A NATIONAL REVIEW OF BOOKS

BOOKS IN CANADA

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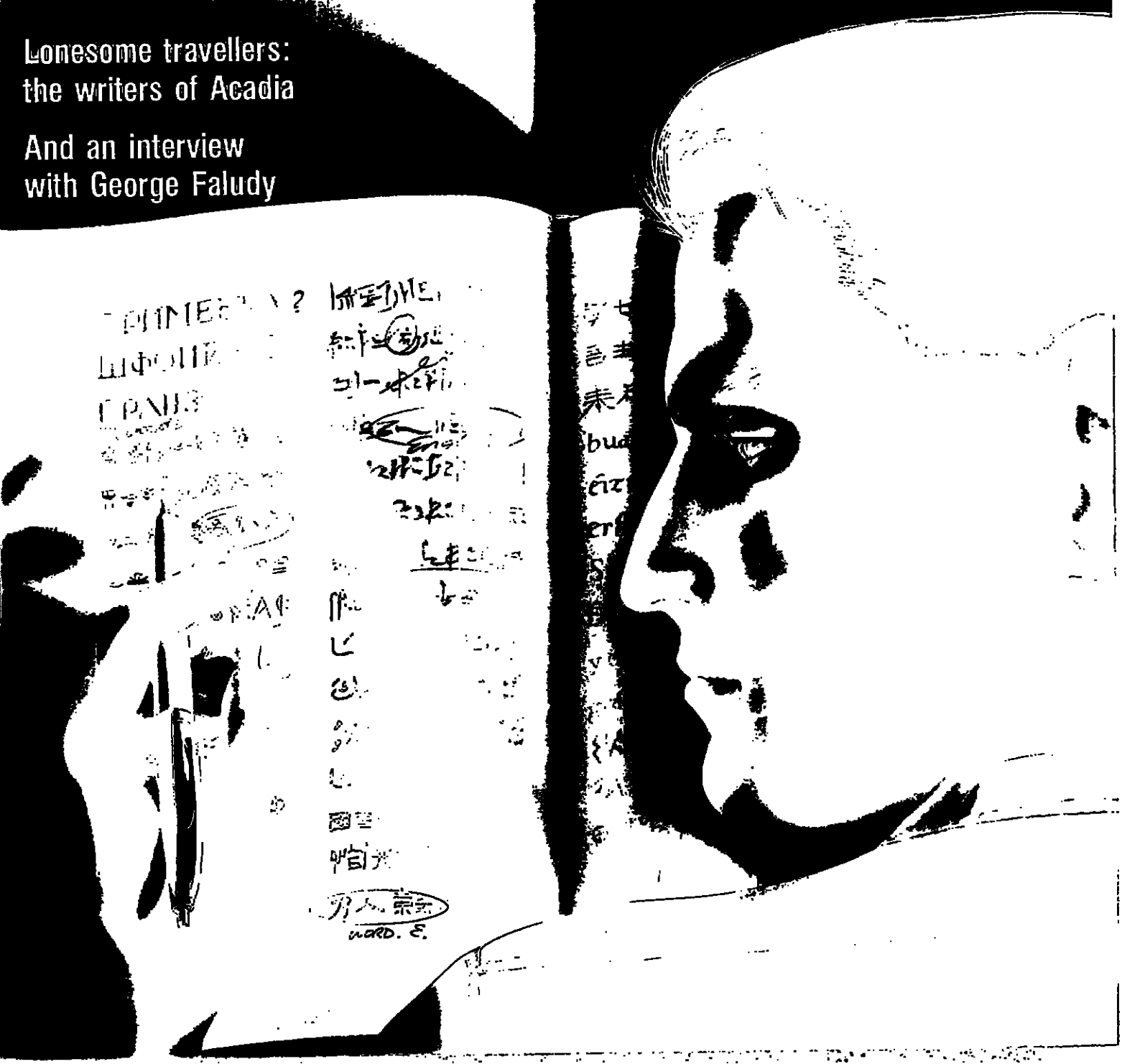
OTHER WORDS, OTHER WORLDS: THE TRANSLATORS' CHOICE

Lonesome travellers: the writers of Acadia

And an interview with George Faludy



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Volume 15 Number 1

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FIELD NOTES

Command performance

A blend of Improvisational theatre, sports event, and therapy, Toronto's monthly Poetry Sweatshop produces a lot of adrenalln and a little literature

ABOUT 120 YOUNG Torontonians are packed into the Rivoli Cafe's smoky back room, waiting for the show. They look like new-wave music fans, in a cross-section of Queen Street styles: a few shaven heads, some Cindy Lauper mix 'n' match ensembles, proto-jock T-shirts and shorts, and fluorescent dresses. But here the cigarettes, beer, and conversation are consumed in the name of poetry. Soon, 25 unknown poets, contestants in the Poetry Sweatshop. will write original works within a 30-minute time limit, and tonight's judge — Howard Engel, creator of the fictional detective Benny Cooperman -will choose 10 to be read.

The evening begins a half-hour late. when the hosts, 29-year-old twin actors John and Jim Coburn, enter the room in pantomimed slow motion to the much-amplified theme fmm *Chariots* of Fire. The Coburns, who have appeared together in the play *Privates on Parade* and the movies Cotton *Club* and *Mark of Cain,* look startlingly alike. But at this, the 18th Toronto sweatshop, they no longer dress identically. ("It just got too twinny," one of them later confides.)

As John Coburn explains it, the sweatshop — a monthly event now spreading into other cities, thanks to a $25,000 cultural initiatives grant — is "part improvisational theatre, part sporting event, and part therapy." The contest has a lot in common with another Canadian invention, Theatresports. Both events combine elements of culture and amateur sports. Unknown performers are judged for their work on randomly chose" themes. under the pressure of imminent deadlines. Audience reactions are immediate and vociferous, and overacting is appreciated.

A preliminary event emphasizes how skilled the Coburns and co-organizer Fred Hill — a story-teller, cab driver, and former PR man — are at mixing poetry and politics. The city's executive council has recommended that the council chambers be used for the Second Anniversary Sweatshop, and the Toronto Arts Council has kicked in $600 for prize money. In return, the swatshop has invited all Toronto aldermen to attend, and four of the most liberal have turned up. The crowd chars each aldermanic ode. especially Dale Martin's on the proposed Metro sports dome: "Doomed dome, con-dome/the only appropriate name for the screwing the public's take"."

Howard Engel then gives a synopsis of his qualifications to judge poetry: "I designed the Cooperman series as a kind of shill, hoping to get my publishers on a" off day and posh a lot of poetry at them. I might call it 'Benny Cooperman sees the Light of Day.' " Engel is the latest in a series of celebrity judges that includes sportscaster Dick Beddoes, authors Peter Newman. George Jonas, and Barbara Amiel, CITY-TV president Moses Znaimer, and two senior editors of Harlequin books.

As 25 poets tune up their pens on the crowded stage, the twins state the roles: one pen, one poem on one side of a page. based on a word taken from a randomly ripped-out page of a thesaurus. A cowbell announces the start of the event. and they're off.

The atmosphere is about as far fmm Marcel Proust's cork-lined study as one can get. Audience members shout to each other over the music, but the contestants concentrate fiercely. Each of the three winners takes home $25, and most

of the poets can use the money. Some scribble frantically, others alternate creation with revision, and some stare off into space, trying to discern the Muse among the shifting patterns of tobacco smoke.

Half a" hour later, Engel elects to do his judging on the stage the poets have just vacated. While cheering sections consult their champions ("Do you think you'll get the $25 tonight, Scott?" "I dunno, what I wrote was pretty weird"), Engel sifts through the output. Finished, he proclaims hls astonishment at the quality level, and then invites IO poets to read their new creations.

The first performer is a slender, pretty woman known only as Sid. A sweatshop regular, she pours emotion into each poem. Tonight the target is a high-school English teacher ("We always knew how to draw blood with a sentence"). But most of the other poems are indistinguishable from unsolicited work that comes over the transoms of little magazines.

One exception is a sardonic love poem based on the thesaurus entry "heavenly." Addressed 'to a failed astronomer, it includes the lines, "I told you we could make stars fall by wishing./ When I found we couldn't. I blamed -it on my astigmatism." Despite the audience's propensity to cheer for anything, this much more accomplished piece does win the most applause.

Later, Fred Hill quota a" onlooker's words: "You don't produce great poetry [here], but you do produce adrenalin." For this reason. he has resisted offers to publish the results, wanting to keep their instantaneous effect. There *is* a" odd suspense to the sweatshops, although other nights have been more memorable than this one. ["The poetry that night fell a little flat," Hill admits. "The politicians were just too damn good.") Regulars who have won. in the past — Sithara Racine, a shaven-headed Eurasia" who performs sound poetry that mixes English with a self-invented language, and Zephyr, another shave"-headed poet who looks like a football linebacker — weren't competing, and Allen Katz, a" actor who recites in the style of a Sourthern gospel preacher didn't make it into the top 10.

Excitement did run hiih in Calgary when the first sweatshop was held there at Memorial Park Library. Hosted by publicist Judy Gunter and *her* twin sister, the contest attracted ZOO people, despite the worst snowstorm in years. Other sweatshops have been held in Kingston and Cayuga, Ont. "We're expanding in two different ways," says Hill. "One. by going to new places; two,

by increasing the carrot. Next February, we'll give away $600; the year after that, $1,200; and we hope to make the prize $2,400 for the Olympics." Judy Gunter, chairing a 1988 Winter Olympics sub-committee, is helping to get the sweatshop declared a special Olympic event.

Hill's ambitious master plan calls for the establishment of 20 local events across Ontario by the end of the year, followed by expansion to other provinces. With the sweatshop's usual hint of hyperbole, he allows: "Just as economic health can be measured by the number of housing starts, so the cultural health of Canada may soon be measured by poetry starts." —JOHN OUGHTON

The *Brick* crit-house

THE LITERATI gathered in a Japanese gift shop had a choice of beer, sushi, and red plonk whose bottles, appropriately enough, bore the label "Brick." They were celebrating the relocation of the literary magazine of the same name, which, once domiciled in Coldstream, *Ont.* (population: 100), has recently moved. Where once *Brick was* assembled in a paper-packed nook off Jean McKay's village dining-mom, it will now emerge from the handsome Toronto home of its new editor, Linda Spalding. Spalding, a frequent *Brick* contributor. has take" over from McKay and Stan Dragland, who founded the thrice . yearly journal 25 issues ago.

Can a small (print run: 1,100) self-styled "journal *of* reviews" from south-western Ontario find happiness in the big city7 That remains to be see". But judging from the cover of No. 25 -the first Toronto-based issue — the magazine has not forgotten its rural roots: it features a typewriter topped by grass-sprouting sod. The roots go deep into a rich regional culture. The area hi and around London, Ont., has been home not only to the Stratford Festival but to such painters as Greg Curnoe and Jack Chambers and such poets as Christopher Dewdney and James Reaney. It was Reaney who founded *Alphabet,* devoted to the "iconography of the imagination" and Brick's immediate predecessor.

After *Alphabet* ended in 1971. *Brick's first* issue was dedicated to Reaney, and there have been special issues on him and on his wife, the poet Colleen Thibaudeau. But Dragland denies any direct connection. *"Brick,"* he says, "was never influenced by *Alphabet.* The two magazines are extremely different. Reaney's magazine contained some reviews. but they were "ever the main thing. *Alphabet was always* shaped by Reaney's strong editorial presence. *Brick, on* the other hand, cultivates a variety of perspectives and does not lobby *for* any particular literary line."

Dragland, who teaches English at the University of Western Ontario, named the magazine after the brick construction typical of London, Ont.'s buildings. In setting up the *Brick*works, "We looked for reviewers who were passionate about writing, and we were able to stretch to accommodate experimental techniques. We also took a" extremely eclectic approach to everything. In the end. I can say we are proud to have brought into being quite a lot of first-rate writing."

Along with the eclecticism, Linda Spalding has inherited the vast visual trove that McKay and Dragland exploited to idiosyncratic, sometimes sly effect. The editors used to buy discarded books and magazines by the pound, snipping out drawings. cartoons, and advertisements fmm ancient catalogues, manuals, and encyclopedias — "millions of them," Spalding says — to illustrate *Brick's* pages.

Some months ago Dragland asked Spalding to take over. ("There must be more ways than one to pursue the ideals Jean and I had for the magazine," he

says. "It will be interesting to see it evolve.") Born in Kansas, until a few years ago Spalding was a social services administrator and public-TV program developer in Hawaii. There she met Michael Ondaatje, who was leaching at a workshop. She, Ondaatje, and her two children have succeeded Leon and Constance Rooke as tenants of a house owned by Aviva (Layton) Whiteson, Irving Layton's ex-wife.

Working within such complex literary relationships, Spalding speaks more of continuity than of change. Dragland did the paste-up for the first Toronto issue, and McKay helped with the mailing. Spalding has enlisted Daphne Marlatt and Ondaatje as) contributing editors, and there remains the Coach House connection: McKay (Gone *to Grass*) and Dragland (Journeys *Through Bookland*) have been published by Coach House Press, with which Ondaatje also has a long association.

Future *Bricks,* Spalding says, will be shaped "around writers who strain after the right words to tell about the people and places and books and ideas that matter to them." To that end, one piece of mortar for No. 25 is "The Pasture: A Proposal to Bring Cows to Downtown Toronto" by the Saskatchewan ceramic sculptor Joe Fafard. Fafard's "slightly more than life-size silicon bronze casts of a plaster sculpture of a lying down cow" now graze near King and Bay.

The cows seem at home. And so (no bull) does *Brick.*

--ANNE VERRIER-SKUTT

ENGLISH, OUR ENGLISH

The Crown's English

If only we all followed Big Brother's stylebook, then we might be able to understand each other

By Bob *Blackburn*

I HAVE KNOWN more than one newspaper editor who, whenever he saw a reporter consulting the big newsroom dictionary, would holler, "If *you* don't know what it means, don't use it."

If me accept the view that most newspaper readers are semi-literate. we must regard that as sound advice. However, it has unfortunate sideeffects.

When I see an error committed by a writer. I assume that he or she was either too lazy to consult a reference or too ignorant to recognize the possibility of error. Perhaps I should add a third possibility: fear of being seen looking something up.

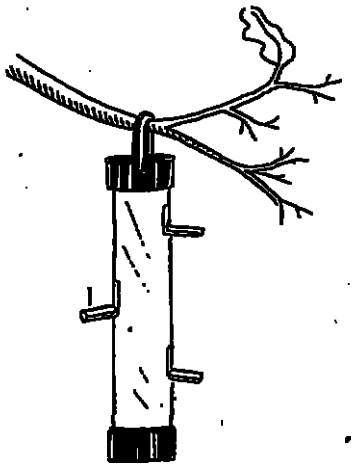
Such reflections have tempered my initial enthusiasm over the publication at year's end of The Canadian Style (Dundurn Press, 256 pages, $11.95 paper). a new stylebook prepared by the Department of the Secretary of State as a guide to writing and editing. It is primarily for civil servants, but is on public sale.

I suppose my knee-jerk response on hearing of this was commonplace: surely any such work, prepared by and for government employees, would be an endorsement of bureaucratese, written in gobbledygook. Anyone accustomed to reading government documents could be excused for having such prejudice.

In fact, though, it is an excellent 250-page compendium of sound advice that, if followed by all, would enable us to understand each other. That would be a nice change.

However, having a good stylebook available and making use of it are different things. Most offices in which writing is done have dictionaries available, but spelling errors persist. What reason have we to believe that a writer who is too stupid or lazy to look up a word in a dictionary is likely to undertake the rather more complex task of consulting a stylebook or a usage guide.

Big newspapers have their own stylebooks, and most have a gnome locked somewhere in a dusty closet writing a new one. One of the most respected stylebooks around is that of the Canadian Press. That news agency is the parent of Broadcast News, whose output is read aloud hourly on countless radio stations and scrolls endlessly up the TV screens of cable subscribers across the country. I have sometimes held up the BN service as one of the most visible



examples of atrocious writing. (It also has certain other weaknesses as a news medium. At Christmas time, one of its top news headlines of one day was "POPE WANTS CHRISTIANS TO LEAD GOD. LY LIVES.")

There is one error in particular that is committed by BN almost every day: the failure to make the verb agree in a clause begun with *after:* "Three people are in hospital after their car collided with a threshing machine." This is a fairly common error elsewhere, but it is impossible for me to understand how a small operation with a relatively tiny daily oat-put of words. can go on day after day, year after year, making the same mistake without anyone doing anything about it. And this is an organization with a model stylebook.

There are, however, reason; to feel encouraged by the publication of The *Canadian Style. I* find it gratifying (and not a little astonishing) to find that there are people with some power in the civil service who are not only concerned about the calibre of English used by their employees but also capable of producing a guide of this quality. Having done so, their next responsibility should be to enforce observance of the standards they have set.

Doubtless some worriers will regard the distribution of this book outside the government service es evidence of creepin8 linguistic big-brotherism, but it seems unlikely to me. even in tbc post-1984 era, that there is anything sinister in this. I am simply grateful for the book, and would like to see one in every home, not just in every office. It does not, after all, have the power of law.

But within the civil service, the same people who ordered the production of the guide surely have the authority to insist that it be followed by public servants who are paid to write.

And Lo Benoît Bouchard, the secretary of state, whose imprimateur gave us the book, I say, thank you. I didn't know you cared. □

REPORT

Lonesome travellers

Once merely a link with the cultural past, today Aoadla's writers explore the prospects posed by regional diversity and Amerioanness'

By ***Henri-Dominique Paratte***

IN ONE SENSE, Antonine M&t has made it easy to identify unmistakably Acadian' literature today. She was born an Acadian, and her work to date has undeniably helped give the Acadian language. primarily the speech of Southeastern New Brunswick. literary credibility. She was the first to write important plays and novels in a speech whose only heritage was an enormous. fascinating amount of oral literature — legends, tales, and songs.

To a large extent, it was necessary to show the world how much the language of ordinary people had a music of its own. ***Maillet's La Sagouine was, in a way,*** the vindication of those letters Emilie LeBlanc, known as "Marichette," wrote in the 1890s, when "Acadian French" was deemed unsuitable for sustained public exposure.. In 1968, the monologues of La Sagouine, through the artistry of Maillet and the theatrical abilities of Viola Léger, opened the eyes of the world to the existence of *l'Acadie* as a distinct culture.

Herménégilde Chiasson

Following in the footsteps of many heroines who had been powerful forces in their communities, it then seemed natural that the character of Pélagie (in Maillet's novel ***Pélagie-la-Charrette***) should reverse the tide of fate, and turn upside down the character of Evangéline — which Longfellow had never intended for Acadian consumption in the first place, but whose patience and ability to suffer looked, to some makers of Acadian ideology, like the ideal role-model for an oppressed society. Pélagie made it plain, at a time when historians, sociologists, economists, politicians, and writers also started to understand it clearly, that Acadians were not a submissive, sheepish group who would endure hell now for the sake of paradise later. What she wanted was to create, if not paradise, at least a community of her own.

Pélagie remains one of the best fictional embodiments of the major change the 1960s and '70s brought to Acadian consciousness: pride in an identity that was neither Anglo-American nor Anglo-Canadian nor French fmm France or from Quebec. Seen from that angle, it was clear what Acadian literature was: writing in a brand of French peculiar to the Maritimes, that relies on events and activities linked with coastal communities whose oral tradition had been valued much longer than in other pans of the Western world.

The problem is that few of the writers of the '80s tit such a definition. IL is not *certain that* Maillet herself won't surprise us in the next few years with new directions In her writing. Gone are the days when Camille Roy and other French-Canadian critics had praise only for a literature that served a collective consciousness. If the only measure of Acadian literature were its commitment to community values, it might not exist at all. Thls is one contradiction all minority writers have to face. On the one hand, they have to connect closely with their society and its need for growth and self-assertiveness. On the other hand. whatever their commitment, they remain lonesome travellers.

A few months ago Herménégilde Chiasson was in Caen, France, for a week of Acadian poetry that also included Gérald Leblanc, Dyane Léger, and Bose Després. Their advance publicity described them as poets of the "*tristesouffranceheureuse*," from the poem "*Mon Pays*," by Guy Arsenault. The word translates into the combination of hell and paradise that poets often toy with: "sadandhappypain." Arsenault, author of *Acadie-Rock*, *one* of the first books to come out of Les Editions d'Acadie in 1973, has been described by bis fellow poet Raymond Leblanc as "the fist poet to accept and typify our 'Acadianness' and our 'Americanness.'" Chiasson (Hermé to his friends) recently told me how he wanted to do something — probably a movie — on Jack Kerouac, the U.S. writer who never rejected his Franco-American identity. A few days earlier. Gérald Leblanc had told me how much *he* wanted to write something about. Kemuac. To Chiasson, the figure of Kemuac represents an

America" "in which difference is a value, in which Kerouac and all other uprooted people travel through a continent that does not belong to them any more."

The mad does not lead anywhere in particular: it leads to a delirious frenzy. analogous to the circles in Dante, the wanderings in Joyce. the "Spiral Jetee" of Robert Smithson. Critics have talked a lot about images of fugitive5 in Quebec writing during the '60s and '70s. Ten years from now. many will be able to leaf through images of roads and movements in Acadia" writing: Acadia" poets as variants of Kerouac, the writer with roots in a" uprooted world. cut from his language.

IN HER "Manifesto for a Well-organized Camping Trip," France Daigle, one of the most fascinating and promising you"8 writers of today, asks:

> But then what is reality? My head is full of details and my life passes as in a film. . . . In Morocco'1 am a poor and shy child who passes the time watching his mother soaking huge skeins of wool in innumerable barrels of dye. That makes me feel safe and gives me the impression of learning something. Later I will visit the great libraries of the world, where plants generally grow quite well. Culture as far as the eye can see, to die knowing why. To be truthful, we should buy a new chaise-longue, too. The girls are growing and they don't always want to sit on our knees. We go to the table. Everyone likes it, we have a pod appetite. And in this case at least it is true that to possess one's language = to possess a real hold on reality.

Someday, academics will write theses about the meaning of reality in Acadian literature.

The very notion of reality is a" uncertainty that constantly changes. Pifty years ago, l'Acadie was a light cluster of communities (who shared) a certain Faith — the hell of poverty for most, a glimpse of paradise for some — a certain amount of common tradition, and, of course, the language. Today, regional differences and the penetration of Americanness into the smallest corners of l'Acadie via TV and video have made reality something to build in one's mind as much as a given set of data.

One of those poets who has constantly blown our language to pieces to make it more significant, Dyane Léger (the first to be published by Les Editions Perce-Neige in 1980), writes:

> I KNOW I AM GOD, I know the present starts HERE. I am. You are. He is. We are. You are. They are. I AM A WRITER, A CREATOR, A SCRIBE. A" those words mean LONELINESS, COMMITMENT, AMERICANNESS. I AM WRITTEN. Creation is my only way, my only consciousness. In me do elements of daily life find their source, America its reality.

The challenge is to create a new Acadia" reality that incorporates elements fmm the past with elements fmm America.

ONE DIFFICULTY in writing anything about modem Acadia" literature comes fmm the fact that there are differences not only between writers but also between regions. The feeling of belonging to a tradition is more strongly present in Acadia" writers from Nova Scotia: even some who have switched completely to English in their writing would cut you to pieces if you told them they are not Acadians. The difference therefore becomes greater between the concept of "l'Acadie," a French-speaking part of the Maritimes, eve" in bits and pieces, and "Acadia," that part of the Anglo-American-Canadian linguistic melting-pol with a" Acadian flavour. The problem exists in Moncton as well as it does in Nova Scotia.

A text by Melvin Gallant, one of the founders of Les Editions d'Acadie, carries a mood common to the '70s into the '80s:

> Acadia Electric, Acadia Travel. Acadia Drug Mart, Acadia Pest Control. Acadia!Acadia! Acadia! The oldest Baptist university is Acadia! Herehere is no Acadie left. She slipped on the sidewalk in front of Deluxe French Fries and vanished under CN trains.

