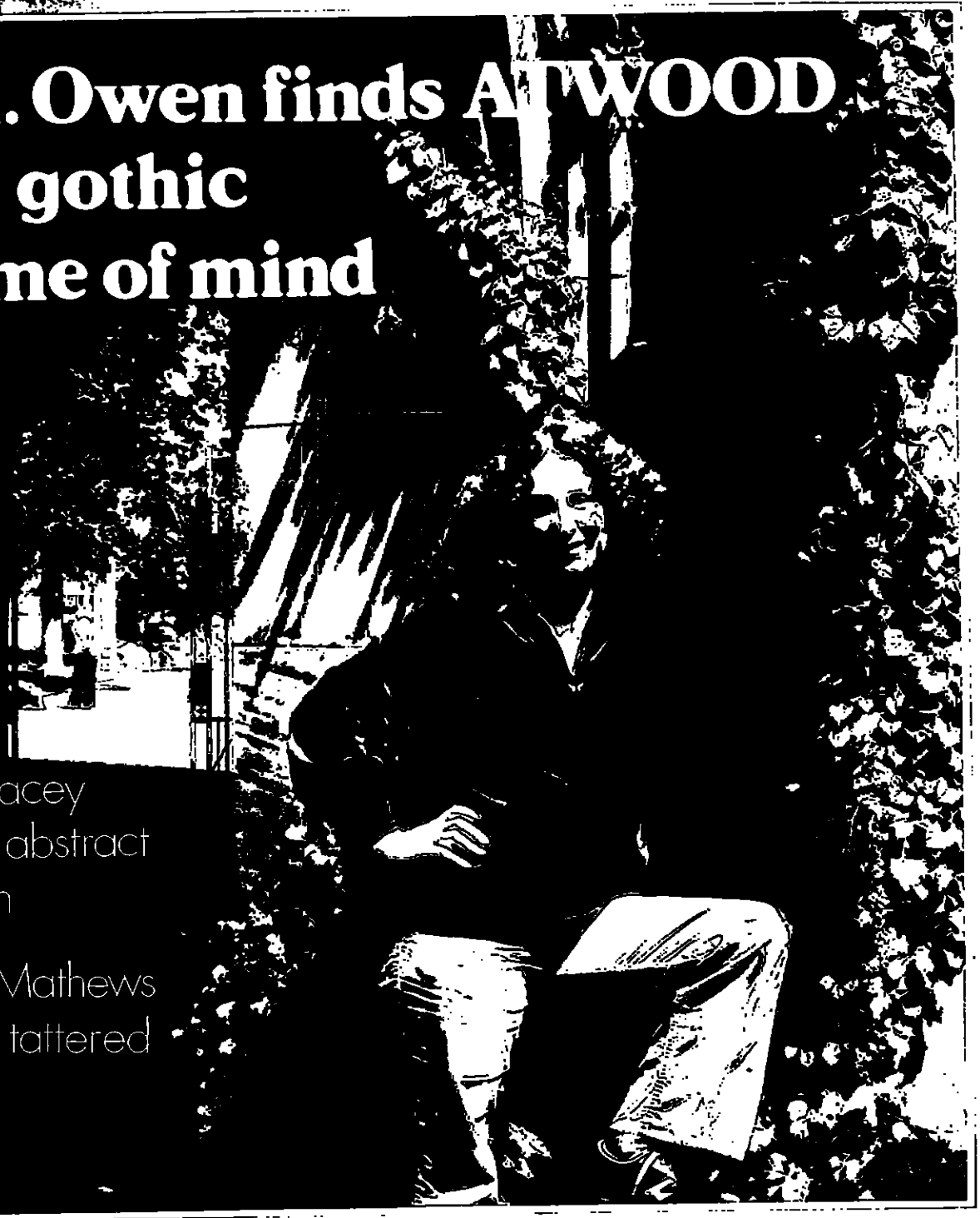
BOOKS in CANADA
a national review of books
SEPTEMBER, 1976

I. M. Owen finds ATWOOD in a gothic frame of mind



C. P. Stacey on our abstract Crown

Robin Mathews on our tattered gown

A YEAR

BOOKS in CANADA

VOLUME 5, NUMBER 9 SEPTEMBER, 1976

ARTICLES AND REVIEWS

DEPARTMENTS

ILLUSTRATIONS

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QUEEN OF THE MAZE

What novelist Margaret Atwood lacks in warmth, she makes up for in entertainment

by I.M. Owen

Lady Oracle, by Margaret Atwood,' McClelland & Stewart. 345 pages, $10 cloth (ISBN O-7710-0815-5).

UNTIL NOW YOU could have described Margaret Atwood as a distinguished poet who had written some prose fiction. With *Lady Oracle* the identification changes for good: henceforth she is Margaret Atwood. poet and novelist. Her first novel. *The Edible Woman, was* not much more than an expanded anecdote. sustained by unfailing and quite dazzling wit. In her second, *Surfacing, she* attempted to treat a similar theme more solemnly and sombrely, with (to me, at least) an ultimately repellent effect. Each book had a single theme expressed through a single character surrounded by mostly forgettable puppets.

Lady Oracle has all the intelligence and wit of its predecessors, and a lot more than that. It is a richly textured novel. spanning 30-odd years, well peopled with characters and full of incident. It is rich, too, in recurrent symbols and allusive echoes that I confidently expect will reveal new players of meaning in successive rereadings, and (a sadder thought) provide a rich quarry for Ph.D. candidates yet unborn.

The book opens with Joan Foster, the narrator and protagonist, in hiding in a small Italian town after faking her own drowning in Lake Ontario. She has become 'an instant celebrity in Canada as the author of *Lady Oracle, a* book of verse that. as we learn later. was produced partly by automatic writing. This is by no means an autobiographical novel. but the wry reference to Margaret Atwood's own experience when she became, as she said at the time, *'a Thing." is unmistakable.

Once Joan Foster is established in the present., and in Italy. flashbacks take us through the story of her life. (The flashback technique is handled well; with a minimum of confusion. In passing, though, let me confess that lately I have reread a lot of 19th-century novels, and it's great to read something that begins at the beginning, goes on until it comes to the end, and then stops. Try it. It's most refreshing.! Joan Delacourt starts life as the plump daughter of a mother who is smart. aggressive. disappointed in her only child. and as time goes on, increasingly alcoholic. The father is a shadowy and taciturn figure, an anesthetist who also specializes in saving the lives of would-be suicides in expiation of his lethal activities during the war.

Fatness. turning in adolescence to positive obesity, is the cross the young Joan bears. Her career in Miss Flegg's dancing school is blasted when she is demoted at the last moment before a recital from a butterfly to a mothball. The next attempt, on her mother's part and her own, to make her acceptable is enrolment in a pack of Brownies in a classier neighbourhood than the one where they live. Thii works better. ("At Miss Flegg's you were supposed to try to be better than everyone else, but at Brownies you were supposed to try to be the same, and I was beginning to find this idea quite attractive.") But to travel to the socially superior Brownie pack Joan must cross a ravine, and her meeting on the' bridge with an agreeable exhibitionist (he gives her a bunch of daffodils) puts a stop to Brownies. About that twine, by the way. One of the smaller, more secluded, and less well known of the many Toronto ravines, it is in danger of becoming a literary shrine, having now figured in two Atwood novels (The *Edible Woman* is the other), in Hugh Hood's essay "The Governor's Bridge is Closed," and in Hood's novel *The Swing in the Garden. It* never used to have a name that I knew of, but lately it has acquired one, on a neatly lettered sign. I won't tell you what it is, hoping to postpone for my lifetime the day when it will have a blue. historical-site sign and perhaps a cairn bearing heads df Hood and Atwood in bronze bas-relief, with suitable quotations selected by John Robert Colombo, who by that date will be the Grand Old Man of Canadian Letters.

Having no companionship with her parents and little with her coevals, Joan finds it with her father's sister Louisa. The exuberant Aunt Lou is the fiat of the series of Lady Oracles in the book; as public-relations director of a sanitary-napkin company, she writes Delphic replies to letters from young women with problems — including one who thinks she has been impregnated by an incubus. Through Aunt Lou and her lover. a small and dapper accountant named Robert. Joan is introduced to a spiritualist church and the neat Lady Oracle, the Reverend Leda Sprott. "Leda Spmtt didn't mind what you believed as long as you also believed in her powers." Joan soon stops going to the Jordan Chapel's dreary services, but not before Leda Sprott tells her that she has powers and advises her to try automatic writing. She does; nothing happens except that she singes her bangs with the candle.

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Aunt Lou suddenly dies, leaving the 19-year-old Joan $2,000 on condition that she loses 100 pounds. With heroic efforts, aided by illness from blood-poisoning arising from an arrow-wound in the left buttock incurred at the Sportsmen's Show, she fulfils the condition, takes the money, and escapes to London. where she meets au only faintly spurious Polish Count who picks her up when she has fallen off a bus — "I wasn't used to having the bus start before people were safely off it and it leapt from under me." Does this happen to us all in London? I still have an occasional slight limp from the time it happened to me.

The Polish Count, with whom she soon moves in, writes Nurse Novels under the name of Mavis Quilp, and loan, following his lead, is soon writing Costume Gothics under her aunt's name of Louisa K. Delacourt. Excerpts from these are strewn through the novel, comically (and towards the end rather more than comically) echoing and underlining its themes. They are such superb pastiche that they raise a question: Is there a Margaret Atwood pseudonym hidden in the Harlequin list? If not, them ought to be.

Is *there a Margaret Atwood pseudonym hidden in the Harlequin list? If not, there ought to be.*

From the Polish Count she passes into the hands of Arthur Foster, a ban-the-bomb demonstrator from New Brunswick. Arthur is a conventional young man, always anxious not to make a fool of himself; part of his conventionality is that he is always active in the currently fashionable New Loft cause, and always eventually leaves it in a flurry of letters denouncing all others concerned in it as traitors.

Word of her mother's death takes Joan back to Toronto, where Arthur follows her. They are married in an "Interdenominational Church" by the Rev. Eunice P. Revele, who tutus out to be Leda Spmtt in hiding from her creditors.

A few years later, when stuck in one of her Gothic novels, Joan remembers Leda Spmtt and tries aummatic writing again, this time with mom success. She fills out the results with the help of *Roger's Thesaurus*, and submits the completed work to a publisher. This is the book published as *Lady* Oracle, which takes her into the world of television interviews and cross-country tours. In this new context she meets new kinds of people, including the Royal Porcupine, a caped artist who exhibits dead animals in freezers under titles like "Raccoon and Young, Don Mjlls and 401, broken spine, internal hemorrhage." The Royal Porcupine becomes her lover for a time. And them is Fraser Buchanan. a hanger-on of the arts who turns out to live by blackmailing cultural celebrities. She deals with his threat to her by stealing his notebook. But somebody is persecuting her, probably the Royal Porcupine, and she decides to disappear, which she &es with the help of two nationalist activists whom she persuades that she is being hunted by the CIA. And so back to the beginning of the book, and on to the dénouement.

That summary, long as it is, leaves out a great deal of this rich novel. The theme of fatness, for instance, which is continued, after Joan loses her excess weight, in her repeated visions, dreaming and waking, of the Fat Lady from the midway performing impossible feats. And a great deal is said about what it is like to be a woman in the description of loan's situation just after she has shed her fat. At 19, she has grown up, like a porcupine or a skunk (my comparison, not Atwood's), without the protective sense of fear:

> I'd never developed the usual female furs: fear of intruders, fear of the dark, fear of gasping noises over the phone, fear of bus stops and slowing ears. fear of anyone or anything outside whatever magic circle defines safety. . Although my mother bad warned me about bad men in the ravine, by the time I reached puberty her warnings rang hollow. She clearly didn't believe I would ever be molested. and neither did I. It would have been like molesting a giant basketball. . . .

> So when I shrank to normal size I had none of these fears, and I had to develop them artificially.

Thus. on a bus:

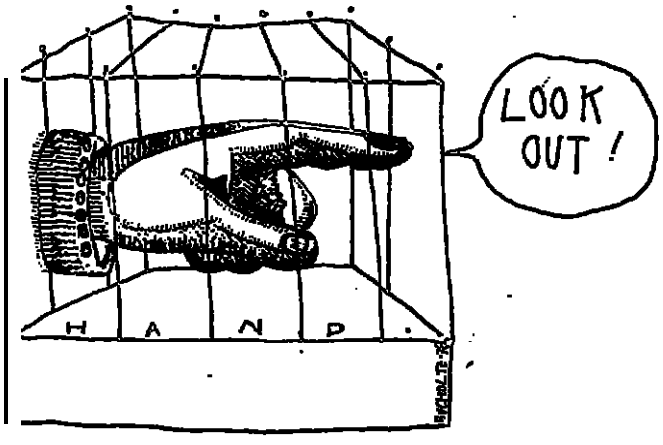
> When the side of my head was bumping against the cold metal of the window frame and my body ached with the desire of sleep, a hand would appear on my thigh, stealthy, not moving, an exploratory hand, tense with the knowledge of its solitary mission.

What tine prose, by the way.

On what it is like to be a man. the author is less successful. This must be the hardest trick for a novelist to master, imagining oneself inside the skin of a person of the opposite sex; but it is often done. and I don't think Margaret Atwood has managed it yet. Perhaps she realizes thii and has cast the male characters accordingly: Joan's father is intentionally dim: Arthur Foster is meant to be dull; and even the flamboyant Royal Porcupine, when he angrily abandons his "art" and his fantastic costume. loses hi flamboyance and becomes "merely Chuck Brewer; had he always been. underneath his beard?"

The dullness of Arthur Foster brings me to the one other weakness I think the novelist Margaret Atwood has still to overcome. Writing of the poet of the same name in the July issue of *Books* in *Canada, Gary* Geddes retorted. rightly I think, to those who complain of a coldness, a lack of feeling, in her poetry. He quoted her own apposite remark that poetry doesn't express emotion, it evokes it in the reader. That's just right: certainly if you are speaking of the relatively short lyrics that constitute most poetry today. Epics, and poetic dramas, are different. And novels are different, for the same reason. The material of novels is imagined people. who are above all expressing emotions. And there is a real inhibition in Atwood (I speak of the writer, not the person) that stops her from expressing warmth, delight, joy. The protagonist of *Surfacing* shares with her creator a love of the rocks and lakes of the Shield; when she goes off by herself in a canoe IO fish, simply because that is what she delights to do. she tells us this, but she can't make us feel it because she can't tell about the feeling without a self-deprecating sneer. So in *Lady* Oracle, Joan Foster tells us that she loves Arthur, but never shows herself loving him: that is, taking delight in his company. laughing with him, enjoying things with him. Instead she makes it clear what a comically dry stick he is, and we don't really believe she ever loved him. In fact it's astonishing what a funny, entertaining book she has written without any of that warmth. When this ice-jam breaks, what an even mote astonishing book she will write. □

On what it is like to be a man, the author is less successful. This must be the hardest trick for a novelist to master, imagining oneself inside the skin of a person of the opposite sex.



MONARCH IN MUFTI

Some notes on Richard Outram, a Canadian poet whose fame is assured-at least posthumously

by Hubert de Santana

RICHARD OUTRAM was born in Oshawa, Ont. and bmught up in Toronto. He attended the University of Toronto, and graduated in 1953 with a degree in English and philosophy. He joined the CBC, and worked as a stage hand for a year before going to England, where he worked for a time at the BBC. He spent a year footloose in London, enjoying a free and spartan existence. It was then that he began to write. After two years in England he returned to Toronto and the CBC, where he has been ever since. He is married to the painter Barbara Howard.

Outram's liar major collection of poems, *Exsultate, Jubilate*, was published by Macmillan in 1966. Since then he has published five other books of verse; which together constitute what is probably the finest body of work by a living Canadian poet. Outram's latest volume, Turns. appeared late last year, published jointly by Anson-Cartwright Editions in Toronto and Chatto & Windus in London. It was received with excitement in England, but in Canada its reception was the same as that accorded to Outram's other work — it was met with widespread indifference.

Although he is proud to be a Canadian, Outram has no interest in being the obsequious Ariel to the spirit of narrow and chauvinistic nationalism that informs the CanLit industry.

