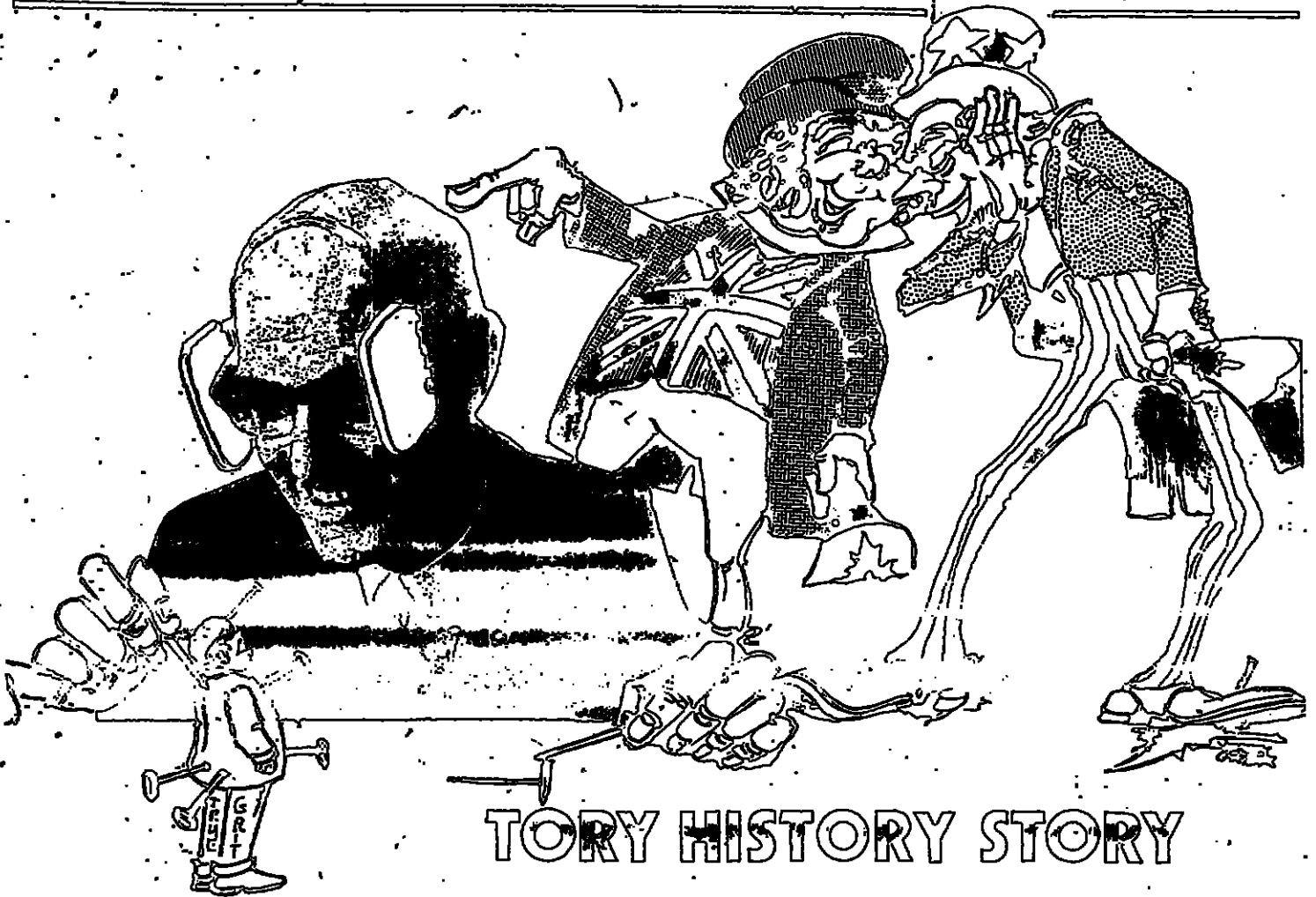


McLUHAN RETRIBALIZED by Leo Simpson
THE GARBAGEMAN COMETH: Jim Christy
HARKER'S GOLDENROD by Greg Gatenby

JEANNIE CANUCK studied by Maureen Scobie
SCOTT OF THE ANTIESTABLISHMENT: Audrey Gibson
WINDY FICTION by Douglas Marshall



TORY HISTORY STORY

TOWARDS THE DISCOVERY OF CANADA

DONALD CREIGHTON

Macmillan

cloth \$11.95, paper \$6.95; 305 pages

reviewed by Glen Frankfurter

DONALD GRANT CREIGHTON is a mighty figure in the world of Canadian

historiography. He is, without doubt, the best known and most influential professional historian in the country. His large-scale biography of John A. Macdonald is a national bestseller. Ramsay Cook, who must have some serious disagreements with him, has declared Creighton to be "the most important historian in English-speaking

Canada, and surely one of the best in the English-speaking world." Robert Fulford has recently suggested that Creighton's Canada is at last coming into its own, and the CBC has given him an impressive amount of television time and announced that he will be seen and heard from again very soon.

over

In *Towards the Discovery of Canada* he has now given us his collected essays to date — 18 essays written over four decades. It is impossible not to like the man who wrote them. In the four essays grouped together in "Part I: The Craft of History," he shows us his wide knowledge and deep understanding of the great humanist tradition of European literature. In "Part II: Commerce and Empire" he deepens our understanding of the shifting processes and changing realities of the Canadian world and the way the decline of our wheat economy and its European markets and the parallel rise of the provincially controlled trade in natural resources (power, paper, minerals), has weakened the federal power.

