a new play commissioned by the Vancouver Playhouse, and a one-man show for actor Michael Hogan. Boyd Neil talked to him in Toronto, where the Tarragon Theatre recently staged his grimly explicit play. *Something Red* (see page seven):

Books in Canada: *How did you get info wiring?*

Walmsley: I've wanted to wrik ever since I was 12 or so. As a kid I would dream of being different things, like a fireman or a lawyer, and I would always write a story about it. I realized I was never going to be anything. I guess that's what happens when you're a writer — you're not anything. I never stopped wanting to bc a writer; I just got sidetracked by heroin for a few years in my 20s. Writing is my way of expressing myself. I mean, what does a construction worker do when he's got his whole past. his life, his love affairs, to deal with? Where does he put it? If you don't write a song, a poem. a book. or even dance. what do you do with all that shit from your past?

Tom Walmsley

BiC: *Was there a particular moment when you decided to switch from drugs to writing?*

Walmsley: Yeah. Them's a play-writing contest in Vancouver, where I live. I'd never written a play — it's such a technical medium-but they promised a critique of it. So I thought, goddamit, this is my chance — I'll write a play. I had only seen one live play before. I figured I could take criticism of a play I had written, whereas at that time I couldn't an a poem or a novel. I entered tbe contest. I placed in it and they did the play. I got about 50 bucks.

BiC: *Why do you write plays?*

Walmsley: I'm good at it: I enjoy writing dialogue. It comes naturally to me, although there are probably a lot of people in town who would disagree with me on that point. It's non-solitary writing as well. You do the writing at home, but at some point you involve other people. You sit down with them and watch them try to bring your work to life. That's exciting. Also, I find the form to fit the content of what I want to write. I figure that if you've got a six-line thought, for chrissake write it in six lines. If you've got a dramatic situation. don't put it in a poem. I wasn't interested in writing a story about those guys in *Something Red.* I wanted to see them passing the gun back and forth, not read about it.

BiC: A *lot of Canadian playwrights have difficulty finding stages for their plays. Why would Tarragon Theatre take a chance with*

your play, Something Red, *when it obviously would upset a lot of their subscription audience?*

Walmsley: *I've* got *no* idea. I was down et the Pulp Press office in Vancouver where I work sometimes. I don't have a phone at home, so there wy this message for me there that Bill Glassco [Tarragon's artistic director] had phoned. I was floored. I had no idea what he could went. I thought I had left my coat in the theatre or something. It was beyond my comprehension that he might want to produce a Tom Walmsley play. I don't know what these people see in it. You can be sure that critics like Gina Mallet [of the Toronto *Star*] will always hate me.

BiC: *Can we talk about* Something Red *for a minute? Is sado-masochism central to it?*

Walmsley: It's an element to a lot of my work. People don't talk about sex and violence very much. A woman told me once that sex is violence. That fascinates me. Violence is intimacy. In the play. the two characters involved in the sado-masochism aren't maniacs, they're just out of control. They exist in their passion. but don't understand it. For Elizabeth, it makes her feel free. Bobby Feels he's watching somebody else's hand doing it. It's a mystery. I guess I just feel strongly about passion. I think you should always have the idea of your own death in the back of your mind, as if it was imminent. If you're not acting out of passion, then what you're doing is worthless. If everyone could feel passionate about just one little thing. then we might have a revolution here. At least we would know who the good guys were and who the enemy was.

BiC: *If you were standing in the lobby during the intermission of one of your plays, what would you like to hear the audience saying about it?*

Walmsley: I would like to hear them say that it made them think about something they had never thought about before. Or. that it had forced them to see another point of view. My father, who lives and works in Oshawa, went to see *The Jones Boy,* which is all about junkies. Afterwards, he said to me that these were people he never had patience with before. But, for the first time, he saw that they maybe hod problems that made them do the junk. That's what I would like to happen.