Richard Outram has always been neglected in this country. Not one of his poems has ever been anthologized: he does not rate a single line in *The Penguin Book of Canadian Verse;* he is never mentioned in discussions or articles on modem Canadian poetry. He remains one of the least-known poets in Canada. Which is odd, because he is one of the very best. And I for one don't need to be clairvoyant to predict that future generations will recognize hi work as among the most enduring in the Canadian literature of the late 20th century. Hi reputation will rise as steadily as others will decline.

Why has Richard Outram not received the recognition that is his due., or critical acclaim remotely commensurate with his achievement? There are, I think, three main reasons. First, Outram is an intensely private man; he has cultivated no public persona, and shuns the media fanfare that some Canadian poets actively seek and revel in.

Second, although he is proud to be a Canadian, Outram has no interest in being the obsequious Ariel to the spirit of narrow and chauvinistic nationalism that informs the CanLit industry. He writes to his own uncompromisingly high standards, and he deals with, among other things, the absolutes of human experience: birth, love, and death, which are universal and cannot be confined within national boundaries.

Third, Outram believes in careful and painstaking craftsmanship. He writes in metre, which makes his work unfashionable at a time when verse is being churned out by "poets" who wouldn't know a tmchee from a tortilla.

The outstanding qualities of Richard Outram's poetry are its integrity, wisdom, and radiance. by which I mean the. *claritas* of Longinus. His art is the art of implication: the written word suggests much more than is on the page, so that once the reader's imagination has been engaged, different strata of meaning reveal themselves as one delves deeper and deeper beneath the surface of the poem. Outram himself has compared the interstices in his poems to negative space in a painting; and one is reminded of Dylan Thomas declaring that "the best craftsmanship always leaves holes and

gaps in the works of the poem so that something that is not in the poem can creep. crawl. flash or thunder in."

The metamorphic process can be seen at work in a poem called "Monarch in Autumn":

Even the maples heeled,
Recovered: flung through the field.
A random erratic blaze
Of hazardous orange. it stays
Flight and for respite clings,
Folding sudden wings,
To aster. or milkweed pod,
Or buffeted goldenrod,
Various intricate eyes
Hidden: suddenly flies
And of necessity beats,
Through mists thinning in sheets,
Being one of a kind,
Indirectly into the wind.

The entire poem is composed of a single sentence, and no one. even on a cursory reading. could fail to be impressed by its many felicities: the control of the rhythms: the beauty and precision of the imagery; the masterly use of rhyme to add to the music of the lines:, the onomatopoeia of "A random erratic blaze/Of hazardous orange.. ."

But it takes a careful reading to see that the core of the poem moves around the annual migration of the monarch butterfly — it travels as far as Central America across the Gulf of Mexico — a titanic journey for so fragile and delicate a creature. The phrase "of necessity" gives a clue to the instinctual imperative for the journey, and "being one of a kind" reinforces the idea of a single species preserving its uniqueness by undertaking a voyage that calls for reserves of courage and endurance.

It is apparent that the monarch butterfly, with its instinct to create, is a symbol for the poet whose intellect makes its own lonely journey through the vast landscapes of the imagination in order to create something that will be "one of a kind," unique and permanent, surviving triumphantly in an inhospitable and dangerous environment. In this poem, as in all of Richard Outram's beat work. the whole is more than the sum of the parts.

"Monarch in Autumn" is taken from *Locus.* which contains some of Outram's finest nature poems. The book was published in 1974 by the Gauntlet Press, which is owned and run by Outram and his wife, and has been in operation since 1960. *Locus* is a beautiful example of the printer's art. The text is printed on hand-made paper, and bound between marbled covers. The richness of the poems is embellished by the wood engravings of Barbara Howard. "Monarch in Autumn" is accompanied by a magnificent engraving of a monarch butterfly, in orange and black.

The Gauntlet Press has published two other books by Outram, *Creatures* (1972) and *Thresholds (1973).* Both are illustrated by Barbara Howard's wood engravings and, like *Locus,* are published in limited editions.

Seer, one of Outram's most important works, was brought out by the Aliquando Press, Toronto, in April, 1973. It was designed by William Rueter, and printed on Carlyle Japan, and bound in French marbled paper, crimson, with the title blocked in gold. It is illustrated with graphite drawings by Barbara Howard. It is a delight to see and handle a book so lovingly produced, which does full justice to such poems as the exquisite "Seer With River Image":

Suitor, consider the source of the river
A variant turbulence; here, a meander.

A silver inscription in meadows washed over
With starlight, the subtlest currents most matter;

Deceptively supple, the slightest will take one
All unsuspecting, grasp one and wrestle one

Under forever. I, mourning, intent upon
Watching a molten rose on the surface

Reforming dissembled, distorted, remember
You, lost in reflection, never to leave it.

The illustration for this poem is an extraordinarily sensitive drawing, three sinuous lines within a circle. which suggest the current and movement of water with the economy and skill of the Japanese masters.

Richard Outram's view of poetry is an exalted one. He agrees with George Whalley who, in "Poetic Process," a brilliant essay on aesthetics, maintains that "the artist's function is priest-lie .. by the ritual *ordonnance* of the sensory materials, a state of grace may be induced in the reader — but only if the reader, abasing and abandoning himself, is prepared to allow the vision to complete itself in him. A work of art, in the manner of a sacrament, offers perpetual access to reality." Here is the key to Richard Outram's work, for he sees poetry as a redemption of life.

Had he been a lesser poet, Outram might have been tempted to turn his back on the harshness of his times, and retreat into fantasy or idealism: but he knows that the inner identity of his age is inescapable, and he responds to it accordingly. His opposition to its baseness and treachery is unequivocal. but he attempts to elevate and transmute *it* through his poetry. It is obvious that some of his poems, like the moving title sequence of *Turns,* could not have been written without an acute awareness of human cruelty.

When, in a rare personal interview, Outram spoke of the inhumanity of our age, his eyes darkened. "Man in his fallen state is unsupportable.." he said quietly. "I don't see how we can survive our self-hatreds, our inadvertent toxicities, and our indifference. Given a false epistemology and a high technology, our future seems bleak indeed — Armageddonish if you will. And we couldn't and shouldn't survive in this state! What then offers redemption? It seems to me — and make no mistake there is no deathwish involved here — that our mortality itself is our great boon. Everyone has some form of volitional access to an outward and inward form of spiritual grace. In other words, it *matters* how you live and what you do." By isolating what-

ever is ennobling in the human spirit, Outram's poetry affirms that possibility of redemption.

At his publisher's request Outmm wrote a summation of his poetic themes that was appended to the present edition of *Turns:* "*These* poems reflect a continuing preoccupation with the problem of evil; with the intransigence, terminal or heroic, of man: with passion and compassion; with the ordinary life. which shall prevail. and with graceful necessary death."

Vision is important for Outram; he sees "the ordinary of

The monarch butterfly, with its instinct to create, is a symbol for the poet whose intellect makes its own lonely journey through the vast landscapes of the imagination.. ..

life" in a new and vital way because his eye has an unusual refractive index. and he can make the reader share in a rediscovery of the commonplace. Sometimes the image may be startling and disturbing: "The ape moon leers/Sucking his orange teeth." More often than not he transfigures his subject by describing it in a way that is fresh and vivid, as when be writes of scrub thorn:

A wasp's nest-grey
Tangle, spattered by day
With scarlet haws snarled
In fists of limbs: a gnarled
Knot of blackness at night,
Pierced by the spiked light
Of stars, happens to keep
Shrike in slight sleep.

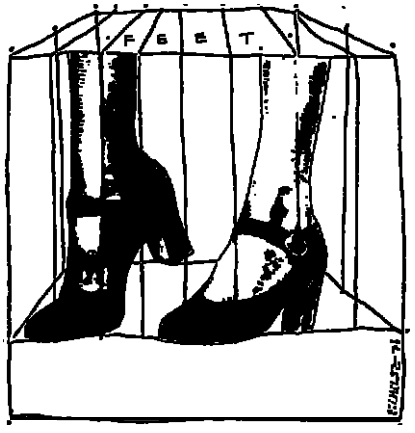
Richard Outmm is now in his 40s, and at the height of hi powers. His poems combine beauty with a whipcord toughness and bruising wit unmatched elsewhere in contemporary Canadian poetry.

This quiet, articulate, hyprr-intelligent poet insists on his right to privacy. and will say nothing about his personal life because it has no relevance to his art. Explaining this, he refers to George Whalley's assertion that "the highest artistic creativity in man arises from a state of humility which is in truth not merely self-abasement, but self-annihilation."

Nor is he very forthcoming about his method of writing, beyond admitting that he destroys all drafts and work sheets of a poem once it is finished. Clearly Outram has no desire to have future scholars coughing in ink over his manuscripts, or gndutute students swarming like ants over the corpus of his work, each one of them scurrying away with a Ph.D. thesis in its jaws.

Few poets have given so much to the literature of their country and received so little in return. I have said that his place in the front rank of Canadian poetry is assured; but it would he a pity if his fame is entirely posthumous.

So long as the shameful neglect of a poet of such distinction continues. by that much is Canadian culture retarded nnd diminished. □



BETSY ROSS'S ACADEME

by Robin Mathews

The University: The Anatomy of Academe, by Murray G. Ross, McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 310 pages, $13.25 cloth (ISBN 0-07-053876-x).

THIS BOOK is remarkable. It is an attempt to deal in a historical/philosophical way with the identity and the discontents of the present university in Britain, Canada. and the United States. Ultimately, it has little to say. It is most remarkable for what it ignores. and — above all — what it tells about the basis of thought and the blindness of the generation of administrators present during "the decade of dissent," now coming to memoir-writing.

Dr. Rosshimself became the first president of one of Canada's new universities, The American University of Toronto. He helped to build an instant university of largely foreign faculty, one of the most ugly and alienated universities in Canada. As a comment upon York University's desire to maintain what Dr. Ross persistently refers to — the traditional, liberal, objectivity-seeking university -the students early dubbed York's administration building The Ministry of Love after the centre of dehumanization and mind-control in George Orwell's *1984*. Dr. Ross, then, is a peculiarly ironic person to be confronting, with the preteensions of a philosophic overview, the concept of the university at this time.

He is plainly no philosopher, though he protests great concern for man's "insatiable desire to know." He declares himself deeply concerned about lost confidence in the universities, and he worries his brain to discover reasons. Unknown m him, they are all before him in the university he helped found, the policies he helped formulate, and in the insensitivities disclosed in this present volume attempting to deal with the university as a general phenomenon. The book adds conviction to the assertion that m be a university president in Canada one must be without a country, without critical insight, and without a scintilla of understanding of what the "liberal university" means in this century.

Harsh words. But probably not harsh enough. Dr. Ross employs the cant language of meretricious and muddle-headed rhetoricians. We read of the university's "mission,," "life-style," "governance" — flab words-presenting Imprecise thought. We are treated to a panoply of non-scholarship. Simple. platitudinous statements that change must 'be prepared for. and that people who disagree about. principle and method will have trouble getting along, are assiduously footnoted to "authorities," works written by U.S. experts in non-information. We read language that appears to have meaning but is grammatically and logically uncertain. For instance, Dr. Ross tells us that if we cannot agree upon dictions., "the inevitable result is a variety of organizational maladies, not the least of which is to sink into a state of anomie."

Behind the fuzzy language of Dr. Ross, there is a genuine problem of faulty perception, obfuscation, and omission of important ideas.

From halfway down Parnassus, the president of the AU of T attempts to define the modern university

At the beginning of the book, Dr. Ross sets up a distinction between tradition and revolution. "How to go forward," he writes, "between these two extremes is indeed the central issue of the university today." ***Rubbish.*** Revolution in the universities (if such a thing is even possible without revolution in the state) is a million miles away. Dr. Ross doesn't mean revolution. He wishes to address the problem management brought about by the pressure for certain modifications that may threaten values, real or mythic, already present. If a reactionary treats minor modification as

The book adds conviction to the assertion that to be a university president in Canada one must be without a country, without critical insight, and without a scintilla of understanding of what the "liberal university" means and has meant in this century.

revolution. then he can attempt to create an atmosphere of desperation and emergency that allows him to play an old liberal/élite game.

That is the game that allows only two choices: "You have a choice between tradition and revolution. Which will you take?" Put in those terms, of course, the answer will usually be. "I will take tradition." Pierre Trudeau played exactly the same game in 1970: "You have a choice between armed insurrection or the withdrawal of fundamental human rights and military occupation for your own good. Which will you take?" The Canadian people didn't want armed insurrection. of course. So they chose instead to he hoodwinked. In both cases. the presentation of stark alternatives denies the person questioned the right to say: "I want neither; I want to look at quite different things." Like Trudeau in 1970. Ross sets up alternatives that are intended to focus attention away from himself. Does someone want to ask about administratiw greed, waste, stupidity. bad planning, and incompetence? Those are questions not allowed by the book.

The book asks us to accept some postulates that cannot he supported by evidence. The people's revolt (as he calls it) has changed the real power structure of the universities. It hasn't. Dissent has made the university more accessible to people all through the class structure. It hasn't. Academic freedom has been threatened by the inexplicable loss of Consensus among university personnel. It hasn't. What was an open. liberal. fair system in which knowledge was assessed objectively has been threatened by radicalism. ***Rubbish.*** Dr. Ross doesn't see the highly ideological basis of the pre-1950 university. and he believes that ***ideology*** has been recently introduced. destructively, to an otherwise remarkable utopian system.

Writing of the "new scholarship," Dr. Ross says:

> **Frequently these pursuits became associated with professors who held radical political positions, and their work was often affected by, or at least identified with, political ideologies. As a result criticism by established scholars tended to blur their differences with (1) the quality of scholarship and (2) the political position of the "new scholars." In any case there is little doubt that a serious chasm among scholars existed, that attack and counterattack led to much bitterness, and that many of the older scholars, like Oscar Hanlin, longed "for the day of the 30's when historians had a sense of being a member of one community ... together working its way toward truth."**

Quite clearly. we are intended to assume that "radical professors" do work associated with ***ideologies.*** "Established scholars" (notice the implication), however, ***are*** not ***ideological.*** In patty terms. a parallel would be to say the left wing of the NDP is ideological but the established Liberal Party is not ideological. To suggest such an idea about scholars in a serious book about education is to declare intellectual bankruptcy.

Dr. Ross also blames the radicals for the bad favour the universities are in now, the radicals and other undesirables. As well as the universities being plagued with rowdyism and anarchic behaviour, "Some professors were overtly doctrinaire in their teaching and sought deliberately to indoctrinate...." Dr. Ross goes on to say of that yeasty situation that, "Such abuses of academic freedom obviously. could not be sustained."

The imponderable at the moment, according to Dr. Ross, is the State. He may be right. The university may be threatened by the State, threatened in its genuine freedom -quite apart from real budgetary and planning necessities. But older colleagues tell us that the older system was infinitely more repressive of eccentricity and ideological difference than the present system. We all know, for instance, that the "established scholar" and much-published Canadian historian, Stanley Ryerson, only received a full-time appointment (in Quebec) a very few years ago. An elegant Marxist thinker and writer. Mr. Ryerson would doubtless (in the ***terms*** Ross uses) have been doctrinaire in his teaching. And so the university community of Canada held him at arm's length for years so that it could go forward, no doubt, as one community working toward truth, to paraphrase Oscar Hanlin and Murray Ross! Reactionary U.S. historians were welcome at York University, but Stanley Ryerson — Marxist and Canadian — could spend his time semi-employ&d at no rank!

The total inability of Dr. Ross to see the ideological nature of the university makes it impossible for him to evaluate its movement and change in this century. He writes often of the university answering the needs of society, but that's as close as he gets to credible analysis. And it is very far away, indeed.

The university system of the West grew for a whole number of reasons: East-West competition, available capital, a myth of learning, contractors'. lobbies. cheap and "cultured" baby-sitting, and so forth. Now the future is unclear. Dr. Ross doesn't address the role of administrators in "mad giantism." He is not very informative about a number of the reasons for disaffection. as I have suggested. In Canada, and I presume elsewhere. the public began to react to arrogant, condescending, delirious waste and betrayal by administrators across the university system.