Throughout the entire book he displays an attractive fervor, an ironic sense of humor, and, above all, deep love and great fears for his country. But history is not the only concern in these essays. Throughout the book, but particularly in Parts III and IV, devoted to Sir John A. Macdonald and Continentalism and Bi-Culturalism respectively, he takes to the hustings. For Creighton is not only an historian but a political polemicist who believes, as I do, that Canadians must come to an understanding of their past because they need it desperately so they can use it as a measure of their performance in the present. Without such a measuring stick our world will appear confused, our national life without sense or meaning, and we shall lose our way.

But it is just in this role of historian-politician that it seems to me Creighton is not only preaching bad politics but teaching bad history. And this is sad for us because a man who stands on the loftiest peak a Canadian historian has attained ought to be able to see a very great distance and help us come to a more stable understanding among ourselves. The trouble is that Creighton has put on a pair of blinkers.

It is his contention that John A. Macdonald, having forged the union of the provinces and captured the West, negotiated a military alliance with Britain that was designed to strengthen Canada's hand in its age-long struggle to build a separate and independent state in North America. In his view

this alliance was destroyed by the Liberal obsession with independence from Britain; a virtual conspiracy among the Grit politicians and their journalist-historian minions contrived to pull the wool over Canadian eyes. As a result, both Canada and Britain were immeasurably weakened so that today Canada is virtually defenceless against the American power. In fact, Creighton goes even further and states that Mackenzie King and his successors consciously and recklessly invited the Americans in to help break the Imperial tie.

But in riding his hobby horse he seems to commit all the crimes of distortion, of prejudice, of out-dated concerns that he charges to the Grit historians — by which he apparently means almost everyone from Willison and Dafoe through Hutchison to Underhill — to whom? Ramsay Cook?

It is not good enough to say that some alliance, apparently existent in John A.'s head, was supposed to help Canada defend itself against American absorption. Strength is not only exerted at the conference table. Strength, spiritual strength and conviction, must be brought to the conference table.

Because Canada kept a constitutional connection with Britain the British Privy Council's Judicial Committee — not a court, mind you — stripped Creighton's favourite institution, the national government of Canada, of its power and influence and vitally amended the constitution of Canada without the consent of the Canadian parliament or people. But because this unhappy and overpowering fact does not fit the Creighton thesis he tells us that was all an accident.

Of course, it was no accident. It was the result of Macdonald's and the Fathers' deliberate choice — as Creighton admits — for a kind of halfway independence. And if John A. didn't know that power tends towards absolute power in 1867, he ought to have known it in 1871 when the United States and that great prop of Canadian power and independence, Britain, conspired together in the Treaty of Washington to fleecy Sir John and send him back to Ottawa with his tail between his legs. But even after that he played politics with the heart and soul of the constitution and fought

against a truly supreme Supreme Court.

The trouble is that an alliance that is only "implicit" isn't worth much in a world where even real alliances committed to real scraps of paper are so often honoured in the breach. Certainly it isn't worth more than the "implicit" agreement between Canada's two cultures.

And that brings us to Creighton's other blinker — bi-culturalism. He quite rightly sees the argument over schools and language in Manitoba and the North West as the pivotal question. But once again he wants to make the facts work his way. It was a mistake he says to have granted privileges to the French "before immigration and the growth of population had determined its [the North West's] true and permanent character." That's what caused all the trouble.

But when is the character of a half grown, almost empty country set? The social forces that mould our experience do not work themselves out in a decade or two. If anybody knows that it ought to be a famous historian. Indeed, is the character of Canada itself set? It would be a rash man who would say so.

The fact is the French speakers were in the North West and had been for half a century. They were the children of the *voyageurs*, the soldiers in Montreal's great fight against the Hudson's Bay Company for a stake in the empire of the West. Canada, the society they had championed against the Imperial monopoly owed them every consideration. And, after its insensitive conduct in 1869, the Macdonald Government was prepared to give them some consideration if the Privy Council's Judicial Committee had not interfered. If the Fathers had chosen real independence instead of taking their constitution over to London to be gift wrapped and tied up with some very long strings attached, Canada today would be a very different place. The federal government would be a supreme central power. And that power would not be effectively challenged by Quebec because the cultural and linguistic conflicts would have been, if not eliminated, at least ameliorated. There would likely be a thriving French-speaking culture on the Prairies rather than 1.5 million French-speaking Canadians

continued on page 10

SHORTLY AFTER the publication of our June issue, a literary columnist in a Toronto newspaper reported my wry comment that the issue might well prove to be our last one. The fact that you are reading a further editorial now discounts that earlier pessimism, but there remains an unhappy irony in the circumstances that left us unable to afford an issue in July, on the first anniversary of our birth as a magazine.