BiC: *Who do you write for?*

Walmsley: I said in an interview once that I wasn't interested in writing about middle-class *Angst.* I don't give a shit about their hopeless lives. Those people have had their day in the son. You know, I bet Bayer's will come out with an Aspirin for middle-class *Angst.* Of course, the middle-class idea of *Angst* probably can be gotten rid of with Aspirin. I've never seen anything on television or in theatre that relates to how I've lived in the street, how I put one foot in front of the other. I would like to get the people I write about into the theatre. Someday, I would like to see one of my plays put on in the penitentiary. □

Letters to the Editor

SWAINSON APPRECIATED

Sir:

I would like to express a casual reader's appreciation for the article "Tribal Drummers" by Donald Swainson in your March issue. As something da "New Canadian" (my Canadian roots reach back only 11 years), it was satisfying to find in Swainson's article a consise summary of the main toots of Canadian historical writing written In a style that made it a pleasure to read. Interesting and relevant (to me, et any rate) information, clearly and concisely organized, and written withstyle-let's have more!

Philip V. Moller, Jr.
Toronto

CBA DEFENDED

Sir:

I find the reasoning of Tim Burns (Letters, February) hard to understand. Certainly the Canadian Booksellers Association is happy to answer the queries about the business of bookselling that are constantly received, but surely the logical place to inquire about a French Canadian publication in Toronto would be a French Canadian specialist book store. IF a well-equipped book store such as Other Books is unable to research the title, why would anyone suppose the staff et the *CBA office* could do so?

Failing all else. the Bibliographic Centre at the Main Library is a reliable source.

Of course, had the publisher (or Quebec agent) taken en advertisement in *The Canadian Bookseller,* 500 booksellers across the country would have the information already.

John D. Taylor
President,
Canadian Booksellers Association
Toronto

MORITZ DEPLORED

[The paragraph that provoked the following letter is here quoted in its entirety: "Also from Montreal come two books from a new press, Guernica, in a rather pretentiously titled series of Essential Poets. The books are Instants *by Marco Fraticelli (67 pages) and* Queror *by Antonio D'Alfonso (71 pages). Although the books look fine on the outside, the typesetting is not distinguished, and the poetry is rather slender. Still, it is an ambitious venture aimed at serious publishing." -The* Editor.]

Sir:

Much is involved in this letter so I hope you will publish it in your next issue of Books in Canada. In it many readers shall discover that art, as long as the artist is alive, still is a matter of communication, that is, a two-way exchange of information. Permit me then to first explain the arguments that. after three months debate, have induced me to want to reply myself to the article written by Albert Frank Moritz that appears in your November. 1979. issue. I will concentrate on the tiny paragraph which this critic dedicated to two volumes published by Guernica Editions in June, 1979: *Instants* by Marco Fraticelli and *Queror* by myself. Let me also stress the fact that at all times I will be speaking es poet and editor (at Guernica).

As I said, it took me three months to decide on whether or not I would scribble down on paper the turmoil that rushed within my veins. I did not in the beginning think it proper to do so, being myself the target of criticism. You could say that I unconsciously expected some other to do the work for me. I bed to leave Quebec. my native and beautiful country, to establish myself in Mexico, my new home, to realize that it is my right to defend myself from the defamatory remarks exposed by Moritz.

Let me begin by expressing my whole-hearted gratitude to Moritz for having even thought about Guernica for the article and then for having spent a few minutes of his life to write down his acknowledgement of the existence of two new poets. That he published those words on us, despite their content, I openly admit his gesture touched me. I will always be grateful For bis having publicly spoken about us.

Nevertheless, to note as he did *en passant* — as if to lessen the harm done to us by the initial comments — that ours is "still . . . an ambitious venture aimed at serious publishing," Moritz did not succeed in calming my personal upset and humiliation. His harsh words of disgrace, not so much what be said es whet be did not say but meant, have not been erased from my mind. Hi choice of words are what I wish to criticize. From the start, one can feel that Moritz is not proposing to fulfil the task of a responsible critic. lie writes like one unwillingly to emit a single sigh of homage. He starts by saying that "two books from a new press, Guernica, . . ." have come out "in a rather pretentiously titled series of Essential Poets." Already, the introductory sentence promises little except signs of scorn and disparagement. Needless to stress that his chosen adverb "pretentiously" connotes all that entails derogation, arrogance, improbity, lack of dignity. abjectedness and. ultimately. discreditability. Any reader of the article has et this point lost interest in our enterprise, albeit he ignores the true nature of our work. He does not want to go on reading about us since be unconsciously knows that whatever poetry stands for is at the antipode of that which gives itself an air of pretentiousness. There is a grave misunderstanding hem. ad it belonged to Moritz to clarify it.