In such a contact, literature often reinforces the historical past to offset present-day uncertainties. During 1984, for instance, we celebrated the centennial of such symbols of Acadian unity as the flag, the national hymn (*Ave Maris Stella*), and the national festival (Aug. 15). In Nova Scotia, Richard Landry won a contest to produce a play that would depict the importance of the Acadian flag for Acadians of today. *Pépé-Padé et son drapeau* was staged at the Université Saint-Anne a year ago.

Landry, who now works for *Le Courrier*, the only French weekly in Nova Scotia, has published little — a few poems. some articles. (Apart from the small Lescarbot publishing house in Yarmouth, there is no literary publisher for French in Nova Scotia: plays are staged, but rarely available For reading. His *Pépé-Padé constantly* reminds us of the need to reinforce a sense of continuity In Acadian life. What unites Acadians Is mainly a number of common symbols that show how much Acadianness has withstood the test of time.

Poet Paul Germain, in a book of poems and photographs called A *Corps et A Cris* (Les *Editions* d'Acadie, 1980). coined the word "*Acadanse*" — a dancing Acadie. For Granddad Claude in Richard Landry's play, festivals clearly express Acadia" vitality: "Festivals of today dearly indicate a reawakening of Acadians here. When I was young, there were no festivals. It's nice to see all those Festivals today, and all those people taking part." Celebrations are an essential part Of life.

In *Raconte-Moi Massabielle*, a first novel by Jacques Savoie, the main character, trying to keep some form of life in the deserted village of Massabielle (a place not unlike the Kouchibouguac region. from which many ordinary people were expelled to make room For a National Park), organizes his own celebrations, with stuffed dummies for participants. I" movies about La Baie Sainte-Marie (Nova Scotia's "French shore") by Phil Comeau and in novels and plays from several regions, festivals play a" important part. But most important, the joy expressed in these popular entertainments is mirrored in plays where having fun is more significant than delivering a serious message. This is particularly so for a gifted young playwright, Rino Morin-Rossignol, who comes fmm Northwestern New Brunswick, the area known popularly as *Le Madawaska*.

Antonine Maillet

PHOTOGRAPHY BY GUY DUBOIS

A former adviser to Reform Minister Jean-Maurice Simard and now an adviser to Premier Richard Hatfield — the man who led Acadians to vote Conservative — Morin-Rossignol wrote what is probably the funniest play in modem Acadian literature, *Le Pique-Nique. In a new* play, he has added to the several characters cracking jokes and exchanging insults none other than the fairy godmother of the Acadians, the Holy Virgin. And rumour has it that playing that pert may be the

> Added to the several characters cracking jokes in Morin-Rossignol's new play is none other than the fairy godmother of the Acadians, the Holy Virgin herself

greatest Acadian actress, *La Sagouine* herself, Viola Léger.

Yet the fete *of* theatre after *La Sagouine* has nor been altogether happy. Laval Goupil, for instance, offers us powerful denunciations of social evils in *Tête d'Eau* (*Hydrocephalus*) and in *Le Djibou* (*Bad owl*), but Goupil has worked more as an actor, primarily with the Théâtre Populaire d'Acadie, than es a writer. And the number of plays available through Editions d'Acadie is lean: *Sacordjeu! by* Claude Renaud; one play only by Jules Boudreau, who illustrates historic themes in the musical *Louis Mailloux* (written with Calixte Duguay, a major songwriter and poet and in Cochu *et le Soleil*, *a* nightmarish account of life following the expulsion of 1755.

To a large extent, Acadian theatre, whether comic or serious, is to be seen in the same perspective es the evolution from Evangéline to Pélagie: the substituting of positive symbols for negative ones. Whether a community's playwrights give it reason to laugh or to remember, the basic aim is the same, the assertion of a more stable, mature consciousness. Among these playwrights. we should not forget Maillet herself, whose latest play, *Panurge*, rewritten from Rabelais, involves a number of people fmm New Brunswick, although it was staged in Montreal.

France Daig

It may be through theatre that most young Acadians will catch a glimpse *of* their own literature. Several plays by L'Escaouette, a Moncton-based company, are designed for children end young adults. Herménégilde Chiasson has also written such children's plays as *Les Aventures de Mine de Rien (The Adventures of* Ms *Casual), Atarelle et les Pakmaniens,* and for an older audience, the recently revised *Cogne-Fou,* a wacky variation on the superhero theme.

Despite the shortage of published plays, it is drama that seems to enjoy the greatest public demand. A survey conducted lest year in New Brunswick by the Conseil de Promotion et de Diffusion de la Culture (a coordinating organization for regional cultural societies) revealed that a large number of people wanted to see more live theatre — not necessarily Acadian plays but plays in French. At the moment, actors working with L'Escaouette or with Le Théâtre Populaire d'Acadie find it hard to survive, and, the regional film industry is only beginning. But there is hope. The Université de Moncton now has a good program in theatre; a coordinating organization called Théâtre-Acadie tries Lo foster better drama productions; and Viola Léger has just come back Lo Moncton to start her own company and work with new playwrights. Her picture was the first to illustrate the cover of the first Acadian monthly in many years, *Le Ven'd'Est*, published in Northeastern New Brunswick, and her return after much international experience, may point toward development of theatre es the major Acadian literary form over the next IO years.

RECENTLY, I RECEIVED from Jacques Savoie some texts for a French magazine, *Les Cahiers Bleus*, which was preparing an issue on Acadian writers. This year, at least five magazines in France, Belgium, and Quebec have requested material for special issues on Acadian writers. The first books to come out of Les Editions d'Acadie (*Cri de Term, by* Raymond Leblanc, and Guy Arsenault's *Acadie-Rock*) *were* poetry collections, but there now are a good number of novelists. What they need in order to improve is time, readers, and the ability to build *une oeuvre*, a clearly individual universe, just es Meillet does.

Maillet has no disciples: the only one might be Laurier Melanson, who lives in Quebec and whose best-known novel is a riotous frolic called *Zelika à cochon vert.* But there lacks in Melanson the sense of history that is so obsessively present in Maillet's work, though his use of language comes close to hers. Acadian language and a will to portray the life of the Acadian peninsula provide the main force in Louis Haché's work. One of the first to receive the France-Acadie award, with *Adieu, Pt'it Chipagan* in 1979, he recently published his fourth book, *Un Cortège d'Anguilles, a* tale of how fishermen organized themselves to fight against oppression. Also from the peninsula, Jeannine Landry-Thériault offers us a subdued tone and a closer look at daily life end human emotions in *Le Moustiquaire* and *Un Soleil Mauve sur la Baie (The Mosquito Net* and A *Mauve Sun on the Bay*).

Claude Lebouthillier, author of *L'Acadien reprend son pays* and *Isabelle-sur-Mer*, has published a thick psychological novel, *C'est pour quand le paradis? (Paradise — When?).* Mostly it is a tonguein-cheek novel: the main character, Ulysse, encounters a number of women who wear mythological or more ordinary names. from Aphrodite to Katia, and is afflicted by sexual guilt complexes, mirrored in his inability to get rid of a urinary disease. (Somehow. as a character in Jacques Savoie's novel *Les Portes tournantes* (1984) *says,* "He has problems with his peepee.") Besides this, there is a critical

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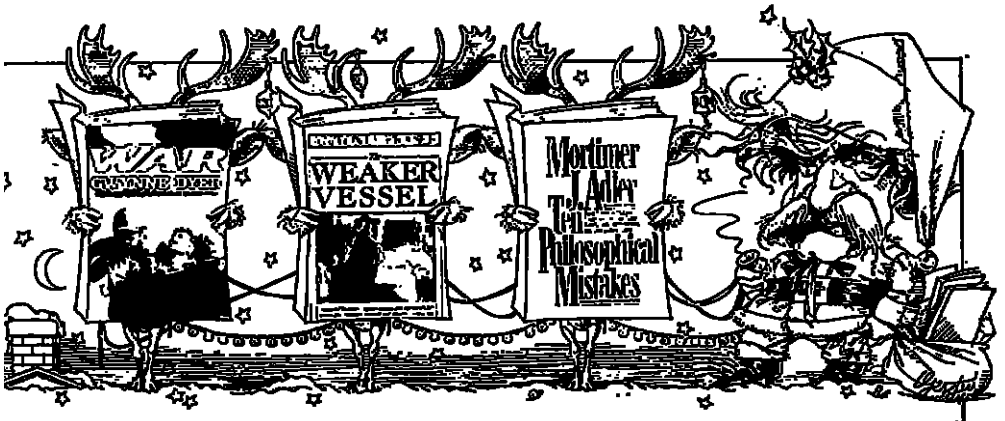

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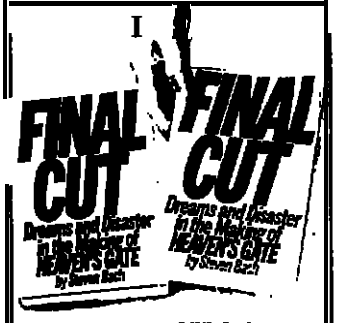

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look at Acadian society, from the dangers of village life to the painful prison of "Lawrencebled" (a place not without similarities to Moncton).

The Acadian soul, the love for nature. the pleasure of simple life, and a desire for feminine freedom are a large part of Germaine Comeau's *L'Eté aux puits secs* (*The Summer the Wells Went Dry*). which is partly set in Halifax. Maritimes realities,

Savoie's novel is being broadcast on Swiss, French, and Canadian radio, distributed in Switzerland, and probably will be translated into German before a film of it is made in Quebec

however dangerous linguistically, are as much part of the Acadian literary landscape as are Acadian realities. Melvin Gallant received the France-Acadie award for' *Le Chant des Grenouilles (1982)* in which the dying Michel relives events of bis past life, including those while he took part in social and political movements (hence the title, Frogs' Song).

The most important novelist to have emerged. however, is Jacques Savoie. Better known as a script-writer and filmmaker, he has written a first navel. *Raconte-Moi Massabielle* (which has been turned into an interesting but too short movie). The archetypal Fool, Pacifique Haché, is the King of Massabielle, a village that the Panda Mining Co. wants to own after expelling all its inhabitants to Bathurst, where they drink away their unemployment cheques in dingy taverns. Along with Stella, he learns to make love, and will bring life back to Massabielle.

Psychoanalysts will see a continuity in tbe Acadian archetype of expulsion, and sociologists may ponder how much the novel has to do with the Kouchibouguac park affair, which shook the Acadian community to its very roots. (How could you be deported again?) Others will just smile when they see Pacifique forsaking everything else, including Stella, to watch The *Price Is Right.* In the meantime, Savoie has made another surprise move: *Les Portes Tournantes, the* first *Acadian* novel since Maillet's to make the short list for the Governor General's Award, is being broadcast on Swiss/French/Canadian radio, distributed in Switzerland, and probably translated into German, before a movie is made in Quebec.

Jacques Savoie

PHOTOGRAPH BY GILLES SAVOIE

I LISTEN TO Herménégilde Chiasson talking about *his* movie, *Toutes les photos finissent par se ressembler* (*In the Long Run, All Pictures Look Alike).* He doer not really talk about the "literary" part of the movie — the first onc to say how Acadian writers of this generation, those who are now between 30 and 45. were born to literature. Nor does he talk about the incredible desire to communicate that was the main element, in retrospect, to be found during that period. Instead, Hermé talks about his daughter. How difficult it is, and fascinating, to see a new generation emerging. A generation in which there will be writers, with — for the first time ever in Acadie — a continuous literary tradition. Models to Follow. Models to reject. Mutual influences. Other avenues opened.

I think about the work of our Acadian poets, how little common ground there is in their writing. Rose Després and her surrealist images, her torturing of language to express all she' has gone through, her will to hit the reader. Dyane Léger and her fantastic tliihts of imagination out of daily life, *le quotidien*, which is so obsessively present in Acadian texts. Gerald Leblanc and his marvellous rhythm. a mixture of beat poetry and Moncton speech patterns, and the crystalline quality of his images. The love poems Melvin Gallant wrote in Greece, and his beautiful attempts to make pictures work with the text, just as he had done in his *Le Pays d'Acadie* or in *Portrait d'Écrivains, our* writers' guide, now already incomplete after only a few years. I think of France Daigle and her uncanny ability to pare down the structures of the novel to a few fleeting notations, in which a whole universe springs to mind.

I think of all the younger writers, from Daniel Dugas to Louise Bourque and many others to come, and I also remember all we have learned from older people, fmm Félix Thibodeau and his tales in Baie-Sainte-Marie Acadian French to Lina Madore and her Madawaska youth, or Lorraine Diotte and songs and her stories of Polidore. And more.

We have seen Antonine Maillet go from an oral culture, last of the tellers of tales, to a written literature. We have seen writers born between 1945 and 1954 emerge in the 1960s and '70s. Raymond Leblanc, Gérald Leblanc. Jacques Savoie, Claude Lebouthillier, Herménégilde Chiasson. Dyane Léger, Rose Després — the first generation to emerge into the world not only of writing but also of rock music, video, planetary consciousness, tantric love, and all that makes the "modem" world, as well as sorting out myth and reality.

Raymond Leblanc says: "My voice will be so loud i won't. need a mike/I'll shout over the hubbub of tractors/of politicians speeches of the noise of power plants/I'll yell at the top of my voice. . . ." Rose Després adds, "You mystify children with your juggler's pirouettes and awaken a master's jii, a feverish rain that fecundates every countryside where dancing Ughtning adorns our solitary gardens with bouquets of tenderness.

Read Dyane Léger, Raymond Leblanc, Gérald Leblanc. Read *Moosejaw*, by Louis Comeau, or "Eugénie Mélanson," by Herménégilde Chiasson, to understand how reality is a shifting notion. Better still, try to listen to Viola Léger telling it, in her show called *El&es-which* is also the name of the only literary magazine in *l'Acadie*. □

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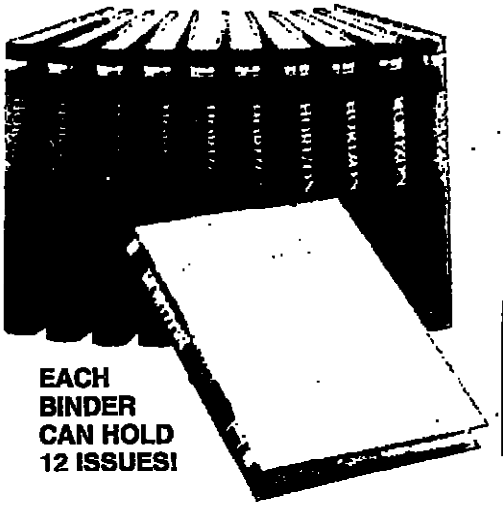

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In other words . . .

Some of the country's leading translators nomlnate the books and writers they would most like to see translated into English, and explain why

BY NATURE, translators are unusual . alchemists: they want to turn gold into gold. But where do they find the stuff? That was the question *Books in Canada* had in mind when we asked some notable translators what books not already translated should be rendered into English. and why. The answers proved as various as the translators themselves, and revealed much about the state of the art these writers practise.

Sheila Fischman, perhaps Canada's best-known translator (her version of Yves Beauchemin's immensely successful *Le Matou* is to be published by McClelland & Stewart in April) feels that, in Canada, translation is essential to creating a national literature:

> I've long believed that translation into the other official language should be an automatic. part of the awarding of the various Governor General's literary prizes. If these various *works of* poetry, fiction, and non-fiction (and in recent years children's books and theatre) are deserving national renown, I would like to see them truly *available* nationally — *and* that requires translation.

The veteran translator Philip Stratford (of work by Jean Le. Moyne, Claire Martin, Antonine Maillet, and Félix Leclerc), who teaches at the Université de Montreal. also stresses quality *and* quantity:

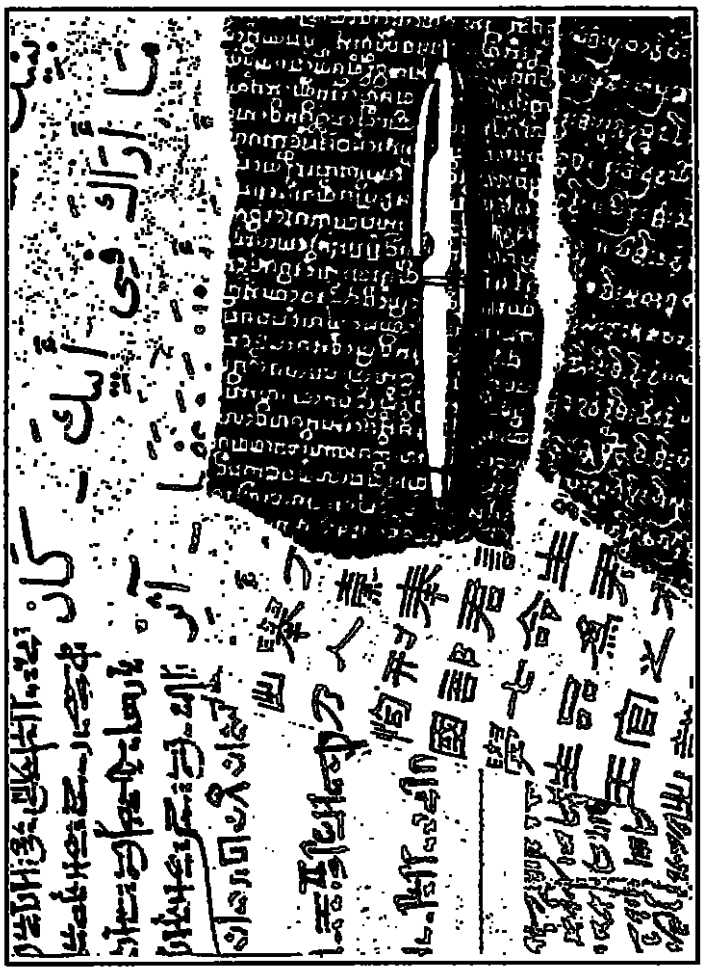
> I feel strongly myself that all Quebec books should be translated (except junk) and that many more English-Canadian titles should be available in French. Specifically, here are some projects I think are worthy, though not all of them Involve new translations.
>
> MY top priority would go to an anthology of poetry drawn from the pages of *Ellipse*, which has been publishing translations in both languages for the past 16 years. I also think a translation *of* a complete major anthology like Gilles Marcotte's four-volume *Anthologie de la littérature québécoise* would be a valuable contribution, as would the reciprocal translation into French of Robert Weaver and William Toye's *Oxford Anthology of Canadian Literature* or Carl Klinck's Canadian *Anthology*, despite the difficulties this might involve..
>
> As far as different genres are concerned. new Quebec novels now get translated fairly fast, as does prominent non-tinion; translations of poetry are appearing more and more frequently, but Quebec drama is still grossly underrepresented.
>
> Translations into French now equal translations into English on an annual basis. but there is still a lot of catching up to do: much history and popular history remains untranslated; fiction translation is spotty. translation of poetry (apart fmm *Ellipse*) is almost non-existent. and the same is true for drama and criticism.

The gap, Mark Czarnecki asserts, does not apply only to new translations. Czarnecki, who translated André Bourassa's *Surrealism and Quebec Literature* (University of Toronto Press), says that:

> there is an urgent need, especially in theatre, to translate again works that may have been translated some time ago perhaps by British or American translators, and which now appear stilted in their attempts to capture proper colloquial equivalents for the dialogue in the original. Ibsen's plays have suffered especially in this regard. and it's a hopeful sign that his plays, as well as those of Chekhov, do attract both professional playwrights and translators into redefining them for modern readers and playgoers: in Canada the most notable examples are John Murrell and David French. This kind of work obviously lies on the border between translation and adaptation, but whatever you call it. k's important for keeping those kinds of classics alive.

Of course, translation may have a political or diplomatic dimension as well as a purely literary one, as M.G. Vassanji, editor of the *Toronto South Asian Review*, points out. This is especially true, he observes,

> when we consider translating from a language not closely related to English and Western culture-as the European languages are — and when a substantial body of translated work does not already exist. For then the question of responsibility arises. One may be selling a precedent. creating an image. Obviously this is of consequence when the language and culture from which one translates also belong to a minority population in an English-speaking society. One is tempted then to consider works as ambassadors — "we also have great literature."



JACOBSON

The poet and translator Seymour Mayne (*Burnt Pearls: Ghetto Poems of Abraham Sutzkever*, Mosaic Press), takes hi responsibilities seriously.

> We need to extend our awareness of the significant literary achievements of the major Yiddish writers of Canada. The poetry of Rachel Korn (1898-1982) has been translated end published in two English edltions, end Chava Rosenfarb's monumental fictional documentary The *Tree of Life* has recently appeared In English es well. But a complete edition of the masterful short stories of Rachel Korn end a selection of the fine autobiographical work and essays of Melech Ravitch (1893-1976) need lo be translated fmm the Yiddish. The writings of these neglected authors may prove to be more enduring In the long run than the work of many contemporary English-Canadian writers currently the subject of media attention and hoopla. We have ample opportunity now to redress the indifference of decades.

A few translators emphasize single authors or books. The Puerto Rim-born poet Rafael Barreto-Rivera — whose latest collection, *Nimrod's Tongue* (Coach House Press). includes "Derridative Poems" based on the work of Jacques Derrida — chooses Jorge Luis Borge's *Los Conjurados*. "It represents an almost minimalist retracing of — as Borges himself has suggested, in another context — the evolution of his work from the mythologizing of slums to games of time and infinity:

> Chances are Los *Conjurados* will get translated. But what about a Nobel laureate, the Czech poet Jaroslav Seifert? John Reeves, the CBC producer, detective novelist, and multi-Linguist, wants the question answered.
>
> Not all his work has been translated. end anyone who would like lo complete the job is faced with a difficult task, because an important part of his work is not readily available in the original: the state censorship in Czechoslovakia refuses to publish poems it disapproves of — among them many poems by Seifert. Most of the unpublished poems are, however. obtainable In their *samizdat* form. If they were obtained and translated end published, that would bee great service to the reading public and a great blow struck for freedom of expression.

Paul Wilson, whose translation of Josef Skvorecky's *The Engineer of Human Souls* (Lester & Orpen Dennys) won a Governor General's Award for fiction in English, has an ongoing interest in Czechoslovakia's literature and politics:

> I don't know of a single good work of literature written in Czechoslovakia over the last 50 years that does not reflect that nation's experience with fascism and communism. Of the many worth translating, I would single out two, not because they are the best. necessarily, but because they provide fresh insight into how those two major forms of totalitarianism work.
>
> The first is *Zivot s hvezdou* (*Life with a Star*), *by* Jid Weil (1900-1959), a Jewish journalist and novelist who wrote in Czech. It Is a kind of fictional diary kept by a Prague Jew who evader the death camps through an administrative fluke. The book reflects Well's own experience and explains, better than any book I know. how so many Jews could have gone so passively lo their deaths. In a glutted market, it is a rare and vivid reminder of the bureaucratic face of the Holocaust.
>
> The other book, *Language and Power, by* a Czech writer who calls himself Petr Fidelius. is a recent study of contemporary communist propaganda. Observing that propaganda serves its purpose whether or not people believe it, Fidelius treats it as seriously as a psychiatrist would treat the delusions of a madman as an idiolect that unwittingly reveals the true nature of the system it represents.
>
> And perhaps a final recommendation: the novellas of Egon Bondy. Bondy is a prolific writer (unpublished, of course, inside *Czechoslovakia*), and *though primarily* a poet and philosopher, his short fictions — The *Little* Monk. *Shaman, Afghanistan* and. most recently, *Non-story* — all set in the past or future, are remarkable parables *of* the present.