When we set out over a year ago, we planned on this editorial page that our readers were in favour of Canadian books. We set out with very few resources across a territory ominously scattered with the bones of similar magazine projects that had fallen by the wayside. We are still trudging onwards, somewhat emaciated, with frequent halts, but with those biases still upheld and with our determination to continue the journey unshaken. And although we may be behind schedule, we do have progress to report.

In nine issues (far less than we had hoped to publish in the time), we have reviewed an average of 25 new Canadian books per issue. The shortage is not, we're glad to say, of Canadian books worth reviewing, but of financial re-

sources to provide space enough to review more of them. Over the same year, we have published several profiles of Canadian writers, as well as such irregular features as "From The Small Presses," "An Editor Regrets," and "Heard & Told". Far too few of each of these, but for the same reason.

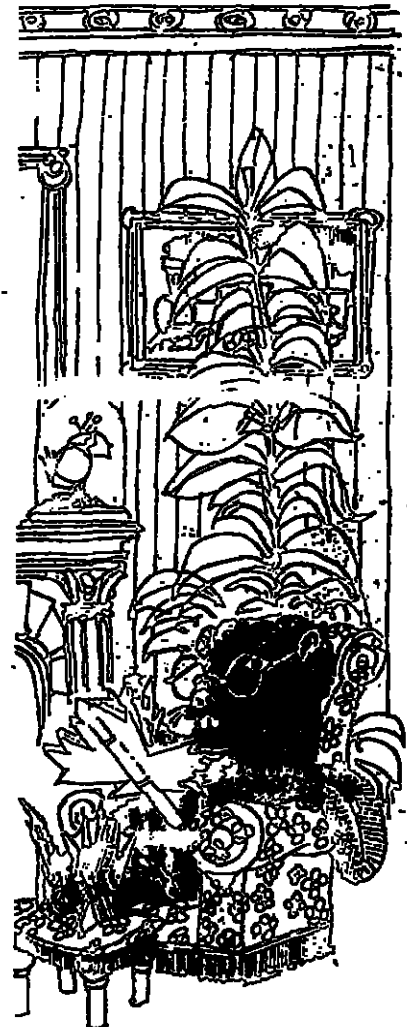
If you are one of the majority of our readers who picks up his copy of *Books In Canada* free at the local bookstore, you may wonder with a pang of guilt if your paying for it might help. For reasons that relate to the odd economics of magazine — and book-publishing, we doubt if it would. Our overriding concern, in any case, is to get as much information and advice about Canadian books to as many Canadian readers as possible. We believe that by circulating some 35,000 copies of every issue, free through bookstores, and by subscription through libraries, we are serving a great many interested Canadians who might otherwise have little means of finding out what Canadian books are available and which might be of interest to them.

Space in our newspapers and magazines for the review of books, and particularly of Canadian books is very limited. We believe that we added a worthwhile amount of reviewing space and that we could increase that space considerably given a modest yet consistent level of support by the publishing industry and the government. We cannot conceal our disappointment in the support obtained from either source so far. As I have pointed out in this column before, it is too often the publishing houses who have profited most from reviews in our pages that are most niggardly in their support of our continuance. Likewise, although the Federal government has shown lavish if discriminatory concern to increase the output of Canadian books, it seems only moderately interested in ensuring that Canadians come to know about them.

We are not claiming that either world, book or bureaucratic, owes us a living. Indeed if those of us who have survived the rigours of this first year

were entirely dependant for a livelihood on this magazine, it would not now exist. But we do claim, as we did at the beginning of this venture, that Canadians are owed a national book magazine of their own. And so, still encouraged by the constant and warm support of readers and librarians and booksellers and writers and (some) publishers, we trudge into a second year, hopefully. □ VAL CLERY

Confronted simultaneously by a heavy backlog of unpublished reviews and by the prospect of many new fall books from publishers, we have had to hold over until September such features as "Heard & Told," "Ready & Waiting," and "Write-In."



BOOKS *in* CANADA

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DERNIERE CRISE

QUEBEC '70:

A Documentary Narrative
JOHN SAYWELL
University of Toronto Press
paper \$2.95; Illustrated: 152 pages

reviewed by Marion McCormick

THE READER is permitted a sigh at the prospect of another book on the October Crisis, but having sighed and pressed on, he may find Professor Saywell's "documentary narrative" the most useful account to have appeared so far. This little book is a sparingly embellished chronology of what happened from the April, 1970, election in Quebec to the end of December when James Cross, his kidnappers safe in Cuba, was a free man. Everyone knows the story, and nothing has been added. Not enough time accumulated to permit hindsight or assess the aftermath, and Professor Saywell denies himself the pleasure of speculation.

This makes it different from a crowd of earlier books, as does the author's dispassionate tone. His is a straightforward recital of a chain of events, illustrated by newspaper quotes, cartoons and transcriptions of recorded material, including that famous "bleeding hearts" interview taped on the run with Prime Minister Trudeau.

If Professor Saywell avoids speculation himself, he raises questions which inevitably give rise to it. Some of these will be chewed over for years to come. Three examples:

1. Did the various governments under-react in advance of the Cross kidnapping? (Plans to kidnap Ismail and U.S. diplomats had, after all, already been discovered by the police if not by the courts.)
2. Did these same governments over-react in acting for and implementing the War Measures Act?
3. And what was that mysterious colloque involving a number of prominent Quebecers all about?