I disapprove of what Moritz declares, and what he does not. He cunningly masks what is not said: that he deliberately confused the reader by refusing to reveal what he should have done but did not. He did not attempt, as all good critics would have undoubtedly done, to find out the exact meaning of Essential Poets. It would be Foolish to presume that the editors of a new press should want to voluntarily girdle its publications with an attitude of pretentiousness and arrogance. If anything, what a press must avoid — if it wishes to attract a large audience — is to be condescending.

On reading the title of the series, Moritz immediately jumped to erroneous conclusions. Instead of looking up the exact meaning of "essential," the adjective, be simply opted for the common and incomplete definition of "essential," the noun. Instead of reconsidering his subjective position, he publicly disclaimed Guernica for having utilised an affected heading for its volumes. Let me specify. "Essential" has a primary definition which Webster's New World Dictionary gives: "of or constituting the intrinsic. fundamental nature of something; basic; inherent." "Essential," it goes on to say, also means "containing or having the properties of, a concentrated extract of" some larger object. These are the meanings intended by Guernica. The two volumes are part of something greater, and that thing we shall call Essential Poetry. No.

not poetry that is indispensable — for all poetry is dispensable - but a certain kind of poetry that lies at the other side of Formalism and Concrete poetry. I, as one of the editors responsible for the publications, can be somewhat blamed for not having specified in a preface the purposed interpretation of this title. I confess the error is mine. I promise to remedy it by publishing a series of articles on the subject. None the less, I find it inacceptable that a critic should dismiss (consciously or unconsciously) an entire body of work for an error committed, no matter how large that error. Moritz should have questioned the use of the title by indicating his design instead of depreciating the entire publication. No matter what the excuse, Moritz did not have to rebuke the works the way he did. His task was not to judge, morally and subjectively, the value of the works but to unravel, objectively, the precise nature of the poetry. This lack of responsibility once again repeats itself — fortunately, not in the next sentence in which only the titles of the books are mentioned — in the third sentence.

He writes that the books "look fine on the outside" but that in the inside well, you know, the stuff's worthless. He condemns the typesetting and finds the poetry "slender." Yet he neither explains why "the typesetting is not distinguished" nor why the poetry is "slender." In regards to the typesetting, I personally cannot see where we failed. Perhaps, you will argue, being my babies, the real value of these books are unknown to me. However, according to many editors and poets, both *Instants* and *Queror* exhibited first-class quality. Moritz possibly meant to lash us for the few misprints but he never stated it. Misprints are current in books. I have rarely come across a book that did not have an error or two which for some reason escaped the proof-readers. Many publishers, such as Faber, Penguin, New Directions, Dall'Oglio, Einaudi, Laterza, Gallimard, Hexagone, and I pass, have at one time or another let by a few typographical errors. Mistakes such as these are accidental, never intentional. If they were purposely committed, I would be the first to disclaim the merit of the publishers. You do not push aside a collection by Gaston Miron or Pablo Neruda for typographical mistakes. So why should a critic like Moritz snob Fraticelli's collection or mine for errors that we are not accountable for? Honesty still is the primary criterion for any sort of profound communication. Guernica cannot be, in spite of what Moritz insinuated, considered dishonest. *Queror* comes with an errata sheet. The mistakes were detrimental to the interpretation of the poems in which they occurred. What would have been base, was to have done, as so many publishers do, pretend the errors never existed and hope that the reader would not himself notice them. Once again, and I wish to stress this, Guernica is not dishonest.

Moritz ascribes to the poetry the adjective "slender." Does he by this suggest that he would have enjoyed reading more poems by the poets? Or does he — and this is how I interpret that adjective — reproach it for being lousy? If the poems are so bad, why not quote parts of the worst poems and offer a detailed explanation as to why the poems do not work. Again, his silent jibe (there is no better term to qualify his choice of vocabulary) ricochets back to him: his insistent refusal to fulfil the task he has been assigned. The critic quotes, tries to decipher hidden meanings in order to comprehend what the poet is doing. Then he must offer to his readers an account of his discoveries. Moritz never even attempted to appreciate the poetry, let alone its meanings. He quickly dismissed the poems of both poets as being insignificant. Does not this attitude, arrogant to say the least, display Moritz's own derisive want of compassion for the work of fellow poets?