To begin', the Canadian population was and is treated with open contempt as a resource pool for university personnel. So great has been the wasteful failure to use Canadians in our universities that the Ontario Minister of Universities and Colleges had. recently, to threaten the Ontario presidents that he will undertake economic sanctions against them, if they continue to refuse to hi qualified Canadians. Only in Canada could such a directive have to be published. In any institution like a university the greatest cost is for personnel. For 20 years, Canadian administrators have been operating a policy of wholesale waste in the use of Canadian personnel. The influx of foreign professors, moreover, is often made up of inferior personnel, and tends to warp

programs of study away from Canada in ways quite irrelevant to Canadian needs.

Dr. Ross never addresses himself to the rampant empire-building and waste in physical plant. The subject deserves a fully researched book of its own. Some day it may be written. The public became increasingly disaffected as it came to know that something was deeply wrong with expansion in education. Who built the universities? What was their connection to provincial cabinets? Let me use one example only, a simple and quite undramatic one.

Carleton University in Ottawa built a high-rise academic building of 22 stories: unnecessary, inefficient, alienating, unsuitable, and ugly. The elevator system is so ill-planned that entry and exit from the main floor has to be cut off in winter! Myth was circulated that the endless ranks of phosphorescent lights running through the offices provided the cheapest lighting available, though the lighting was cold, over-bright, and unsuitable. When austerity hit a year ago, a team of electricians went through the building disconnecting all but one phosphorescent light in each office and *installing an* individual reading lamp in each! Academics can duplicate that story from coast to coast and doubtless from the Gulf of Mexico to the Yukon.

Waste of Canadian talent so great as to be obscene! Waste of tax dollars in physical empire-building beyond the dreams of Montreal's Mayor Drapeau! Waste, too, in the organization of material so that the learners have had, and still have, trouble learning what is most important for them to know. The fight to get Canadian materials into the universities has never received the support of administrators like Dr. Ross. Administrators still block the development of reasonable and necessary Canadian studies.

About 1970 the University of Saskatchewan at Regina taught U.S. and Russian government but did not teach Canadian government. At Dr. Ross's university, York, the course on Income Tax examined the U.S. tax system and structure without any reference to Canada! Waste of Canadian talent. Waste in physical construction. Waste in the organization of learning materials. Waste, finally, of moral integrity. Scholars, the rhetoric went, must dream and stand as critics of society. But the buck-chasers came out of the universities like Hong Kong land speculators. When genuine moral issues arose, the academics collapsed. In the U.S., the McCarthyites weeded the universities almost without successful opposition. In Canada, hundreds of academics yelping that the drive to Canadianization robbed, somehow, the basic human rights of people who hadn't even yet applied for jobs in Canada disappeared into obscene silence when the Trudeau government lifted the human rights from 400 *Québecois* and thrust them, nameless, in jail.

Someone also needs to do a study of the corporate directorships held by Canadian and other university presidents. Dr. Ross. a director of *Time* magazine, is not likely to undertake the task. His book, in fact, is liie the Pope's examination of The Vatican and world Catholicism, or Mussolini's analysis of Fascism. or Keith Davey's examination of the Liberal Party of Canada. It is a book that gets seriously in the way of understanding the university and its discontents in the last quarter-century.

When R. B. Bennett left Canada, went to England, and took a title, F. R. Scott wanted to record the essential colonialism that permitted Bennett to see the height of his career as an English Lord rather than as a Canadian Rime Minister. Scott wrote:

To make the single meaning doubly clear
He ends the journey—as a British peer.

Times have changed. The kudos now is with U.S. connections. A colonial-minded university president now caps his *career* with a directorate of a U.S. corporation. Of Murray Ross, one might rhyme:

Director now. *he tops his splendid climb*
A U.S. propaganda boss -for Time. □

Putting our trust in princes

by C. P. STACEY

The Crown in Canada, by Frank MacKinnon, Glenbow-Alberta Institute/McClelland & Stewart West, 169 pages, $7.95 cloth (ISBN 0-7712-1015-9) and $4.95 paper (ISBN 0-7712-1016-7).

THE CROWN has been much in the public eye in North America in 1976, with the Queen's triumphant Bicentennial visit to the United States followed by what one may perhaps call (in all the circumstances! a remarkably successful sojourn in Montreal for the Olympic Games. But the Crown the newspaper readers and television watchers have been aware of is not quite the same Crown that Professor Frank MacKinnon is writing about in his new book. Mr. MacKinnon is a political scientist, and the political scientist's concept of the Crown is rather different from that entertained by the common people.

MacKinnon's Crown is an abstraction. At the wry beginning he says that the Crown in Canadian government today has 12 representatives: "The Queen. the Governor General. and the Lieutenant-Governors." Even some political scientists may blink momentarily at the idea of the Queen as a "representative" of the Crown. Most of us think of Queen and Crown as one and indivisible. Yet the political scientists have long distinguished between the Sovereign and the Crown. The late MacGregor Dawson, as revised by Norman Ward. says. "The Crown is . . the institution apart from the incumbent of the moment; kings and queens may come and go, but constitutionally and legally the Crown goes on forever. relatively undisturbed by the impermanence of sovereigns." It is the institution that MacKinnon is writing about.

His thesis is very definite. The Crown is a very valuable political institution indeed. an utterly essential part of our system of government. If it did not exist. Mackinnon clearly believes, it would be a good idea to invent it. It is particularly valuable in that its existence separates the *possession* of power from the *wielding* of it. The politicians in office are allowed to wield power. but they do not possess it: it is a temporary trust. The Sovereign is the possessor of power. which means today that she is the custodian of it on behalf of the people. But in all normal circumstances the power is wielded only on (we used to say) the advice of ministers; MacKinnon says frankly, and truly. the advice of the prime minister. He observes: "A prime minister in Canada (and a provincial premier) is made to know from the start of his administration that he is advising on the use of the Crown's power. not wielding power that he actually possesses." I hope this is not an optimistic statement. Our author has a proper suspicion of politicians, and an equally pmper suspicion of the public's tendency to idolize them. He recalls the "frenzied adulation" of Mr. Trudeau in 1968 and (holding the balance even) of Mr. Diefenbaker in 1958. We must idolize somebody, he admits; and it is better and safer that we should idolize the Crown, which does not wield power. (Here I chime in with the remark that this is all perfectly true, but that the Crown we are invited to idolize — and which some of us, in some degree. do idolize — is not an abstraction, but a charming lady and her agreeable family.)

Mr. MacKinnon is not concerned with preserving the Crown as a symbol of Canada's British heritage and tradition. He lays much emphasis on the new Letters Patent of 1947 by which the then King authorized the Governor General to exercise "all power and authorities lawfully belonging to Us in respect of Canada." "Thus the powers of the head of state are now completely in Canadian hands." This the author fully approves, clearly feeling that it should make it easier for all Canadians, of whatever origin, to accept the Crown and the Queen of Canada as a Canadian institution. Quebec newspapers please copy.

With the author's general thesis ordinary citizens as well as political scientists can and should fully agree. The system ofconstitutional monarchy as it functions in Canada is a sound, efficient expression of democracy. It has worked well for us, on the whole. for more than a century, changing with changing times, and if we put something else in its place we should almost certainly get something worse. Nevertheless, I think MacKinnon somewhat overdoes his enthusiasm for monarchical institutions. One gets just a trifle tired of his exposition of the unpleasant things that happen in countries that have gone republican: India. for instance, or Nigeria, or Uganda — or the United States. Did these nasty things happen because of republican institutions, or did they happen because those communities-are the kind of communities they are? No doubt our system is better than the Americans'; no doubt the Americans owe their survival partly to the fact that they are so rich that they can afford an imperfect system: yet the U.S. hasn't done too badly for a couple of centuries; it is pulling out of the Watergate misery pretty satisfactorily, and I suspect these things are owing to American qualities and an American tradition to which the republic-versus-monarchy argument is really not very relevant.

This is a tactful book. Its subject is controversial, and MacKinnon doubtless has strong feelings about it, but he carefully avoids dealing with it in polemical terms. Nobody would know from these pages that there is in the Canadian House of Commons an ex-Prime Minister who has long been campaigning against what he and a fair number of other people consider the tendency of Liberal governments to downgrade the mle of the Crown in Canadian life. Nor does the book mention Mr. Léger's long illness following

hi unfortunate stroke in 1974, **which has** certainly afforded ammunition to those **who are** disposed to argue that the office of **Governor** General is **redundant.**

It is also a short book, and cannot deal in any detail with the history of the subject. **Some** day. perhaps, somebody will produce a study of Mackenzie King's attitudes towards the **Crown,** based on thorough reading of the great man's diary. ("Attitudes" is the word, not "attitude.") King certainly would not have gone along with the idea **of the** Cmwn as a safeguard against the over-mighty or over-popular politician. And I fear that he usually thought of the **Crown** in personal rather than institutional terms. Perhaps Mr. **MacKinnon** is a little too impersonal. In the emergency situations (which he duly notes) where the Cmwn may be called upon actually to exercise power, it is a person. not **an** abstraction, that has to act. It was not an abstraction that **refused** MacKenzie King a dissolution of Parliament in 1926; it was a tough, high-minded citizen who had commanded army corps and **armies** and was not afraid of taking responsibility. **There** is no certainty at all that we shall not need **another** tough citizen **m** do something similar in some future crisis. It was not an abstraction that chose **Stanley** Baldwin over Lord **Curzon** to be Prime Minister of Great Britain in 1923; it was an experienced old monarch, getting the best advice he could.

The Crown in Canada is an excellent little book as **far** as it **goes,** and one could wish it went **further. Its approach** is academic, and academics, **unfortunately,** will probably be its chief readers. Few people in French Canada **are** likely m note or heed its cogent argument that the **Crown** as a political institution has much to offer to **Quebec: the majority are more** likely m go on regarding the Queen as a survival of foreign domination. Mr. **MacKinnon,** I speculate, has decided that the Crown in Canada is in danger, and **that the best thing he can do towards** saving it is to present a cool intellectual assessment of its practical value to the country. This he has done very well, and it is a **good** thing he has **done** it. But I suspect that if the **Crown** survives in Canada it will be at least as much **because** of sentimental and **personal** appeal as of practical political considerations. People **are** interested **in** people. The television **watchers — who are also the voters may exercise the decisive influence,** if **they are** allowed to. There are **many** indications ***of*** creeping republicanism among the politicians in Ottawa, and the creepers will certainly continue to **try to push things their own way** without raising the issue frankly-and assuredly without/giving the voters a chance to **express** their views. □

How Canada conquered to stoop

The Enemy that Never Was, by Ken Adachi, McClelland & Stewart. **456 pages, $14.95 cloth (ISBN 0-7710-**0723-x)

By JOHN **PEARCE**

"YES, **YOU ARE** free in Canada," **proclaimed** the Victory Bond **slogan** in 1943. **Grim reading** for the Canadian Japanese, dispossessed of **their** livelihoods and **property** by decree **from** Ottawa, evacuated **from** coastal British Columbia, and crowded **into** mm-shackle camps in the interior. Thousands of them were Canadian citizens; the previous **year** hundreds of them had contributed **generously** and loyally m the same Victory Bond scheme, &signed "to free the **oppressed.**" Their story has not been **told** be**fore.** In future it may be **told** differently, but it is unlikely m be told better than **by Ken Adachi, who makes of it powerful and salutary reading.**

Perhaps -just perhaps — there is palliation for the King government in the context of war against Japan (though the Canadian Army said that the Japanese did not constitute "the slightest menace to national security.") But there is no mitigation for the virulent racism with which Canada greeted the preceding 50 or so years of Japanese immigration. The general **response of** B.C., **frighteningly well displayed by its politicians, tanged from guarded hostility m rabid and malicious persecution; from words ("Their presence is an insult and a stench in our nostrils," wrote the Kelowna *Courier)*** m deeds (the 1907 anti-Oriental riots in Vancouver; extensive anti-Japanese legislation).

It is a measure of Mr. **Adachi's distinction as a social historian that he tells the bitter tale of his** people with such **dignity** and restraint. **His writing is an immensely attractive mix of balance and passion. There is scholarship; there is rich irony; them is a dogged mmd that worries at a subject, looking for hidden motives and parallels. For** example, **not content merely to explain and expostulate over the wartime evacuation, he**

sets up comparisons — all, as it happens, unfavourable — with the treatment of German and Italian aliens in Canada. and of Japanese in America and strategically critical Hawaii.

Even more impressive. there is a novelist's mind at *work* in the account of what it felt like to be a Japanese in Canada in the first half of the 20th century. In particular, he explores the generation gap between Issei (pioneer immigrants) and Nisei (second generation) with great sensitivity, in the light of traditional Japanese industry. clannishness. political passivity. and restrictive virtues. A whole way of life is vividly evoked.

As complex patterns and identity crises emerge. especially over rooted loyalties to a country that has cried to reject them. rhe lumping together and bulk labelling of all Japanese comes to seem not only, ludicrous but tragic. The smear campaign conducted from 1890 io 1950 by many *B.C.* politicians and editorial writers stinks. Adachi has little trouble refuting wild and unsupported claims about lack of hygiene, subversion, and "unfair competition." as well as gross exaggerations about numbers of immigrants and breeding rates. Yet these views, which frequently culminated in cries for expulsion, carried considerable "no smoke without tire" weight throughout Canada.

Discrimination was often sadistic or cynically self-interested: an employer. suddenly needing cheap labour, dowses earlier inflammatory remarks about the "yellow peril" and hires Japanese at exploitive rates: fishing licences are revoked because the Japanese are "excessively industrious" and so a threat. However. Adachi has the insight to spot a compensatory masochism in the Japanese that ties in with some of Margaret Atwood's Basic-Victim Positions: "It can't be helped"; "We mustn't give offence"; "Authority should not be challenged."

Quite justifiably, he employs as an *idée fixe* the skeletal nature of Japanese Canadian citizenship before it was fleshed out with the franchise in 1948. Adachi has an acute eye for anomalies -especially when a country seems to have first-class and second-class citizens — and he is full of dire warnings to Canada about possible repetitions.

His account of the ill-conceived and ill-executed evacuation is essential reading for anyone with smug assumptions about Canada's supposed fairness and adherence to democratic ideals. Nevertheless, the evacuation emerges as an ambiguous evil compared with earlier inexcusable injustices. Despite the upheaval, the massive expropriations, the derisory reparation, the jarring of 21,000 lives. many Japanese Canadians now look upon the event as a blessing in disguise. Certainly barriers

of prejudice have tumbled since the Second World War and dispersal across Canada has brought prosperity to many. The camps, though potentially soul-destroying. provided the first holiday for decades for some of the elders. and many of the children were entranced by the mountain environment — see *A Child* in *Prison Camp* by Shizuye Takashima (Tundra Books, 1971).

That small-child memoir has up until now been one of the very few books to touch on the Japanese in Canada. Suddenly. in a rich and provocative study. Ken Adachi has made them history. In doing so he has raised issues of conscience that will gnaw away at those who believe Canada should champion the free trade of peoples and a consistent and liberal interpretation oftherightsof a citizen. He casts a shadow over Canada's much-vaunted success in assimilating immigrants: and forces his readers to examine their own responses on matters of race for lurking prejudices. □

Input from the Outports

by MICHAEL COOK

Education and Culture in Newfoundland. by Frederick W. Rowe. Xl&raw-Hill Ryerson. 22.5 pages, $12.50 cloth (ISBN 0-07-082373-l).

'"There's no better place than here". by Ralph Matthews. Peter Martin Associates. 164 pages. $8.95 cloth (ISBN o-58778-135-7) and $3.95 paper (ISBN 0-88778-136-5).

BOTH OF THESE books are about Newfoundland. There the similarity ends. The weighty pretentiousness of the title of Dr. Rowe's hook should warn curious seekers after the truth that what they find might not be what they expect: for it is a sad but undeniable fact that public office constitutes a poor training ground for literary endeavours of any kind. In this instance Rowe. who spent many years in the Smallwood government as Minister of Education, might be expected to be a walking compendium of statistical information — which be is-and at the same time an apologist for those developmental policies, formulated in the cabinet of which he was a member, that have brought the province close to emotional and economic disaster. The latter is also true.