Some of us who lived through it all have been wondering ever since.

It is hard to see what preventive measures could have been taken that

would not have done much more violence to individual civil liberties than the War Measures Act finally did. And even if every potential kidnap victim had been strenuously guarded, a kidnapping or something like it was surely inevitable. The events of October were not set in motion by tensions that might have been eased, or circumstances that might have been changed, but purely by ideology.

As for the War Measures Act, it was alarming by implication more than by implementation. Very few people were touched by it at all, and it would be hard to find anyone who suffered more than inconvenience and impossible to find anyone for whom it had tragic consequences. The deepest psychic scars are probably borne by a few revolutionists *manqués* — a McGill academic leaps to mind — who somehow never managed to make it to Jan, try though they did.

Professor Saywell doesn't do much to clarify the conversations between Claude Ryan and that band of prominent people, among them René Lévesque. Were they plotting to set up a provisional government in serious expectation of the roof falling in, or were they just rapping? It seems unlikely that the men mentioned shared many common motives or expectations, and the rumour of a plot might have been based on nothing more substantial than Ryan's appearance and personality. The man does have the air of an *éminence grise*. He looks both awe-inspiring and hard to get along with, like an El Greco saint.

Professor Saywell refers to Charles Gagnon; Pierre Vallières; Michel Chartrand and Robert Lemieux as the Four Horsemen, and occasionally he opens the ranks to admit a fifth, Jacques Larue-Langlois. Two — Chartrand and Lemieux — are still carrying on at the same decibel level. Gagnon hasn't changed his mind about anything. Vallières, on the other hand, has renounced violence to follow the democratic path of Le Parti Québécois, and Larue-Langlois has moved to the country and taken up pig farming.

The *Montreal Star* carried on a paragraph on an inside page the other day reporting that Larue-Langlois had paid a small fine in lieu of serving a few days in jail for causing a disturbance

in court some time ago when all these events were fresher in everybody's mind. Farming — especially livestock management — precludes time off for ideological gestures. □

MARION McCORMICK, who lives in Montreal, is a well-known literary broadcaster and journalist.

HERE TODAY

THE HAZARDOUSNESS OF A PLACE:

A Regional Ecology of Damaging
Events

K. HEWITT & I. BURTON
University of Toronto Press
paper \$6.00; Illustrated: 168 pages

OUR EARTH IN CONTINUOUS CHANGE

DAVID M. BAIRD
McGraw-Hill Ryerson
cloth \$7.95; Illustrated: 128 pages

reviewed by Ziba Fisher

THE HAZARDOUSNESS OF A PLACE is a recent Research Publication of the Geography Department of the University of Toronto. It enables Ken Hewitt and Ian Burton to provide a detailed and carefully structured back-rack upon which both hard and soft data about hazards might be hung.

Because of the need to rationalize research and planning procedures (there has been no systematic survey of losses from natural hazards in Canada), these writers are understandably concerned by the lack of any "Theoretical and conceptual framework by which to organize . . . empirical data . . . for hazard studies".

Virtually all studies to date have concentrated on the probability of the occurrence of a particular hazard at any given area. Hewitt and Burton have emphasized site, using the "all hazards at a place" approach. Gleaning information from a wide variety of local sources, they have compiled some pretty hairy reading for anybody living

in Southwest Ontario, the area chosen as their case study.

This preliminary work, which includes but moves well beyond a mere taxonomy of hazards, stresses the difficulty and importance of assessing hazard impact on society, as well as upon the environment in which that society finds itself.

By employing an ecological view of hazards, an important start has been made in measuring and evaluating the total range of intricate interactions between a society and its reactions to disastrous environmental change.

If you own a new, fully illustrated book which begins by extolling the need for an aesthetic appreciation of the physical, and continues from there to discuss such matters, as dating, bedding, old fossils, major and minor rifts, thrusts, and (hold on) joints — would you give it to your daughter? Leave it on the coffee table? Read it in bed?

You might do any of these things with *Our Earth In Continuous Change*. Baird's most recent (or is it? — rumour has it that he will be doing some more National Park stuff) book has everything his readers have come to appreciate him for — comprehensivity, clarity of illustration, and Canadian examples by the load.

The underlying thrust of *Earth* is to stress how geologists discover the processes at work inside the earth, and on its surfaces. Some might fault him for contending that in modern times there can be no more exciting science than a study of geology, but none will quibble with his magnificent attempt to convince us that he is right. The colour plates used to illustrate his chapters are stunning. The choice of examples ranges far and wide, without omitting the many Canadian examples which are so infrequently cited.

No attempt has been made to provide an exhausting collection of labels that geologists might use to stick on things. Baird is being the geologists' apologist, and does a first rate job. This is a gneiss book; don't take it for granite. □

ZIBA FISHER teaches geography at Seneca College, Toronto, and is director of its mobile learning program.