Michael Bullock declines to name a current book or author to be translated because "the choice is too wide and the criteria are too varied." Instead Bullock (winner of a Canada Council award for translation fmm French and the Schlegel-Tieck German Translation Prize) reaches into the past of 50 years ago. He, like Wiion, connects literature and politics:

> *Untermenschen* (*Sub-Humans*), *by* Walter Kolbenhoff, wee one of the first novels to reveal the true nature of the Nazi party and its treatment of its opponents in the first days of its power. Although at a distance of half a century I can no longer remember the details of the story, I vividly recall Its impact on me and the force of its revelation of what was going on in Germany at that time. Since it may not be a literary masterpiece (I remember it as a political rather than a literary revelation), the moment for its translation may be past. But If it had been translated at the time it was written it might well have served to open the eyes of many people who, at that lime, preferred not to see. It is the only work of fiction I have ever read that stirred me to direct political action. As such it occupies a very *special* posilion for me and perhaps its significance is not wholly dimmed by the passage of the years. In any case it seems to me a novel of real historical importance.

Few works can rival the Scandinavian sagas in historical importance., and George Johnston has translated several of them: *The Saga of Gisli* (Dent), *The Fame Islanders' Saga* and *The Greelanders' Saga* (both Oberon Press). Like Bullock, a poet-translator, Johnston also nominates a work of fiction, the contemporary Faroese poet-novelist William Heinesen's *Fortaellinger fra Thorshavn* (*Tales from Torshavn*): "He is a superb story-teller. I have read some of these tales and look forward to reading them all; they are full of a lively, broad humour, and they are written in excellent Danish. If I do not translate them somebody should."

From his home in France, the former Canadian ambassador to the Soviet Union makes a case for an entire literature — the Brazilian. R.A.D. Ford says, "I have translated some contemporary poets (three appear in my latest book of poetry from Mosaic Press). Carlos Drummond de Andrade in particular is a very line poet but because of the lack of knowledge of Portu-

guese by most Anglo-Saxons he is hardly known outside Brazil and Portugal."

Nearer at hand. Betty Bednarski is a Jacques Ferron enthusiast. She has already translated tbc physician-author's *Selected Tales (House* of Anansi) and is at work on his Scattered *Texts.* She argues that a collection of Fermn's short pieces, including letters and articles, should be published:

> Although many of Ferron's short stories and novels have been available in English for some lime,. few English readers have had a chance to savour the brilliant pieces on literature, politics, medicine. religion. and countless other topics that he contributed regularly to newspapers. journals. and magazines. Still hailed mainly as a humourist and *conteur,* Ferron is one of Canada's great humanists, one of the subtlest, most original minds this country has ever known.

'Still hailed mainly as a humourist and *conteur*, Ferron Is one of Canada's great humanists, one of the subtlest, most original minds this country has known'

Ray Ellenwood, who translated Fermn's *Le Ciel de Quebec (The Penniless Redeemer)* and is now working on the poet Gilles Hénault, makes the case for Réjean Ducharme.

> *L'hiver de force* has been translated and published in an awkward bilingual edition that is difficult to find. A 1968 translation by Barbara Bray of *L'Avalée des avalés* is long out of print. And yet. despite his hermetic life, Ducharme is recognized as one of Quebec's most important writers. In a poll of young writers made by *Le Devoir* a few years ago an astonishing number singled out Ducharme as a major influence on them. Ducharme's work is darkly humorous, dry. off-the-wall, full of wordplay, but no more or less translatable than other "difficult" works, such as *Finnegan's Wake,* recently published in a French version. The major problem seems to have been Ducharme himself, who has resisted translation of his work. It's a shame.

Another Quebec novelist, André Major. *has* been translated, both by_ Sheila Fischman (*The Scarecrows of Saint-Emmanuel,* McClelland & Stewart) and Mark Czarnecki (In*spector Therrien,* Press Porcépic). Nest, according to Czarnecki, should be *Les Rescapés,* the third volume in his *Histoires de Déserteurs* trilogy, and one that won Major the 1976 Governor General's Award.

Fischman has her eye on another French — but not Quebec — miter, one whose

> works are rather little known (though Mavis Gallant, in a recent New *York Review* article. praises his use of language), even in France. That writer is Julien Gracq, a novelist now in his 70s whose masterpiece is *Le Rivage da Syrtes. (He* has also written essays, scholarly works, and poetry.) Gracq's work shows affinities with the Romantics — but also. curiously. with the Surrealists. He is capable of creating astonishingly real landscapes — physical landscapes and landscapes of the emotions and the mind — through his unparalleled use of the French language. At times. indeed, he seems to have re-invented his language-or to be able to force it to display itself in dazzling ways that other "users" might dot have suspected to be possible. Gracq uses the French language as dancing teachers. perhaps, might be said to "use" their pupils. I don't honestly know whether Gracq's works have been put into English. but I think not. I should add, by the way. that in addition to being a wizard with language, be tells a good story.

To extend the future of language is also to re-evaluate the past, and in Quebec terms, D.G. Jones, an award-winning poet, critic, and translator *(The Terror of the Snows: Selected Poems of Paul-Marie Lapointe,* Pittsburgh University Press) recommends Pierre Nepveu's *Les mots à l'écoute: Poésie et silence chez Fernand Ouellette, Gaston Miron, et Paul-Marie*

Lapointe, "a model of contemporary dose reading and the comparative method that illuminates three major Quebec poets of L'Hexagone generation and makes significant distinctions among them."

If some translators (or just knowledgeable people) single out individual authors or books, others prefer to compile literary shopping lists. The prolific poet, critic, and anthologist Alberto Manguel is a good person to get us started. (Manguel has recently translated Marguerite Yourcenar's Oriental *Tales,* and his v&ion of Yourcenar's biography of Yukio Mishimo has just been published by Collins.)

From the French: the novels of Hector Bianciotti, shortlisted For the Goncourt this year; brilliant, delicate portraits of European *aristocracy.* reminiscent of L.P. Hartley et his bat. The *Deserts of Gold is* one *of* his best.

The stories of Léon Bloy, '30s caustic, witty writer who hated everything and everyone. There is a collection called *Unpleasant Tales* with an introduction by Jorge Luis Borges, who calls Bloy one of his masters.

And why not a classic? Chateaubriand's *Life of Rance* — *an* exercise In biography imposed on him by his spiritual master — is a short gem that includes a section on writing love letters that every writer should read.

From the Spanish: The stories of Adolfo Bioy Casares. A few of his novels have been smuggled into English but God-knows-why have received no attention. His stories (*Love Stories* and *Fantastic Tales*) *are among* the, best fantastic Latin American fiction.

Ciro Alegria's *The World is Wide and Foreign.* Peruvian novelist, master of the realistic novel. This one in particular shows how powerful this kind *of* writing is in Spanish, and that there *is* life beyond magic realism.

Antonio Di Benedetto's *Zama.* A novel of the Spanish conquest of America: it inspired Klaus Kinski's film *Aguirre the Wrath of God. It* is simply one of the best historical novels ever written.

Kathy Mezei, whose translating increasingly tends toward theory and criticism (she does the University of *Toronto Quarterly*'s *annual survey* of translations) echoes other writers in urging English versions of books by Jacques Ferron, Réjean Ducharme, and Pierre Nepveu, but adds:

Novelists of the past: Patrice Lacombe, *La Terre paternelle;* Damase Potvin, *Le Français.* Poets: Albert Lozeau, Simone Routier, Alain Grandbois. Contemporary novels: Louky Bersianik. *Le pique-nique sur l'acropole;* Yolande Villemaire, *La vie en prose,* Francine Noel, *Maryse* (some may be in progress). Writing by Madeleine Gagnon and Julie Stanton end criticism such as Suzanne Lamy's *d'elles* and criticism by Richard Giguere and Francois Ricard.

Shuttling between his home in North Hatley and his teaching post at the Université de Sherbrooke, Ronald Sutherland also ranges far afield as a novelist, editor. and critic. As a frequent reviewer of Quebec literature, he offers the following as "of interest and importance to thinking English Canadians":

- Richard Giguère, *Exil, Révolte & Dissidence.* An interesting comparison of English and French Canadian poetry of the 1940s and '50s.
- Victor Teboul, *Emergence du libéralisme moderne au Québec.* About the fascinating, years-ahead-of-his-time Jean-Charles Harvey and his magazine *Le Jour.*
- Naim Kattan, *La Reprise* (L'Arbre HMH) and Gérard Etienne, *Une femme muette.* The new Franco-Jewish and Haitian dimensions in Quebec literature, and signs of an emerging pluralistic society. Both brilliant books besides.
- Gérard Bessette, *Le Garden-party de Christophire.* Amérique. Excellent short stories by an old master.
- Madeleine Ouellete-Michalska, *L'Échappée da discours de l'oeil and* Marcelle Brisson, *Plus jamais l'amour éternel.* The two bat books on Quebec Feminism. Ouellette-Michalska is full of Fascinating information, end Brisson, a former nun, uses the history of Abélard and Heloise to show how the Church sup pressed women.
- Richard Joly, *Notre democratie d'ignorants instruits.* Insightful commentary on modern society and how the explosion of information makes it impossible For individuals to catch up. Thus we are becoming increasingly ignorant, incapable of intelligent decisions.
- Max Dorsinville, *Le* Pays *Natal.* A comparison of Third World and Quebec *authors* and the philosophical issues shared. A unique book with remarkable insights.

The most eloquent argument for new translation probably comes from M.G. Vassanji, whose nomination "is based on an intellectual and literary interest. not on social or other commitment." Yet Vassanji's unusual choice — "a collection of medieval Gujarati works in 12 books, the bar *granth* — *reflects* geopolitical realities. The *bar granth is*

'The verses, exuberant in their imagination and invention, roam freely through the mythological spaces of India,, flouting convention, a thorn in the orthodox flesh'

pert philosophy, part folklore, and part mythological extemporizing, in poetic form. It comes from a world that is the Indo-Iranian counterpart of Umberto Eco's Europe in The Name *of the Rose or* Ladurie's Montaillou, with *sadhus* and *pirs* let loose instead of monks, end no Inquisition. In our own world, which quietly succumbs lo the levelling wrought by contemporary technological culture (even as, paradoxically, orthodoxies take stronger root). this work (like some recent discoveries From medieval Europe) reminds us of a time when diversity was the order of the dry. when every community had (or tried to preserve) its own symbols in which to understand the mysteries of life.

Consider: Vishnu creates Brahma, lays him down beside slumbrous Maya, and does a disappearing trick. Maya awakes. sees the child beside her, and assumes it was born From her lap. Thus the *lila,* the play, of the gods. But, we are told: Vishnu is none other then Allah. There lies the rub. The work is Muslim. What kind of Islam is this? A local version, to be sure; a mystical one; of the poet and story-teller, of the *sufi,* not of the theologian. Among the 12 books are a complete life of the Buddha.

Purists shrink from such unfamiliarity. Classicists gather their robes, walk by like lofty Brahmins Fearing pollution. Enter scholars of a theological bent, swooping in with their slew, ready to sift end separate, argue about authorship. ascribe influences. pronounce corruption and deviation. But the verses, exuberent in lhdr imagination and invention. roam freely through the mythological spaces of ancient India, flouting convention, a thorn in the orthodox flesh.

Whet they need is a translation and explication that celebrate their invention end de not impose present-day subdivisions, an image of our cut-up globe. upon them.

One translator you will not find giving up his gold-mining claim (or alchemist's crucible) is Larry Shouldice. Long an editor of *Ellipse* and translator of a book of interviews with 14 Quebec and Acadian writers by Donald Smith (to be published by House of Anansi), Shouldice says that our question

strikes me es well-intentioned but a bit naive. Since so many translation projects in this country are initiated by translators — the translator approaches the publisher. suggesting that such and such a book might be of interest — your survey amounts in some cases to asking people to publish their trade secrets.

It can happen-and in fact did with my translation of Alain Grandbois's short storks. *Champagne & Opium,* (Quadrant) — that a number of translators hit upon the same idea at the same time, and the one who's first to arrange rights ends up with the actual contract.

In any case, It happens that I don't have any brilliant ideas et present (except for a variety of literary-criticism works). bet if I did, Book *in Canada* would probably be the last place I'd went it known. □

REVIEW

For king and company

By Al Purdy

Company of Adventurers, by Peter C. Newman, Penguin, illustrated, 413 pages, $25.00 **cloth (ISBN** 0 **670** 88379 **0).**

IT BEGINS WITH a couple of French Canadians in the 17th **century, *coureurs de bois.*** The **two** men traded for furs with Indians to the **west** and north, returning home anticipating a **cordial** reception fmm **Quebec** authorities. They were taxed heavily instead, and fined for trading without a **licence.** Their **names** were Pierre **Esprit-Radisson** and **Médart Chouart, Sieur** Des **Groseilliers.** Modem schoolboys learning Canadian history often couldn't **pronounce** their names. and called them "Radishes" and **"Gooseberries,"** but there was nothing comic about the two woods ***runners.***

Raging over the injustice **of** their treatment at Quebec, they sailed for **England, met** the London **aristocracy,** and told not-so-wild tales of riches in furs near Hudson Bay, copper deposits in the North, and of a country larger than Europe that had never bean explored. **Convinced** that fabulous wealth **awaited in** Canada, Charles II granted a royal charter to a group of **17** investors, headed by the romantic Prince **Rupert** of the Rhine, that gave the Hudson's Bay Company — the "Company of Adventurers" of the book's title — total authority over lands draining into the huge bay. **which** is **almost** as large as the Mediterranean.

Newman tells a great story in this book, the first volume of several describing **more than** 300 **years** of **fur**-trading adventures. The book also touches on **the English preoccupation** with finding a North West Passage, the fabled Straits of **Anian.** Pathfinders and explorers of the far north mapped out the contours **of "Rupert's** Land" during that period — **an** immense territory that later became part of modern Canada, Today the company is a **conglomerate** that owns 484 stores, controls an **oil** company, owns a large real estate **firm,** and continues **to** operate **120 fur-trading outlets** in the **Canadian** north.

At the **height** of the company's **geographic** presence its **domain** covered one-quarter of North America, **reaching** beyond the original charter's authority. But even with that huge **territory** under its control, the Company had fewer than 3,000 **employees.** Jules Verne. in **one** of his north **country** romances, assured his readers that the HBC employed "about a million men in its **territories."**

Tbii immense mercantile structure was all based on the beaver, a proletarian worker-rodent, weighing from **40** to **60** pounds, that became extinct in England **during** the 15th century. It seems that the soft underhair of beavers is compressed into waterproof felt by a **special process** (anyone who knew this **method** kept it from possible rivals), and so the fur **was** prized for the **manufacture** of hats. Noble lords willed beaver hats to their eldest sons. They were treasured and guarded like gold. The French Huguenots were the world's **most expert** felt-makers:. after **their** massacre- on St. **Bartholomew's** Day they **fled** to **England.** which thus became **the beaver-hat centre** of the world..

The beaver became, in effect, money. 'The HBC reckoned the value of all its **trade** goods, from guns to safety pins, in an equivalent of dressed **beaver** skins. It was written into the company's **original** charter that whenever royalty should enter **the** HBC domain, they must be presented with two elks and two beavers. In 1970 Queen Elizabeth **visited** Winnipeg, where she was presented with two **live** black beavers **who** tussled together with enthusiasm. "Whatever are they doing?" Her **Majesty** wanted to know. **"Ma'am,"** the HBC Governor **said** disgustedly, "it's no good **asking** me; I **am** a bachelor." The Queen assumed her customary **mid-distance gaze** and murmured, **"I *quite*** understand."

The company actively **discouraged** anyone else invading their preserves **until** Lord Selkirk **brought** in his **dispossessed Scots** in 1812. It resisted change so adamantly that **the** price of trade **goods**-scarcely altered **over 100** years. The **successive governors** and managers shunned publicity, pretended anonymity — **unless** of **course** their interests were threatened..

War with **France** in 1697 was one such threat. **Pierre le Moyne d'Iverville,** a **brilliant** French commander, took **over** Hudson's Bay posts with **scarcely** a shot being **fired.** Nearly 100 **years** later another French commander, La **Pérouse,** captured Fort **Prince** of **Wales** on the Churchill **River,** also without a' shot. But the HBC had all these posts returned when peace treaties were **signed.** The company was not warlike, but its **businessmen** were demons over the **negotiating** table.

There was. of course, racism. **"Lesser** breeds without the **law"** was **born** long before Kipling. Indians, **life-blood** of the entire HBC enterprise, **were** badly treated. **Scots** and **Orkneymen** were treated badly **too.** Slavery was legal when the **royal charter** was granted. **Officially** there was no intercourse **between** company men and Indian women: **of course** there ***was*** intercourse **in all** that word's senses.

Blair **Stonechild. Cree** head of Indian studies at a Regina college, says, "The Company takes the view that it treated **the** Indians' fairly, using the rationale **that** it did not attempt to exterminate them as was done in the U.S. It is the difference from **being** in the frying pan and **being in the fire."**

The company's explorers **were** notable men. John Rae, **Orkneyman** and **physi**clan, was a pmdiiy of strength and **endurance: he mapped huge areas of the** Canadian **arctic. One** of his minor journeys was a hundred-mile jaunt by snowshoes from Moose Factory **to** Fort Albany in **24** hours. At age **45,** when **living** temporarily in Hamilton, **Ont.,** Rae **snowshoed** to Toronto to dine out. covering the 48 miles in seven hours.

Sir John Franklin, the **English** arctic explorer. disappeared after 1845. In 1853 John Rae **received artifacts from Eskimos** that indicated indisputably that Franklin was dead, and that cannibalism had been **practised** by the explorer's **crew** in their efforts to stay alive. When Rae mentioned thh in his **reports,** the **Royal** Geographical Society **received** the information with some hostility: **"English gentlemen** do not devour one **another."**

Henry Kelsey. another Company **man, was billed as "Discoverer** of **the** Canadian Prairies." Dispatched westward in the interests of trade with the Indians there, he was a sort of **travelling** salesman with glass beads and kettles. **Kelsey** reached a point **south** of present-day **Saskatoon in** 1690, and **wrote** a journal of his trip in doggerel poetry, precursor of the Black Mountain boys.

Samuel **Hearne walked** overland from Fort **Prince** of Wales to the **mouth** of the Coppermine **River, near** the Arctic Ocean, and back between 1770 and 1772. The **Chipewyan** Indian **chief Matonabbe** was largely **responsible** for the success of this 3,500 **mile** trip.

Despite the **heroism** of the HBC **pathfinders,** things always seemed to and badly. The **company** made little or no use of **information** provided by these early explorers. **Hearne's** wife died after Fort Prince of Wales was **taken** by the French navy commander, La **Pérouse. Matonabbe committed** suicide. **Hearne** himself died in London, a **comparatively** young man and nearly penniless. Radisson also **died,** in 1710, **begging** the company for a job. Henry **Kelsey** died **in** England as well, with no mention of **his** explorations and 38 **years service in** the company records. Only **John** Rae, the tough **Orkneyman** who read Shake **speare** in' his **igloo** by seal-oil **lamp,**

managed to survive all misfortune. He retired at the early age of 43, and lived out his long life in England.

In many ways this book is a shapeless mass of information. but deals in turn with different aspects of the company: from the pathfinders and factors of Hudson Bay to aristocratic governors in England; from mosquito-bitten clerks to Chipewyan and Cree hunters of the Barren Ground. In the narrative's nature. it is not sequential with an orderly beginning, middle, and ending.

Them are some annoying things; illustrations are identified only in the book's rear; you have to look them up each time in the "Key to Illustrations." In Appendix One the HBC Charter is dated May 2, 1760; four lines below it's correctly dated, 1670.

People have said to me that Newman is a mediocre writer. On the basis of thii book they're wrong. His previous much-publicised money-power books have left me indifferent; but this one is fascinating. It's one of the most interesting non-fiction books I've read. I don't see how Newman could have handled this shapeless mass of material any differently. Maybe it's even worth all the money Penguin Books is said to have paid him for the publishing rights. And I'll probably have to pay for volume two out of my own pocket. □

REVIEW

Served with a twist

By Terry Goldie

Mr. Palomar, by Italo Calvino, translated from the Italian by William Weaver, Later & Orpen Dennys, 130 pages, $14.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88619 063 0).

Black Venus. by Angela Carter. Academic Press, 121 pages, $19.95 cloth (ISBN 0 701 I 3964 I).

> This is the most difficult step in learning how to bc dead: to become convinced that your own life is a closed whok. all in the past, to which you can add nothing and can alter none or the relationships among the various elements.

IN THE LAST work published in English before his recent death, Italo Calvino provides his own epitaph. And as he no doubt knew, it is wrong. in a number of interesting ways. At a writer's death, the scalpels of critical dissection are readied to attack one more corpus/corpse that is complete. By their attack, they immediately incomplete it as various pieces formerly left out (the "inconsequential"

lacunae not by any means excepted) are dredged up in the process of reassessment. For Calvino. much of whose acclaim has come from those who know him only in translation, there is a double refraction, as his words are never mmplete until the William Weavers complete their words.

Calvino would love it. So would Mr. Palomar. As the book observes. Palomar's name reflects the famous observatory. So Palomar lives accordingly. a life with little lively experience but much observation and reflection. Calvino notes the importance of such non-experience when he considers how the simple reading of a book reshapes all that went before: "after he has read that book. his whole life becomes the life of a person who has read that book. . ." Calvino might have said "written" as well, as the old Calvino becomes reshaped by "a new Calvino" and, in future dredging projects, the dead Calvino. no longer a possible reader, will continue to be a possible writer.

I hope the last comment does not seem flippant, in the mourning time of such an important and humane author. But the certainly — the absolute — of death, seems so impossible in the light of what Calvino and other post-modernists have written. Mr. Palomar finds himself plagued by an uncertainty that makes much of life impossible.

He bites his tongue before speaking so as to avoid saying things he does not mean, but this, of course. prevents him from ever speaking. Yet he also recognizes that many will interpret his silence, so he can choose not to speak but he cannot choose to avoid unintended assertions. A nude woman on the beach gives him the same trouble. In attempting to convince her by his manner of looking or not looking that he is liberated yet not predatory, appreciative yet not sexist, supportive yet not desirous of participation, he angers the woman and leaver himself in hopeless confusion.

Mr. *Palomar* concludes with a complicated index that arranges these apparently only superficially linked pieces. For example, "On Biting the Tongue" is 3.2.1, while "The Naked Bosom" is 1.1.2. Calvino's note states that 1 denotes visual and descriptive, 2 is anthropological and narrative, and 3 is speculative, less description or narration than meditation. "Learning To Be Dead" is, as one might expect. 3.3.3.

Mr. Palomar is in many ways an old friend of fiction, the observer whose life seems inconsequential until the novelist takes us within. Robertson Davies's Dunstan Ramsay might be a Canadian example. Unlike Ramsay, however, Palomar's life really is inconsequential. But -and this is the truly important but — his reflections of other inconsequentials make the reader begin to sense the consequence of all. This is an observatory to open the universe.

As is Angela Carter. *Black Venus* is a collection of stories that blurs a number of chronologies. including that of publication. All of the selections seem to predate her *tour de force* in *Nights at the Circus* (1984), and they should be examined as precursors of the novel rather than sequels to it.

The most interesting suggestion of *Nights at the Circus* in *Black Venus is the* title character, Jeanne Duval, Baudelaire's mistress. who seems quintessentially Carter. Her presence is powerful from the beginning of the story. but it takes pages before the reader can even begin to delineate her character. When Carter finally reveals who she is — the facts of her name; dates, and so forth — eight pages in. the information doesn't help because the reader, now swimming in the atmosphere of the Venus, has long lost interest in such minor details.

Calvino's identification as a post-modernis: in *Mr. Palomar* is first shown 'by the strange irony through which the reader is forced to contemplate Palomar's innocent observations. Then it is reinforced by the manipulative packaging revealed in the index. There is little of the self-reflexive "I am writing, watch me writing" found in more simplistic post-modem works.