I quote in full his final cunning remark "Still, it is an ambitious venture aimed at serious publishing." These words do not relieve the hurt of the original blows. On the contrary, one can even guess the working of a sly jab of the elbow. Those who have read *Julius Caesar* know what Shakespeare did with the word "ambitious." A modern poet is only the product of the past. He cannot invent. He can simply use the tools the past to him has given. Moritz is quite aware, being a poet himself, the other dimensions of the term "ambitious." He is being frankly derogatory. He does not plan to cover up the evil done; he wants, in being smart, to plunge the fist deeper still into the gash.

This sort of vicious attitude must not be uncondemned. The critic's role is to help the reader in understanding the often complex semantic world a particular poet created. He must draw the reader to the source of conflict. He must reconcile the reader to the poet. This can be achieved by paying due respect to the poet and his creation. Why should a critic spurn and dishonour the work of a fellow poet? Are they not both working towards the construction of a better nation? To belittle as Moritz did the work of another proves to what extent the critic acts as a selfish and narcissistic businessman. He views the world of poetry with eyes of a competitor, and not with eyes of a fellow compatriot and artist. What he cares about is not the work of others; it is not to reveal the beauty of a new poet to the rest of the country. What he cares about is to see his own name in boldface printed at the end of a published article. Paz wrote that the poet exists only in the eyes of the Other. The same can be said of the critic. Without the Other, his existence crumbles into dust. The Other, whether a poet or reader, is entitled to the sincerest respect, regardless of his caste, race, political party, or religion.

Antonio D'Alfonso
Mexico City, Mexico

The editors recommend

THE FOLLOWING Canadian books were reviewed in the previous issue of *Books in Canada*. Our recommendations don't necessarily reflect the reviews:

FICTION

A **Right Honourable** Lady, by Judy La Marsh, McClelland & Stewart. The further adventures of Kathleen Marshal, Canada's first female prime minister, and her Trudeauesque antagonist. A *roman-à-chef* with class.

NON-FICTION

Dictionary of Canadian Biography, Volume IV, 1771-1800, general editor Francess G. Halpenny, U of T Press. A book of living history, brilliantly edited.

The Great Scot: *A* **Biography of Donald Gordon**, by Joseph Schull, McGill-Queen's University Press. Schull captures the gusto, enthusiasm, and good humour of his subject in a book that is clearly and critically written.

New Star Books

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by **Rolf Knight**
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CanWit No. 52

For a revised critical biography of poet Sarah Binks (1906-26), the Sweet Songstress of Saskatchewan, I would appreciate receiving any letters, papers, fragments, or other human-interest material not already in The Binksian Collection in the Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan.

Paul Hiebert
Dept. of Chemistry
University of Manitoba

AUTHOR'S QUERIES are a regular feature of literary journals in the United States and Britain. With the above model in mind, readers are invited to submit queries about any Canadian — real, fictional, or legendary -they may wish to make the subject of their biographical or critical attention. The winner will receive $25. Address: CanWit No. 52. *Books in Canada*, 366 Adelaide Street East. Toronto M5A 1N4. The deadline is May 1. (N.B. Serious requests for research material are published in these pages as space permits and should take the form of a letter to the Editor.)

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Classified rates: $6 per line (40 characters to the line). Deadline: first of the month for issue dated following month. Address: Books in Canada Classified, 366 Adelaide Street East, Toronto M5A IN4. Phone: (416) 363-5426.

HAWTHORN BOOKS, previously available through Prentice-Hall. are now available in Canada through Clarke Irwin.

BOOK FAIR. Tcmntc Intl. Antiquarian Bock Fair. Park Plaza Hotel. May 21-23. Open to public510 pm. May 21; 2-10 pm, May228 23. Admission $5.00 for entire Fair. Last 2 days 53.00. (415) 861-1648.

CANADIAN LITERATURE for collectors and librarians. Catalogues issued. Steven Temple Books. 198 Queen SL W., Tcmntc M5V 122.

CATALOGUE OF CANADIAN FICTION. Primarily literary First Editions. Richard Peterson — Books, 225 Princess St., Kingston. Ont. K7L 1B3.

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RARE BOOK AUCTIONS. Canadiana. Arctic, etc. 400 lot May Cal $1.00. Wild Rose Auctions, Box 1442. Edmonton, T5J 2N5.