PSALMS OF EXISTENCE

THE ARMIES OF THE MOON

GWENDOLYN MacEwan

Macmillan

cloth \$7.95, paper \$3.95, 75 pages

reviewed by Clyde Hosein

"TO THINK" is "to thank" is "to write poetry" was a premise for reasoning out the creative act in human lives advanced by Martin Heidegger.

The revelation of its truth has been so far pronounced undefective by all who, like Miss MacEwan, contemplate the void, the absolute, including mystics and a handful of literary critics.

Her poetic experience, much like the reflective understanding of theology in faith, issues from a struggle with the nature of Being. This is physically expressed in an ultimate concern for life at its very foundations, and not merely with the objective visible nature of the phenomena of things. The point at which this is startlingly expressed is in her "A Lecture to the Flat Earth Society." This is her main psalm of a disciplic advent of Mind to the very edge of all consciousness which sings that only such a journey can reveal the true nature of what we are and why we are here.

Through fear of death, Man is cast out "into the Primal Dark beyond," and it is only the "consolation of each other's company" that constrains the conquerors of that final possibility from "falling into the sweet and terrible night." As an entity, this high, out-spacish human consciousness leads a precarious existence. She says it is a "disc which spins its insane dreams through space," forever subject to the gravitational force of moral falling.

Fair enough.

But, by saying it is "doomed," she admits the finitude of our existence by alienating mystical experience from all traditional ideas of the trans-human reality known to poetry, theology and other literature.



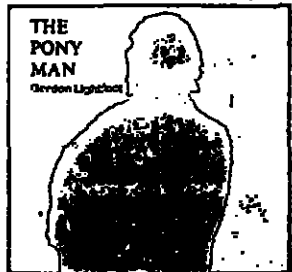
PLAYING HOCKEY THE PROFESSIONAL WAY

Rod Gilbert & Brad Park

Introduction by Emile Francis

Heavily illustrated fast-filled guide to Canada's most popular sport by two top players in the National Hockey League. Covers offensive and defensive play, stick handling, power plays — all aspects of this exciting sport. Ideal for both young players and spectators.

October, \$7.95



THE PONY MAN

Gordon Lightfoot

Illustrated by Edzina Delessert

A folksinger's magic. The famous song by Canadian, Gordon Lightfoot, from his best-selling album "If You Could Read My Mind," now in a beautiful picture book for anyone who enjoys fanciful ideas, fascinating rhythms and superb illustrations.

September, \$5.70



BEFORE THE AGE OF MIRACLES

Memoirs of a Country Doctor

William V. Johnston, M.D. LL.D.

With a wry sense of humour, Dr. Johnston recalls his practice in Lucknow, Ontario from 1924 to 1954, in an era when milk was 10¢ a quart and insulin, antibiotics and birth-control pills were yet to be discovered.

September, \$6.95

Published by
Fitzhenry & Whiteside Limited
150 Lesmill Road, Don Mills, Ontario

Not only are Good and Evil doomed, they are utterly irreconcilable: for she holds that the Marce separated from the cerebral mind dwells by the "Abyss," the creature of the chaos/Who dwell in darkness below our heels" no of a good mind eternally to their fallen state.

But if one can "fall" cannot one rise? And if "doom" is the lot of all, what is the reason for vertical mobility between the upper and lower regions of the mind?

Poems like "A Dance at the Mental Hospital" and "When I Think about It" answer these questions affirmatively, but cannot to speak from one who is in "the terrible night" of ignorance of reality.

Miss MacEwan's consciousness of life therefore is thrown into the confusion of irreconcilability or non-motion, which is no reason to "danken" or, much less, to write poetry or to think. She has relegated the conscious world, by its own choice, to the tyranny of things over man, the result of which is the degraded mediocrity of mass-existence.

However, it is in the world of physical temporality that Miss MacEwan comes back to shatter the inauthentic ordinariness of the finite man. With a brilliant interplay between housewife and woman she has merged the philosophy and the physical existence, making each at its highest become development of the totality of man's groping towards the purpose immanent in all by the cold choice of the question: Why are we here? She contends that truth is a gift which must be earned by action, within the finitude of experience which totalizes in death. Since no one has come back to "tell the tale," groping in the darkness becomes a divine certainty, a reason for life. The poet finds this great anxiety the motivator of ideological currents; one has to see one's own constantly as one's own reality is forever changing.

This activity becomes more and more frenetic in the face of our gradual loss of being as we confront the immediately present final possibility — death. When she thinks about her death she is on her knees "thanking God that nothing is happening" and that she is "alive, to tell the tale."

Here is the real point of her poetry. She claims that one has to take one's life into one's own hands, like the prodigal son, in view of the possibility that "my death and yours is everywhere," "in view of the million possibilities" in our lives by which "everything becomes impossible."

So, in effect, Miss MacEwan brings us back squarely to confront the invisibility of the trans-human Being.

She reinforces this by the symbolisms we now in sci-fi and science, by the equality of travelling the space-time dimension through macrocosm and microcosm, through astronaut and seamstress-cook, with the result that the same uncertainty surrounds our pawing of lunar dust and cooking a meal.

She parallels the enigma of "Why do we work to feed ourselves to live in fear that we would die" with that of the scientific astronaut, who, in all his passion for knowing, knows intuitively that he is merely playing intellectual golf over the reality which is hidden beyond the physicality of things.