The same is true of Carter, and yet her credentials as a post-modernist are equally clear. Her vision is something closer to the post-modern in architecture, the playful and yet purposeful reworking of historical motifs. *Black Venus* includes Baudelaire, Edgar Allan Poe, and the American axe murderess Lizzie Borden. Then an American captivity narrative about a 17th-century whore who was transported but escaped to live with the Indians; a background piece for *A Midsummer Night's Dream;* and two reworkings of traditional folktales. The one remaining piece, "The Kitchen Child," should be traditional. the personal-experience narrative of a Victorian child conceived as a result of a cook being accosted while preparing a soufflé. The cook. of course. could not leave the souffle and so never learned the identity of the father of her child.

Calvino takes the everyday and brings out the strangeness inherent in it. Caner takes the familiar elements of the imagination, famous authors and famous stories, and adds her own twist. In her "Peter and the Wolf." the wolf is Peter's long-lost sister, just as happy a captive of the wolves as the whore is of the Indians. The story of Poe is not of the author but of the child, and of his mother the itinerant actress. The nar-

rator of the *Midsummer Night's Dream* is Titania's "lovely boy," focus of Oberon's envy. But "he" is really the Golden Herm, a hermaphrodite.

In a joint review, it is tempting to perform a comparative evaluation. Calvino's overt sense of metaphysics probably makes him the more "important" of the two. Even before his death his writing drew the post-structuralist critics like flies (or entomologists). Ott the other hand. for the non-cerebral, both Calvino and Palomar might seem a bit intellectual.

Some overly squeamish readers might find Carter perverse, but those with more liberal attitudes will find her free-wheeling sexuality. a romp. If there is a problem in her writing it might be excess of imagination. But in good post-modem fashion Carter seems to justify the necessity of excess. In an interview she gave during a recent stint as a writer-in-residence at an Australian university she referred to Walter Benjamin, the German Marxist critic, as an important influence. This should not be surprising if a reader takes the time to explore the implied purposes behind her reshaping of these bits of detritus from literary and non-literary history, the whores. the drunks, the orphans, the murderers.

So I should conclude with some suitably trendy comment about the darkly venereal *Black Venus or* the playful palimpsest of Mr. *Palomar* but I shall dispense with all that. Instead, a very simple ending. Two very good books. May many more come from Angela Carter. And praise and peace to Calvino, one of the most extraordinary observers literature has seen. □

REVIEW

The French connection

By I.M. *Owen*

Les Tmis **Colombes: Essai,** by Dorval Brunelle. VLB Editeur, 308 pages, S16.95 paper (ISBN 2 89005 216 8).

Straight fmm the Heart, by Jean Chrétien, Key Porter Books, 231 pages, S19.95 cloth (ISBN 0 919493 74 2).

IT'S NOW more than 26 pars since the Great Darkness of Quebec ended with the death of Maurice Duplessis, and Paul Sauvé, emerging from the shadows to take over, uttered the portentous word "*Désormais. . . .*" He lived to see only four months of that "henceforth"; to us who can now look back over the ensuing quarter-century, the transformation in Quebec and the consequent transformation in Canada are equally amazing.

The recent Quebec election looks as if it may be the beginning of a period of relatively calm mnsolidation: a good time for looking back at the events and the actors of the turbulent years. And the materials for doing this are accumu-

lating well. Lately we've had Graham Fraser's history of Lévesque and the Parti Québécois and Gérard Pelletier's memoirs of the 1950s. Now we have Jean Chrétien's political memoirs and a useful book by Dorval Brunelle on the careers of Pelletier, Jean Marchand. and Pierre Trudeau up to 1968.

The four names are significant of the change in Canadian affairs brought about by the transformation-of Quebec: these are all federal politicians. For the first century of Confederation, the provincial legislature was the place for talented and ambitious French-speaking Quebec politicians; those who were important in the House of Commons don't require a whole hand to count them — Cartier, Laurier, Lapointe. (Henri Bourassa's bicultural nationalism was overwhelmed by the Britishness of English Canada in his time;.and Louis St. Laurent wasn't a career politician.) It was in the days when Lester Pearson was in office in Ottawa and Jean Lesage in Quebec that distinguished Quebec French Canadians began to figure prominently on the federal scene.

Now. as was demonstrated in the 1984 election, it's the party that's led from Quebec that wins a majority. No doubt this is a temporary phenomenon: but for the moment it's pretty plain that, for instance. if in September, 1984, the Conservatives had been led by Joe Clark and the Liberals by Jean Chrétien the result would have been very different.

This makes Sept. IO, 1965 — the day Marchand, Pelletier, and Trudeau declared their intention of seeking Liberal nominations in the forthcoming federal election — a crucial date in our history. Dorval Brunelle's *Les Trois Colombes* (that's the epithet the French-language press applied to them, while the English-language press called them the Three Wise Men) traces the story of the three from their origins to that day and beyond to June, 1968, when one of them led the party to the first parliamentary majority the country had seen since Diefenbaker's victory of 10 years before.

I picked the book up with some apprehension: I'd "ever beard of Brunelle before. but knowing his publisher I expected to fmd a scornful, one-sided denunciation of federalist *vendus. Not at* all. It's a careful and fair-minded account, drawing on the writings of Pelletier and Trudeau and on tbe deeds of Jean Marchand *as* labour leader. (Marchand doesn't write if he can avoid it, but Brunelle has found two of his undergraduate essays, one on government corruption and one on socialism — whose section on Marxism has unfortunately beat "amputated" fmm the wpy deposited in the Laval library.) Throughout. Brunelle gives credit where credit Is due, and exposes superficiality where be finds it — as he does, for instance, itt Trudeau's major essay in *La Grève de l'amiante, "La Province de Québec au moment de la grève."*

I particularly like Brunelle's clear statements of historical concepts that are obvious enough, as most true statements are, but perhaps because they are obvious don't often get stated, and thus may escape our attention. For instance, here he states the argument of an earlier book of his own, *La D&illusion tranquille, on the Quiet* Revolution:

> This so-called revolution, at the outset at least and contrary to what many analysts say, was aimed not at increasing provincial autonomy but quits the reverse — to bring Quebec back to the bosom of federalism.

Nevertheless, by its very nature it gave rise to a new separatist nationalism. Similarly, we have now seen how nine years of government by a patty founded to advance the cause of separation have made Quebec more comfortable, not less, within Confederation.

Thus too he shows tbat since Quebec nationalism had for a century been the doctrine of clerical conservatives it was natural tbat when forceful opponents to Duplessis arose in the persons of these three their thought would be anti-clerical and fervently anti-nationalist.

I'm doubtful about a few of Brunelle's judgements. He argues that the Asbestos strike of 1949 was not in itself a particularly important labour dispute; that its importance lies in tbe fact that it brought Marchand, Pelletier, and Trudeau together. But surely there was more to it than that, since the support of Archbishop Charbonneau *of* Montreal — which resulted in his dethronement and withdrawal to exile in

Victoria — opened a rift in the church that led first to a renewed ascendancy of its right wing and then to the secularization of Quebec society in the Quiet Revolution.

For so detailed a work there are some curious omissions. There's no mention of the regular meetings at Pelletier's house or Marchand's apartment during the Lesage régime, at which the three, with André Laurendeau, discussed policy with Rend Lévesque, effectively their representative in the government. Nor of the phone call from Newfoundland in August, 1965, when Lévesque urged them to go into the Liberal Party as a team; that none of them should go alone as he had. And no notice at all is take" of the strong influence of Frank Scott on Trudeau; but this is usual — as far as I know no published account has yet recorded that it was Scott who invited Trudeau to edit *La Grève de l'amiante.* (I have reason to think that this gap will soon be filled.)

But tbis is a thoroughly useful book. I'd like to see it appear in translation, perhaps in combination with its predecessor, *La Désillusion tranquille.*

It seems as if *Stmight from the Heart* has been reviewed or excerpted in every periodical in sight. What's left to say7 I can confirm that it's a very engaging book from a notoriously engaging author. It does, though, raise the question whether a *politician ought to write* his memoirs before he retires. Even if he is as given to frankness as Jean Chrétien, there are obviously things he can't say — especially about the present leader of his party — which are the very things we are most interested in hearing. Inevitably he allows himself very few unkind remarks. But I'm glad he didn't restrain himself from a lapidary characterization of Mark MacGuigan as "too educated for his intelligence." That deserves immortality.

Almost the only thing that Marchand, Pelletier, and Trudeau had in common to start with was that they had all lost their fathers in early life. In contrast; though Chrétien was the 18th child in his family, his father lived to see hi in the cabinet. And it's an interesting sidelight on the history of Quebec that this father. influential in local Shawinigan politics, was a deeply committed federalist -so much so that he actually voted "yes" in the conscription plebiscite of 1942.

I wish Chrétien bad given a fuller account of his six years as minister of India" affairs. I always thought he was the best holder of that difficult portfolio (there's still a chance that David Crombie may equal him), and I was glad that Trudeau uncharacteristically left him in it for so long. Well, *there's room* for another book if he ever does retire. □

REVIEW

Sins of the father

By Volker *Strunk*

Remember Me, by Michel Tremblay, translated from the French by John Stowe, Talonbooks. 58 pages, $5.95 paper (ISBN 0 88922 219 3).

THIS TRANSLATION is of Michel Tremblay's *Les Anciennes Odeurs* (1981), a *one-act* piece that explores the anxieties of two homosexual but not very gay ex-lovers ambushed by their mid-life crisis and the growing suspicion of their mediocrity. The môde is, or appears to be, relentlessly confessional: if it weren't for the pregnant silences that would have done Harold Pinter proud, the two figures would have talked themselves to death. Visually highlighting the confessional mode is the focal point of. the piece, a large, worn-out leather armchair in and in front of which Luc and Jean-Marc alternatively sit and kneel as they demonstrate that the need for affection is mutual.

The' two had been living together for several years until the younger one, Luc, tired of being Jean-Marc's "cute little joyboy" and "disciple." decided to spread his wings. Evidently he didn't get very far; just back to "that darkness you'd hauled me out of," and *that wasn't all* fun and games. Tbe setting he evokes smacks of Baal's' ("I keep moving like a river, discharging my refuse into the sea!"), but unlike Brecht's amoral, polymorphous, perverse degenerate in search of orgiastic wriggles, Tremblay's Luc finds no celestial bliss in radical hedonism, since his pleasures in tbe gutter are circumscribed by his need to belong. That's why this bird returns to his former prison, his "big cage."

The master/slave relationship in this cage is acted out with an Oedipal vengeance since Jean-Marc. the dominant lover, 'college teacher by profession, also doubles as a father figure. In a gesture designed to signify his independence from hi "father," Luc had moved out. though it's not long after reentering hi former prison that he feels. "as if I'm talking to you like a son to his father . . . *once* again. It's true when all's said and done, you would have made a good father." In due course the prodigal son cries on "daddy's" shoulder and implores him to "Tell me a story like you did when I used to get depressed. Pretend you're my father one last time. When he's dead, I won't ask' you again."

"He" is Luc's terminally ill *real* father, reportedly incapable of attending to his son's "stories," yet craving a proper send-off fmm Luc's lover. As a solution to parental despotism this is of course bound to fail, but the ending is not all bleak because Jean-Marc conveniently undermines his own status as surrogate father by becoming a fellow sufferer. a "brother," as it were, and thereby seems to prepare the ground for true companionship.

All this is about as undramatic as it can get. since the real conflict between Luc end his surrogate father just withers away as Jean-Marc discovers that he, too, is tired of playing games. But is this really what the play is all about? Has Tremblay been writing a silly little naturalistic milieu study demonstrating that not all is well in fairyland? Not one bit. Although the play can be approached as a realistic specimen, it makes its far greater impact as a rather sinister monodrama.

The prospect of a happy ending to this many-mirrored play is somewhat diminished by the fact that the place of the action — Jean-Marc's basement study — is a spatial pretext and that Luc's entry ("My goodness, a ghost!") is that of an unappeased ghost in the subconscious. The translator most have known what he was doing when he chose the title *Remember Me,* which recalls the ghost of Hamlet's father. The title is appropriate in a different sense, too. The man whom we see in the beginning marking papers has left no other mark. Rapidly approaching 40, the teacher/writer with one "utterly boring," "utterly useless" novel to his credit, yearns "to leave some indelible mark on the world, whereas in fact nobody will remember me, they'll just remember my 'disciples' — as you so snidely refer to them, since you're one yourself."

The "rotating" confessional mode the play adopts serves as the great leveller: in the realm where all are mediocre, none is, and that could be the premise of a renewed friendship. But a somewhat different picture begins to emerge if we see Luc's confessions — indeed his whole character — as the *projection* of the man in the basement who had always wanted to become what Luc *is*: an actor. Instead he has become a spectator, or more precisely, since he is self-conscious to a fault, a voyeur of himself. He used to get through the wont moments of his childhood by "watching myself on an imaginary screen playing my own role in an endless adventure film." But that doesn't work any longer, because "Whenever I try to recapture that state of grace which once did wonders for me,

it's you I see. playing my role." And how does one cope with such a" apparition, how does one accommodate one's envy of "the other" who has left his mark on the world? Well, one turns this mark into a stain — or better still, lets Luc himself turn the mark and imprint he made into a "stain," a "blemish." And finally one reduces him to the nonentity of one's mirror image: at the end we see Luc at Jean-Marc's desk, marking papers and repeating Jean-Marc's opening line, "Two mistakes in the title alone. . . . Incredible!"

Remember Me is a fine monodramatic miniature. One would like to see this translation performed soon. though one would also like to see the playwright break out of the miniature mold. □

REVIEW

Breadline and boardroom

By ***Phil*** *Hall*

Last in **Line: On** the Road and Out of Work, **a Desperate Journey with Canada's** Unemployed, by **Alan Mettrick,** Key **Porter, 201** pages, $14.95 paper **(ISBN** 0 919493 **72 6).**

Room at **the** Top: A Woman's **Guide** to **Moving Up** In Business, **by** Ruth **Markel, Penguin,** 283 pages, **$6.95** paper **(ISBN** 0 14 **007065 6).**

THESE TWO BOOKS hate each other. As **their names** imply, they speak **from opposite** ends of the political and economic spectrums. ***Room at the Top*** is subtitled "A woman's guide to **moving** up In business": ***Last in Line*** is about rock-bottom unemployment.

Alan **Mettrick** lived as a transient **during** the worst recession days of **1981-1983,** and has **written *Last in Line* as a chronicle of** temporary **labour halls,** Skid Rows, **missions,** and hostels. lie wanted' **like** Jack London **(*People of the Abyss*)** and **George** Orwell (Down ***and Out in Paris and London)*** *among others,* **to write an honest journalism-on-the-bum. He argues: "I** defy anyone with money to do a real job of researching **poverty."** So he cut his **money-lines** loose and went **west,** where a person **who** is **broke has** less chance of **freezing.**

The result is a book to be grateful for, **especially** now. Slice **1983** a phtsh rug of renewed pmtits has hidden the worst dirt-poverty. Runaways. doorway **alcoholism,** the real reasons for **unemployment — such subjects are now** regarded as **old-fashioned and quaint.**

Mettrick worked **as** a daffodil cutter, did phone sales **till** his jaw was sore, sold **meat by the** f--load. **dug** holes. did **a** lot **of** sitting and **waiting, and listened** well. What he heard is both discouraging and heartening. In every major city in Canada there are thousands of homeless people, as **Mettrick** says, **"stalking** the streets as if their inner compasses had **gone wild."** But I take heart **from** the **resourcefulness, sustained humour, and generosity toward each other that Mettrick witnessed these** people displaying.

The **amazing people!** (Or ***The People, Yes,*** **as *Carl*** Sandburg says.) Survivors, **idiots,** tough nuts, con **artists. tear-jerkers. real pals. Tbe book is** full of conversational surprises. and transformational **life** stories that are all the more interesting for being true. Thanks **to** a **woman** named **Ricky in** the book, I know how to stay **drier** at night by sleeping **with tin pie-plates on my sleeping** bag.

Last in Line asks all the right **questions** and answers some **ruthlessly:** "Poverty **has** always **been** the blood-stained dipstick [politicians] use to show the **rest** of us how well we are doing."

Compared to this acute **analysis,** Ruth **Markel's *Room at the Top*** is **comical.** Its advice to **business** women is also frightening **in** its lack of sexual. **social,** or **class distinctions: "Become** a team member"; "Never lose your temper"; "Know the **buzz** words." There is no section that deals with sexual harassment, but **there *is one on* "visibility"; and there is some consideration of how to make your boss look good. Also, you should "devote some thought to the company image, and how your personal style, including** dress and speech, **fit in** with it." And remember, ladies, **at** business luncheons **with** male **colleagues:** "The **time** it takes to **warm** up to business negotiations resembles the **role** of **foreplay in sexual satisfaction."**

Actually, to be fair, *Room at the Top may be a* good guide, as **guides** go. There are charts and **questionnaires throughout,** and the book is **based** on seminars **Markel** has conducted. To **personalize** her advice she uses examples of **women** she has met **directly in** her workshops. **Also,** I **know** this book is not intended for me, a **man,** not even **in** business. So beyond pointing **to** its **stylistic shallowness, I judge it only politically, and give it a zilch.**

The **disparity** between these two books points to the extreme **economic** hiihs and lows that **exist** between our **office** towers and **our** mat-s on pallets under **bridges. *Last in Line amounts to a* brave descent into the cataracts of poverty: *Room at the Top amounts to another* oblivious climb into the blindspot of money. If you enjoy the one, you aren't** likely **to enjoy the** other. □

CRITICAL NOTICES

BELLES LETTRES

Isak Dine-sea's Africa: Images of the Wild Continent from the Writer's Life and Words, by Isak Dinesen and other **contributors,** Douglas &McIntyre, **illustrated,** 142 pages, $40.00 cloth (ISBN 0 88894 488 8).

By John *Oughton*

THE '80s seem to be the apotheosis of soap' opera as **mainstream entertainment.** It issomewhat **fitting that Dinesen** should be hot **right now, celebrated not only by this gift book but also by the release of a Sydney Pollack movie of *Out of Africa* with Meryl Streep and Robert Redford.**

Not that the **Danish writer descended to formulaic mixing and matching of the rich and oversexed; her writing has the clarity and poetic force of such great traveller-visionaries as Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. But her life certainly** contained **all** the **anguish and coincidence of a *Dynasty* epic:** her father **committing** suicide when she was 10 and her **first** love **dying** in a plane crash. She then **married his twin brother, who** gave her unhappiness **— and syphilis. While** living in Kenya, she suffered the loss of her best **friend** to suicide, and ha lover **Denys Finch-Hatton** to another **plane** crash. Her coffee **farm** eventually failed, **forcing her** to **return** to Denmark. She somehow fought off the effects of **syphilis until** 1962, **when** she died at the age of 77.

But that's the stuff of the movie. **The book, also largely drawn from Out *of Africa*, combines excerpts with colour** photos of East Africa by contemporary **lensmen** and black-and-white snapshots of **Dinesen** and **her circle.** Most of the images do complement her words, showing a similar blend of **realistic** detail and emotional response to the alternately **stark** and lush landscape and the **Kikuyu** and **Masai people** she loved. ("Perhaps they **were,** in **life** itself, within **their** own element, such as we can never be, **like fishes in deep water which** for the life of them cannot understand our fear of drowning.")

Is this, as the press release claims, **"the gift book** of the year"? It is generally **well-designed** and produced. and **certainly** has better **writing** than most of its competitors. **But the production values are just short of top-notch, with more minor colour-plate printing errors than one expects from a job printed in Japan** under Sierra Club auspices. Certain4 it will please **those'** readers for whom **Isak** Dinesen's **writing, and East** Africa, are something **to treasure.** □

NOTE

Particularly positive critical notices are marked at the end with a star. ☆

Out in the World: Selected Letters of Jane Bowles 1935-1970, edited by **Millicent Dillon, Paget** Press, 319 **pages,** $32.00 cloth (ISBN 0 920348 53 **X)** and 320.00 paper (ISBN 0 920348 52 **1).**

By Sherie Posesorski

IN PHILIP ROTH'S *The Ghost Writer,* fledgling *writer* Nathan **Zuckerman** shivers **with** the **thrill** of **renouncing life** for **writing, deciding** that "all one's concentration and flamboyance and **originality** [should be] reserved for the **gruelling,** exalted, transcendent calling" as he **travels** to meet **his** muse, elderly **novelist** E.I. Lonoff. Yet after meeting Lonoff, he realizes **that** although he may emulate the writing style, **Lonoff's** lifestyle — which consists of watching deer out the window and turning **sentences** around — would rapidly use up his *Imaginative resources,* **and so goes back out into the world.**

The Lonoff-Zuckerman choice is a dilemma faced by all writers. Does living flamboyantly **in** the world or monastically **in** the house better serve the muse? The **writing** careers of Paul and Jane **Bowles** epitomize the Lonoff-**Zuckerman** split. Paul **Bowles,** by seeping **all** the flamboyance and **colour** out of **his** life and into **his art (he has lived an austere and isolated life in Morocco for the last 30 years), continues to create a body of fiction of lurid originality and power. When** his wife Jane Bowler **died** in 1970, **her** small body of work (a novel, a **play,** and **six** short stories) had long been forgotten. Her *wildly* **eccentric life**style **— her** defiant pursuit of pleasure, her **lesbianism,** drinking, and **writing** block — are what she *is* primarily remembered for.

Born in 1917 to a **wealthy, assimilated** Jewish family, Jane **Auer *met*** and mar**ried Paul Bowles in 1937. Living** separate4 yet emotionally intertwined, **Jane busied herself consuming life with her life, while Paul (whose life was no less unconventional than hers) zealously banked his reserves in order to write music and tiaion. As his work gained recognition, so did hers — but only for its non-completion. She had a stroke in 1957, and her notorious writing block found its physical equivalent in her aphasia and eventual blindness.**

The selected letters are a sad testimony to the originality of her life and her **diminishing powers. They provide little of the kind of interest to be found in, say, those of Flannery O'Connor, who creates a strong characterization of herself and others as she outlines her emotional and intellectual growth. Bowles shows herself to be chatty and capricious. Her concerns (she spends pages deciding whether or not to dry-+" Paul's clothes** or **to** sublet his apartment) are of relatively **minimal** interest. That she was an original and disturbjnn **writer** is **apparent in** her **novel, *Two Serious Ladies.*** However, it **is hard to remember those qualities after reading these self-absorbed and trivial letters.** □

CITIES

Toronto Architecture: A **City Guide. by Patricia McHugh, Mercury Books (Methuen), illustrated, 264 pages,** $14.95 **paper (ISBN 0 9691971 011).**

By John *Oughton*

ARCHITECTURALLY, TORONTO has more **than the CN Tower, the Royal Bank building, and the Eaton Centre to offer visitors.** Those who doubt that **claim** can be converted by McHugh's **lively** and informative walking guide to **downtown buildings.**

McHugh comments on some 750 downtown edifices, from unpretentious cottages that recall Toronto's 19th-century origins to massive warehouses and office buildings. She is an entertaining and occasionally sarcastic writer who neither condescends nor preaches to the general reader. Brief essays on each major historical style **open** the book. and the architectural terms she **uses** are explained in a handy glossary (although it doesn't **contain "ogee").**

Toronto contains a greater **variety** of architectural styles than even its natives might suspect. **The great Richardsonian Romanesque style of the Victorian era is still evident in the York Club (formerly George Gooderham House), while less elegant buildings like the St. Lawrence Centre espouse "Brutalism," McHugh comments on** renovations and adaptations as well as original structures, and can be dismissive. **("The less said about the gauche new** pastiches next door, the better.")

Illustrated with a blend of historical and contemporary photos, *Toronto*

Architecture is an excellent gift for amateur architects, walkers, and visitors to the city. ☆

FICTION

Apple Staff and Silver Crow.. by Nancy-Lou Patterson. Porcupine's Quill, illustrated, 223 pages, 812.95 paper (ISBN 0 8894 075 X).