Had Rowe limited his theses to the primary topic, education, then the book, although hardly bedtime reading. would have proved of value to those interested in the admittedly painful struggle for enlightenment characteristic of Newfoundland educational history. He might, tdo, have indulged in less pedantry and more art. for although the book manifestly reflects painstaking research, it lacks the colour and breadth of humanity — a strange ommission in a book purporting to speak to culture and education.

'But worst of all is the complete absence of any reference to what now can be seen as Newfoundland's struggle for cultural survival, a struggle in which education has played a dual, almost schizophrenic role. In pre-Confederation days. the cultural bias was essentially English. Since the cultural traditions of the people were extracted from England and Ireland, and their educational opportunity was extremely limited, the threat of dominance from an outside cultural source was minimal. The education explosion that occurred after 1949, well documented by Rowe, was also attended by an invasion of American textbooks. Not only was scant attention paid to Newfoundland and its people, but the new Canadian parent might just as well not have existed. Ally that to a critical failure to understand and appreciate the richness and importance of the various dialects that abounded-an attempt, in fact, to teach English as a second language — and the result has been a generation deprived of its heritage. It's hardly surprising that English is the most hated subject amongst the vast majority ofstudents. This situation is being corrected now as school boards, curriculum committees, local publishing houses, educationists at all levels. seek to introduce new generations of students to a wide range of material that speaks to them, in their own tongue, of their own experience.

That is the current cultural revolution.

But Rowe does not concern himself with this at all, preferring instead, to take side-swipes at those-who would condemn the resettlement program, allying industrial progress with educational opportunity, and noting with a good deal of satisfaction that the province has almost made the transition from a rural to an urban society.

There is a great need for a book that studies in depth the full implications of the educational revolution that has turned Newfoundland upside down during the past 25 years, and the real social and cultural implications. Dr. Rowe. cut off it seems from the mainstream of the current realities of Newfoundland life. has failed to provide it.

In contrast *"There's no better place than here"*, written by sociologist Ralph Matthews. examines the circumstances surrounding three small Newfoundland communities' stubborn refusal to resettle to "growth" areas, 'as part of the program of which Rowe speaks so warmly. Matthews, at one time with the Institute of Social and Economic Research of Memorial University, had originally intended to study the way communities adjusted to social change; but when a small outport on an island in Notre Dame Bay announced resolutely that it would not be moved to a growth area. despite the obvious benefits of increased educational and medical services. to say nothing of general communication, he changed his tactics.

The result is meticulously honest (he states his bias). carefully researched, moving. and timely — a plea for an alternative to the current obsession with industrialization. modernization, and growth centres that infect not merely Newfoundland, but the whole of rural Canada. That there is in existence a lone-ten plan to reduce the rural popular& of Canada is hardly in doubt. For years. the Newfoundland provincial government touted the notion that the only communities resettled were those that requested it, a theme retold in Dr. Rowe's book. At the same time, there existed in Confederation Building a map detailing those communities slated for resettlement! It was the shocked discovery. by the residents of Small Harbour (not its real name) that it was scheduled to resettle that prompted the initial confrontation, a confrontation that resulted in the islanders gaining improved circumstances and the Freedom to make their own choice . . to leave or to stay. Mountain cove was within the area of Bonne Bay. now a National Park, and Grande Terre, one of the few remaining French-speaking communities in Newfoundland, lies at the tip of the Port au Port peninsula, jutting out into the Gulf of St. Lawrence. From the government's point of view. none of the communities were economically viable. But as Matthews points out: "The problem with such programs (centralization and resettlement) is that they fail to take into account the wishes of those who do want to remain in rural areas. and that they use inadequate and value-biased criteria in their assessment of the nonviability of much of rural life. It is a value bias to assess rural communities only in terms of their economic viability and to ignore the social structure. culture, and values of the people which together constitute the social vitality of these communities." Exactly. Human values ignored in the light of economic criteria.

Newfoundland may have made the transition from a rural to an urban society, but it lost its soul in the process

Matthews is a realist. He examines the life style of the people in the three communities under discussion, and in many cases finds it harsh and primitive. But granted the specifically limited and localized skills of the inhabitants, they can maintain themselves with greater dignity and freedom where they are, whereas immediately, or within a few years, they would become unemployable on the labour markets of larger centres. Since the majority already draw government assistance of one kind or another, there is little purpose sewed in moving them to areas where they would probably require assistance for longer periods. Perhaps most tellingly, Matthews makes the point that successive governments have totally ignored the development of small resource-based industries in rural areas. which would have the effect of improving the economic viability of such areas. while improving their social conditions. Successive delegations from the Maritimes have trotted off to Scotland, Norway, and Iceland, to examine the effectiveness of those countries' rural development programs. Apart from eating nod drinking well, the immediate advantages of such trips have not become apparent, although each one of those countries have ensured the continued survival of a vigorous economically viable rural culture. As Matthews notes:

> It is ironic that Canada's programmes for rural and regional development are built on strategies of urbanisation and industrialisation when fifty per cent of the population already lives in only fifteen major centres. It would seem more logical for planners to investigate alternative life styles and to promote strategies that would move people out of urban centres.

Even the Department of Regional Economic Expansion, hailed as the saviour of the Maritimes, focuses mainly on industrial incentives as the key to regional development, and the bulk of tlemonies from DREE programs land up in industrialists' pockets, leaving the people if anything. further back than *they were.*

In Newfoundland today, although the resettlement program is. one hopes, a thing of the past, the threat to rural lifestyles remains as governments pursue a simple policy of neglect. Millions of dollars are currently being spent in St. John's on an arterial mad that nobody wants -no one, that is. without a vested interest in the project — while the city panics about water supplies. and out in the remote coves touted so lovingly by the Tourist Department (the income from tourism is *in excess* of $100 million) the honey buckets are lugged to the landwash at nights and water is fetched by hand IO gallons at a time.

The people of the three communities who resisted resettlement have been lucky so Far. Dogged persistence, a reevaluation of their life style in comparison with urban centres. the presence of community leaders, and self-help all contributed. But Matthews, no romantic, warns that their continued survival depends on revised government planning, attention to the development of craft industries and the recognition that such *communities are* legitimate alternatives so proliferating urban sprawl. But currently, even freight and transportation policies are designed to bring about the demise of much of rural Canada. Anyone who has ever been on the receiving end of Canadian National's service in Newfoundland can vouch for that.

Pierre Elliot Trudeau, in the days when he was a theoretician and not a politician, wrote: "Every Canadian has the right to the good life. whatever the province or community he *lives in."* Something seems to have gone wrong. And time is running out. *"There's no better place than here"* is timely. and compelling, and deserves wide attention. One hopes somebody will leave a copy on Pierre's pillow. To say nothing of the pillows of Frank Moores, John Crosbie, and, why yes, even Dr. Rowe. It's never too late to learn, they say. □

Festschrift with feeling

The West and the Nation: Essays in Honour of W.L. Morton, edited by Carl **Berger** and **Ramsay** Cook. McClelland **&** Stewart, 335 pages, $14.95 cloth **(ISBN** 0-7710-l 192-x) and $7 **paper (ISBN** 0-7710-l 193-8).

By ALASTAIR SWEENY

IT IS A COMMON practice to honour eminent scholars, who are deemed to have retired, with a ***festschrift, or*** book of essays. In **Professor** Morton's case, this **token** of his friends' appreciation goes to a man who is still teaching, still writing. and still as fascinated as ever by the mosaic of Canadian history.

The book is aptly titled. Born on a Manitoba farm, and reared behind a horse-drawn plough breaking virgin Prairie sod, Morton once described himself as "among the last of **millenial** generations of men who followed **the** plough whose work fed household, village and city, and carried the fabric of civilization on their sweating shoulders." This **upbringing, combined** with his father's election as a Progressive to the Manitoba legislature, doubtless gave him an organic, even a mythological view of his surroundings, and a determination to explore, preserve. strengthen and then explain them, first in a regional and then in a wider geopolitical context.

Beginning with his **earlier** works on **Western** history, culminating in ***The Progressive Party in Canada. Begg's Red River Journal,*** and hi brilliant ***Manitoba:*** A History, Morton went on to measure his understanding against a wider national context, in The ***Canadian Identity, The Kingdom 0f Canada*** and --what **I consider to** be his greatest work so **far — *The Critical Years: The Union of British North America, 1857-1873,*** (in which the practice of historical judgment is **carried** to its zenith).

I will not attempt to review the **15** fascinating essays in thii collection, except to say that I have my **favourites:** Arthur Silver's "French Canada and the **Métis** Question." which goes a long way toward explaining why thr ghost of Louis Riel still stalks the land; **Frits Pannekoek's** witty "The Anglican Church and the Disintegration of Red River Society, **1818-1870";** Craig Brown's "The **Politics** of **Billingsgate,**" which should demonstrate to contemporary politicians that scandal-mongering. though sometimes cathartic, has its dangers; and Jacques Monet's **"The Canadian Monarchy," a** fine and elegant apologia **for a** system that works well, in preserving **"our im**practical, multi-cultural, religiously pluralistic federation, which is economically dominated by strangers, and which barely manages to stretch a relatively small population **across** a continent of widely differing and **non**complementary economic regions."

The most spectacular essay of all is Donald **Creighton's** "The **Ogdensburg** Agreement and F. H. Underhill." The Ogdensburg **Agreement, first publicly declared** in August, 1940, established a Permanent Joint Advisory Board between the U.S. and Canada for the mutual **defence** of North America in the event of the collapse of Great Britain. In praising the agreement later that month, Fmnk Underhill unfortunately suggested that **"we** can no longer put **our** eggs in the British basket." When his remarks were repotted to **the** public, demands for **Underhill's** resignation **were** made to Resident Cody of the University of Toronto, and it soon came out that in 1934, Professor Underhill had written an article suggesting that the League of Nations and the British government were "alluring" Canadians into a war: "We must make it clear to the world. and especially to Great Britain, that the poppies blooming in Flanders fields have no further interests for us."

The U of T Board gave Underhill a week's notice either to resign or be dismissed, but support quickly materialized in **the** university. Harold **Innis,** a scholar whose system of ideas was **diametrically** opposed to **Underhill's,** came to his **defence,** and Underhill refused to resign. Hugh Keenleyside and 0. D. **Skelton** muddied the waters when they took his case to the Rime Minister, and King had Chubby Power visit his friend Mitch Hepburn, who in **turn** phoned Cody. Keenleyside ***also*** telegraphed Cody that "proposed action **against** a man widely known in the United States as exponent of continental cooperation would have the most serious **repercussions** in that country."

In spite of their **annoyance** at the meddling of the mandarins, the U of T Board took no action against **Underhill,** whose narrow escape appears lo have cooled him off, and turned his political

loyalties, once firmly CCF, toward the Liberal Party. As Creighton writes:

> He opposed what he always called "British imperialism" not because he was moved by a strong Canadian national feeling or even by a rooted dislike of the establishment of any kind of political and economic hegemony of one country over another. He was not a Canadian nationalist or an anti-imperialist: he fought against the imperial connection with Great Britain, but he easily accepted the imperial leadership of the United States. His real aim was North American continental unity; and, under the foreign policies of King, St. Laurent and Pearson, this aim was coming closer and closer to realization. . . . The man who had preached against Canadian participation in the Second World War, now zealously defended Canadian involvement in the Cold War. The man who had denounced the sinister "imperialist" machinations of pre-war British politicians now extolled the moral righteousness of the foreign policy of Truman and Acheson.

The last few paragraphs of Creighton's article drive the dagger home, and illustrate just how completely Underhill had abandoned Canadian nationality. Apparently forgetting French Canada, Underhill praised the "cultural uniformity of North America," and opposed the findings of the Massey Commission, suggesting that "these so-called 'alien' American influences are not alien at all: they are just the natural forces that operate in the conditions of *twentieth-century civilization.*"

The laws of the political jungle, no doubt. as understood by a babe in the woods. □

Steppes we didn't take

Canadians in Russia, 1918-1919, by Roy MacLaren, Macmillan. illustrated, 301 pages, $15.95 cloth (ISBN 0-7705-1339-5).

By DAVID McNAB

IN BOTH THE 19th and 20th centuries Canada's relationship to Britain has been a source of conflict among English Canadians and between French and English Canadians. *Canadians in Russia* is concerned with one of Canada's most important imperial adventures overseas, one that has been generally ignored by liberal-nationalist historiography — Canada's military presence in Russia during and after the First World War. Although the book is meant for a popular Canadian audience, it does break new ground about the role of Canadians in Russia.

Roy McLaren has a dual purpose. First of all he clearly indicates the reasons for the official Canadian interest in Russia in 1917-1918. The "critical situation" on the Western Front in 1917 proved to be the initial reason for their involvement. The British government asked for Canadian troops to reopen the Eastern Front, which had collapsed during the Russian Revolution. Borden, the Canadian prime minister, responded, as ever. with "Ready Aye Ready" to the call of the British Empire. The second reason was nationalistic. Both Borden and hi Minister of Trade and Commerce, Sir George Foster, lacking knowledge of the state of Russia, were misled by British officials into believing that Russia would become a potentially enormous market for Canadian goods if the Bolsheviks were toppled. Siberia became the apogee of Canada's westward ambitions. Even after the war ended in November, 1918, the Canadian military presence remained largely because of thii Canadian *Drang zum Westen.*

MacLaren's second purpose is "to convey something of how it must have felt to be sent to Russia at that time, whether as a general commanding an infantry brigade in Siberia or as a frost-bitten gunner in northern Russia fighting off persistent Bolshevik attacks." With a sharp and sometimes exciting prose style, MacLaren is at hi best in this section and therein lies much of the originality of this work. His description of the individual Canadian successes and failures with "Dunsterforce" in the Caspian Sea sector and with the Canadian forces in the White Sea area give a &tailed and fascinating account of the experiences of these Canadians in Russia. To his credit, the author has used oral evidence to flesh out hi narrative and has revealed the stark contrast between the soldiers' and the officials' attitudes towards the Canadian presence in a foreign land. He also @scribes the hopelessness of the undertaking be cause of the diiuaity among the Allied forces and the White Russians. the indifference of the Russian peasant, and the power of the Bolsheviks. One can only conclude that, as one contemporary critic put it, Ottawa was as "deathlessly remote" from what was happening in Russia as it was with respect to the rest of Canada by the end of the war.

The third and fourth parts of the book are relatively disappointing. The former deals with the Canadian contingent to Siberia and largely with its commander's conflicts with Borden and the British. Canadian tmops saw little action in this area. The last section, entitled "Sir Robert Borden and Russia," contains the story of the futile attempts by Borden to rationalize the Canadian military presence in Russia. Although MacLaren readily acknowl-

edges Borden's responsibility for the ineffectual and often disastrous expeditions to Russia, the author is far too sympathetic in his final judgment. One cannot absolve Borden simply bemuse he felt it was his "duty" to the British' Empire to send Canadians and state that he did his best to remove them as quickly as possible after he discovered he was being used by the British government in another "imperial" adventure. The inability of Borden and hi colleagues to distinguish between Canadian and British imperial interests resulted in a miniature Vietnam for Canada in Russia in 1918-1919. For a number of years this fiasco alienated Canadians from Britain and the Empire, although it did not "kill its appeal" in the long run. Lastly. when Borden agreed to the use of conscripts for the Canadian "volunteer" force in Russia, he created mom hostility between English and French Canadians. MacLaren has become entangled in liberal-nationalist historiography. But he has written a work that is both stimulating and controversial. □

Other mice, same elephant

Gringos from the Far North: Essays in the History of Canadian-Latin American Relations, by J.C.M. Ogdsby, Macmillan, 346 pages, $17.95 cloth (ISBN o-7705-1287-9).

By ROGER HALL

AT THE OUTSET I was reluctant to review this hook for two masons: first. I know virtually nothing about Latin America; second, I happen to be a colleague, and was once a student, of Jack Ogelsby. The first caveat is easily discarded — one of the unhappy facts pointed out in this book is that virtually no one in Canada does know anything about the 20 republics and 200-million-plus people south of that border. The Few exceptions are in pan the subjects of Ogelsby's interest. As to the second point. I have no doubt that I am prejudiced in Ogelsby's favour but I flatter myself that I have good reasons For being so-and confirmation of that agreeable judgment is seen in this book.