In so doing Miss MacEwan moves us to the transcendental by the totality of nothing and makes us stand before the severity and incongruity of its meaning.

In the battle of ideas, to show us how small we really are calls for the positivization of all our passions. □

CLYDE HOSEIN is a poet and critic from Trinidad who has recently settled in Toronto

NEW ED FIGURES APAIN MARSHY GROWND

TAKE TODAY: The Executive As Dropout

MARSHALL McLUHAN & BARRINGTON NEVITT

Longman

cloth \$9.95; 304 pages

reviewed by Leo Simpson

MARSHALL McLUHAN is fundamentally a futurist — a thinker who breaks down huge, complex movements of history into a digestible myth, or quickly understandable order. He would certainly be the first to deny this, since "order" is exactly what he believes is not happening, and "quickly understandable" is a cowardly way of avoiding saying *rational*. (Rationality is a sequence, a bastard child of literate-mechanical prejudice.) Nevertheless, he is concerned with explanations. He diligently repeats many of his former explanations in *Take Today*, and indeed he repeats some of them more than once within the new book. We are exposed again to the thought, for instance, that electricity enables tribal organizations to bypass the de-tribalized evolution of Western societies; to the distinction between roles and jobs; to the obsolescence of sequential thinking and behaviour; to complementation myths; to the King

Cadmus myth, and the aggressive nature of the phonetic alphabet in its resemblance to teeth; to the phonetic alphabet as the first assembly line; to replaced technologies as new art forms; to money as "the poor man's credit card; to Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* as the foremost book of prophecy of our age; to the failure of papyrus supplies from Egypt as the cause of the fall of Rome; and, among scores of lesser ideas, to the instinctive wisdom of pre-literate cultures, particularly when they are Eskimos.

I've always been fascinated by Marshall McLuhan's addiction to Eskimos. Oddly, for somebody who preaches the resonance of mythology and technology, the reciprocal patterns existing between them and their creators, McLuhan has no sense whatever of man being "programmed" by pre-technological environments. "We are now," he writes, "swamped by a new environment of pre-literate forms."

And certainly the impact of television, audio-visual aids, group (tribal) activities and decision-making, spitting of disciplines into specialties, all these changes can be seen to produce, as he keeps saying they do, post-literate or pre-literate individuals.

Admittedly, it is hard for some of us not to think of them as illiterate, and of the unavoidable prejudices of the ante-habit, but the implications are instructive in McLuhan's sense, too. One tribal is self-sufficient and inherently wise, and that technological is conditioned. He is usually careful to stipulate, by implication, that he excludes moral judgments from his schema, yet he seems to indulge in them when he discusses, in *Take Today*, "the community," a value in the process of being destroyed by intoxication with technology. Distinguishing between traditional slums (which, he says, have a sense of community, whatever else they lack) and the new high-rise slums, he calls the first "the rural monster," and the second "the anti-social monster." A writer who applies words like monster to phenomena would seem to me to be making moral judgments, and pugnauously.

His affection for communities becomes interesting later, when he reaches the subject of retribalization. "The computer," then, "is a portent of the return to Carlyle's medieval ideal of economy, when large enterprises were run from a kitchen . . ."

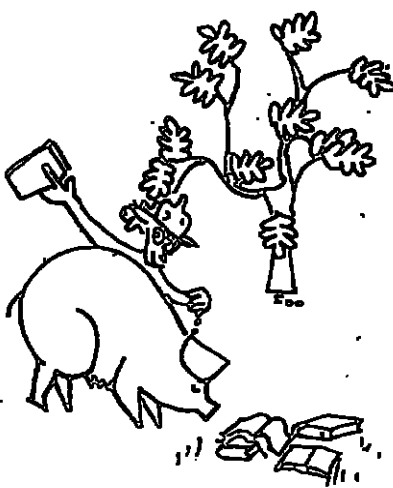
Broken into one of his chilling pun-structures, the main message is read: "By living electrically . . ."

doing everything at home, the Babes in the Wood sort terminate Big Business." To my mind, this is the intrinsic fascination of Marshall McLuhan — his combination of tough intellectual vision and lovable childishness. He sees the role of the computer more clearly than any man alive today, and yet manages to hope that it will produce the kind of Utopia dearest to his heart, the Utopia of resurrected communities. Mankind's love of efficiency will dissolve the binding force of power.

The newest addition to McLuhan insights in *Take Today* is the idea of *figure and ground*. As I understand this, systems do not annihilate their precedents instantaneously, and especially they do not replace the sluggish ideas

of their precedents. One becomes the *figure* and the other the *ground* of the contemporary attitude, and they exist in, an uneasy conjunction, or, as he puts it, "in abrasive interface." I found, as I usually do with something innovative from McLuhan, that when I was convinced I understood these new concepts, they seemed to become arbitrarily reversed in the examples provided. Again, *Finnegans Wake* is copiously quoted, together with several other works of well-established opacity whose authors are in no position to challenge the motives and ideas credited to them, because of being dead. There is the customary mass of supportive quotations from works of deserved obscurity. And of course there are the frightful puns — I accept the technique of "dislocating the mind into perception," but I am not free of the suspicion that some of the puns are in here simply because Marshall McLuhan thinks they're funny. He needs to be more careful with his dead writers (Samuel Butler did not have a vision of any process that motivated him to "write the title of his Utopia backwards," since he wrote it anagrammatically), but he is otherwise in great form still, and his books remain at least 50 years in advance of the ideas cherished by the governments and corporations that rule our lives. □

LEO SIMPSON, whose novel *Ark* was published last fall and who has completed a second novel, lives near Madoc, Ontario.