By Barbara Gunn

PATTERSON'S TALE about a young couple's quest for love seems, at first glance, to be a sort of remake of Cinderella. The dashing young prince is here, as is the servant girl, a beautiful but long-suffering creature who in this case does floors rather than chimneys. But Patterson's story has glittering swords rather than glass slippers, a wise and warm-hearted hermitess itt place of a cruel stepmother. and a trip to the sea instead of a ball.

The action quickly unfolds after Patterson has introduced us to Prince Garth and the scrub-maid Irmengarde. idealistic and unworldly young characters who are both at the age of sexual awakening. King Darkspur, Garth's stepfather, tells Irmengarde that she may no longer associate with the prince, her treasured, long-time companion, which prompts the young woman to flee *Darkspur's castle. Garth* soon begins to long for Irmengarde and eventually also leaves. A protracted expedition follows, in which Garth searches for Irmengarde and a somewhat-confused Irmengarde searches for that ever-evasive "some thing."

There is much within Patterson's simple story to give it a fairy-tale flavour, such as the constant tug-of-war between innocence and experience. No diminutive fairies romp here, but there are supernatural creatures: a red-eyed dragon, a unicorn with a rainbow-coloured horn, a garrulous snake. Still, Patterson's tale isn't likely to be embraced by a wide audience, nor by a young one. There are too many extraneous adventures that separate start from finish, side-trips that were no doubt well-planned but tad to pull our attention away from the basic plot. □

Glass Houses. by Tom Marshall, Oberon Press, 129 pages, 823.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88750 593 7) and 512.95 paper (ISBN 0 88750 594 5).

By *Done Sturmanis*

MARSHALL'S WRITING STYLE in this collection of short stories is seductively competent; he has a way of orchestrating his sentences so that he makes the most mundane material hiiy readable. Unfortunately, most of Marshall's material here *is* mundane. Through the eyes of Harold Brunt, he sketches out the limited experience of a former professor trying to write novels. we follow him through affairs with graduate students. the bii drama of his ex-wife's *exhibiting her paintings* of *their* sex life, hi wandering excursions into cafés and book stores, seeking artistic inspiration.

This is not to say that these stories are unappealing. Brunt is a man with a certain insight and sense of humour, who seems to accept the misfortunes that come his way often because of his own ineptitude.

The two *strongest stories* in the collection arc the first and the last. The first. "The Story of T," is an excellent talc of a quirky relationship between the' professor and a small debauched boy. Written in a detached style quite unlike the others, it offers more general insight than all the rest.

In the final story, "Barbara and Harold on the Island: An Idyll," the professor still finds himself stumbling into events beyond his control and behaving predictably. But Marshall provides a fresh dramatic twist and an off-the-wall character, Mrs. Cornice, who puts the pretentious Harold Brunt in his place. □

Mario, by Claude Jasmin, translated from the French by David Lobdell, Oberon Press, 180 pages, 827.95 cloth' (ISBN 0 88750 572 4) and 514.95 paper (ISBN 0 88750 573 2).

By *Anne Verrier-Skutt*

MARIO *IS* IO years old, grey-eyed, with curly blond hair. Sometimes, he hears "harps laughing at the top of their lungs." Mario is also mentally retarded.

Clovis, his brother. almost 16. creates a fantastic make-believe world for them, full of adventure and excitement. One 'day, their parents decide to place Mario in a home, so the brothers run away. Twice, very sadly, Clovis attempts to remove Mario from a world where he doesn't fit. In the end, out of ideas, he asks and obtains heavenly help.

Jasmin gives us *an accurate description* of retardation, but in such a way that one can't help but love Mario. He is most effective when he tells of the children's withdrawal from reality, at the same time showing that their enchanting world cannot possibly work in everyday life.. He also says that a home for the retarded is *not a solution:* these children need a loving family environment even more than average children.

In an odd way, the book also offers a powerful religious message. It is a thoroughly worthwhile novel. ☆

Oil Patch Empire, by John Ballem, McClelland & Stewart, 270 pages, $19.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7710 1052 4).

By S.A. Newman

IN ANOTHER *Dallas* in book form. Ballem exhibits an inherent Canadian dislike for going too far. Oil *Patch Empire is* touted es a "blistering saga of passion," yet the occasional sex scenes are unconvincing, leaving the feeling they've been written merely because a hook of thii nature demands it.

The characters are flat and two-*dimensional, and* though the story is action-packed and easy to read, every move can be anticipated. The book ends abruptly, leaving the reader vaguely dissatisfied.

It is the story of Venture Oils of Alberta — its political associations, the underhanded deals made between government and private sector, and the paper-shuffling and chessboard manoeuvring of big business. Heading the all-star cast Is Bill Crawford — dynamic. rich, handsome, brilliant, kind, and ethical, yet still successful in business. Obsessed by his dream of arctic oil, he is ruthlessly persecuted by Margo Jones, investigative reporter. Bill's beautiful, sexy daughter, Debbie (herself a business force to be reckoned with), engineers Margo's downfall, while manipulating the lives of all the men who fall adoringly at her feet. However, at the happy end, Debbie's inherent sweetness shines through.

This is a book full of rich and powerful *characters* who are miraculously happy. The theme, though, is a conflicting one: good. things_ come to those who are evil/good; bad things come to those who are good/evil. Anything is possible if you want it enough. as long as the ending is happy.

Also to end on a happy note, it might be said that Oil Parch Empire will be worth the paperback price. □

On the Endangered List, by David Gurr, McClelland & Stewart, 313 pages, $19.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7710 3664 7).

By *Valerie Keller*

THIS NOVEL IS so fast-paced that it takes a while for the reader to get in step. At first 'I felt as if I had arrived late at a party where strangers spoke a language I recognized but couldn't quite understand. But once I began to recognize that Morgan Brendell's "we" referred to both him and his alter ego "Lefroy," I was hooked. fascinated. and frightened. Gurr shows how innocence, naïveté, and youthful high spirits can easily embroil us in a hopeless situation with the government, and that pleading stupidity

— or guilt by omission — is no defence.

On *The Endangered List* also gives us a frightening sense of being a bug under a microscope. We are all aware of satellites spinning overhead, but Gurr brings into focus just how those spinning bits of machinery threaten our privacy and rights as "free" beings. Readers with a curiosity about tbe high-tech world — who aren't easily shocked by graphic descriptions and strong language — will find Gurr's latest book a good read. ☆

With a Strange and Terrible Clarity, by Brian L. Flack, Black Moss Press, MS pages, $12.95 paper (ISBN 0 88753 130 X).

By Cheryl Sutherland

ANDREW TAYLOR is a man with a successful career, a great attraction to women, and a mind self-educated by Shakespeare, Joyce, *et al.* We meet him as he is committing suicide, frustrated by his six-year marriage, hounded by unresolved conflicts.

Unfortunately the author who seems most to have influenced him is Dickens, for his childhood memories, drenched in self-pity, beg comparison with *David Copperfield*. In chapters alternating the days before his death with his recollections, he relives his father's death, the dissolution of his family, his intense loneliness at the Patton Home for Boys, and his rage against his mother, which now has been transferred to his wife.

However, instead of the compelling, noble hero Flack seems to have envisioned, Taylor is a muddled, unsympathetic man whose suicide is melodramatic and whose despair is unconvincing and overwritten. He is a self-deluded character, a supposedly intelligent man who fails to realize the parallels between his father's death and the legacy he passes on to his daughter, whom he claims to adore.

The account of the day of hi death,, suffused with calm and regret, is well-written, but the rest of the novel is uneven, awkward, and stilted. □

Vancouver Short Stories, edited by Carole Gerson, University of British Columbia Press, illustrated. 183 pages, $9.50 paper (ISBN 0 7748 0228 6).

By John Greenwood

PUBLISHED TO celebrate Vancouver's centennial, this is a rather dubious book. The problem is with its intention to present, according to Get-son, a sort of broad picture ("which is both colourful and selective") of Vancouver over the years — like one of those murals you find in public buildings. But the stories themselves were not written for this purpose. They vary too widely in form to benefit fmm being anthologized, and indeed the collection might have been improved had a few been omitted. Yet on the whole they're quite good.

The first few pieces were published initially around the turn of the century, and are of the mystery and adventure variety. While Pauline Johnson's "The Two Sisters" and "The Siwash Rock" are sentimental reworkings of Indian myths, Bertrand Sinclair's "The Golden Fleece" is more thoughtful and has some intriguing descriptions of life on board a ship.

Somewhere between social document and literature. Emily Carr's "Sophie" is an insightful description of a. poor Indian woman whose children never make it past infancy. It's a sketch rather than a story, told with considerable *force.*

A number of the pieces deal with life in Vancouver's immigrant community. These are predictable stories of clashing values, but Sky Lee's "Broken Teeth," about an old Chinese woman who hated her father but still pays him customary homage, is effective. Of the more recent writing, George Bowering's "Spans" is clever and difficult, but most enjoyable is. *Alice* Munro's "Forgiveness in Families," a delightfully ironic short story about a woman called Valerie who can't abide her brother's eccentric ways. □

MIXED MEDIA

Finding Canadian Facts Fast, by Stephen Overbury, Methucn. 192 pages, $9.95 paper (ISBN 0 458 98250 4).

By John Goddard

WHEN NOVELIST Timothy Findley began to research *Famous Last Words*, he picked up a history book, began to read, and found his eye picking up on a particular sequence of names. lie followed the sequence, picking up on personality traits and links between people end events. He dubbed this picking-up process the "magnet phenomenon," and he elaborates on its usefulness to the creative writer in Overbury's imaginative, sensible, low-tech guide on how to research almost anything.

Findley is one of 12 researchers fmm a variety of fields who contribute brief, lively chapters on personal research experiences, approaches, and philosophies that fill the first half of the book. Other contributors include lawyer Julian Porter, reporter John Zaritsky, former Ontario cabinet minister Frank Drea, and a telephone virtuoso named Gary Goodman who has a theory that good singers make good telephone communicators: they can modulate their voice to create tonal harmony with the other person, a useful persuasion technique.

In the book's second half, Overbury, a freelance journalist and research instructor, tells how to gather information in libraries. from three levels of government, and at the courthouse. "Privacy is an endangered species," he writes with equanimity. "There is no such thing as information you can't access." •i

ON STAGE

Contemporary Canadian Theatre: New World Visions, edited by Anton Wagner, Simon&Pierre. illustrated, 411 pages, $29.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88924 152 X).

By Jason Sherman

AS A DOCUMENT of Canadian drama in this century, this series of outlines, summations, and viewpoints is dry, occasionally perceptive, and almost without exception uninspired. As a presentation to last year's World Congress of the International Theatre Institute (for which it was hastily assembled) it is a listless read that does much to further the image of Canadian theatre as dry, not at all perceptive, and always uninspired.

The editor writes that the inclusions "collectively suggest that any theatre which specks to its own immediate community and society and them finds its own reality can discover and dramatize universal truths and values." This sounds more like an apology than a startling observation. After all. it is little more than a rewording of the paradigm that in the particular is the universal. It does. however, give us an indication of what to expect: banality and a rough attempt to categorize both the subject matter and the way in which it is presented. One chapter, "Government and Cultural Expression." has little or nothing to do with either.

This kind of instant mythologizing might be a little easier to digest if the writing were on a slightly hiicr level. As it is, the survey "Theatre and Drama Across Canada" might as well have been presented in the form of chronological lists. Only occasionally in this province by-province précis is an attempt made to provide an overview, to interpret the way in which works interrelate.

There are well-written, informative pieces, such as those by Don Rubin, Audrey Camiré, Herbert Whittaker and, perhaps surprisingly. the actor R.H. Thompson. Perhaps this is *not* surprising. Thomson's piece is the most personal, the least pretentious in the book. The bulk of the book is written by members of the Canadian Theatre Critics Association, and stands as a

testimonial to the sad state of theatre criticism in this country.

Ray Conlogue, in particular, provides a icw glaring examples of poorly researched journalism, though none so amazing as this: in the same paragraph he commends the Vancouver Playhouse for commissioning fine homegrown work such as *The Ecstasy of Rita Joe* while condemning director Malcolm Black for programming works emanating fmm England. What Conlogue misses is the fact that not only dld Black not program the English plays, he in fact commissioned *Rita Joe* when he was at the Playhouse. □

Milestones II: The Life and Times of Miles Davis Since 1960. by Jack Chambers, University of Toronto Press, illustrated, 424 pages, $24.95 cloth (ISBN 0 8020 2539 0).

By Janet Windeler

THIS BOOK CONTINUES from *Milestones I*, published two years ago. which examined the early years of the controversial trumpeter from St. Louis. Chambers, a jazz authority and professor of linguistics at the University of Toronto. brings the skills of a scholar to this work. He has produced a sensitive musical analysis unhampered by fan-club sentimentalizing, and combines it with a literate and exhaustive biographical study of one of the most enigmatic figures, and certainly one of the most important musicians, of our time.

In the 1950s Davis was riding high: he had finally broken free from a four-year heroin habit, and permanently abandoned his habit-supporting pimping to return to his music with a creative vitality he hadn't experienced in pars. The modal innovations of the great acoustic sextet of the '50s, with John Coltrane and Bill Evans, gave way during the '60s to Davis's increasing "se of rock elements and electronic instrumentation. which resulted in a sophisticated fusion of jazz and rock.

Davis had taken to performing in continuous sets as he persisted with audacious experiments in rhythm and counterpoint, and he moved into funk in the '70s, relentlessly searching beyond jazz for his sources of change.. But in 1975 he was down, suffering from exhaustion, a bleeding ulcer, and a number of ailments brought about by a life-long battle with sickle-cell anemia. For six years Davis was silent, and the rumour-mongers went wild.

. But with the Kool Jazz Festival of 1981, Miles was back, with a new barrage of sidemen and a repertoire that Chambers suggests was designed *to* bury the past. In his restless, sometimes obsessive search for innovation, Davis has been accused by some jazz traditionalists of having sold out to showbiz. He responds to the accusations with a blast of obscenities, and says, "I play whatever comes into my black head, ma"." ☆

RE-RUNS

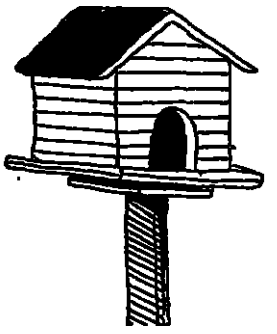
My Happy Days In Hell, by George Faludy, translated from the Hungarian by Kathleen Szasz, Collins, 469 pages, $9.95 papw (ISBN 0 00 217461 8).

By Paul Wilson

IF THERE IS anything to be gleaned from this timely re-release of thii autobiography (first -published in 1962, several years before Faludy moved to Canada), it is that the deeper a person's roots strike into his own traditions — in Faludy's case, the traditions of classical and Christian European culture — the less likely he is to be misled, defeated, and physically liquidated by forces bent on destroying that culture.

Faludy's "hell" is exile from his native land, which took him, in the late 1930s, to France and then, always one step ahead of the Gestapo, to Morocco and finally to the U.S., where he ran an exile newspaper and served in the armed forces. After the war, he returned to Hungary, where he was eventually arrested and spent three gruelling years of internal exile in a Stalinist concentration camp. The book ends with his release a few months after Stalin's death.

Contrary to what one might expect, the book — in Szasz's vigorous translation — is delightfully entertaining. Faludy stands out against the grim backdrop to hi life as a person of wide learning and deep, humane wisdom, of



buoyant yet sober optimism, hc is a natural rebel, and he embraces life with an exuberant openness, a healthy respect for death, a deep distaste for stupidity, and a passion for poetry. discourse, and conversation.

Like many Central European writers, Faludy can be fully engaged in the events he describes and still keep his distance through irony and humour. Often, he is funniest in moments of greatest stress or danger. (Convinced he will soon be killed, he ponders what last words he might leave in his cell for posterity; reluctantly, because he knows it sounds tacky. he scrawls "ARTHUR KOESTLER WAS RIGHT" in his own blood, adding, "I WAS GUILTLESS" so no one would think he was identifying with Rubashov, Koestler's hero.)

There is a strong, and not at all fanciful, suggestion that Faludy was able to survive the rigours of starvation, disease and overwork in prison — and to help others survive — precisely because he believed so profoundly in the power of the human spirit. and because, unlike so many of his generation, hc was never seriously tempted to espouse the ideologies of progress that circumscribed his life. At the very most, they could offer only p&shadows of the pleasures and truths he found in hi own mind. ☆

SCIENCE & NATURE

The Natural Alien: Humankind end Environment. by Neil Evernden, University of Toronto Press, 160 pages, $16.95 cloth (ISBN 0 8020 2.552 8).

By *M.T.* Kelly

EVERNDEN'S STUDY is a brilliant, difficult, passionate assault on the dominance of economic — in fact of western — thinking. In it Evernden calls for nothing less than a complete re-evaluation of environmentalism.

The dense, closely reasoned arguments arc difficult to sum op. Evernden ranges from an assault on Cartesian thinking (which "builds a barrier between man and nature and invites us to guess what is on the other side") to a stud) of the *Romantics*. But basically he says that it is useless to argue with those who are destroying not only the environment hot the very world itself on their terms. For example, ii you defend the existence of a creature. and someone then asks, "What good is it?" it is useless, to argue back. "Perhaps the bat the environmentalist can hope to do is to reply: 'What good arc you?' — not to insult the other. but to illustrate the absurdity of our presumption that one being's existence can be justified only by its utility to another."

Another example — and one I found particularly poignant — concerns the preservation of wetlands. Evernden would say that there is no point in telling a chemical engineer that wetlands should be saved because they can serve as filters for toxic waste. Maybe the scientist would come up with a better filter, or something else, and good-bye wetlands. "By basing all arguments on enlightened

self-interest." Evernden says, "the environmentalists have ensured their [illegible] perceived as lying elsewhere."

The Natural Alien calls for what has been termed "deep ecology," which sets itself the task of confronting the "dominant social paradigm" that stands in the way of any significant change in a man-environment relationship. The centre of this complex, passionate book, seems to be, like many Central European writers, showing how effective "deep ecology" can be, talks about what impels people to try to keep their environment, their experience, alive. After all. environmentalism is essentially "a protest on behalf of value."

What makes a housewife try to save a tree from the chainsaw is simply that she feels the tree to be part of herself. Poets have thought that way, and deep ecologists, and some of the most effective campaigners to save the world from poison and destruction. The housewife doesn't want her own arm cut off. ☆

SOCIETY

War, by Gwynne Dyer, Stoddart, illustrated, 272 pages, 823.95 cloth (ISBN 0 7737 2068 5).

By Derek Suchard

SINCE AT LEAST the arrival of the Darwinian influence on sociological thinking, the nature of war has come under close scrutiny as a manifestation of our basic animal aggression. In a departure from this line, Dyer outlines a thesis in which. war is shown to be not a natural phenomenon but rather a social development arising out of the invention of civilization -and one that has changed only in degree from the first agricultural settlements of 10,000 years ago.

Bared on, and a worthy supplement to, the television series, *War* sets out to make the point that though war has until very recently been a minor affair — one that touched the lives of the majority of the citizens only remotely — now it has become deadly serious, with consequences immeasurably extended beyond the field of battle. Therefore it must be eradicated.

Dyer's sardonic sense of humour shines through clearly in print and adds a sense of comic relief to a subject that totters uneasily between readability and boredom. The flow is also helped by the juxtaposition of quotations from speakers on all sides of military questions and the photographs that follow each chapter. *War is a* good addition to the library of a serious student of the subject or someone who simply wants to keep up on what everyone else will be talking about. ☆

WORLD AFFAIRS

being's existence can be justified only by [illegible]

Latin America at War with Its Past. by Carlos Fuentes, CBC Enterprises, 76 pages, 86.95 paper (ISBN 0 88794 146 X).

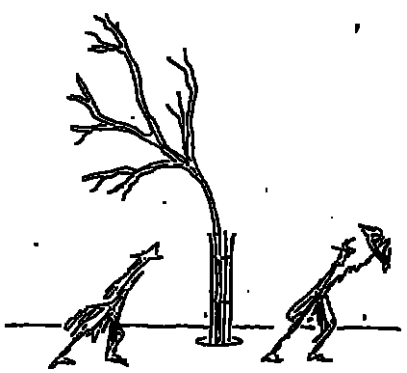
By Alexander Craig

"WHAT THE United States has no business doing is demanding instant democracy of the Sandinistas in Nicaragua — and never demanding it of Pinochet in Chile — while in effect having tolerated the Somoza dictatorship for forty years." That's why there's so much turmoil in Latin America, and why it will continue for a long time. These Massey Lectures by the eminent Mexican titer are essential background reading *for* understanding the enduing social and political tensions in the continent, which so affect its relations with the United States.

In a grand historical sweep, Fuentes shows how great the cultural differences are between Latin and Anglo-Saxon America and how historically rooted they are. He deals sharply and critically with U.S. ethnocentrism, which seems at present to be as bad as ever. Yet he sees Latin America's central problems as internal — "we are at war with ourselves, not with the U.S."

His conclusions are deeply pessimistic: "And the millions of urban marginals in our great cities, depoliticized, with nothing to lose.. . the lost cities, prepare their assault on the citadels of wealth and privilege: I fear we might plunge into a millenarist explosion of medieval resonances in Latin America."

Whether the outlook is as profoundly unsettling as that or not. Fuentes's lectures provide an invaluable picture of today's Latin America. He emphasizes



global interdependence: "If we cannot boy what we need in order to produce, nor sell what we need for our growth, we shall be condemned to vegetate as potential — never effective-economic units. Our crisis shall mirror your own Western crisis, since you in the developed world

will also stagnate, for lack of growing, confident clients."

The lessons for Canadian readers are generally implicit, but they are clearly there. There's a lot of stimulating, provocative food for thought in these lectures. ☆

REVIEW

Art of darkness

By M.G. *Vassanji*

Borderline. by Janette Turner Hospital, McClelland & Stewart, 287 pages, $19.95 doth (ISBN 0 7710 4222 I).

"THESE ARE VIOLENT times," observe.3 Seymour the artist: words that, like Conrad's "the horror," leave a faint but persistent echo in the mind, a grim residue at the end of the book. The violence and terror that in the jumbled flatness of our newspapers acquire the character of the surreal and absurd are too real in their bloodiness and savagery for a segment of humanity. How we cope when our paths intersect with this other world, whether we withdraw or engage, is a function of the ghosts we chase, our private obsessions. This is but one of the strands that run through the rich tapestry of this novel, which is impressive in its achievement and out of the ordinary in its scope.

The Renaissance was a time of "astonishing beauty in art and considerable brutality in politics," observes Felicity, an art curator in Cambridge, Massachusetts. While driving to ha cottage near Montreal, she witnesses an. extraordinary scene at the border checkpoint. A meat van enters a control booth; an immigration officer emerges and, after much argument, throws open the van doors: exposed, behind "a curtain of roiling carcasses," is a group of freezing Salvadoreans. The van driver tries to escape., and during the ensuing ruckus, while travellers patiently await the pursuing officers' return, Fdicity meets Gus, from Winston, Ont.

A guard arrives to impound the van and drives it off, doors swinging, stacks of carcasses sliding and crashing on the pavement. From one of them emerges a woman. Felicity is struck by the face: "The *Magdalena*," she pronounces, referring to a painting by Perugino. Without a thought for the consequences, Felicity and Gus co..ceal La Magdalena, under blankers and sleeping bag, in Felicity's car and cross the border. Events subsequently take their course.

Felicity's obsession is her past: she was brought up *in* India and Australia and lives in Boston. The ghost she chases is her father, a missionary doctor in India who "went native" and eventually disappeared. Gus (Augustine) is a Catholic. an insurance salesman tormented by guilt for the adulterous temptations he cannot resist. For him La Magdalena becomes a symbol of suffering, whom he most help to redeem himself.