Canada's lack of interest in Latin America is matched only by that region's almost total ignorance of Canada. AU of this is rather peculiar For

then are many similarities between the regions -or rather. some of the countries tit is all too common a fault to consider all of Latin America as substantially the same). Certainly there are similar problems: national identity: dealings with natives; difficulties of staple economies; federal versus state conflicts; and overall. the brooding question of rhe relationship to be had with the United States.

Ogelsby's efforts have been to look at Canadian-Latin American relations in three bmad realms — official, that is in terms of diplomacy: economic, meaning business enterprise: and finally missionary. The result is a bit fragmentary. One is left with the impression that the whole is something less than the sum of its parts. Still it is difficult to fault a guide to otherwise uncharted territory and there is every indication in the meticulous research exhibited here that the academic benchmarks are correctly fixed.

The chapters on business I found the most revealing. The flag seems to have followed trade. Of particular importance is the analysis of Brascan's mammoth involvement in Brazil and the peculiar economic enthusiasm frequently pursued by Canada and Mexico. Speaking of business, the book doubtless will do little. Macmillan does no one a service by bringing it out only in cloth at a staggering 517.95. The publisher in hi own way contributes to our nothern solitude. □

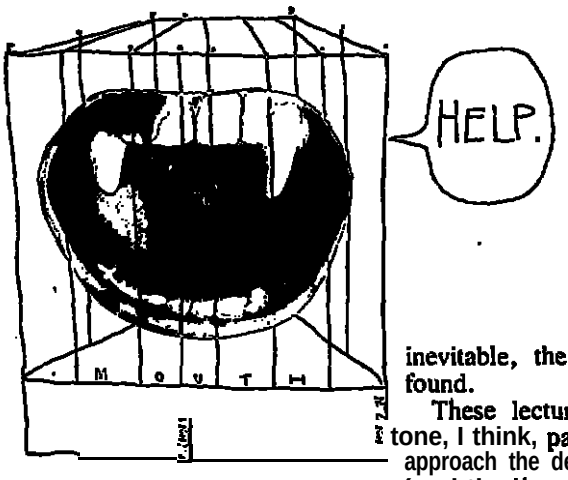
Withering away with relish

Beyond Industrial Growth, edited by Abraham Rotstein, U of T Press. 131 pages. $12.50 cloth (ISBN O-8020-2228-6) and $4.95 paper (ISBN O-8020-6286-5).

By GORD RIPLEY

A NOISE THAT faintly pours from *Beyond Industrial Growth is* that of the 20th century being ground exceedingly small in the wheels of the future. These are lectures recently sponsored by Massey College. now edited for publication by Abraham Rotstein.

The theme can be couched in innocuous terms: six eminent men cautiously ponder the social effects of "return" ton steady-state economy. In fact they are imagining Canada as it will be, in 10 or 20 years, after the deluge. An impetus for these calm speculations



was a report tendered by the Club of Rome in 1972. *The Limits To Growth* warned that there would be, within decades, too little food, too many people. too much pollution (wars and rumours of wars).

Canadians do not anticipate genocide or mass starvation, grisly implications of this study; we have a tiny population. a surfeit of land, bags of resources. Nevertheless, a further Club of Rome conclusion looms over *Beyond Industrial Growth: the* world is running out of the raw materials that feed industrial expansion. A "growth economy" has created and sustained our institutions, class structure, and ways of life. When it goes, as may be inevitable, the stresses will be profound.

These lectures have an optimistic tone, I think, partly because the authors approach the dearh-bed of materialism (and the "consumer society") with some relish. Into the foreseen economic void they fit a more egalitarian, more democratic, more human Canada. Though, as Charles Taylor says, "The future will be gloomy, willy-nilly," they suggest much may presently be done to avoid class warfare or dictatorship when things go sour.

Francis Bacon also rejoined: "Let men do moral things in t&present; the future will take care of itself." Now a part of humanity can do moral things until the cows come home: the future is horribly compromised. This whiff of apocalypse makes *Beyond Industrial Growth* compelling as well as elegant. □

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Dieu et mon (dough)

Montreal: The Days That Are No More. by Edgar Andrew Collard, drawings by John Collins. Doubleday. 316 pages, $9.95 cloth (ISBN 0-385-1 1002-2).

The Billion-Dollar Game: Jean Drapeau and the 1970 Olympics, by Nick Auf der Maur, James Lorimer & Company, 144 pages, $13 cloth (ISBN 0-88862-107-8) and $3.95 paper (ISBN 0-88862-106-x).

Montreal **Inside** Out, 282 pages. $3.95 paper (ISBN O-919988-01-6) and Great Montreal **Walks**, 176 pages, $3.50 paper (ISBN 0-919988-00-8), both by Bonnie Buxton and Betty Guernsey, Burns & MacEachern.

By BRIAN VINTCENT

EVERYONE KNOWS "O God! O Montreal." It's the little refrain you bring out with a sigh and a superior shake of the head after every civic stupidity. Everyone knows what you mean. You don't have to explain that it's the chorus line in Samuel Butler's satirical poem "The Psalm of Montreal," nor that he wrote it after finding a discarded plaster cast of the Discobolus statue hidden in a back room of the Montreal Natural History Society a century ago. And it's not really necessary to have heard that an old man was stuffing an owl in the room at the time and that he said the statue couldn't be put *on* display because it was "rather vulgar," meaning it had no "vest nor pants."

Yet the mutterers of "O God! O Montreal!" who don't know all this. don't generally know that there was a poetic response to Butler's complaint against Montrealers' philistinism and their preference for commerce. In it the "ignorant Londonee" is accused of preferring the works of man to the works of God. the statue to the owl.

And once you've got this far with the story, you're in a position to ask what business Butler had ridiculing Montrealers for their commercial enthusiasms anyway. Had he perhaps forgotten what brought him to the city in the first place? The Canada Tanning Extract Company had gone bankrupt. It so happened that Butler has sunk a substantial sum in that enterprise and was anxious to retrieve it. The irony of the situation clearly escaped him when he came to write his disgruntled poem.

But this poetic confrontation eontains more than meets the casual eye. Using a little fancy, it isn't difficult to uncover in it the irreconcilable differences that have always shaped the character and history of the city. For Montreal is two cities of opposing forces — the City of God and the City of Commerce.

Edgar Andrew Collard nowhere writes of the city specifically in these terms of confontation, but it is certainly implicit in the various articles he has written each week for the Montreal *Gazette* during the past 30 years. He has collected the best of these in a series of books, the fourth of which — *Montreal: The Days That* Are No More -has recently been published.

His technique is the vignette, stories of local history that rely heavily on personalities and separate incidents. His subject is old Montreal from its founding to the late 19th century and occasionally beyond. His intention is to preserve *in* memory both Montreals — the City of God and the City of Commerce.

Certainly these days you have to think hard to remember that Montreal was founded as a City of God. The great convents at Atwater and Sherbrooke are almost deserted; the nuns have given up their winged headdresses and wear mufti in the streets; Nuns' Island is ttying hard to be a thriving, desirable suburb. On the radio. as you swung the dial of an evening, you used to be able to pass two or three stations carrying the mesmerizing mutter of the *Ave Marias,* which vesper congregations all over the city were pouring out in a never-ending cycle. But the congregations have thinned and their intensely pious witness has burnt out like so many of the lights on de Maisonneuve's Cross up on the Mountain. Once the proud symbol of the city's link with its God. a communications tower dwarfs it now.

Some things remain -Jean Mance's Hôtel-Dieu Hospital, though she wouldn't recognize it in its huge modern complex. And to find a bit of original wall that protected Ville Marie you have to go into the cellar of a tavern. The Champ-de-Mars is a parking lot; Jacques Cartier Square is cut off from the river by a hulking grain elevator. Dollierde Casson, the great Superior of the Sulpicians — the order that once owned the entire Island of Montreal — would certainly shake his strong fist in horror at the corruption of the pure and utopian ideals to which the first settlers dedicated themselves.

But it wasn't so long ago that you could still sense the religious spirit that guided old Ville Marie. Before Quebec's Quiet Revolution it still seemed possible that thelunatic piety of a Jeanne Le Ber- who from 1695 until her death 20 years later had herself locked up in a cell behind the high altar of a chapel-could be repeating itself in some dark, scary parish church. Or that those girls in white parading to their first communion could be come of Marguerite Bourgeoys's *filles du roi* designed to beat immense families for the glory of God and the colony's increase. But in thii year of the Olympics, not a trace of all that remains.

Everyone knows who *put an* end to the City of God. After the conquest, the McTavishes and McGills and McGillivrays founded the City of Commerce.

Grand follies are nothing new to Montreal. The city was built on excesses

Each spring they set out from Lachine in the great canoes laden with prodigious quantities of food and drink for the lavish summer banquets held in the wilderness at Fort William. The *voyageurs* paddled and sang up the Ottrow and across Lake Nipissing. The Indians padded silently over the pine needles of the forest floor bearing furs. Montreal grew rich and greedy at the crossroads of the fur trade.

But the City of God would not disappear. It retreated into a frozen conservatism and in 1869 forbade the burial in Christian ground of Guibord, the printer. because he had been a member of the proscribed lnstitut Canadien, a society devoted to freedom of opinion. In Collard's account, the City of God held out for sir years until the Privy Council ordered Guibord's burial. The City of God complied, but had grown crafty. As soon as the accursed man was in the ground, the bishop deconsecrated the plot and to this day there is one single grave in the middle of the Roman Catholic cemetery at Côte-des-Neiges that is not in Christian earth.

Collard's articles do not extend up to the time of the Olympics. That sinuous saga has not yet settled into history. And as far as Nick Auf der Maur is concerned, it won't for a long time to come. As an opposition councillor for the City of Montreal: he has done hi duty in a book that is excellent background for the inquiries into wrongdoing and corruption that are bound to come now the Olympic flame is extinguished.

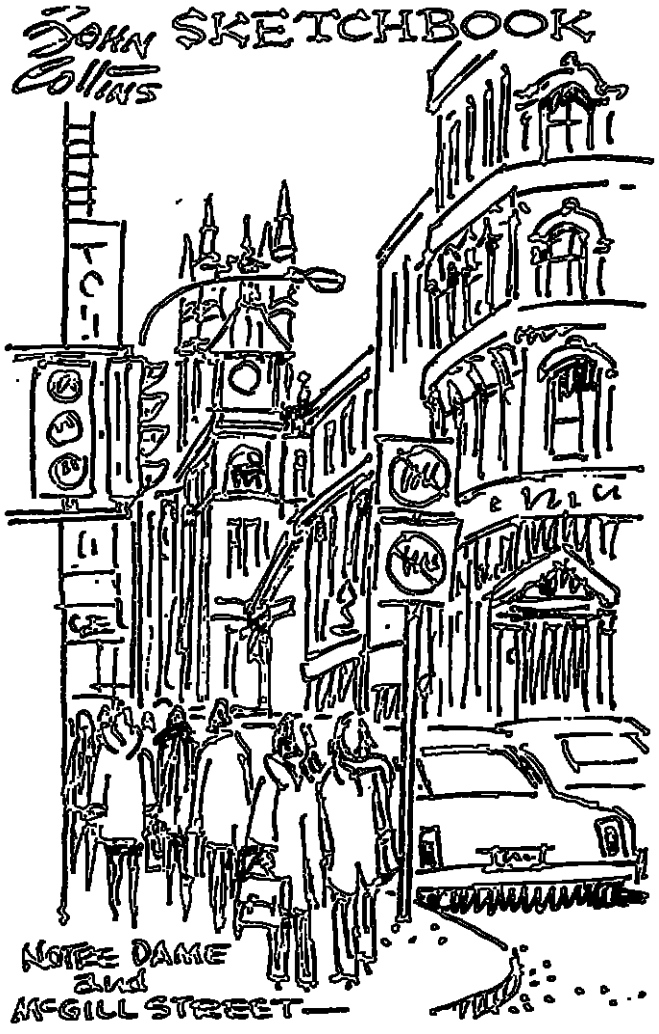
Most of what he says in The *Billion-Dollar Game* is generally well known: Drapeau's almost de Gaulle-sized passion for *grandeur,* and the disaster of his restaurant in the Windsor Hotel. which went bankrupt when patrons declined to agree to the mayor's policy of "disciplined dining," which meant they had to shut up when the orchestra performed. The stories of bad planning and shoddy work are here, crowned by the Olympic Village fiasco where, shottly after the topping-off ceremonies, one of the balconies fell off.

The Billion-Dollar Game is a carper's deliiht. And, sure. the water tax — that amazing invention — is going up in Montreal; there's no money to repair the streets or remove the snow; and the city is one of the last in the world without a sewage treatment plant. which means the towns and villager downriver will continue to have a smelly time for a good while yet.

But if Collard has nothing to say about the Olympics, he does show that Montreal is no stranger to all the fuss they've caused. His article on how, in 1875, the city acquired the Mountain Park — where the new *voyageurs* now gather on St. Jean Baptiste Day. just as their forefathers did in the spring at Lachine to light their tires. sing their songs, and pass the not-always-peaceful pipe of peace — is a story that is uncanny in its similatity to the Olympics saga. The -very greatest foreign landscape architect was retained (not a Frenchman as it happens like Taillibert, but an American). His expenditures were bitterly criticized by the city and, yes, there was greed. One of the owners whose land was expropriated for the park cut down all the trees he could and sold them for timber before he was forced to move.

0 God!, 0 Montreal! indeed. What can you say about a city that dlsplays public statues of Sibelius and Dante and Isabella of Spain, but has forgotten to honour one of its own great heroes, Samuel de Champlain, in a similar way. Or a city that hands Sherbrooke Street over to developers who destroy the great houses of Montreal's own grey mountain stone — including the Van Home mansion, in the attic of which that railway builder passed many a night painting not untalented pictures — and replace them with a faceless canyon of glass and steel.

A hopeless case. you say. Perhaps but Edgar Andrew Collard and other *Anglais* Montrealers like Bonnie Buxton and Betty Guernsey, who have prepared two concise and useful guidebooks to the city, would disagree with you. Because you wouldn't have experienced the quintessential moments of English Montreal-those crisp autumn afternoons through which a curvaceous woman of high fashion strides westward past the museum carrying a stylish little parcel from Holt's, which you are sure contains an article of imported elegance purchased on a whim. Or the frozen nights before Christmas when the Ritz ballroom and the Craig Street Armouries would be, filled with the lights and swirling music of private dances for the sons and daughters of the commercial aristocracy. The days that are no mote. indeed — since Holt's is reputedly bankrupt and no one can afford to rent the Ritz ballroom these days. But they were grand while they lasted. As grand certainly as all the city's yesterdays have been and this surely is the assurance that for as long as Montreal remembers its past, its tomorrows will be just as good. □



Drawing by John Collins from Montreal: The Days That Are No More.

Please don't sink the trilliums

Trillium and Toronto Island, by Mike Filey, Peter Martin Associates, 96 pages. $12 cloth (ISBN 0-88778-141-1) and $5.95 paper (ISBN 0-88778-142-x).

The Toronto Book: An Anthology of Writings Fast and P-t, edited by Williim Kilbourn, Macmillan, 290 pages. $13.95 cloth (ISBN 0-7705-1322-0).