RESULTS OF CANWIT NO. 50

ON BEHALF OF McClarkan & Newspider author Joyce Castor, who is planning a 12-volume epic novel series on the settlement of the West and so far has only one title (*Whores and Peace River*). we offered a special $50 prize for help with the remaining 11 titles plus a general title for the series. The prize goes to Barry Baldwin of Calgary for these occidental suggestions:

General title:
The Greatest Tories Ever Sold

1. *The Three Hillsiad (Homer on the Range)*
2. *Vancouvered Waggons*
3. *All Things Bright and Cariboottful*
4. *Aberhart of Darkness*
5. *Red Blights on the Prairies (The Story of the CCF)*
6. *Veni, Vidi, Wackie: The Bennett Years*
7. *The Temptations of Big Bare*
8. *Wested Interests*
9. *Sin Crude*
10. *Hark, Hark, the Clark*
11. *Songs of a Sour Trudeau*

Honourable mentions:

General title:
Homer on the Range, or The West's Odd I See

1. *Two Year Before The Pas*
2. *Drumheller Highwater*
3. *The Mills' Grin Progress*
4. *Slocan Communes: Of Lice and Zen*
5. *Yukon Debt: Pair of Dice Lost*
6. *Donkey Ho! Tete Jaune Journal*
7. *The For Sale Saga*
8. *Song of Roland, the Ferry Queen*
9. *I've an Hoe*
10. *Petrocan Deed*
11. *Be a Wolf*

—Patti Fraser, Willowdale, Ont.

* * *

General title: **Drumheller High Water**

1. *The Banff Man Dynasty*
2. *i-be Red Deer Badge of Carnage*
3. *The Mystery of the Edmonton Dude*
4. *Five Little Jaspers -A Motley Crew*
5. *Black Diamond's Whore Forever*
6. *The Joys of Sexsmith*
7. *The Callgirl Of the Wild Hay*
8. *A Grande Prairie Booze Winter*
9. *Live and Get High River*
10. *How To Become A Vermilion Air*
11. *Lethbridge — Too Far!*

-Brian McCullough. Ottawa

* * *

General title: **The I-Hate-Chinooks Books**

1. *The Book of Common Prairies*
2. *The Beauty on the Mountie*
3. *Alice Through the Kicking Horse Pass*
4. *For Whom Riel Cajoles*
5. *A Wheatcar Named Desire*
6. *Even Cowgirls Vote for the Blues*
7. *The Greatest Tory Ever Sold*
8. *Peter's Principals*
9. *The Rigger of the Bar Pissus*
10. *Tess of the Oil Spills*
11. *The Rise and Fall of the Third Rig*

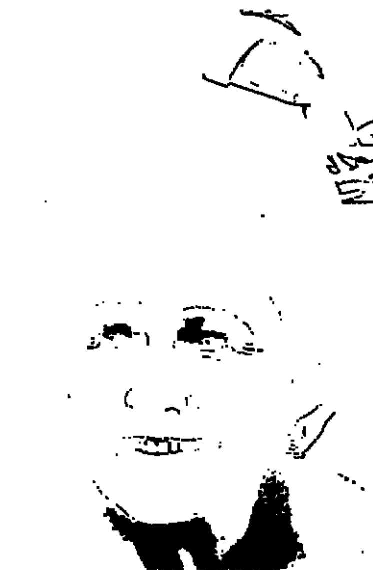
— Kiloran German, Toronto

Books received

THE FOLLOWING Canadian books have been received by *Books in Canada* in recent weeks. Inclusion in this list does not preclude a review or notice in a future issue:

Across the White Lawn, by Robert Foster. Turnstone Press.
Almost a Ritual, by Les Siemieniuk. Turnstone Press.
Alternate Endings, by Jill Rogers. Sono Nis Press.
Apple Worm and All, by Kathy Tyler. Fiddlehead.
The Art of Earth, by Rona Murray and Walter Dexter. Sono Nis Press.
Blood-Lines, by Allan Cooper. Fiddlehead.
The Book of Fall, by Ken Norris. Maker Press.
Breaking Ice in the Desert, by Lorne Gould. Emanation Press.
Britain and European Resistance 1940-1945, by David Stafford. U of T Press.
The Butterfly Ward, by Margaret Gibson. Totem.
Circles in the Sand, by Sally Harasym. Fiddlehead.
Cottage Country, by Peter Fowler. Oxford.
Countryside Canada, by James Wreford. Fiddlehead.
The Covered Bridge at Trenton, by Gerald E. Boyce. Hastings County Historical Society.
Crossroads I and II, edited by William Boswell *et al*. Van Nostrand Reinhold.
David Ingram's CENTA Guide to Income Tax in Canada, Hancock House.
Earth Magic, by Dionne Brand, illustrated by Roy Cross. Kids Can Press.
Energy R & R Decision Making for Canada, by Karen Hartley *et al*.. Institute for Research on Public Policy.
The Essential Guide to Prescription Drugs, by James W. Long. Fitzhenry & Whiteside.
Ethnic Organizational Dynamics, by Henry Radecki. Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
From Hell to Breakfast, by Douglas Alcorn with Raymond Souster. Intruder Press.
The Fruits of Experience: An Anthology of Short Stories. Emanation Press.
The Genetic Imperative, by Alan V. Miller. Canadian Gay Archives.
Gentle Sinners, by W. D. Valgardson. Oberon Press.
Going Under, by John Bemrose. Fiddlehead.
A Good Place to Come From, by Morley Torgov. Totem.
Hombro's Itch, by Howard Robens and Jack Wasserman. Signet.
The House on Dorchester Street, by Ronald J. Cooke. Vesta.
Icequake, by Crawford Kilian. Seal Books.
Immortality Here & Now, by Kosta Kirpiev. Vesta.
Inside, by Anne Scott. Fiddlehead.
The Israelis: Portrait of a People in Conflict, by Frank H. Epp. M & S.
Jack Kerouac: a chicken essay, by Victor-Levy Beaulieu. translated by Sheila Fischman. Coach House.
Jimmy Bang Poems, by Victor Enns. Turnstone Press.
The King's Loon, by Mary Alice Downie. illustrated by Ron Berg. Kids Can Press.
The Kiss, by David Phillips. Coach House.
Klondike Lost, by Norm Bolotin. Alaska Northwest Publishing.
The Land of Look Behind, by Paul Cameron Browne. Three Trees Press.
The Landau Strategy, by Suzanne Landau and Geoffrey Bailey. Lester & Orpen Dennys.
Landmarks, by Robin Skelton. Sono Nis Press/Oolichan Books.
Landscape With Rain, by Ralph Gustafson. M & S.
The Love Poems of Irving Layton, M & S.
Lyulph Stanley, by Alan W. Jones. Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
Mephistopheles and the Astronaut, by David Solway. Mosaic Press/Valley Editions.
Messages to Man, by Brian J. Grieveson. Charasee Press.
My Faith, by Anne Minkalis. Vesta.
Nova Scotia, by Sherman Hines. Oxford University Press.
Odes for Sterilized Streets, Alexandre L. Amprimoz. Vesta.
On the Broken Mountain, by Norman Newton. Fiddlehead.
Ottawa: Our Nation's Capital, by Rudi Haas. Oxford.
Parkland Portraits, by Doug Gilroy. Western Producer Prairie Books.
Phoenix Rising, by Kathleen Forsythe. Fiddlehead.
Pointwise, by Dirk Wynand. Fiddlehead.
A Porcelain Cup Placed There, by Richard Truhlar. Coach House.
The Pottersfield Portfolio, edited by Lesley Choyce. Pottersfield Press.
Right Hemisphere, Left Ear, by Paul Dutton. Coach House.
Sandpoems, by Lala Koehn. Fiddlehead.
Seasons in Transition, by Carol H. Leckner. Fiddlehead.
Sexual Assault in Canada, by Ruth M. Bray. Guidance Centre. Faculty of Education. U of T.
Shorelines, by Douglas Barbour. Turnstone Press.
A Split in the Water, by Candice James. Fiddlehead.
To a Sister Loneliness, by Michael Brian Oliver. Fiddlehead.
To a Young Horse, by Sharon Berg. Borealis Press.
The Trouble with Princesses, by Christie Harris. M & S.
The Ukrainian Canadians, by Marguerite V. Burke. Van Nostrand Reinhold.
Under the Spell of India, by Olga Dey. Vesta.
The Underdogs, by William Weintraub. Seal Books.
With Equal Eye, by Peter Robinson. Gabbro Press.
Woods and River Tales, by Roderick Haig-Brown. M & S.
Zoning: Its Costs and Relevance for the 1980s, by Michael A. Goldberg and Peter J. Horwood. The Fraser Institute.

BESTSELLERS



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