While Gus lives wretchedly in Montreal (his wife having left him) tending a refugee, in Boston Felicity suffers terror and bewilderment. hunted by one group that wants La Magdalena, sought by another concerned for her safety. Plain hdping, without commitment, is not possible: Felicity must choose a side. Ultimately, in separate incidents, Gus, Felicity, and La Magdalena disappear: they become *los desaparecidos*, the disappeared ones: a news item.

The story is told by Jean-Marc, Felicity's stepson, a piano tuner and self-styled aesthete, who reads Dante in his spare time. Through his frequent interjections the narrative becomes conscious of itself. thus adding another dimmsion to the novel. The writing is rich and brilliant, at times aesthetic: images recur and reinforce, words resonate. paragraphs are little compositions. But there are instances when it does not work ("He had no visa for the country of talk"), and the result then is an unintended flippant tone.

There are echoes here of 'Conrad. parallels in theme and form with Renaissance art, allusions to Indian mythology. "Borderline" is itself a metaphor for other barriers: between Felicity the art curator and Gus the insurance salesman; Felicity the mother and Jean-Marc the lover; Felicity the rich white woman and Angelo the illegal alien. Much of the action takes place in Cambridge. Central Square with its poverty and squalor (exaggerated for effect, I believe) becomes a menacing presence, a Third World, an area of darkness in the heart of Cambridge, a walk away from stylish Harvard Square where Felicity has her gallery.

The book itself, pegged on real incidents, barely stays on this side of the border between the real and the fanciful — or what is dictated by form. With its richly embroidered language, with events, names, past and present fitting tidily into each other (despite claims to the contrary). it becomes itself an aesthetic piece. but for the voice of Jean-Marc the narrator.

The ultimate irony of the novel is that when all is said and done, when Felicity and Gus are canonized by art (one a Magdalen who brings one child close to his Father, the other a St. Augustine in Carthage, N.Y.), the "other world," with its violence and terror. retreats into the surreal and absurd -as it does when we finally put aside the book. □

REVIEW

Beauty and the beastly

By *Nanci White*

Oriental Tales, by Marguerite Yourcenar, translated from the French by Alberto Manguel, Collins, 141 pages, $17.95 doth (ISBN 0 85 12876 8).

ACCORDING TO Marguerite Yourcenar's postscript, these tales remain essentially as they were when they appeared for the first time in book form in 1938. The IO stories range fmm freely developed transcriptions of various fables and legends to superstitions and folklore fmm the Greece of 19X2-1937 and an imagined chapter in the great 11th-century Japanese epic, *Genji Monagatari*. They include fragments of Serbian ballads brought to life and a personal fantasy of the author provoked by a charming chapel in the Attic countryside.

Although the overt theme of the tales is man's resources and agonies concerning pleasure and sin, the subtext is a myriad of reflections on the world of art. From the Taoist Chinese painter, lost and saved within his own work, to an obscure contemporary of Rembrandt's sadly meditating on his own accomplishments. the central characters all carry a larger message from the Palace of Art, laid over their depiction as small lives, great souls. Old men turned gently stupid by an uneventful existence are given new visions of the world to sustain them. Pashas with floral harems, emperors corrupted by art, and a dynasty dating from the Crusades. surviving in the prayers of a few old priests, are the keepers of the flame of art against the encroaching dark of history and oblivion. But the grand sweep of Yourcenar's vision. amply displayed in her earlier fictional biography of Hadrian, the Roman architect/writer/emperor. always places swirlings of conquest and culture at a distance fmm the miracle of individual and-heroic perception.

When those individuals' perceptions come to us filtered through the eyes, ears, and dark brain of this romantic and symbolic writer, we walk uneasily the violent, dust-laden streets of antiquity. Despite Yourcenar's obvious love

of words, images, and their beauty. she ruthless4 undercuts eve" the most evocative of romantic scenes with shameful diseases and knife-fed brawls. One-eyed slaves with flies clustering in the recently emptied socket tremble over the intinite diversity of floral perfection; the blood of the tortured is seen as less red than the pomegranate of an artist's paintings; a mother blinds her child with ointments to create a more effective gypsy beggar; a bridge where a young girl has been walled in reveals a wisp of her hair, sprung through a crack and drooping over the water like a blond plant. The horrible and beautiful are presented together, like the goddess Kali, to be lovingly puzzled over and revealed.

Saints, idiots, murderers, harlots. child-stiflers, queens of heaven and masters of compassion trudge through memory and imagination like players fmm a Jacobean drama. The dance of life features the souls of those who desire yet do not desire, those who suffer yet enjoy, and those who fear living and fear dying equally. Like a surrealist artist, Yourcenar places the jumble of the conscious and half-conscious worlds before us. glittering, noisome heaps from the sordid Orient and untidy south. a picture perhaps too rich in smell and blood and human effluvia for fastidious present-day tastes.

But reality is what the search is about — the immate 'ate head fixed to a body of infamy; an unbearable odour of leather and fatigue; the pitilessness and power of the blazing sun — dealing both life and death. Against this background, the equally-real Musée de Beaux Arts bystanders go about their lives: dogs lick up blackened pools of blood, then, panting, return to lie in the thin ribbons of shade from a shallow doorway. Old men, in the evening of their lives, grow weak: and harmless like the sun. Inside taverns as smoky as a drunkard's co"- science, a solitary dreamer escapes the glare and dust. as man's hopes and ambitions crumble down the centuries.

For Yourcenar, the totality of this world is rich enough to sustain us. Jules Boutrin, an engineer, speaks from the shade of a fire-coloured parasol, next to a harbour where

> a sickening stench rises from a pile of fish leftovers picked clean by almost unbearably white seagulls.... To think of the fools who argue that our times lack a sense of poetry, as if we had no surrealists. no prophets, no movie stars. no dictators. Believe me, what we lack is reality. Our silk is artificial, our horribly synthetic food resemble the make-believe dishes with which mummies are stuffed, and our women, who have become Immune to unhappiness and old age, are, however, no longer alive: It is only in the legends of semi-barbaric countries that we still find these creatures rich in fears and milk, creatures whose children we would be glad to be.

If you like your reality intensely poetic and intensely sensory, you'll like Yourcenar. □

REVIEW

Poetic justice

'By Timothy Shay

No Feather, No Ink, Thistledown Press, 190 pages, $25.00 cloth (ISBN 0 920633 02 1) and S15.W paper (ISBN 0 920633 03 X).

The Louis Riel Organ &Piano Co.. by Frank Davey, Turnstone Press. 77 pages, $7.95 paper (ISBN 0 88801096 6).

THE COMPILATION of a poetry anthology that concerns itself sole4 with the commo" national themes provided by Louis Rid and Gabriel Dumont at Batoche obviously risks redundancy. Nevertheless, Thistledown Press has successfully gathered poetry (both lyric and long poem), illustrations, historic photos, and the occasional folk-music lyric into what is end what will quite possibly remain the hallmark in dealing poetically with the Northwest Rebellion.

Each piece in this book stands on its own both in style of delivery and point of perspective. From the distinctive voices of Ken Mitchell and Miriam Waddingto" through classic lyrics such as John Newlove's "Ride Off Any Horizon." this is spellbinding reading. Eve" the usual criticisms of this theme are summed up succinctly by the poets; bp Nichol writes in "The Long Weekend of Louis Rid":

> *it's not enough they take your life away with a gun they*
> *have to take it away with their pens in the distance he could*
> *hear the writers scratching louder & louder i'm getting sick*
> *of being dished up again & again like so many slabs of back*
> *backon he said i don't think we should've done it said the*
> *mounties again reaching for the toast & marmalade*

This collection would be well placed in the library of any secondary school or university. Not only does the text cover the strange and passionate history of Rid, but because of its concern for thii theme, blended with its high degree of competence, it presents a crystallized example of the often sought but seldom clearly identified "national" literature.

No Feather, No Ink is a key anthology for those seriously interested in the directions Canadian literature has take" in the latter part of the 20th century. And in a" ironical way it is the unexpected echo, a strange koan, produced by Riel's prayerful accusation: "Almighty God! Protect Thy poor M&is/Almost abolished by the Bngllsh race. ..."

The Louis Riel Organ & Piano Co. held several difficult moments for me, beginning with the title and cover copy. The title seemed an odd concoction and proved to be indicative of the contents. The book's first error is the cover copy claim: "A rambunctious long poem about North American myths. ..." This is no long poem except by the most tenuous of circumstances. Any poet's complete works might, because of general thematic interests, be called a long poem based on this definition. If the cover had claimed, "a series of long poems," the stewed-up title might have seemed justified.

"Wacouster" is a long poem that, for this reader. rises and sets in obscurity. "Dump," a coherent, humorous long poem, deals with the sad but inevitable endings of hopeless sexual relationships as well as that last great American frontier, the local garbage dump. Davey uses his voice to good effect in this thoughtful piece. "Crockett" was spoiled for me upon reading the second stanza:

> II was *1955*
> *in Hamilton, too*
> *Davy, Davy, Davy, Davy, Davy*
> *Crockett they called*
> *at David McFadden.*

Many of the better lines and stanzas in this overly long perpetuation of an America" myth are shadowed and fogged by the Strange image of a youthful David McFadden in coonskin hat.

"Rid" is a masterful long poem (it's also included in No *Feather, No Ink*) that gives us Frank Davey at his best. Here he observer with some accuracy:

> *Of course if Jesse James had keen Louis Riel,*
> *he'd have been a red river cart robber,*
> *a survey crew bandit, a pemmican kid.*
> *There'd have keen no General Middleton only*
> *a Pinkerton man.*

And again, striking at the core of a" experience universal to North American children born in the 1940s and '50s: "At 4pm, after I had died several times as an Indian/my mother called me in to practise the piano. ..."

Unfortunately the final long poem in the book, "The Thomas Organ & Piano Co.," deflates the excitement created by "Rid." It seems to exist mainly as tiller and its consistency is that of mere

BookNews: an advertising feature

cataloguing. Much of this piece could have been executed in prose without any sort of sacrifice.

The most disturbing quality displayed in Davey's book is the dense seeding of the dropped names of embodied and disembodied literati. If there is any one thing that might justify calling there five long poems one long poem it would be this attribute. If one knows the living writers among those mentioned, Davey might be able to claim imagistic justification (as in McFadden's permanent hat), but a general readership is left with nothing more and something less than a telephone directory. Among the 28 or more names dropped are bill bissett, E.J. Pratt, Northrop Frye, George Bowering.

Speaking of George Bowering, in one of the delightful footnotes to his long poem, "Uncle Louis," in No *Feather, No Ink,* he says something that Davey should consider:

> One *wonders how* much it would set one back to have one's name included in his nest effort — or how much more it would cost for the more attractive option. to ensure that it be omitted.

The editors of Longspoon and Davey might have done better to have published a highquality chapbook containing two of the long poems in this selection: "Dump" and "Rid.'! A superior product easily accessible rather than an afternoon of sorting the author's jumbled papers is, I believe, desirable. □

REVIEW

From bath to verse

By ***Lesley Choyce***

Advice to *My* Mends. by Robert Kroetsch, Stoddart, 143 pages, S6.95 paper (ISBN 0 7737 5021 5).

Why I Haven't Written. by Phil Hall, Brick-Books. 68 pages, $7.50 paper (ISBN 0 919626 26 2).

AS THE TITLES *suggest,* these areintimate books. Both poets ask the reader to respond personally, and that perhaps explains why I found myself reading most of Kroetsch's volume while taking a bath.

At first, *Advice* seemed like lukewarm bath water. There was something obtuse and limiting about the first section of the book. which appeared to be a selection of private poems addressed to such people as Eli Mandel, Fred Wah, Michael Ondaatje, Doug Jones, and others. Was this what Canadian poets are supposed to do once they turn SO? Do they just write poems to each other and let outsiders eavesdrop? Since I didn't drink beer with any of these people, as Kroetsch apparently did, 1 felt somehow cheated, left out and dissatisfied. It was like listening in on only one side of a telephone conversation.

But sections titled "Mile Zero," "Delphi Commentary," and "The Frankfurt Hauptbahnhof" illustrated a wonderful sense of line-play and experiment in form. Much of the work was presented to appear as work-in-progress. with arrows and inserts and such. Lying full length in the tub. I studied these possibilities for a while, but found many of the poems to be little more than stylistic diversions.

For such a personal book, the content simply wasn't intimate enough. The experiment welcomed the reader to participate, but it was a little too much like growing a beard just to prove that you could do it. Further in the book. I discovered the lines, "We write books/ to avoid writing books,: and wondered if that's what this one was all about.

Nonetheless, as my skin began to prune up. I found myself moving beyond these lyrical badlands and into the heartland of the book-the sections titled "Letters to Salonika" and "Postcards from China." Now I was convinced that I was eavesdropping on worthwhile stuff. The first concerns a record of time spent by the poet while his lover was away in Greece. There's loneliness, loss, and sadness here, but Kroetsch is able to rise above it because he can turn it into impassioned poetry.

"Letters to Salonika" is written as a diary of sorts, and the poems are rather prose-like but rarely prosaic. In one entry, Kroetsch writes:

> *to desire an end to desire*
> *is to desire*
>
> *and sometimes, looking at your ass,*
> *your legs, I see the old Greek woman*
> *you are going to be one day, you with*
> *your city woman's view of the peasants,*
> *and I love you then, I want to be old*
> *with you, both of us hundreds of years*
> *old, and still loving each other, making*
> *tea and getting drunk and kissing in*
> *public and still writing ferocious poems*
> *to each other.*

Hell, yes! But then he slips off into writing about going to another restaurant with Fred Wah and I turn on some hot water. Earlier he has insisted, "The world is ending but/the world does not end." This is a\ elievable slatement if he can hold onto the passion and avoid boring sections about drinking beer with other poets and going to all those damn restaurants.

"Postcards from China" concerns Kroetsch's adventures as part of a Canadian literary invasion of China. These prose poems remind me of Gary Snyder. and they truly savour the discoveries to be had ihside a mysterious country. The poet is awake, alive, and breathing life into everything. That's all a poet ever should do, and Kmetsch, when he's up for it, can do it well.

I read Phil Hall's volume on a sobering Sunday morning of rain and would advise better weather for the next

reader. It's a sad, tragic book, one that is carved from despair and disappointment. why *I Haven't Written* is a successful book. however, and the -poet shows skill as well as insight.

The collection revolves around the poet's father, for I assume that confessional narratives of this strength come more from the heart than simply through the skilful creation of a persona. In "A Gentle Man" Hall writes:

> *The only thing he did beautifully*
> *after that, was die. It seemed so brave,*
> *or selfish, the way he asked for water,*
> *then quit breathing the moment*
> *he was alone.*

The book is populated with people who live out lives in despair, or who carve out some form of existence less than elevated. In "Dale" the lines are terse and unsophisticated yet ring with sarcastic clarity and, to some degree, truth:

> *Two important early deaths*
> *and a study of the Classics*
> *have brought her to a Coca-Cola*
> *salesman*
> *who wants pork chops and creamed corn*
> *with beer.*

'Hall writes effectively about growing up and disillusionment as if these two inevitably go together. One could almost wish for a bit more of the Kroetsch playfulness in these poems, but that would certainly change the writer's intentions. Even when Hall tries to find something good to say about hi father, he slides back toward cynicism as in "Goodbye to a Statue." where he writes:

> *Problem is I also admired my father*
>
> *although in his wallet*
> *he had a picture of a naked woman*
> *bent over*
> *grinning back between her legs*
> *at a camera.*

I'm convinced that this is a very honest offering of poetry by a troubled spirit who has a clear ability to turn despair into good literature. It is a book of personal catharsis, a text of recollective exorcism. After thoroughly documenting the pain and the failures, the book ends on a wonderful, brief updraft of the spirit, as Hall concludes:

My heart crawls out of my chest.
My father crawls out of his grave.
And I begin to sing for them
the smallest song I know
about a star. □

REVIEW

Home and native land

By John Goddard

Village Journey: The Report of the Alaska Native Review Commission, by Thomas R. Berger, Collins, 288 pages, $22.95 cloth (ISBN 0 8090 9624 2).

The Quest for Justice: Aboriginal Peoples and Aboriginal Rights, edited by Menno Boldt and J. Anthony Long, University of Toronto Press, 406 pages, $45.00 cloth (ISBN 0 8020 2572 2) and $17.50 paper (ISBN 0 8020 6589 9).

IN *Village Journey*, Thomas Berger makes aboriginal rights seem understandable and easy to deal with. In *The Quest for Justice*, two professors from the University of Lethbridge make aboriginal rights seem complicated and almost impossible to deal with. Both books, the first more than the second, advance the search for a just way to accommodate native peoples in North America.

Berger's report is based on a two-year study he undertook for the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, a group representing interests of 100,000 natives of arctic Alaska, Greenland, and Canada. He sets out to "assess whether the first major North American land-claim settlement fulfilled the goals and aspirations of the native people."

In his report, he shows why the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act of 1971 was a bad deal for Alaska natives, and explains how to change it into a good deal. The report addresses unique Alaskan circumstances while offering lessons for Canadians. And it is highly readable — with descriptions of village activity and quotes from the villagers — which explains why the report is also a widely distributed book.

Berger, a former British Columbia Supreme Court Justice, was a household name in Canada in the mid-1970s. As a one-man Royal Commission, he travelled to northern villages to determine whether a large-diameter gas pipeline should be built through the Mackenzie River Valley in the western half of the Northwest Territories.

He concluded a pipeline should not be built for at least 10 years, to allow the Dene and Inuvialuit of the valley time to prepare for the effects of development. Just as important, he defiantly included land claims as a subject of his inquiry and brought the subject of native aspirations to the forefront of Canadian political discussion.

Following the format he devised in the Mackenzie Valley, Berger travelled in Alaska with his sleeping bag to 60 villages and hunting camps to hear testimony from 1,450 speakers. The Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act had been hailed as generous in 1971, allotting Alaska Natives 10 per cent of Alaska's land base and $1-billion. So Berger's conclusion comes as a shock: the native peoples of Alaska are certain to lose their aboriginal lands and most of the money they now hold in common if the terms of the settlement are not changed soon.

Losing their lands would mean losing their livelihoods and traditions, Berger writes. "Alaska Natives who now live in villages would drift to the cities in ever larger numbers and become a financial burden on the state . . . [and] Alaska would become an antiseptic wilderness. Alaska would not be Alaska."

The main problem is that "Congress did not wish to acknowledge the legitimacy of Native ways of life" and attempted to apply non-native concepts to rural Alaska, he says. All the land and almost all the money went to establish 13 regional corporations and 200 village corporations. And almost all Alaska natives became shareholders. Native hunting and fishing rights were extinguished.

Now, almost no native corporation is making money. At the end of 1991, the corporations become subject to taxes and shares become saleable; both conditions make the corporations and the native lands vulnerable for takeover by non-natives.

Although Berger often repeats points, sometimes creating the sensation his argument is going nowhere, he pursues an underlying logic to a comprehensive solution: tribal self-government. The land and money should return to the control of local tribal authority to be held in common for all in perpetuity, he says. Tribal governments should be re-established for all local-government purposes under state law. The modern importance of subsistence traditions should be recognized, and tribal governments should be given jurisdiction over fish and wildlife on native lands.

He seems to have Canada in mind when he sums up: "If governments continue in their efforts to force Native societies into molds that we have cast, I believe they will continue to fail."

The Quest for Justice is a collection of two dozen articles by native leaders, lawyers, academics, politicians, and bureaucrats giving views on the nature of aboriginal rights and addressing how those rights might be recognized through the constitutional process.

The editors give a brief introduction to each section of the book, often despairing at the diversity of views, as in: "Taken together, sections 1 and 2 demonstrate the virtual impossibility of achieving any meaningful consensus on aboriginal rights."

The editors keep their distance, allowing the essayists to get away with some outrageous arguments. Oren Lyons, a professor at the State University of New York at Buffalo, argues a chosen-people line, saying "aboriginal rights were given to us by the Creator when we were put here."

At the other extreme, Richard Dalon, a senior Alberta civil servant in the intergovernmental affairs department, argues Alberta natives would be better off with the province's "pragmatic, home-made approach" to aboriginal claims, "rather than a more cumbersome constitutional approach." The editors don't step in to say Alberta, with British Columbia, are the two provinces that have become key obstacles to dealing fairly with aboriginal rights.

For readers initiated to the aboriginal-rights debate, however, *The Quest for Justice* is a valuable reference book outlining who stands where. □

REVIEW

Holes in their briefs

By Guy Stanley

The Other Macdonald Report, edited by Daniel Drache and Duncan Cameron, James Lorimer, 225 pages, $24.95 cloth (ISBN 0 88862 901 X) and $14.95 paper (ISBN 0 88862 900 1).

IN NOVEMBER, 1982, in the midst of the worst recession since the 1930s, the royal commission under former finance minister Donald Macdonald began its inquiry into the Canadian economy. Nearly three years and $20.6-million

later, the commission produced a three-volume. 2,011-page report containing sweeping recommendations such as:

- A guaranteed minimum income to replace existing social safety nets;
- A consumption-based income tax on income spent, not saved;
- Radical streamlining of many government programs, from agricultural marketing boards to reduced unemployment insurance;
- A" elected Senate;
- Free trade with the United States.

A promised 72 volumes of supplementary research are to accompany the report, of which perhaps a third have already appeared.

With so much public policy research to digest, eve" the most zealous policy groupie might be forgiven a gasp of dismay at yet more commission material. But here we are, with a selection of excerpted briefs from what the editors call "the third agenda" — groups that speak for "ordinary Canadians." (Corporations and stale agencies allegedly make up the other two). Upon inspection, these turn out to be groups favouring traditional social democratic policies advocated by the NDP: trade unions. social workers, native, feminist, and church groups.

What concerns the contributors to this volume most is social policy. Yet the issue with which their arguments are preoccupied is Canada-U.S. relations, especially free trade. They argue that free trade would further weaken the economy and cause massive job loss, especially in manufacturing. The resulting economic and social distress would outweigh any benefits. Instead, policy-makers should consider a Canadian industrial policy that manages international trade by granting market access for Canadian value added.

Despite the editors' claim of alignment with interests of "ordinary Canadins." their line of argument is maintained by many in tbe corporate and other elite sectors of Canada who are doing very well, thank you, out of the *status quo*'s protections. Currently, their main public spokesman seems to be Ontario Premier David Peterson.

What's more, although the editors claim Macdonald ignored the views expressed in this volume. the opposite is the case. Not only did the commission suggest measures designed to strengthen Canada's social services and dramatically reduce unemployment, but it also gave careful consideration to the quesdon whether a state like Canada could successfully devise and implement a" industrial policy from the centre. The conclusion: it was not practical and could not be done.

What Macdonald does propose is a fundamental policy realignment. Everyone acknowledges the enormous uncertainties in this policy reversal. But the work under review sheds little fresh light upon them: *The Other Macdonald Report* underlines a concern about Canada shared by many foreign observers and still retarding direct investment from outside: how many Canadian opinion leaders really understand what's cooking in the world and the challenges posed by today's global environment? In all too many ways, the nostrums repeated in this volume provide scant reassurance. □

FIRST NOVELS

Breaking away

Whether academic satire or feminist polemics, some recent first novels dwell mainly on characters in pursuit of new beginnings

By Douglas *Glover*

PLAYWRIGHT JIM CURRY'S Nothing so Natural (78 pages, 55.95 paper), the 1984 winner of the Pulp Press three-day novel-writing contest, is a small gem. A novella really, *Nothing So Natural* Introduces us to Tommy Curly, head of the Curly family, a drunk who spends his days haranguing bums on the banks of Brantford, Ont.'s Grand River, a father of three who lives off his wife's earnings and hasn't held a job since he was 21, a baiter of policemen. a lecher. a reader, a man without shame, in short, a man. Curly is a remarkable comic invention, a Falstaffian figure.

He's seen through the eyes of hi young so" Tim, which is where *Nothing So Natural* acquires its roundness and depth. Tim is a clear-sighted, long-suffering victim of his father's vagaries. He sees his mother being ground down, he sees the havoc (his older sister Betty commits suicide at the close of the book) drunkenness causes. But he's also a" avid aficionado of Tommy's pranks — he spends a lot of time killing himself laughing.