TALES OF THE NORTH PACIFIC

THE ROYAL NAVY & THE NW COAST OF NORTH AMERICA:

1810-1914

DR. BARRY M. GOUGH

Univ. of B.C. Press
cloth \$12.00; illustrated; 310 pages

reviewed by Robert I. Hendy

CANADIANS pay little heed to the influence of sea power on history — past or present. In this book, Dr. Gough tries to dispel some of the apathy and misunderstanding surrounding the contributions of the Royal Navy to the Canadian Confederation.

This extremely well-researched history describes an era known as the Pax Britannica, recounting the adventures of "the far distant ships" of the Royal Navy's squadron in the Pacific in securing Britain's precarious foothold on the West coast.

While in his introduction he disclaims any attempt at detailed recording of the many officers who commanded the station, the reader is to appreciate the high degree of initiative required to ensure control during the many incidents which threatened the British-Canadian position. The American attempt at trespassing on the Queen Charlotte Islands in search of gold and their continued, concerted efforts to extend the northern boundary of the United States to a point halfway up the B.C. coast are two incidents Dr. Gough uses to illustrate how narrowly B.C. escaped becoming a state of the Union.

Dr. Gough has included several useful appendices of ships and flag officers. A complete bibliography makes this volume valuable to those wishing to pursue history and is an essential addition to any library of Canadian.

ROBERT I. HENDY, a Toronto lawyer with an interest in naval matters, is chairman of the National Committee on Maritime Affairs for The Navy League of Canada.

VOYAGE AU BOUT DE NUIT

IS IT THE SUN, PHILIBERT?

ROCH CARRIER
(Transl. Sheila Fischman)

Anansi
cloth \$6.50, paper \$2.50; 100 pages

reviewed by Jane Rule

OF THE BOOKS that make up Roch Carrier's trilogy, *Is It the Sun, Philibert?* is the most socially responsible and politically correct. In it, Philibert, the son of a grave digger, leaves behind the rural Quebec of the two earlier books and goes to Montreal where the experience of ignorance and suffering is stripped of the vivid imagery which

church, landscape, and local custom provided before. Only early in *Is It the Sun, Philibert?*, while Carrier is giving isolated sketches of Philibert's childhood, do the episodes carry the surprise and conviction that mark Carrier's earlier books. In that landscape a pig still screams "loud enough to burst God's eardrums" before its slaughter, and its cut-out tongue, contracting on the floor before the fascinated child, utters the oaths of men. What happens to Philibert once he arrives in Montreal is much more predictable. At first his naive energy and hope which make him shovel snow off walks in certainty of getting food also allow him in angry disappointment to stamp out this message in the snow: "YOU HAVE AN ASSHOLE INSTEAD OF A HEART"; but with each dismal job, from peeling potatoes in a dark basement to working in a factory, the energy of his childhood dwindle until Philibert's experiences and his responses to them are a cataloguing of the dreary and sometimes grotesque defeats of one of many little victims of the city. His complaints,

drinking bouts, and dreams are gradually drained of the colour of that rural past until their only interest is sociological. The irony becomes heavy and dull edged with obvious messages: "Life should be beautiful."

It is as if Montreal defeated Carrier as well as Philibert. The raging humor and absurdity of *La Guerre, Yes Sir!*, the wild invention of *Floralle, Where Are You?*, the unquestioning life of both these books, all fall before the urban fact, which deprives not only the character but the plot itself of hilarious courage and fine invention except in the last couple of pages of the book, when death can borrow the serpent from that old mythology and give Philibert back pain vivid enough for a man who has been alive. *Is It the Sun, Philibert?* is easy enough to believe but not nearly as easy to read as Carrier's earlier work. Reading it remains a social duty. □

JANE RULE, whose most recent novel was *Against The Season*, lives in Vancouver and will shortly be teaching creative writing at the University of B.C.



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LAYING WASTE THE WASTE LAND

THE GARBAGEMAN

JUAN BUTLER

Peter Martin Associates
cloth \$6.95; 176 pages

reviewed by Jim Christy

durante. It is a Spanish word without a direct equivalent but which approximates a feeling, a flash of recognition, a power state when one has gone all the way, taken the final risk and now stands on the precipice facing death or affirmation. It is a moment of life, a moment of art, or a joining of both. In art it has more to do with heart than technique. It is the difference between a Segovia and a Manitas de Platos, between a Hemingway and a Norman Mailer, between a Lester Young and a Stan Getz. The only way to approach this state is to gamble; to be, in Nelson Algren's words, an "all outer."