By MARVIN GOODY

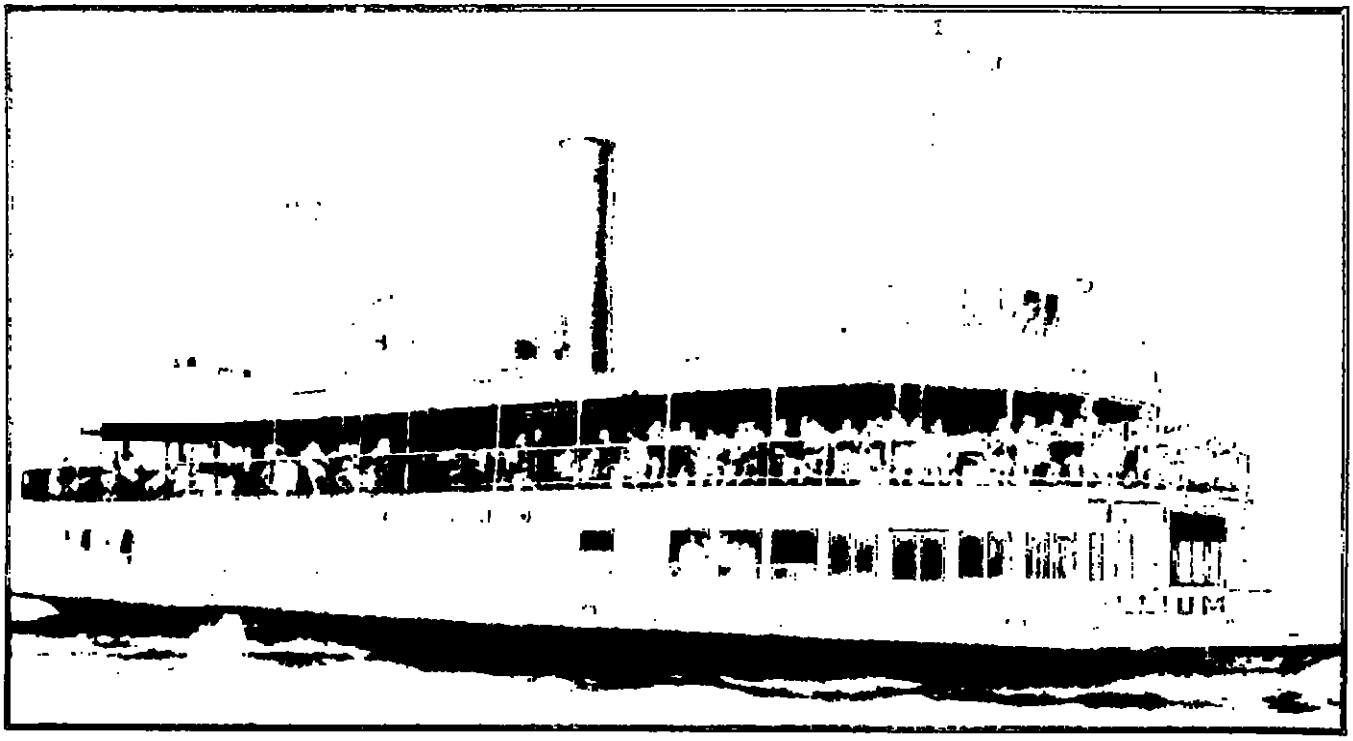
THESE two very different books have in common that they are both about Toronto and that they both include extracts From the diary of Elizabeth Simcoe, wife of the first governor of Upper Canada, and perhaps the first recorded admirer of Toronto Island (then peninsula). Mike Filey's volume is essentially a picture book, but with sufficient text that it might not unreasonably be subtitled "Everything you might have wanted to know about the Toronto Island ferries if you had thought of asking." Bill Kilbourn's is "without apology, a reader" (that is. no illustrations), an idiosyncratic collection of literary pieces and excerpts about Toronto with a few specifically commmissioned items thrown in For good measure.

In 1910 the ferry *Trillium* went *into* service for the Toronto Ferry Company, later taken over by the Toronto Transportation (now Transit) Commission. For 45 years she plied the waters of Toronto Harbour carrying holidayers and Island residents. In 1957, having been taken out of service the previous year because of a decreasing demand for ferry service, she was purchased by the Metm Toronto Works Department for conversion into a garbage scow. Instead, she was left for the next 16 years to mt in an Island lagoon, until the author and other interested persons persuaded city council to approve a $I-million restoration project.

The first and larger portion of the book is concerned with the history of the Island and the development of the ferry service. The second part documents in detail the work of restoration of the *Trillium* which was accomplished in two years between 1973 and 1975.

The photographs and illustrations throughout are abundant and excellent, which is just as well since Mr. Filey is a Fairly pedestrian writer. I would say, though, that the book is an indispensable addition to the library of any Toronto nostalgia buff.

Bill Kilbourn's is a thoroughly amiable book put together by a man who evidently has a deep affection for the living and growing organism that is the city in which be has been active for many years both as academic and alderman. It is a bouillabaisse of diary excerpts, magazine and newspaper articles (even a couple of letters to the editor), personal correspondence, occasional pieces, a short story. some poetry by Raymond Souster (why no one else?), and specially written essays, all roughly grouped under six section headings ranging fmm "Toronto's Past" to "Politics and Pressure Groups." It makes no attempt to be comprehensive or exhaustive, and any Tomnto reader can make his own list of subjects and events that would merit inclusion. (A couple of personal nominations: the Davises and the Crest Theatre and *Spring Thaw;* Domthy Cameron and the, Great Porno Raid in 1965). Nor is the book biased towards any particular point of view. It reminds me a bit (but just a bit) of one of those admirable CBC radio profiles by John Reeves that by illuminating its subject From a variety of angles and sources, creates the sense of a real and fully dimensioned character, not fiued to a Procrustean mold to suit some small mind's urge to neatly. categorize, but bodied forth in all its natural inconsistency and contrariness. That it lacks the



The Trillium *during the war years, from* Trillium and Toronto Island.

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Fallaci is one of the most brilliant and Indefatigable journalists in the world today. She is enormously respected by her colleagues and legendary in her abilitytodrawfrompeoplethings they never revealed before. In these fourteen contemporary portraits of power and dissent, Fallaci makes an important contribution to the understanding of the role of the leader in history. The revealing interviews in this book, which include Henry Kissinger. Thieu, Golda Meir, Yasir Arafat and Indira Gandhi, are enhanced by extensive personal accounts of Fallaci's experience with, attitudes toward and summary view of her subjects.

Toronto's Sunnyside in 1930, from Trillium and Toronto Island.

skillful orchestration of those programs is no great shortcoming since the reader is free to skip back and forth at will.

In Bill Kilboum's own contributions on Toronto history (and he is an historian by trade) one gets a sense of the contagious delight he takes in his material. He is constantly alluding to events and personalities one feels one would like to see given a whole chapter. Strange that he should begin the book with a piece by Percy Robinson who tries hard but almost totally lacks Kilboum's ability to bring the past to life.

There is one serious sin of omission for which Prof. Kilbourn, or his publisher, deserves a smart slap on the wrist. There is no index of authors, and the table of contents is woefully incomplete. Some 50 short items are not listed, more in fact than the numberthat are. The general criterion appears to be that if it is less than a page in length, it is omitted. though there are exceptions both ways. Thus, for example. if one wishes to locate Rupert Brooke's splendidly patronizing characterization of Toronto in 1914, which does in fact occupy a full page, one must (lacking a photographic memory) thumb through the book until it turns up. Furthermore, if one wishes to know the source of a particular item. perhaps with a view to reading further. one may search the page of microscopically and solidly printed copyright acknowledgements with a magnifying glass, and if lucky obtain a clue. Otherwise, all we are vouchsafed is a date. Similarly, only the authors listed in the contents are found in the biographical notes.

These unfortunate oversights contribute to an impression that the book may have been thrown together in haste from Prof. Kilboum's files, although an alternative explanation is provided by his acknowledgement of "the invaluable help of John Robert Colombo in .. assembling [the] material." (Of course these are not necessarily mutually exclusive. One can visualize Prof. Kilboum. a busy man, saying to his friend: "Here John, I've collected all this material. Do you think you could whip it into some kind of shape?") I would suggest that the publisher print a decent table of contents, sources, and biographical notes and make this available to all purchasers of the book. Surely at $13.95 a copy Macmillan can afford this.

Not to conclude on a carping note, I would like to mention some of my favorite pieces: the previously cited letter of Rupert Bmoke; Robert Fulford's memoir of growing up in "the Beach," done in hi best quietly devastating manner. Hugh Hood's delectable "Recollections of the Works Department"; Ernest Hemingway on free shaves at the barber college. with a strong flavor of Leacock (have litcrits noted this influence on his style?); and finally, to sum up, this quote from Eric Nicol, which might have served as an epigraph for the volume:

> It is not as easy to hate Toronto as it used to be. It can still be done, of course. If you put your mind to it. But you are no longer struck, the moment you step off the train or the plane, by a wave of offensiveness.

□

Ironist in the fire

The Lady **and** the **Travelling Salesman: Stories by Leo Simpson,** University of Ottawa Press, **155 pages. $5.40 paper (ISBN** O-7766-4337-1).

By CHRIS **SCOTT**

A **COMPUTER HOUSING** doctoral **mathematicians** who impregnate **secretaries,** a new religion marketed by a **giant** corporation. a TV station **broadcasting** inverted images. the news at the **wrong** time and continuous commercials — these were some of the mordant **satirical** inventions in Leo Simpson's **first** novel. ***Arkwright.*** Published in 1971, it was an **18th-century** book of **humours,** vast. whimsical and amusing. a **Fieldingesque** romp through the world **of** North American big business. **Two features** distinguished ***Arkwright*** **as a first novel:** the author's wit [Anglo-Irish, **a rare compound of Swift** and **Sterne),** and the quintessential sanity **at** its core-on present showing, a **vision** still clearly in Focus.

In 1973 Macmillan of Canada also **published** Simpson's second novel, ***The Peacock Papers.*** wherein the **19th-century** satirist. Thomas Love Peacock, returns to the mythical small **town** of **Bradfarrow, Ont.,** in an attempt to thwart the conversion of the **local** library into an **eletromagnetic** data **bank.** The Peacock connection hints at **Simpson's** own sensibility: that of a **man** who. committed to no cause or **party, finds** himself embattled as a free **agent against** the mindless legions of contemporary technocracy.

Born in Limerick, Ireland, in 1934. Simpson came to Canada in 1961 and worked as an editor and then as the **publicity director for a Toronto** publishing ***company. In 1966 he*** resigned his position. and now **writes** full-time From **his** rural retreat near Madoc. in eastern Ontario. This new book. a collection of 10 stories written between 1966 and 1974, assures hi reputation as a subversive **ironist** at large in the **camp** of the Global Village.

The stories range from anecdote to fable. the narrative mode **from** realism **to** allegory. A **favourite** target of **Simson,** the **fabulist,** is the corporate state, in its academic or industrial **manifestations** and absurd jungle. with its own **absurd** lore. **"You** make a businessman sound **like** a Martian," protests **Grayson, in the** story, **"The Ferris Wheel."** "He s a human **being.'** Seager. the personnel director, corrects him: "A good businessman ***operates*** under special conditions,. like a good soldier. A soldier would lose battles if he kept remembering he was a human being." Garth **Abertyte,** president of the Rockhouse **&** Stem advertising agency in "Where Does A Giant Gorilla Sleep?"' (the answer: "Anywhere he likes") has almost forgotten that he is a human being. But not entirely; he fears for his reason, as well he might, faced with the problem of marketing "Lash," a product that **exists** in name only. "A concrete subject is a concrete anchor," he says. "Wings of eloquence won't carry concrete. Freedom, justice, **honour,** integrity. there you go, all abstract, so **naturally** we're not saying what Lash actually ***is, see?"***

Abertyte enlists the aid of **Crom Cruach,** a Druid who dislikes blood, sacrifices **goats,** doves, and virgins (in the afternoon), and claims to be opposed to the forces **of "Urapit," a sinister** agency bent on world domination. Meanwhile, the "Lash" campaign continues "with billboards, toothy salesmen, sensual tones, **electon [sic] engines** and threats."

The political satire here ls apparent; what is remarkable is the use of surrealism **to** demonstrate a **very real** moral. In a post-Onvellian, **cosmeticized** world, the only way to escape madness is by death-or, like **Professor D'Arcy** in "The Ivy Covered Manner," by becoming a super-madman. **D'Arcy** has a shod way with his critics; he kills them, **which is the only** sensible **thing** to do. **Imagine** Sheridan returned to **a university EngLit** department, with its Feuds, slavish industry, and parasitism — and you have **pretty much** the tone of this story. As a fable of futility, it matches any in the book. But it **is** also a wildly comic ***jeu d' esprit,*** which encompasses, in 11 pages, the odd **800** or 900 needed for a novel **like *Giles, Goat Boy.***

There is more than satire in this **collection,** however. Harry Connors, the **travelling** salesman of the title story, **returns** to **visit** an old friend, Robert, but finds his wife Patricia instead. Seen through her eyes. he is brash and aggressive. A porcine parody of the chauvinist archetype. **Harry, es we soon** discover **from** telephone calls, sells machine guns to the **Third** World. Patricia, a suburban **Libber,** doing **strawberry flans** for the cause, is **right-**

eously indignant. Two months every year. she and her doctor husband work, without **pay,** at a Mexican mission. Harry asks **if Robert** is down at the hospital. No, he's gone **to** the city hall with a delegation pmtesting the rezoning of one of hi slum districts for industry. She is so moral, so **asceptic** in her cut-off cords and jersey top; and of course she **protests** too much. She is also eminently makeable. They quarrel; Patricia breaks Harry's head with a rolling pin and stitches it up for him. Tbe dog, **Heathcliff,** bites his ankle; she fixes that, too. but he does not get her into **bed.**

Everything and nothing happens in **this** story. Behind the eternal quadrilateral — wife, husband, friend of same, and telephone — behind the catechism of pose and counter-pose, **the** idiot slogans of **our** day. there are two people, Harry and Patricia, who **have** just met each other and are yet to meet themselves. Professor Henry **Imbleau** (from whose pen this book comes with an introduction) sees in this **"a** subtly **ironic** retelling of Cinderella" — probably because Patricia herself makes bitter-sweet play with the **heroine** of the hearth. I do not **know** which version of Cinderella he refers to, **only** that **Simpson's story** is **a brilliant and** exactly **cut** facet **of eternity.**

He is equally successful in "The **Savages,"** a masterly **exposé** of North American attitudes. Charles **Polson,** computer **programmer,** another plastic man, three months married, wallows in weekend fantasies at his cottage north of Toronto. **Polson's** dream of Etienne **Brulé** and the perfect program is interrupted by three boys and a girl. Apocalypse trippers, they're armed — with a switchblade and a Springfield 30. **Polson's** wife is raped, the kids playing with her as they do with his electric-train set. More by default than &sign, he kills two of the boys with the knife, and is going to shoot the **third** when **he discovers** that the firing pin has been tiledoffthe rifle. Not until **the end** of the story does Simpson reveal his hand: "There was **never honour," Polson reflects, "nor was** there pity. So **for** the hyperbolic equation. the wave **equation,** I should remove one independent variable by **using** a finite difference. I should put away my playthings and find out what I am now. This day has destroyed me. It has left me with nothing."

A bleak vision? Not really. The **quality** of Simpson's indignation is subtle rather than savage: in the Charles **Polsons** of this world there is nothing to destroy.

Balanced against the humanity of "The Cahershannon Heresy," in which a youthful agnostic becomes a missionary to Africa in order ***to con***vince the people that "they are not the deceitful and sinful wretches they sop pose themselves to be, but noble and upstanding folk, with noessential harm in them"; or compared with "Visiting **The** Future," an elegiac **portrayal** of an **emigrant's** return **to Ireland,** this is a catholic collection in every sense of the word, strong, **beautifully** written, and compassionate.

The Lady and the Travelling Salesman looks as though it was designed by an insane computer as a textbook on the intrinsic motivation of rats. Every paragraph, every line of dialogue is separated by a double-line space-a hideous layout, distracting the mind and eye. This **is** a disservice to Simpson, a fine writer whose **prose** is **alive** with a delightful sympathy for **this** poor, abused. tawdry language of ours. □

For whom the bell hops

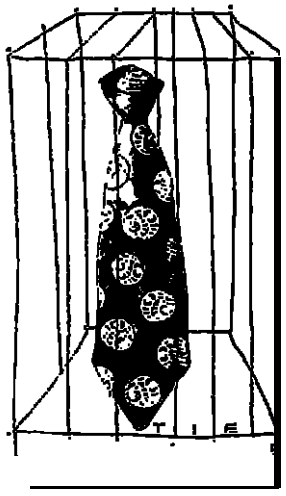
Night Desk, by George Ryga. **Talonbooks,** 128 pages, $2.95 paper **(ISBN 0-88922-089-1).**

By **DuBARRY** CAMPAU

GEORGE RYGA would have us believe that this is not his story, that he took down verbatim the words of it during long nights in a seedy Edmonton hotel **from** one of its guests. This is a device that has been used by other, and distinguished. writers of fiction — Somerset **Maugham, Joseph Conrad,** and William **McFee** among them. Yet it is a technique that never quite persuades me of its validity because, perhaps, I am not that good **a listener,** or that even if I found the man's story enthralling I would want to interrupt it to ask questions.