Nothing So Natural is a" episodic (how could it be otherwise given the limitations of the three-day form?) and somewhat breathless (short sentences, minimal transitions — what could Curry have done with, say, five days?) novel of amazing dramatic energy. Tommy Curly strides across the pages like a force of nature. scattering loved ones like chaff in his wake. IL is a very funny sad book.

Susan Charlotte Haley's 'A Nest of Singing Birds (NeWest Press. 229 pages, 017.95 cloth, $7.95 paper) is a warm and witty academic love story, a Canadian update of Kingsley Amis's *Lucky Jim*. with an appealing, no-nonsense heroine who shoots straight from the lip and always hits the heart.

Anna Callaghan, 29, comes to teach philosophy at an unnamed Prairie university only Lo find herself falling in love with a tenured professor in the English department. Unfortunately for. *Anna* and fortunately for us, there are difficulties. Anna's lover already possesses three children and a wife who has run off to Harvard with a more successful colleague. (Half-way through the book. the wife returns and takes a cynical stab at reforming her marriage.) Besides, this is the '80s, the era of temporary appointments and mendicant scholars. Anna will have to find a job somewhere else at the end of the term or forget about her career. Needless to say, the ending is complicated but happy — Anna wins reappointment and a chance to build a life with the ma" who wants to marry her.

Academic satire may seem at first glance a somewhat dated vehicle. But Haley reflates the idiom; she has a genuine affection for her ivory-tower denizens, demonstrating that beyond the petty ambitions and Byzantine politics, there is a life of the mind. Her style is terse and ironic. (Sadly, the first couple of pages — a bad place for this sort of lapse to occur — are too terse and information-packed, underwritten, in fact.) Her dialogue sounds authentic, varies from person to person as an aspect of characterization, and just crackles along, eve" in the dread faculty meetings.

The besr thing about A *Nest* of *Singing Birds*, however, is its principal character, Anna Callaghan. She's a"

amazing woman. a joy to be with. Whether she's drunk and falling into snowdrifts, bed-ridden with flu (hanging her head over the side to keep fmm vomiting). making up little songs or crying because she's blue. trading wit with a colleague or marking papers, she's utterly honest and loves life — and that's a great thing to get across in a book.

Margaret Clarke's The Cutting Season, (NeWest Press, 180 pages, $17.95 cloth, S7.95 paper). winner of the Search for a New Manitoba Novelist competition, is a polelmical navel that manages, by various plot contrivances, to include just about every important feminist theme of the last IS to 20 years: spouse abuse, breast-feeding, masturbation (sex without men). feminine intuition (premonitory dreams), home childbirth, death and dying, women's solidarity, self-sufficiency, and the back-to-the-land movement. It's a cross between *Robinson Crusoe* and *The World According lo Garp*, with a dash of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* for colour.

Joanne Frost, following the death of her husband, moves from Winnipeg to the family cottage in northwestern Ontario, learning to fend for herself alone in the woods, suffering nightmares about workbooted "intruders." Back in the city, her daughter Maureen, a nurse in a terminal ward. decides to break up with her boyfriend only to discover she's become pregnant while taking a holiday from the pill.

The women tangle through the first half of the novel — Joanne doesn't want her daughter to have an abortion, Maureen doesn't want her mother living in the sticks — only to be united by events in the second half. Joanne fights off would-be rapists with a chainsaw and delivers Maureen's baby (girl) in a blizzard. What they discover is that they both hate being controlled by mm, the intruders, and that they can get along very well without them, thank you very much.

There's a lot to be said (and a lot has been said) for the ideas and sentiments Clarke expresses. But as a novel *The Cutting Season* is too programmatic to be entirely successful. Crucial scenes. though handled with verve, develop along the lines of pamphlets (on death counselling, on spouse abuse. on home childbirth).

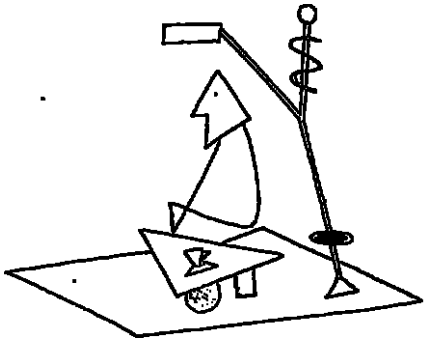
Clarke's female characters don't so much grow as adopt politically correct ideas. Her men are either dead (the husband), wimps (Maureen's boyfriend), or woman-beaters (Joanne's neighbour). Three-quarters of the way through, the novel explodes into Rambo-style violence, women against fiendish male caricatures (which is not to deny that such men might exist-only in this case they seem less real and more like flat projections of Joanne's fears) before subsiding into a sappily utopian ending.

This is unfortunate because. in many ways, *The Cutting Season* is a promising first book. The interaction between Maureen and her grieving mother at the beginning is handled with honesty and accuracy. Clarke knows how to use procedural data, the how-to of the northern woods. to create texture and mood. She can write a tear-jerking deathbed scene and a page-turning action scene. If she manages to harness these talents to a more encompassing vision, she may emerge as a significant artist.

Paddy Webb's Rough Passage (Quadrant Editions, 234 pages. $9.95 paper) is an ambitious, sprawling. and technically risky novel with a theme that superficially resembles that of *The Cutting Season:* the heroine, alone, betrayed by men. comes to understand her essential self.

Harriet Rawlins, a 39-year-old Montreal high-school teacher. suddenly cutting herself loose fmm her faithless lover. friends, and job. retreats to a cottags in the Eastern Townships to write a novel. Isolated, faced with a terrifying past (her insane husband and their two children vanished years before in a mysterious murder-suicide) and aesthetic terror of the blank page, she suffers a nervous breakdown. The characters of her novel (a lecherous impresario, a dwarf yoga instructor, a concert singer) come alive to torment ha.

Harriet searcher for sanity first within the cloistered walls of a convent, then a



psychiatric hospital. Finally, she makes her own peace by admitting that all along she's been in love with ha best friend, a lesbian Catholic mystic. But the lesbian has taken vows, and heads off for a missionary post in the north before they can consummate their love. Harriet finishes her novel. The lesbian is killed in a plane crash. A New York publisher accepts the *novel.* But Harriet has learned the love that heeds all things, bears all things.

The chances that Webb takes are enormous. To begin with, she tackles an immense subject for a mere 230-page first novel: writing, language, the war between the sexes, religion, psychiatry. Second, she complicates the issue by introducing long sections of half-surreal, half-metafictive delirium in which Harriet has a sado-masochistic affair with the hem of her novel-within-the-novel. This material is well-written and entertaining in itself, but it tends to interrupt the "reality" plot of *Rough Passage:* Harriet leaving her boyfriend, dealing with the unfinished psychic business of her past, and coming to love her lesbian friend.

The reader has a feeling that as the hallucinatory pyrotechnics (the novel-within-the-novel-within-the-novel) expanded in the middle, the story of Harriet's real-life adventures got squeezed more and more into the beginning and the end of the book (hence the flurry of telegrams and *deus ex machina* plane crashes in the last chapters). Webb makes valiants attempts to bring all thii together but with only fitful success; in the end. the life of art and the art of life do not coincide.

Like *Rough Passage, Terry* Crawford's *Angels* in the Rain (Oberon Press, 176 pages, $23.95 cloth, $12.95 paper) is a novel of delirium. Sandwiched between two framing chapters, there are 13 chapters in which the protagonist, Brendan Quinlan, suffering severe injuries following a car accident, wanders in a coma-world of time-travel, mysterious doubles. and guardian angels. In thii case, Crawford tries to avoid Webb's problem (the problem of bringing dream and reality into some satisfactory relationship) by pretty much eliminating the outer story — Brendan Quinlan's hallucinations *are* the novel.

Quinlan's dream is organized partly by association (a doll named Flo becomes Florence Nightingale. a Crimean War lithograph hanging at the end of a school corridor spawns dreams of the Light Brigade and a British hospital at Scutari), partly on poetic principles (image patterns. recurrence), and partly like a spiritual thriller (a mysterious figure — variously Lord Raglan, Nemesis, or death itself-pursues hi). In addition, some rather esoteric psycho-spiritual doctrines about collective memories and shared visions come into play (Quinlan and a Crimean War soldier named Barry have similar injuries, appear to each other across the gulf *of* time, seem to dip in and out of each other's consciousness).

What becomes clear at the end of the book is that we are reading the story of Brendan Quinlan's brush with death in a Saint John hospital ward (and by dream

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extension, Barry's brush with death in a British army hospital at Scutari). 0" one level of hermeneutics (Crawford provides several), the characters that inhabit Brendan's coma "symbolically represent a certain part of [Brendan's] mind — you know, like Freud has his ego, id, superego or whatever." But on another level, they might be real. Crawford teases the reader in his final scene, mixing elements of the dream with the actual world. As an epigraph For the last chapter. Crawford quotes Dickens:

> Everytime he resolved within himself. after mature inquiry, that it was all a dream. his mind flew back again, like a strong spring released, to its first posidon. and presented the same problem to be worked through, "Was it a dream or not?"

Angels in the Rain is not a novel in the traditional sense of a pattern based on character and plot (causal Links); it is rather a pattern of images obeying their own internal symbolic logic. Characterization is secondary; what there is seems embarrassingly flat and contrived, only serving as anchor For one or other thematic chain. Plot — action serving as basis For further action and culminating in a climax that is satisfying to the reader — barely exists. Crawford is clearly trying For a virtuoso performance of a" unusual order.

Unfortunately, *Angels in the Rain is* marred by weak and sloppy writing (imprecise diction, run-"" sentences, mixed metaphors, ambiguous antecedents, dangling modifiers, tense-confusions). There arc too many abstract longueurs dealing in a quasi-philosophical way with Life. Sometimes, the arbitrariness of the dream world turns to licence and self-indulgence. For example, guardian angel (Folksy, Familiar) narrates a chapter-long biography of Quinlan, but this angel never shows up again — instead of a technical dcvicc, the angel-narrator becomes a violation of point of view.

It is disappointing that Crawford failed to lavish as much attention on the minutiae. the nuts and bolts, words and sentences, as he did on the overall structure of *Angels in the Rain. If contains* novelistic materials more impressive than those in many novels I might think perfectly acceptable. But, in the end, it Falls far short of the success to which it aspires. ❑

INTERVIEW

George Faludy

'Canada is a rare thing for *one* who comes from Eastern Europe. Canada has the great advantage that politics are uninteresting'

By Jacqueline D'Amboise

THE MAN MANY regard as Hungary's greatest living poet is now a Canadian living in Toronto. Born in Budapest in 1910, George Faludy was educated at European universities and has lived in Paris, Morocco, the United States, and London. Persecuted For anti-Nazi activities in Hungary *prior to the* Second World War, he returned to his native land in 1945, working as a journalist before being sentenced Lo 25 years in a forced-labour camp For allegedly being a conspirator and U.S. spy. After serving three years, he escaped Hungary in 1956 and settled in Toronto in 1967. A poet, novelist, translator, and biographer, Faludy has just had his autobiography, *My Happy Days in Hell,* x-issued by Collins, and his *Selected* Poems *1933-80,* edited and translated by Robin Skelton, has recently been released by McClelland & Stewart. He was interviewed in Toronto by Jacqueline D'Amboise:

George Faludy

PHOTOGRAPH BY JANE HARRISON

Books I" Canada: You *have translated Rabelais, Heine, Lorca, Rilke, Baudelaire and many others into Hungarian, and ore completing a translation of a volume of some 1,000 poems from world literature into Hungarian. When and why did you begin to translate?*

George Faludy: Hungarian literature is a small literature. Thus, For more than 200 years Hungarian writers have considered it their duty to translate into Hungarian the best of world literatures. For instance, our three best poets of the 19th century, Petöfy, Arany, and Vorosmarty, decided to translate the complete works of Shakespeare and succeeded in part. I was the first Hungarian writer to translate German poets such as Erich Kästner and Bertolt Brecht when these writers were nearly unknown. as well as French and English ones such as Hilaire Belloc, G.K. Chesterton, and Jules Romains.

BiC: *Why do you continue to translate?*

Faludy: I wouldn't if there were a normal situation in Hungary. Until the Communists took over, every writer translated what he liked to. But now the state publisher gives orders to the writer what and what not to translate. One reason I continue is to counteract these things. Also. since it is the state publisher who orders what is to be translated, he will order hundreds of translations from our best poets and they, considering this a" easy job, will translate 20 poems or so in a" afternoon — the task is a well-paid one — and the publisher's reader or anthologist will be happy to have than. Meanwhile, the lesser poets get lesser fees For fewer poems. They sweat over their translations, which arc returned to than again and again until they are better. The result is that the bat poets arc producing miserable translations, and the lesser poets are doing a fine job; So I continue in order to counteract this, too.

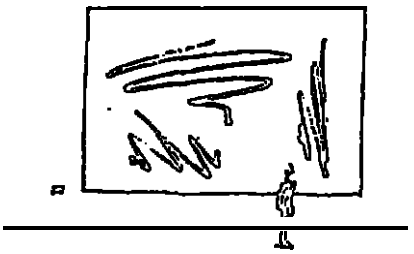
BiC: *Could you speak a little about the new translation of your* Selected Poems. *What was your role in this book other than as its author?*

Faludy: It was a collaboration in that I made a draft of the Hungarian poem, explaining how, why, and when it was written. I sent Robin Skelton five or six poems every two weeks. He made the translations and sent them back to me For criticism. I criticized them mercilessly. I Felt a little ashamed because I was basically just giving a crib and he was doing the whole job. Whenever I sent him. poems, I added an eight-to-10-page letter with some themes of my life,

memories, things like this, mostly erotic ones, to amuse and encourage him. That was the process. I was, so to speak, reborn as a little English poet.

BiC: *What do you think of the translation of My* Happy Days in Hell *and what is if like for you to see it in print again?*

Faludy: Well, My *Happy Days in Hell* was translated by Kathleen Szasz, who



shared her life with me, in a manner of speaking. Whenever I was an emigrant in Paris, Morocco, the U.S., etc., she was there. When I was at the Army special training camp in Palo Alto. California, she lived in San Francisco. Back in Hungary she was also there. I call her a witness of my life. She did a marvellous job by imitating my style in English. To see it again is a supreme pleasure since for 20 years I myself have not been able to get copies.

BiC: *What induced you to write and publish your autobiography?*

Faludy: Basically the seven years under communism, the labour camp, the secret police. I returned home fmm America to witness this. My success was not in witnessing it, but in surviving it. When I was forced to stand for 24 hours with my nose flat up against a wall, without being allowed to drink, eat, or go to the toilet, I thought that despite everything there was an aim to all this. I thought: I shall write about them. I shall describe them. I tried to write mildly, since I have no taste for brutality or torture scenes. I preferred to describe how a salamander's four feet were crushed with an axe by a guard rather than a shooting, knowing that a British reader would be more moved by the death of a salamander than by that of a man.

BiC: Was *the book meant to be a political or a personal statement or a mixture of both?*

Faludy: It was meant to be a literary statement.

BiC: Do *you believe that It is important. to dmw one's poetry from the past?*

Faludy: I am not a rationalist, which means that 1 do not sit down and think that now I shall write a poem concerning my past or my present or my future. What happens is just that I write the poem. It is not I who give myself orders, but rather I fed that the poem wants to be written by me. The poem is the subject and I am rather the object who writes the poem as it comes.

BiC: *Has there ever been a period when you have experienced writer's block?*

Faludy: Yes, after I came out of prison. for nearly a year. In prison it was much easier to write poems. When you believe that you will die of hunger in two weeks or in two months, a poem comes more easily than it does in an oppressed country with a dictatorial government and with the secret police looking upon you as a criminal. It was a "block" in the sense that it was political.

BiC: Your *writings have been preoccupied with politics and love. Is there anything else about your work that you consider important?*

Faludy: The dangers that mankind is facing now and didn't face in the past. It seems as though a great catastrophe is approaching. It is very hard to write about this because it is too much of a commonplace. Friends sometimes want to make bets about atomic war or population explosion, or global famine, none of which will occur, they say. It is very diffiiult to argue about such things, let alone write about them. But man's fate has always interested me. Politics in a smaller sense do not interest me. Canada has the great advantage that one is in a country where politics are uninteresting.

BiC: *Why is that?*

Faludy: Because it is not a bloody dictatorship. I am not an enthusiast for the three political parties here. but I am not against them either. Canada is a rare and great thing for one who comes from Eastern Europe, where enemies are fighting for life and death.

BiC: *Do you believe that it is a writer's duty to soy things that would otherwise be silenced?*

Faludy: Yes.

BiC: *Why7*

Faludy: Because they want to be said. If you have ever been to the Museo Nazionale in Florence. you have seen the marble figures of Michelangelo, trying to get out of the stone, which is unfinished. It is as though the stone wanted to remove its own clothes. That is the way it is with the important things about which one has feelings.

BiC: *Could you describe what most affected* you *when you were silenced as a writer in Hungary?*

Faludy: It Is something one cannot imagine if one has not experienced this silencing oneself. When the head of state, the Communist boss Rákóczi, placed around our necks by Joseph Stalin, says in the newspapers that love poems are written by bourgeois hirelings

and that love poems will no longer be published, that is the beginning of the end. Then, nothing about nature can be published because these things are regulated by the Communist Patty. Then nothing about unhappiness, because there is no unhappiness or sorrow in tbe Communist state — there is only happiness and dancing. Then the time comes when nothing is allowed other than happy commentaries on the glorious leaders. the glorious Soviet Union, and the glorious Communist Party. Now what do you do then? You are writing for your desk. Then you can't write for your desk any more because there will be a house-search. But you cannot stand hating them all day, so you write and learn your poems by heart. A time comes when you no longer dare to write them down. Then you can no longer recite your poems to anyone, not even your wife or your mother, because they fall into despair knowing that you write poems that will lead to your arrest. This is the way by which one slides down into nothingness,

BiC: How *are* you *thought* of in Hungary *today?*

Faludy: In the Hungarian *samizdat*, all those who know me quote me, like my books, bay them secretly, translate my articles or anything I say that reaches them. And youth loves me. I am considered to be their poet.

BiC: *Are we naive about Communism here in the West?*

Faludy: Communism has many faults, but it also has many advantages. One of them is its marvellous widespread system of propaganda. When one reads in leading American newspapers that Andropov died, one experiences the results of this propaganda. Andropov, the Soviet ambassador to Hungary, was the head of the secret police in Hungary and the man who, after the uprising, arranged the murders of 2,000 children aged 16 and under. He was hailed as a humanist and a liberal in the U.S. press. Now what should I think of this? There is no hope. It is disinformation that partly comes from cowardice, partly from American well-being; that is, they swallow everything and are putting their fingers into their ears by not publicizing the truth, by not speaking up. Second, it is just a general condition of human nature. They want to enjoy life as long as they exist. The bad thing is that they don't enjoy it. That is the worst side of capitalism.

BiC: *What have your years in Canada been like* for you?

Faludy: I simply feel that this country is my home. Whenever I come back to Canada after travelling abroad I feel just this. according to an old Hungarian custom one should fall to one's kneed and kiss the soil. Here there is concrete. And when leaving I am happy that no one asks me where I am going and to produce my passport. I felt this tbe first time when crossing the bridge at Niagara Falls to enter the U.S. We didn't stop at Canadian customs. There was nobody there. I want to live in a country that you can leave like this. In the turmoil of this century, Canada is still a pleasant place, a pleasant and sympathetic place, with a population tbai barely recognizes its advantages. □

LETTERS

Our misguided reviewers

IN HIS REVIEW of Elspcth Cameron's *Irving Layton: A Portrait* (November) B.W. Powe mites: "I cannot express my opinion too strongly that the biographies of living people should not be written." It certainly is a comfort to an author and publisher knowing that a reviewer with this kind of attitude has been given the product of more than four years' intensive research and work. What is perhaps even more senseless, however, is the reason Powe gives for not wishing to read such biographies; he writes: "Why add to the pile of gossip, Ph.D. theses, and criticism that steadily accumulates around him?" While I certainly enjoyed Mr. Powe's mingling of *gossip, theses,* and *criticism* — what these have to do with one another Powe falls to elaborate — I still have no reasoning in hand as to why biographies of living people should not be written.

Powe also makes it clear that Layton is a friend of his. Not just any kind of friend either, but one who has been "helpful" to the reviewer. The Layton Powe knows is "affable" in person, and that seems to be the extent of his knowledge. With this kind of depth of character analysis, it's no wonder that Powe found Cameron's portrait to be something of a surprise.

In addition, Powe regards Layton as "the only poet of his generation truly worth reading." Now there's a comforting perspective! To this Powe adds the information that Layton "spends a good deal of time in Europe drumming up support for a Nobel prize," a curious point of admiration, not to mention activity. With this kind of objectivity, who needs reviewers?

There also is a curious echo in Powe's review of a number of comments Layton has been making of late. I am referring to constant references to the fact that a piece appeared on Layton and his wives la a recent issue of *Chatelaine.* The reviewer could not resist being helpful to Layton by indulging in such excessive references as "stylistic spice courtesy of *Chatelaine*" and "*Cosmo*-girlish adjective writing." If the reviewer had taken the time to compare the material in *Chatelaine* and that in the book, he would have discovered an enormous difference.

In another part of his review he makes the assumption that Cameron's "editors . . . plainly encouraged her to 'let it all hang out.'" He then goes on to state "you can (briefly) pity how this upwardly-mobile professor from tbe University of Toronto has been left to dangle in public." As Cameron's editor and publisher, I challenge such statements as unprofessional in the extreme. Powe's comments have been made without any supporting evidence

Powe goes on to make unsupported statements about the tone and content of the book. He claims there are historical errors, but neglects to point out what those errors might be. He says Cameron has little grasp of radical politics, leftist agitation; and Jewish sensitivity, but again conveniently neglects to support any of these statements. Powe's funniest and most absurd comments, however, are reserved for that section of the review in which he labels the biography as a "feminist tract." What possessed him to make such a statement is nowhere made clear. but it certainly is a good indication of the kind of gross, personal misreading Powe has given to this book.

In short, I found Powe's rather confused review to be blatantly biased, and worthy of the title "hatchet job" for which I am sure his "helpful friend" will amply reward him.

Ed Carson
Publisher, Stoddart Publishing
Toronto

B. W. Powe replies: While writing my review-essay, I'd felt sympathy for how Cameron had been let down by her editors. After reading Carson's letter, I actually fear for the future of all Canadii publishing.

Carson misreads what I wrote at every step. When he states that I was the hatchet-man for Layton (a writer who hardly needs anyone to play apologist for him), I can only conclude that Carson didn't finish the essay. I realize the reader's attention span is short today

Letters may be edited for length or to delete potentially libellous statements. Except in extraordinary circumstances, letters of more than 500 words will not be accepted for publication.

. . . but no; I'll resist taking such an easy shot. The piece I wrote is, if read closely, equally balanced in its critique of both books, and of the approaches the authors chose.

About my lack of citations of Cameron's accuracies: I'd simply hoped to save the author further embarrassment. When a biography claims to be critical, scholarly. and definitive, I must raise the questions that I did. Page references of inaccuracies can be provided upon request. Bat surely the inaccuracies, the poor prose, and Cameron's hackneyed interpretations of Layton's work signify larger problems: what is it that concerns publishers and readers — sales or quality? Perhaps style and precision no longer matter.

All this, however, is a sideline to another point: the question of dissent in this country.

To my knowledge, Cameron's book has been well-received. The good response by the literary establishment was well-orchestrated in advance. I understand that the biography is selling well, and better than Layton's memoirs. Carson's letter therefore suggests something insidious: that an opposing voice may not have a place in our literary world. This refusal to accept a tradition of dissent is more terrifying than any complaint an editor of a major house could offer. Indeed, his note is indicative of the malaise of quiet intolerance that Canadian letters depends on.