However, if one can accept the premise of the conditions **under** which it is supposed to have been written, thii is in many ways an extraordinarily fascinating **account** of the life of a bully and a **braggart** who not only goes to ballets, but cries at them. Romeo Kuchmir, fmm Calgary, says he is the son of a Cossack whose forebears cut off the heads of Turks. In **Western** Canada he found not quite such dashing deeds to perform and has settled for being a wrestler and, getting a bit past that. a **wrestling** promoter. But there is a writer of bad verse tucked away somewhere under his brawn.

"I'm a man **from where the** pine trees **grow** and the wind bums like the



smoke stacks of hell." he says. "That's the way I am and that's the way I live."

Romeo is affirmative about love, or at least about fucking, and is not reticent in recalling his amorous adventures. His background was rough; his father owned an unsuccessful pool hall where much of Romeo's education took place. "A woman was a broad and a noisy man was the leader of a gang — so I talk and think like I was trained to do." he explains.

He once rose to a fairly hiih plane of spiritual adoration, brought on by a luscious female evangelist. But when he heard her speaking naturally, and extremely vulgarly, to her husband, she turned, for him, into one more broad. Yet through all of hi own coarseness, a gleam of romantic aspiration comes shining through, usually with extreme sentimentallity.

Ryga evidentally finds this character strong, exciting, and celebratory — a nature boy who reacts with joy to the small wisps of art and culture that he has sensed but not been able to grasp. To me. it is not this aspect of Romeo that is of interest. Instead, it is the vigorous, colourful, and vivid language in which he describes his battered life and the browbeaten, defeated companions with whom he has shared it. Tacky and sordid though it may be, whores, bartenders, midget and women wrestlers, bi-sexuals, and petty thieves all contribute enormous vitality to it.

Romeo is undeniably picturesque in his language and describes with relish the grimy, gutsy underside of Western Canada. He is a sort of folk hero -and that is certainly how Rygs sees him — that has so far had little singing done about him in this country. For that reason alone, quite apart from his saga being extremely readable, he deserves our recognition, if not quite the admiradon given him by the author. □

As time cycles by

So Free We Seem, by Jamie Brown. Clarke Irwin, 177 pages, $8.95 cloth (ISBN O-7720-10529).

By DENNIS DUFFY

THE SECOND installment in a trilogy that will cover "the rise and fall over three generations of the fictional Moncrieff family," So *Free We Seem* deals with auto manufacturers whose careers one assumes will span most of our century. The Jalna novels prove that popular sequential fiction not only can entertain, but also display certain widespread assumptions that a society holds about itself at a particular time. The chronicle of the Whiteoak family reveals the prevalence among its characters of a Loyalist and colonialist cast of mind. Their standards of worth and gentility,

however often breached. are rooted in an overseas culture presenting them with what they see as their sole cultural protection against the overwhelming presence of the U.S. fact. The hero of So *Free We* Seem, on the other hand. fulfills the popular nationalist assumptions of the Canadian present, but in such a way as to reveal our ironies and lapses, rather than our insights.

In this thinly told tale, William Moncrieff spurns his rich-boy advantages to rake to the road during the Depression and follow the *vocation* of a painter. Thus the opportunity arises to tell the reader of the philistinism, callousness, and cautious colonial-mindedness of the central Canadian ruling élite, and the herb murmurs "Group of Seven" as a mantra. However. this is all a matter of telling rather than showing, and thus such events as the First World War. the Oshawa and Stratford strikes, and the Second World War whirl by at a cycloramic pace. In fact, the piece bears the same relationship to a novel that a cyclorama does to reality, dependent as it is on placing characters against a background in such a way as to make that setting appear real.

What happens is that a series of social happenings are invoked to motivate a fairy-tale (you've seen it in Fritz Lang's film *Metropolis*) wherein the cruel boss's son takes up with the worker's daughter. The characters aren't really a part of those events; they just have things happen to them. To view this from another angle: the pasteboard figures who represent the political notions of Richard Rohmer are wholly defined by their socio-political stance, the managerial Canadian, the tycoon American, and so forth. But their private vacuums fail to hamperthe roles they play in their creator's political tracts. It is only when they are examined from thestandpoint ofliterature that they vanish. In another way, the characters in this novel have no reality beyond the story-telling clichés they embody (rich kid, poor kid) so that their lives offer no examination of the social values and events they purport to convey. And thus the colonialist apeing of the gentry in a fox hunt comes to be more sharply conveyed than an indigenous labour massacre.

Though the novel mouths the "right" principles, its very shape reflects nothing different from that of the machine-tooled, global best-seller. Of course. it isn't nearly as finely crafted as the efforts of a Delderfield, but instead is the sort of third-rate imitation of an internationalist norm that only a Canadian publisher would feel is adequate enough for his meagre, unquestioning public.

The split between theory end practice, the curious manner in which nationalist slogans can flourish within an increasingly continentslist economy, are never more clearly revealed than in this book. If themythical crew of monkeys sat down at the typewriter and one day punched out all of *Canadian Forum*, that still wouldn't give us Canadian culture. •i

Hard cell

Shaking It Rough, by Andreas Schroeder. Doubleday, 232 pages, $9.95 cloth (ISBN 0-385-12310).

By TERRENCE HEATH

ANDREAS SCHROEDER'S prison memoir, *Shaking It Rough*, is a fine, perceptive, and intelligent account of prison life. It could do more for the understanding of the penal system in Canada than five sociological studies and three royal commissions.

Schroeder is not writing *about* the system. He is not tabulating statistics or guestimating the effects of punitive justice. lie is writing out of prison life in its everyday, every-week, every-month realities. He writes of men's hopes and desires, their emotions, their battles, their hates and loves. He writes with passion and with humour. Within 20 pages, he has drawn you into the cells, the corridors. and the work-camp gangs. You know how it feels to live in close proximity with men who are either you friends or your enemies. There is no third possibility. No man can make it alone: he must be part of the society; he must have friends and know who his enemies are. There is no place he can go to be alone, except to the cold steel slats of a cot in the isolation cell. Those inmates who can't come to terms with life inside "shake it rough."

As you move with the author deeper into prison life, you slowly realize that the horror of confinement in prison has more in common with "everyday life" than you might have expected at the beginning. As the prison becomes the only reality and the outside world loses its hard lines and certain proportions, you find the prison is inhabited by people who have the characteristics of people everywhere. It is this depiction of men (prisoners and guards) as both individuals and as part of a closed and ruthless world that makes *Shaking It Rough a* book for anyone who wants to know, not what it is like to be in prison, but what it is like to be stripped of all the excess baggage we schlepp through

life and be forced to live with an intensitu and consciousness that raise life above the mechanical rituals most of us suffer as "real life."

Shaking It Rough is a book written in a hurry: some of it scribbled down while in prison; some written later. The structure of the book is a stringing together of these "fragments." The writing has some rough places. But the language from one cover to the other never loses its vitality. The language of much of the book comes right out of the language of prison: it is grotesquely coarse, but electric and tense. There is no peace. no pausing, and no delicate phrasing. As with the author. the only break the reader gets is a day's pass that ends with a lo-ticket ride on a roller coaster. Schroeder has let the language lead him and it speaks as the experience itsdf.

Shaking It Rough is not a book to be savoured. It is not a full vintage wine: it is green. heady, and tasting of the berry. It's what it should be. □

One up, two down

The **Werewolf Miralces,** by Terry Crawford, Oberon Press, 95 pages, 57.95 cloth (ISBN 0-88750-183-4).

Glass Passages, by Wayne Clifford, Oberon Press, 152 pages, S8.95 cloth (ISBN 0-88750-154-0) and $4.50 paper (ISBN 0-88750- 182-6).

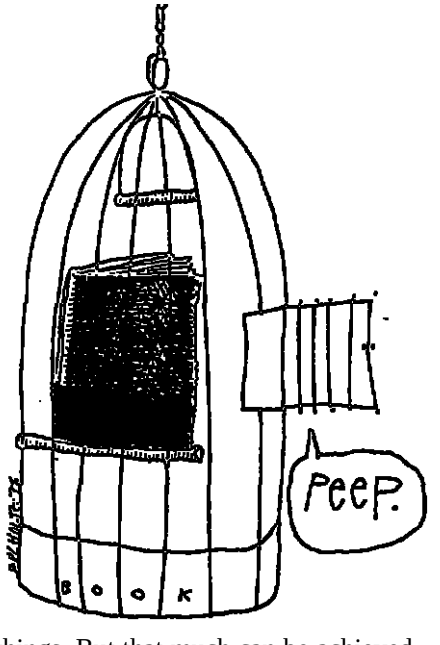
Even yr photograph looks afraid of me, by Artie Gold, Talonbooks. 69 pages, unpriced, paper (ISBN 0-88922-059-x).

By PIER GIORGIO DI CICCO

THE VEIN OF neo-surrealism is sufficiently new *to this country* that ir is hard to slight a book that has the interests of language at heart. *The Werewolf Miracles* is a book of poems that tries to escape or transcend the literal facts of this world -but the miracles have yet to arrive. The poems have the instinct of good poetry, but lack the form of it. The mode is familiar; the abrupt narrative of ostensibly trivial events tendered marvellous by the shocking and the unexpected. The poems are allied in mood, but suffer in their proximity to each other. They are untitled and undifferentiated in format and one is left wondering how much one poem has to do with the next. The effort distracts. The pattern of continuity is invented only to be let down. Editing might have spared two or three rereadings. Two things are needed — concision and a clearly allegorical pattern of images. Lacking these, a mere sense of the extraordinary remains, one that tires in a book of 95 pages.

It is embarrassing to have to consult the jacket blurb for insights into a volume of poems. There was no alternative in the case of Wayne Clifford's *Glass Passages.* The poems do not have a convincing sense of structure. The words are too many and their purpose vague. I missed a distinctive rhythm, either visual or tonal. These difficulties were aggravated by the length of the book. The wasteful use of typographical space is a partial answer. Rather than risk the unkindness of a quote from the book, I recall the publisher's note: "If we cannot reach our destination, we can at least find out where we are now."

Artie Gold's wit is not as genial and lighthearted as the cover of his book may suggest. In spite of the title and the cartooned cats prancing about a typewriter, the poems pack a lot of punch, and the humour is acerbic. These are poems that rebel from a literal world with their gusto, their sheer disatisfaction with the way things are. The lines sweep across the page in a fashion reminiscent of Ginsberg. There is an almost concerted effort to be liberal in spacing, in typography. Gold is intent on grappling with the literal world; he grapples well, even if the point of it is sometimes lost. The satire is not distanced from the authorial gripe. If the poems are witty, they are not generous. If they are intelligent, they don't provide a moral base for poking fun at



things. But that much can be achieved with experience. What can't be achieved is what Gold already has -a maverick sensibility that can make poetics out of anything. □

Lebensraum at last

A Different Sun, by Walter Bauer, translated fmm the German by Henry Beissel, Oberon Press, 118 pages, $8.95 cloth (ISBN O-88750-165-6).

By MICHAEL THORPE

AT THE VERY LEAST, writing like Bauer's is a timely reminder that there are more kinds of Canadian consciousness than the '*English" and the "French." Bauer's consciousness is, of course, the poet's: but it is also that of many thousands who. like him, came to Canada in middle life as matured Europeans for whom neither official language can ever express the depths of their experience. It is only through the fluent service of Bauer's translator Henry Beissel, in English versions refreshingly free from imposed poetic devices, that we are privileged to hear a moving voice from among those Canadians who are overlooked in disputes about cultural discrimination. They are likely to be divided dreamers, nursing "a desperate love for Europe," yet seeking, in flight from Nazi Germany, the Soviet empire, or Italian poverty, a new, clean beginning under "a different sun." As Beissel, no besotted devotee, comments in his objective preface: "It is simply not true that the Canadian 'never knew shame.' Just ask any Indian." Nevertheless, he understands and forgives Bauer's tendency to idealize Canada, as other readers will.

After a past in Hitler's Germany, the harrowed spirit seeking renewal clutches at hope, not new reasons for despair. Bauer's "older man's" message is "Onward!/The charge of the living," but not only that; it is charged with his duty to witness to a comparatively innocent country that, as a German and a human being, he brings to his new land his people's terrible history as a universal inheritance.. Though he has so far overlooked Canada's enormities, several biting short poems point how dangerously thii inheritance lives on in America. Several of his most deeply felt longer poems take historical perspective in their celebration of others who have borne witness that the "lucky" ones "who are still in the light" may see. Breughel and Goya, like "the men of the twentieth of July/Nineteen hundred and forty-four," refused the total emigration that is the easiest way.

Bauer's voice, as befits his age (72). is ripe in the wisdom of chastened experience, yet with a fiery embracing of life without which no man can continue a true poet in age:

Resignation is for others.
For me the knowledge
In spite of which
I carry on.

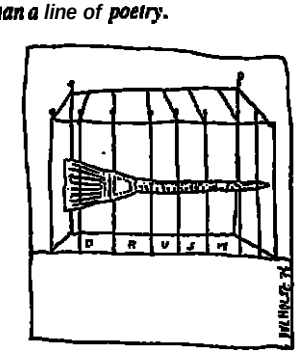
His strength comes from looking outward beyond obsessed introspection or the doom-laden despair he derides in contemporary poets, philosophers, "pseudo-paupers" (young bourgeois "revolutionaries") with their merely imagined sufferings: "Big words/ Turn/My stomach.-. . . I eat myself well/On little words." His youthful Communism (he was beginning m make his name as a left-wing writer before Hitler came to power) gleams still in the bleak. compassionate eye attentive to his fellow immigrants. He penetrates beneath their outlandish clothing to the harsh experience he shared with them; many poems in the first part of the book, notably the five-section "Dishwashers." attest this with a moving blend of irony, sympathy and realism. They also ponder the new country's meaning in a sequence of observations. open questions, and tentative affirmations. In "Canada" and other poems, the arctic, "icy void" draws the imagination of this biographer of Nansen towards a simplifying, awesome clarity that renders artificial our every form of light:

Northern lights
Moving gigantically in flaming silence
Converse about nothing.

The second and third parts of this ample collection are devoted to political commentary and reflection and to less remarkable pieces on the nature of poetry and the poet's calling. Throughout. a strong, brooding voice compels attention and respect, especially in the dignified monologues and conversation pieces Bauer — in Wordsworth's phrase, "A man speaking to men" — favours. One can believe him when he affirms, of the shoemaker with whom he would talk as if to Pasternak:

A glance from the eyes
Of the short Ukrainian
Warms me
No more. no less
Than a line of poetry.

□



Whisper our trespasses

Beothuck Poems. by Sid Stephen, Oberon Press. 58 pages. $7.95 cloth (ISBN 0-88750-121-4) and $3.50 paper (ISBN 0-88750-162-1).

By PATRICIA KEENEY SMITH

THE POETRY of Sid Stephen's *Beothuck Poems* is subdued. even self-effacing. Unconsciously, it almost **hides** more than if **reveals of a vanished people.** We get glimpses and imaginative **extensions** from a few **meagre** facts. In this book, the **Beothuck** Indians, "native inhabitants of Newfoundland" when the **Europeans** came in the **mid-1400s,** first sounded the island "as if it were a bell," making its **harsh** reality their own. **Their** presence is conjured up in images of mutability and isolation. Their **rituals** transmit a spare and **beautiful** logic: their **craftsmen** observe **perfectly.**

Not **every** piece works, but there is **something** in each. Europeans are as **ludicrous** as beached whales; they penetmte the wilderness to feel "the sudden/warmth of cobwebs/on the face at night," and **are** plagued by the "cold **sparks/** of fear ... **struck/** in dry white minds." Suffering is starkly conveyed. **Starvation** is felt with "Each **motion** [that] brings dead **flesh/ painfully** to life."

The plights of Mary March and Shawnadithit (two of the Indians captured, we **are** told, by white hunting parties) **are** recorded with compassion, the power of incident giving force to poetry. Odd and touching **are** the accompanying maps and drawings made by Shawnadithit while in captivity; they provide the last tentative links to an obscure **past. There** is ironic counterpoint in the **final** section of the book. which describes a modem odyssey into Newfoundland; but the barren hostile mystery is unchanged.