PEACE ON EARTH

YOU CHOSE THE wrong person to review Kevin Roberts's book of poetry, *Nanoose Bay Suite* (October). J.D. Carpenter obviously appreciates fine poetry, but doesn't seem to know about Nanoose Bay as it is today, which knowledge is important in order to understand the implications of Roberts's lines concerning peace (or lack thereof) on earth.

Carpenter states that the book is "mythological, personal, and political," but he misses the political double meaning of these lines quoted in the review: "what is the shadow of peace/but war?/ Blessed are the peace makers/for they shall inherit/what is left/of the earth." Perhaps Carpenter thinks, as I expect readers of tbe review would conclude, that Roberts has forsaken literary integrity to include in his suite of poems the war-*angst* theme because it is a current topic of common concern and can be slotted easily into literary works.

But Roberts's reference to peacemakers has particular meaning for Nanoose Bay itself. The real reason the above lines are both beautiful and ominous is that Nanoose Bay is the site of a Canadian Forces maritime experimental test range. U.S. submarines (some of them nuclear-powered and armed) visit Nanoose Bay frequently, and for the past while they have been greeted by a handful of stoic souls at the Nanoose Bay Peace Camp, a circle of

teepees an the shore directly across the busy highway from a travellers' rest stop.

Many visitors and residents of Vancouver Island support the brave and worthwhile efforts of the few peacemakers at the camp. There have been news reports several times (the national news at least once) on their efforts in promoting the conversion of Nanoose Bay Canadian Forces Base to a peaceful project.

Thus it is not only global cataclysm that prompts Roberts to make reference to war as -the shadow of peace. Blessed indeed are the peacemakers, including those camped on the cold shores of Nanoose Bay, keeping vigil for all Of us.

Susan Yates
Gabriola Island, B.C.

POETIC LICENCE

THREE ARTICLES IN the October *Books in Canada* have angered and saddened me. The three are Al Purdy's review of new books by Alden Nowlan, John Steffler, and Greg Cook; Brian Fawcett's review of Kay Burkman's Champ; and Lucille King-Edwards's review of *The New Canadian Poets.*

What do Purdy's descriptions of "Nowlan making rounds like an air conditioner badly in need of repair" have to do with a discussion of Nowlan's work? He doesn't quote one line from the new poems — poems that are significant beyond the fact that they are among the very last an important Canadian poet wrote.

Later Purdy calls Milton Acorn "... a ranting madman who wrote shit, then marvellous stuff in the next breath. Nowlan never wrote shit, but never rose above a certain practised mid-excellence either." I don't think this will make or break Nowlan's reputation, but I wondered why he bothered to say it.

Cook's *Love in Flight* centres *on* his *journey to* search for the spirit of his father, who was killed during the Second World War. Purdy says: "If the poems aren't good enough ... does one then say that the father's spirit is mediocre?" I'm afraid that this goes a long way toward desecrating the memory of Cook's father and the book. At least Purdy quotes a few lines. which should entice his readers to seek out more.

Purdy's discussion of Steffler's *The Grey Islands perhaps contains a* clue as to why he wrote thii as he did. He says, "reading it I felt like a 'deeply astonished' codfish." I'd say that in his disc&ion of Nowlan and Cook he is out of his own element.

Brian Fawcett doesn't quote one line fmm Ray Burkman's *poems to* hack up his dismissal of her book. He calls it "totally amateur. .. cluttered with third-rate creative-writing department metaphors." I'm going to buy the hook and make up my own mind.

A comment by Fawcett raised my ire: "What does become abundantly clear is why poetry has such a small (and diminishing) readership in this country. And that raises the question of why we publish. so many volumes of poetry." My experience is the opposite. Earlier this year, a book I published by Nova Scotia poet Don Linehan pre-sold 150 copies. I've now sold more than 350 copies in less than six months. The audience for poetry could he batter. but it's not as terminal as Fawcett suggests.

I'm also bothered by Lucille King-Edwards's comment: "Maybe. just maybe. . . *too much* money goes into publishing and not enough into poets' pockets for keeping out of print and writing and rewriting and editing, so that instead of a deluge we might have sparkling streams of poetry, major lakes of poetry. great cataracts of poetry."

Instead of attempting to stunt poetry in this country we might give it room to grow. We have to face it: there are more posts than ever before — more good poets, If we want to praise our "great" writers, so be it: but we can't throw out minor or developing voices just because they haven't reached our prescribed level of greatness yet.

Allan Cooper
Riverview, N.B.

AL PURDY'S REVIEW (October) deserves a response on behalf of my editor. publisher, and friend Alden Nowlan, who knew what 1 was doing in Love *in Flight even* though he did before I completed the book.

It is appalling that Purdy would spend,

the first half of his review of A" *Exchange a/ Gifts: Poems New and Selected* discussing Nowlan's personal habits and indulging in medical gossip, only lo conclude the best of Nowlan's poems "ever achieve "mid-excellence." No mention is made of why Nowlan was given a Guggenheim fellowship as well as both Governor General's and Canadian Authors' Association awards for poetry.

Ernest Buckler often said that one must not confuse sediment (life's residue) in art with sentiment. I am afraid Purdy has. It is a sad day when a poet's achievement — accessibility lo grade-live students and tradesmen — is dismissed merely as a "practised ease."

Purdy's praise for *Grey Islands: A Journey* by John Steffler is deserved. And it is not surprising that George Woodcock points out in *Poetry Canada Review* some derivation Steffler owes Purdy. Many of us owe him. However, in his notice of my book, *Low in Flight.* Purdy commits the cardinal error in criticism. He reviews an imaginary book, one he never succeeded in tiling himself. Therefore, he fails lo answer carefully enough the first of three consequential questions Goethe defined: What is the poet trying to do? How well is it done? Is it worth doing7

I bared my bones to speak to children of the war dead, veterans and their families lo whom these poems are unmistakably addressed. Their pride, nightmares, and moments of history are rooted in the earth of my language, which I have been practising ever since Al Purdy published the first poem by me lo appear in a national anthology (*Storm Warning*. 1971). That poem was written to Alden Nowlan.

Although each of us changes "from man lo beast and beast to man," it does not become us to be seen mauling the fresh corpse of a warm canon. Nor does Purdy do himself justice to be caught looking Narcissus-like into the work Of younger poets as though they are mirrors made only for him.

Greg Cook
Wolfville Ridge, N.S.

PORNOGRAPNIG IMAGES

IN HIS ESSAY "Closet Dramas" (November) Robin Metcalfe argues that sexually arousing fiction is one way of producing "a new sexual culture." HOW Metcalfe hopes to achieve this brave new sexual world without distinguishing between the imagery of the old sexual culture and that of' what is to come is rather bewildering. In fact. he will not achieve it until he first accounts for the many disturbing elements of pornography that his essay ignores.

Al the heart of the problem lies Metcalfe's abuse of the very term pornography. By defining pornographic literature as anything that portrays "the messy physical realities of lust" as against "tasteful" erotica, Metcalfe ignores the fact that *all* pornography is based on the objectification and/or degradation of human beings. Would Melcalfe place portrayals of nonconsensual or violent sexual activities under the rubric of revitalizing pornography? Would he include detailed descriptions of rape, intended to arouse, among these "messy physical realities of lust?" If so, how will a new sexual attitude be forged out of the proliferation of images so imbued with the existing culture's conception of sexuality?

And if Metcalfe is really interested in revolutionizing sexually arousing fiction, the last thing he should be concerned with is how remunerative it can be. Treating sex as an item of merchandise is not an act of liberation; it merely perpetuates the existing view of sex as a commodity held by those in control of a billion-dollar exploitation industry. Metcalfe is a mercenary masquerading as a revolutionary.

Brenda Austin-Smith
Douglas Smith
Antigonish, N.S.

Robin Metcalfe replies: As a *gay man, I am only too* aware of the need for radical changes in our sexual culture. But we cannot make a neat incision dividing where we have been from where we would like to go. Starling fmm a clean slate may be a" alluring fantasy, but the means by which it is indulged can only be those of totalitarianism.

The prevailing use of the word pornography impoverishes our ability lo make subtle distinctions. It forces complex subjects into simple, absolute categories, artificially dividing all sexual material into that without taint (non-existent) and that without merit (suitable far burning). Pornography, like other forms of popular culture, does indeed have "many disturbing elements." but lo say that "*all* pornography is based on the objectification and/or degradation of human beings" is semantic overkill. We cannot create a new sexual culture if we suppress all efforts to imagine it.

Simple arithmetic shows that I am not getting rich writing porn. If we are 10 have a culture. revolutionary or otherwise, we must allow those who create it to earn a livelihood. Being paid for my writing is what enables me lo write.

POWER PLOY

JOHN GODDARD'S profile of Margaret Atwood (November) is a puzzling blend of good writing and limited thinking. His irritating bow to mood-setting in his description of Atwood and her house is pure self-indulgence. He apparently didn't gel Atwood's clear and sensible message about the dangers of equaling her with her surroundings, a message he chose to see as a haughty edict. His description of her hair in particular is a piece of vividly written irrelevance. But where the article really raised my hackles was in its concluding section.

Again, despite clear indications that he was on the wrong track about the meaning of *The Handmaid's Tale* — how much more forceful can you be than "No . . . No, no no. no no"? — Goddard insists on requiring' of Atwood's writing moral directives about such issues as abortion and birth control. When Atwood claims that her narrator's being reduced lo a breeding function is not a message about abortion and birth control but a" examination of the way power works and of the implications of a lack of power, Goddard. still wanting the book to be something other than what it is, is critical. Similarly he wants lo see the fundamentalist backlash against women in the book as a warning that women's liberation is moving loo fast. Atwood will not have it.

Goddard is obviously an honest writer; he records' both his and Atwood's comments so that his readers can judge where the failure in understanding occurs. Nonetheless he accuses Atwood; he says she "comes on strong and specific at first, then backs off, recanting, denying, disavowing." He wonders whether she is "being wilfully unhelpful" or simply "so bogged down in detail that she does not know the answer herself". He remains apparently unaware that he's got the wrong question.

If there is a conservative backlash against feminists, the question is not whether feminists shouldn't move more slowly. it's how those conservatives, male and female, can be made lo see that the women's liberation movement is a necessary and inevitable response to the disempowering of more than half the world's population; that rather than threatening desirable structures *of* stable power, the movement firmly asserts the dignity and worth of women, which are denied by the present structures of power; and that society's structures are not and cannot be stable until the pmsent imbalance of power is corrected.

Atwood's entire corpus has bee" concerned to understand power, and that analysis comes from a position that could be labelled both moral and feminist. If Atwood resists labels of this kind, perhaps that resistance springs from a desire not to see her work reduced to simple moral lessons of the

type Goddard seems to want, or written off as concerned with issues of restricted interest. The exercise of power concerns us all.

Susan Gingell
Saskatoo"

BY PUBLISHERS UNKNOWN

IN AN ISSUE (December) that praises a Macmillan book (A *Canadian Tragedy*) as ranking with *Fatal Vision, Serpentine,* and *By Persons Unknown (another* Macmillan title), it was disconcerting to find another review' entitled "By Persons Unknown." It was even more disconcerting to find that the book under review, *Cardiac Arrest* had been wrongly attributed to us, when the publisher in question is Doubleday.

Douglas M. Gibson
Publisher
Macmillan of Canada
Toronto

LAYTON'S LETTERS

I AM COMPILING a collection of letters by Irving Layton for publication by University of British Columbia Press. Layton has given this project his full support. I would appreciate those with letters fmm Layton contacting me for further information.

Francis Mansbridge
2189 West 2nd Avenue
Apartment 6
Vancouver V6K 1H3

THE LAST WORD

THE EDITING OF my review, for space reasons, of Ken Norris's book, *The Better Part of Heaven* (November), inadvertently gives the sense that I was neutral about the book, whereas in fact I liked it a lot. This is mainly due to the fact that the last sentence was deleted: "His writing is graceful, humorous, touching, and easy to read." I had also compared Norris's book to "Daphne Marlatt's text, How *Huge a* Stone, with its maps and rich evocation of place."

Libby Scheier
Toronto

RECOMMENDED

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

NON-FICTION

Frederick Haultain: Frontier Statesman of the Canadian Northwest. by **Grant MacEwan,** *Western* Producer Prairie Books. **MacEwan's** exhaustive research **and** plain **prose** combine **with the granite-like integrity** of his **subject — Haultain (1857-1942) was** arguably **the finest states**man **western** Canada **has yet** produced -to **tell the** oddly **moving story of an almost forgotten** man.

POETRY

Ask **Again,** by George Johnston, Penumbra **Press. Johnston** may govern **an** island of only small compass. **but the civility, wit, and** willingness to **experiment** with sound and form **that** mark these **37 deceptively casual** poems make that Island one worth **visiting.**

RECEIVED

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

À l'ombre de DesRochers, by Joseph Bonenfant *et al.,* Les Éditions de l'Université de Sherbrooke.
Abnormally Happy: A Gay Dictionnry, by Richard Summerbell, illustrated by Paul Aboud, New Star Books.
Aboriginal Self-Goverament in Australia and Canada, by Bradford W. Moore, Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queen's University.
Aboriginal Self-Government in the United States, by Douglas Sanders, Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queen's University.
Aboriginal Self-Government: Rights of Citizenship, by Noel Lyon, Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queen's University.
Aboriginal Self-Government: What Does It Mean?, by David C Hawkes, Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queen's University.
The Adventures of Broughton Bear: A Dream Becomes Real, by Susan Atkinson-Keen, illustrated by Nancy W. Patterson, OWL.
The Adventures of Broughton Bear: Fun Times, by Susan Atkinson-Keen, illustrated by Nancy W. Patterson, OWL.
The Adventures of Broughton Bear: Lost and Found, by Susan Atkinson-Keen, illustrated by Nancy W. Patterson, OWL.
The Adventures of Broughton Bear: One Thing Leads to Another, by Susan Atkinson-Keen, illustrated by Nancy W. Patterson, OWL.
The Adventures of Broughton Bear: Unexpected Wonders, by Susan Atkinson-Keen, illustrated by Nancy W. Patterson, OWL.
The Adventures of Broughton Bear: A Whole Day of Surprises, by Susan Atkinson-Keen, illustrated by Nancy W. Patterson, OWL.
The Adventures of Chuchi, by Jane Gaffin, illustrated by Patricia Ellis, Golf Pro.
The Alaska Highway, by Phillis Lee Brebner, The Boston Mills Press.
The Anne of Green Gables Cookbook; by Kate Macdonald, illustrated by Barbara Di Lella, Oxford.
The Art of Relaxation: Volume One, by TAO, published by TAO.
The Bad Day, by Sylvie Assathiany and Louise Pelletier, illustrated by Phillipe Béha, James Lorimer.
Bathwater's Hot, by Shirley Hughes, Douglas & McIntyre.
The Battle Over Bilingualism: The Manitoba Language Question, 1983-85, by Russell Doern, Cambridge Publishers.
Bearers of the Sun, by Chris Foster, Integrity International.
Benji's Daddy Was a Golfer, by W.J. Illerbrun, Illustrated by Al Sens, Collichan Books.
The Best Is Yet to Come, by Betty Jane Wylie, Key Porter.
Birds of Ontario, by J. Murray Speirs, Natural Heritage.
Blue-Riders, by Laurence Hutchman, Maker Press.
The Boardwalk Album: Memories of the Beach, by Barbaranne Boyer, The Boston Mills Press.
The Body Labyrinth, by Sharon Berg, Coach House (1984).
A Brand of Its Own: The 100 Year History of the Calgary Exhibition and Stampede, by James H. Gray, Western Producer Prairie Books.
Breaking Trail, by Phyllis Larkin-Pirotton, South Western Ontario Poetry.
Canada: Coast to Coast, by Grace Deutsch and Avanthia Swan, Collins.
Canada: The State of the Federation, 1985, edited by Peter

CANWIT NO. 108

Higgledy-piggledy
Brian *Mulroney*
Gloats in the face of the
Liberal din.

Sniping in terms very
Unparliamentary
That the Prime Minister
Leads with his chin.

LONG-TIME READERS of this column will remember Higgledy-Piggledies, the witty double-dactyl verses that take their name from their traditional opening line. As in the example above. the sixth line is a single double-dactyl word, and the fourth and eighth-the rhyming tines-are curtailed double dactyls. Contestants are invited to compose similarly structured verses on well-known Canadians living or dead, whose name must appear in the second line. The prize is $25. Deadline: March 1. Address: CanWit No. 108, *Books in Canada,* 366 Adelaide Street East, Toronto M5A 3X9.

Results of CanWit No. 106

REPLIES TO OUR request for telephone numbers — combining letters and numerals — for well-known Canadians wouldn't quite fill the Toronto directory (nor Moose Jaw's, for that matter). Then again, many of the celebrities enumerated here would probably prefer to keep such entries unlisted. The winner is Angels Home of Halifax, whose black book includes the following:

☐ SUN-KING: Pierre Trudeau
❑ SKY-HIGH: Marc Garneau
❑ 'NET-GAIN: Wayne Gretzky
☐ BIG-WHIG: John Turner

Honourable mentions:

☐ SLO-MAIL: Jean Claude Parrot
0 SIX-IRON: Dan Halldorson
☐ LOB-SHOT: Carling Bassett
0 HBC-1670: Pets C. Newman
— Wayne Lowe, Winnipeg

☐ GOD-HEAD: Irving Layton
☐ BAD-FISH: John Fraser
— Jim Green, Fort Smith, N.W.T.

☐ *HOT-PUCK:* Wayne Gretzky
☐ SHU-LESS: W.P. Kinsella
— Marlene Alt. London Ont.

☐ CON-GAME: Harold Ballard
— Gerry Redmond, Edmonton

☐ HAS-BEEN: John Turner, John Crosbie, John Fraser. Suzanne Blais-Grenier
— W. Ritchie Benedict, Calgary

☐ IM2-GRIM: Anne Hébert
— Brian Bartlett, Outremont, Que.

☐ OUT-BABY: Henry Morgenthaler
— Ervin Bonkalo, Sudbury, Ont.

M. Leslie, Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queen's University.
Canada's Billion Dollar Pension Scandal, by Earle Beattie, Methuen.
Canada's Colonies: A History of the Yukon and Northwest Territories, by Kenneth Coates, James Lorimer.
The Canadian General Election of 1984, by Alan Frizzell and Anthony Westell, Carleton University Press.
Canadian Literature in English, by W.J. Keith, Longman (Academic).
Canadian Poetry in Selected English-Language Anthologies: An Index and Guide, edited by Margery Fee, Dalhousie University.
The Canadian Style: A Guide to Writing and Editing, by the Department of the Secretary of State of Canada, Dundurn Press.
CFTR 5:10 Stoopid Joke of the Day, compiled by Mike Cooper, Chocolate Publishing.
Champions: A British Columbia Sports Album, by Jim Kearney, Douglas & McIntyre.
Chicken! Chicken! Chicken!, by Lynn Mendelson, Whitecap Books.
Child Care: Options for Working Parents, by Janet Rosenstock and Eva M. Rosenstock, Methuen.
The Clarity of Voices: Selected Poems, 1974-1981, by Philippe Haeck, translated by Antonio D'Alfonso, Guernica Editions.
Closed Circuits: The Sellout of Canadian Television, by Herschel Hardin, Douglas & McIntyre.
Colin and the Computer, by Peter Desbarats, illustrated by Victor GAD, M & S.
The Collected Longer Poems: 1947-1977, by Robin Skelton, Sono Nis Press.
Comment fair l'amour avec un Nègre sans se fatiguer, by Danny Leferrière, VLB Éditeur.
The Courage of the Early Morning, by William Arthur Bishop, M & S.
Culture Critique: Fernand Dumont and the New Quebec Sociology, by Michael A. Weinstein, New World Perspectives.
Dangerous Waters, by David Philpott, M & S.
Daughters of Earth and Other Stories, by Judith Merril, M & S.
A Day in the Life of Japan, Collins.
A Dictionary of Acronyms and Abbreviations in Library and Information Science, compiled by R. Tayyeb and K. Chandna, CLA.
Dictionary of Canadian Biography: Volume VIII, 1851-1860, U of T Press.
The Dingles, by Helen Levchuk, illustrated by John Bianchi, Groundwood.
The Double Ego, by Michael Bullock, Melmoth Publications
Dream Tracks: The Railroad and the American Indian, 1890-1930, by T.C. McLuhan, Abrams (Prentice-Hall).
The Easterners' Guide to Western Canada/The Westerners' Guide to Eastern Canada, Eden Press.
Eating for the Health of It, by Helen Bishop MacDonald, Austin Books (Hounslow).
The Entrepreneurs: The Story of Gendis Inc., by Albert D. Cohen, M & S.
Ernest Hemingway, Dateline: Toronto, edited by William White, Collier Macmillan.
Escape from the Glue Factory, by Joe Rosenblatt, Exile Editions.
Every Woman's Guide to the Law, by Linda Silver Dranoff, Fitzhenry & Whiteside.
Excellence in Exporting, by Philip Rossom *et al.*, External Affairs Canada.
The Farmyard, by Stefan Anastasiu, James Lorimer.
Felice: A Travelogue, by Robert Harlow, Oolichan Books.
Feminism Now: Theory and Practice, edited by Marilouise Kroker *et al.*, New World Perspectives.
First Principles: Constitutional Reform with Respect to the Aboriginal Peoples of Canada, by Bryan Schwartz, Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queen's University.
First Rains of Autumn, by Aubrey Diem, published by the author.
Flavinn's Fortune, by Alastair Macdonald, Harry Cuff Publications.
The Forests of British Columbia, by Cameron Young, photography by Bob Herger and Gunter Marx, Whitecap Books.
Forget-Me-Knot: A Canadian Birthday & Anniversary Book, illustrated by Sarah Silver, Hounslow Press.
Forms of Aboriginal Self-Government, by David A. Boisvert, Institute of Intergovernmental Relations, Queen's University.
Fragments of War: Stories from Survivors of World War II, by Joyce Hibbert, Dundurn Press.
The Fridge, by Pierre Pratt, James Lorimer.
Gaining Ground: European Critics on Canadian Literature, edited by Robert Kroetsch and Reingard M. Nischik, NeWest Press.
The Garden, by Marie-Louise Gay, James Lorimer.
Getting Dressed, illustrated by Philippe Béha, James Lorimer.
Gilbert La Rocque: l'écriture du rêve, by Donald Smith, Éditions Québec/Amérique.
Gift Giving: Ideas for All Occasions, by Wendy Trousdell and Eleanor Panio, Pandell Enterprises (Raincoast).
The Gold Diggers' Guide: How to Marry Rich, by Thomas Schirmacher, Eden Press.
Grandma's Visit, by Sylvie Assanthiany and Louise Pelletier, illustrated by Philippe Béha, James Lorimer.
Green Eyes, Dukes & Kings, by Michael Rawdon, Quarry Press.
The Harrowsmith Fish & Seafood Cookbook, Camden House.
Heavy Seasoning & Heavenly Bodies, by Jan Figurski, South Western Ontario Poetry.
How Many?, illustrated by Philipe Béha, James Lorimer.
How the Loon Lost Her Voice, by Anne Cameron, Harbour Publishing.
How Raven Freed the Moon, by Anne Cameron, Harbour Publishing.
I Fought Riel: A Military Memoir, by Charles A. Boulton, edited by Heather Robertson, James Lorimer.
I'll Belly Your Button in a Minute!, by sean o'huigan, illustrated by Barbara Di Lello, Black Moss Press.
Jamaica Under Manley, by Michael Kaufman, Between the Lines.
Jennifer Has Two Daddies, by Priscilla Galloway, illustrated by Ana Auml, Women's Press.
Jewels, by David Carpenter, The Porcupine's Quill.
Kids Can Play Activity Book, Volume I, by Nicholas Austin, Carib-Can Publishers.
The Last Echo, by Byrna Barclay, NeWest Press.
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