Generally, the writing is plain and dignified. almost constrained by an elusive **and austere** subject. One remembers the content over the style, which is perhaps a measure of success., This story of the island and its **first** people is "whispered/but **not told."** □

script & film

Why 'Gzowski on FM' fizzled and what its successor should be looking for

By RON WALDIE

LAST FALL the CBC launched its new national FM-radio network. Ode of the flagship offerings was a national **late**-afternoon **program** on the arts. ***Gzowski on FM.*** The show, which attempted to capitalize on **Peter Gzowski's** name and talents, underwent a **refit** in June when Gzowski left the show for the summer and, ultimately, television. The program was **re-christened** as ***The Entertainment Section.*** with peter Downie as host. September, however, will see the program scuttled. CBC management now is investigating various options before embarking on **another arts** program.

While it might be tempting to see the demise of this program as an example of the CBC backing **out** of yet another imaginative commitment **—two** hours a ***day of prime-time radio*** devoted to the arts is **imaginative — I think** it would he far more valuable to take a closer look at the past year's experiment, since the **program** ultimately must be **judged** a **failure.** It's to be hoped the **replacement** can capitalize on **the** strengths of its **predecessor while** avoiding the **pitfalls.**

The single most laudatory aspect of the show was its emphasis on live performances by its guests. This policy **gave** the show a vital element of **creative** tension and provided the guests with tangible monetary support. (Since **it** went on air last November, the **program** has **averaged** more than **$11,000 per** month in **performance fees.)** Artists, especially musicians. have thus **benefitted** fmm a superb technical **exposure** of their work to a national audience and a comfortable **cheque** to accompany the promotion. The policy of keeping **the** production team as small as possible and relying on the artists and performers to supply the content is one that should be carried over to whatever replacement format the **CBC** adopts.

There were, however, major problems **with** the program's design. Its approach to the arts was one of assiduous non-specialization. **Gzowski** described his **role** as host as that of "being a dilettante among the arts"; of "acting as a surrogate for those who are interested but who do not know much about them." This **tactic** was designed to make the arts more easily **approach**able for a wider segment of the audience. While this idea had interesting possibilities in theory, the realities of its application **left** much to be desired. **It** was also the unwitting cause of the major problem of the program: the **lack** of any meaningful critical perspective.

Before embarking on any kind of discussion about "critical perspective" it is vital that this concept be clearly understood. During the past decade, which will surely be viewed as one of the **great** ages of sentimentality, this concept, like those of **literacy** and self-discipline, has become part of the new profanity. By critical, **therefore,** I mean the process whereby any **creative** activity: be it artistic, scientific, **mechanical,** or academic, is placed in formal and historical perspective and then evaluated. A critical approach focuses attention on the work rather than its **creator** and establishes meaningful

contests for appreciation. Gzowski's role as a dilettante gave the program a unique potential for such an approach because he was in a position to ask basic critical and formal questions in the highly relaxed and personable manner which is his trademark.

Because of a production decision to eliminate the idea of criticism and to avoid talking about THE ARTS, however, this potential was wasted. Gzowski, in fact, often had remarkably little to talk about. The focus, instead of being on the art form as an intrinsically interesting and important phenomenon, was on the artist as a supposedly. interesting and important personality. All too often. Gzowski ended up having to ask the most banal and empty of questions: "When did you write that song?" or "How long does it take to write a poetry sequence?" Thii approach implicitly conceded that the song or the poem was either too difficult or boring for a radio conversation or that it was simply not important enough to discuss. It also resulted in dull conversation and established a dangerous precedent in treating the arts.

Artists are interesting and important only as their work is interesting and important. The assumption that because an artist is "creative." he is a personality. is highly questionable, since it serves to separate the artist from the rest of the population. many of whom. in their own contexts. are highly creative. Gzowski's consistent attempts to make artists. many of whom need a sense of privacy and detachment to survive, "open-up" often resulted in self-conscious and annoyingly precious conversations. In late May. for example, Gzowski spent an hour with John Hammond, one of the finest and most knowledgeable blues artists in the business. Only the last question. which had to be rushed because of time, allowed Hammond to talk about the blues rather than himself. It was fascinating to not6 the change in his manner. An intensity immediately emerged that. had it pervaded the entire interview, would have made for much more interesting listening. It would also have served to broaden my knowledge of this fascinating genre, which will last much longer than John Hammond.

The only defence of the program's studied refusal to adopt this approach lay in the view that critical discussions are exclusive and boring and that the show must aim for a general audience appeal. Poppycock! First, the CBC FM network is an urban network. That means that anywhere the program is heard. alternative radio is available. So those who are not interested in the arts can change stationswhile those who are interested — and there are many -can listen. How many? According to the Canada Council and Statistics Canada,

there were 100 million paid admissions to visual and performing arts events in 1974. During the same period. there were 64 million paid admissions to sporting events.

Second. the assumption that critical approaches are exclusive approaches is both patronizing and dangerous. Surely the producers could have credited the people of this country with some intelligence and sensitivity. Thus the attempt to make the arts more approachable by assuming a folksy air ironically served to patronize and alienate both the arts and the audience. Borh are too important for that kind of treatment.

Another major problem with the program was the absence of a consistent national focus. Put simply, the show ignored the reality of that border. I am not about to urge the replacement to adopt any kind of Canadian-only purity quota. But I sincerely hope that it will recognize that Canadian cultural and entertainment values are not identical to those south of the border. The issue is not one of Canadian being better or worse. but of Canadian being different and different being important.

I am. for example. curious to know why Bill Usher and Linda Page Harper were gallivanting all over the United States talking to bluegrass/ blues/ jazz musicians and then sending the tapes north. Have we explored in any meaningful way the folk traditions in this country? Why weren't they in Newfoundland. the Maritimes, or Quebec? Similarly. Truman Capote's trivial and vicious gossip about New York's élite, which has absolutely nothing to add to the arts scene in rhe U.S., let alone Canada, was inflicted on us as some sort of major event. Why?

I simply refuse to accept the proposition that then? is not enough going on in the arts in this country to build a daily two-hour, prime-time program. The problem with all the arts in Canada is that hardly anyone knows what *is* going on. Surely, one of the real functions of programs such as this was to find out about and make us aware as a country of what we are, in fact, doing. Why wasn't there some good old investigative journalism into such general areas as the recording and publishing industries in this country, or the problems of arts funding. or the issues raised by the Symons report on Canadian awareness? Why not a series of discussions with distinguished Canadian literary clitics such as A.J.M. Smith, George Woodcock. or Northrop Frye on the state of CanLit? Did anybody bother to find out what the Royal Winnipeg Ballet has planned for next season? There is in this country an astonishing array of material available for intelligent and interesting broadcasting. It's a shame that the program chose not to explore thii potential.

The continental assumptions of the show. rather than raising awareness of and critical interest in the arts in Canada. served instead to reinforce the assumption that "real" culture is hap pening somewhere else-like the Ap palachians, or the deep South, or New York and Hollywood.

To be sure, important Canadian talent did get exposure — if and when it got to Toronto. The exposure was often the result of coincidence; the artists were there because of a concert date. or a book publication, or an opening night. Generally, there were dismally few attempts to get even basic information about the arts and artists in the rest of Canada on the show. Onceagain, we had the infuriating impression of Toronto sitting back and waiting for the rest of the country to come m it.

The purpose of writing an article such as thii in a national book review is not to take shots at a program that is already &ad. The purpose is to stress that the original commitment was important; the country needs a program like this. I hope that the CBC does schedule a replacement and that it can give the arts in this country the treatment rhev deserve. I will be a very interested and hopeful listener this coming fall. □

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Notes & Comments

THE SUMMER began for the Canadian publishing industry with a display of petty bickering in Vancouver. It ended with the book-review section of the august New York *Times* carping about cultural nationalism in "colonial" Canada. But in between some real progress was made toward unity, common sense. and enlightenment.

The bickering, which marred the otherwise highly successful annual convention of the Canadian Booksellers Association, arose over the old issue of special orders — publishers selling directly to the public. Burlington bookseller Al Cummings, later elected the new CBA president. reported that nine Toronto publishers had been approached by an *agent provocateur* asking for books. Only one — McClelland & Stewart — refused. The publishers replied hotly that. depsite such lapses. special orders are against company policies. They claimed moreover that when potential customers are referred to a retailer, the bookstore often fails to fill the order. With that, the name-calling began. Ironically. the seminar in which this exchange took place was called "Between Friends: Co-operation instead of Confrontation."

We think this is a non-issue. The relation between booksellers and publishers is symbiotic; they can't exist without each other. Publishers should do their best to ensure that company policies are observed. But if the odd desperate book-buyer is prepared to trek into a remote suburb to obtain a badly needed book, it would be churlish not to accommodate him or her. Harmony could be preserved be ensuring that the retail profits from such occasional transactions are donated to the CBA pension fund.

The carping in the New. York *Times* was prompted by the recent sale of Simon & Schuster's Canadian branch plant to General Publishing. The unsigned article, which had a curiously imperial ring to it, took the view that the deal was a distress sale consummated under the shotgun of Ottawa's Foreign Investment Review Agency. Another edge of the American empire has been chipped away; another corner turned in Canada's sad, mad, government-inspired rush toward premature independence. 0 Howe, thou shouldst be living at this hour!

Well, presumably the *Times* will understand if we colonials take a somewhat different view. FIRA's interest in S&S began when the firm's New York parent was taken over by Gulf & Western. the American conglomerate. Gulf & Western then approached the Canadian government to see whether it could retain indirect control of the S&S operation in Canada. FIRA said no, ruling that the firm's ultimate ownership had changed and the change would not be "of significant benefit to Canada." Suggestions that this decision amounted to "a thinly disguised expropriation" are nonsense. Had its own status not changed, S&S could have gone on running a branch plant here, legally and without pressure, until the second coming of Richard Nixon.

However. it seems that all the while Simon & Schuster has been planning to sell its Canadian subsidiary anyway.

Negotiations were begun months before the FIRA ruling. Said Richard Snyder, the firm's New York president: "I looked at that operation and did not like it and decided to sell. It wasn't making any money and its prospects for making money did not seem particularly high. I don't want it to seem that because of that ruling we jumped into bed with General Publishing."

Needless to say, this was a bit of news tht the New York *Times* did not judge tit to print.

Given the prevailing mood of confrontation and wilful misunderstanding, a small miracle occurred at the annual convention of the Canadian Library Association in Halifax. The CLA had been locked on a collision course with the Writers' Union of Canada over the issue of public lending rights — a system that awards royalties to authors on the basis of books borrowed from libraries. A majority of librarians were — and still ate — firmly opposed to public lending tights. For various reasons. they refuse to admit that any such "tights" exist.

Eut thanks to the persuasive powers of writer June Callwood and the conciliatory mediation of. among others, Dean Francess Halpenny of the UofT's Faculty of Library Science. a compromise emerged at the convention. The CLA now is resolved to support a system that produces increased financial rewards for Canadian authors on the basis of library holdings. as long as tbc funds come from the federal government. Compensation will probably be determined by the number of books held by libraries rather than the number of times a particular title is borrowed. With luck. the scheme could be in operation by next summer.

Although the writers' union is apparently happy with this compromise, we can muster only two cheers. As we have said before in this column; Britain's A. P. Herbert was right. We think public lending "tights" do exist in natural justice and should be formalized in law. We think the librarians arc defending a reactionary and exploitive practice. And we think the writers' union should continue to light for a system that establishes with absolute clarity that there is a fee-paying arrangement between creative authors and their readers. The Halifax compromise simply reinforces the traditional Canadian attitude that writers by and large are a burden on the public purse and should consider themselves lucky if they are read at all.

ON ANOTHER matter which is close to our heart. hopefully there arc still some humans around who will consider this sentence something less than a paradigm of good English — although perfectly viable within the parameters of current usage. We are prepared to surrender on our long rear-guard action to

preserve the distinction between "which" and "that." It was a useful distinction: but nobody. including heads of English departments and *The* New Yorker, seems to understand it any more. This is to serve notice. however. that Books in *Canada is not* surrendering on the misuse of "hopefully" and will continue to regard the use of "human" as a noun ("human being" is the correct term) as an abhorrence. As for those queens of contemporary cant — "paradigm," "viable," and "parameter" -they will be tolerated only when used with authority and discretion.

FINALLY, perceptive readers may have noticed certain changes in our format with this issue. The new look is another step in our continuing program to improve the appearance and content of *Books* in *Canada* as the means become available. Some of the changes reflect suggestions received through our July readers' survey, which yielded a gratifyingly large response. A full report on the results of that survey will be included in our next issue. □

Letters to the Editor

KICK IN THE PILSENER

Sir:

Writes Clive Cocking in his review of *The Great Canadian Beer Book* (July issue): "Beer is the drink of the working classes only because they can't afford other, more elevating (shall we say) beverages." What a crock of Schlitz!

Yn Blue i, Clive:

Ya go, room down there for a 24 and a pizza Clive?

"*The Great Canadian* Beer *Book* is also likely to appeal only to collectors of the inconsequential."

You Moosehead!

Peter Taylor
Toronto

SYNCRUDITIES DEPLORED

Sir:

Since when can a "former vice-president of Imperial Oil" be objective? On what basis are your reviewers for books selected?

I was frankly shocked that you would ld someone with such close ties to the oil cartel — that's what they am-review Larry Pratt's book (July issue). I am not going to point-by-point challenge what Mr. Ritchie says. but I think an incident in the "emergency" surrounding the tar-sands deal should put Mr. Ritchie's defence of the foreign-owned oil conglomerates in its proper perspective.

Back in the not-so-distant days when I was still an avid TV addict, a national emergency was broadcast from Winnipeg. Tension mounted as the week came to a close. Would Syncrude by saved? Does God have ears?

On Friday afternoon the crisis was suspended for the weekend and resumed Monday morning. Why? To give all sides lime to think of the good of the country? Of keeping oil prices low? Or . . Did it have anything to do with the deadlines for TV news? Or the fact that no news happens on the weekends because the reporters aren't around. That's a cold. hard union fact. And it's pretty had to orchestrate a crisis if management has to pay double and triple lime.

Soap operas are great. But when they cost me like Syncrude or the Montreal Olympics or the soon-to-be-approved Mackenzie Valley pipeline. I'll take cheap wine any day.

Don Humphries
Winnipeg

CanWit No. 15

CANADIANS have been told they are boring and apologetic so often that they are ready to buy the idea. At any rate. that's the theory behind McClarken & Newspider's latest venture. The publishing firm is preparing a new series called How Grey We Are and seeks potential titles that conform with the general theme. Bruce Bailey of Montreal received $25 for this idea and a 'like sum will go to the winner. Address: CanWit No. 15. *Books in Canada,* 366 Adelaide Street East, Toronto M5A 1N4. The deadline is Sept. 30.

RESULTS OF CANWIT NO. 13

CONTESTANTS were asked for examples of how common English idioms might be transmogrified in linguistic translation. The winner is Grant Buckler of Wolfville, N.S., who receives $25 for these well-mangled entries:

- "I know I can count on you not to let me down" translates as "I know I can count on you to hold me up."
- "He made himself at home" translates as "He moved in."
- "It's priceless" translates as "You can have it for nothing."
- "He is hard-hearted" translates as "He has a strong heart."
- "It goes without saying" translates as "If you don', mention il. it will go away."
- "She likes to get her oar in" translates as "She enjoys rowing."
- "He's had all the breaks" translates as "He's been injured several times."

Honourable mentions:

- "He brought home the bacon" translates as "He repatriated the pig."
- "She slipped on a banana peel" translates as "She donned a tight yellow dress."
- "He cooked the books" translates as "He made alphabet soup."
- "Lie in bed" translates as "Fib in crib."

— Gordon Black, Toronto

- "I can't make it out" translates as "I'm still in."
- "She never sat out one dance" translates as "She never danced seated."

-B. Muzychka, Ariss, On,.

- "He's no great shakes" translates as "He's no earthquake."

— Mary MacPherson, Toronto

- "He hasn't got a leg to stand on" translates as "He's a paraplegic."

— Patrick Oliver, Toronto