This to introduce Juan Butler and his second novel *The Garbageman*. Juan Butler is definitely an "all outer" and in his book of madness he summons forth in a few brief but undeniable moments that mysterious *duende*. How rare this is.

The writer is in complete control of his material and the reader is caught by the force of his language. Butler does not allow you to confront him; he leaves you no way of backing off, and he does this rather in the manner of a gunman waiting at the end of a dark alley.

The narrator of *The Garbageman* deals in fantasy and truth, dream and reality, madness and insanity and he slips in and out of these as stealthily as a shadow, or as violently as Lautremont armed, turning everything upside down in his fury so that we no longer know the meaning of these states of consciousness, no longer can distinguish between them.

The book begins innocently enough like any mediocre Canadian novel. "I woke up at dawn this morning. Some birds were chirping in the small bush outside my window" — but ends

with the protagonist's dark lucubrations, his plans for his psychiatrist:

One day I'm going to tear them out of his head during one of those stupid sessions with him? Laugh at him. Leave him in a state of extreme shock with two unseeing, jelly-like eyeballs bouncing against his cheeks, joined to bloody eye sockets by thin, fibrous nerves. Let him feel what it's like to be treated like a guinea pig. To be mutilated like a corpse. To be ridiculed like a circus freak. To be considered a piece of garbage.

One day.

In the middle of the book the protagonist mutilates the body of a girl in the Bois de Boulogne in Paris and brutally murders a homosexual sailor in a Barcelona back alley. Or do things happen in this order? Or do they happen at all? But sequence and reality are irrelevant. What must be understood is that *The Garbageman* is primarily a devastating attack on our society, its government, culture, mores. It is a thrashing, if you will, of everything that allows man to be treated as little more than a piece of garbage.

This is a pure anarchist work. Further it is far and away the most revolutionary novel ever published in Canada and as such it shows the work

of people like David Lewis Stein and Robert Hunter for the confused juvenalia that it is. What Butler is telling you here is that "one day" the real revolutionaries will come and they will not be anything even faintly resembling pacifists or howdy-doddy gurus; they will be 20th-century Ravachols, madmen, surrealist gunmen firing at random into the midst of the crowd.

Butler has matured considerably since the publication two years ago of his first novel *Cabbagetown Diary* which was good tough reportage in the manner of Hugh Selby Jr. *The Garbageman*, however, is a much richer blend of realism and surrealism influenced by many diverse sources: Lautremont, Artaud, the surrealists, Garcia Lorca, Hemingway, Anais Nin, Burroughs, Selby again. But although Butler reminds you alternately of all these writers it is never for long because there is a constant shifting of pace, mood, intensity, the violence at times counterpointed by a disarming, child-like simplicity.

A recent *Saturday Night* contains an article about the new generation in Canadian fiction by Donald Cameron and entitled, "Novelists of the Seventies: Through Chaos to Truth." This trip through chaos is exactly the theme that concerns Juan Butler. The article by the way mentions more than 25 new novelists, but it doesn't mention Juan Butler who may be better than them all. □

JIM CHRISTY, whose book *The New Refugees* was published last year, is a journeyman-writer whose base is Toronto.

O Critics, Cultured Critics!
Who will praise me after I am dead,
Who will see in me both and less
than I intended,
But who will swear that whatever it
was it was perfectly right;
Who will think you are better than the
people who, when I was alive,
swore that whatever I did was wrong,
And damned my books for me as fast as
I could write them;

But you will not be better, you will
be just the same, neither better
nor worse,
And you will go for some future Butler
as your fathers have gone for me;
Oh, how I should have hated you!

— Samuel Butler, 1835-1902

IT WAS THE REAL THING

200 YEARS OF NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN ART

NORMAN FEDER

Princeton
\$12.50; Illustrated; 128 pages

reviewed by Joe Tatarinic

ALTHOUGH HE doesn't let sentiment in on scholarship, Norman Feder obviously has compassion for the Indian people and their dying arts. He is, himself, curator of American Indian and Native Arts at the Denver Art Museum and his book is based on an exhibition arranged by him for New York's Whitney Museum. Feder has restricted his book to "American Indian art north of Mexico and from the historic period". (He has also included some Alaskan Eskimo representation). The "historic period" is interpreted as that era from the first white contact to 1900.

The objects are photographed, if not lovingly, at least competently. One would have appreciated a few more colour plates but that's a minor complaint. A total lack of maps makes for difficulty in sorting out the confusion of Indian and Indian nations.

Much of the book's content is Canadian in origin and there is good representation from the B.C. coastal tribes and the Iroquois (Six Nations) people. Of course, any book on the subject can't rely heavily on them without be incomplete indeed.

Feder's book underscores the fact that to many of the best works of our native peoples are amassed in collections south of the border. I'm told, in fact, that the study of Canadian aboriginal art cannot really be begun without visits to any number of American museums, including the Smithsonian and the American Museum of the Indian. There is a history of the depletion of our art treasures by marauders from the south in search of spoils for U.S. museums and private collections. But then, Canadians have

always been more than willing to give away their heritage, whether it be art, oil or hydro-electric power.

A few of the items illustrated are from Canadian collections and we must, at least, give thanks for the wonderful 12-foot-high Nootka housepost still residing at Ottawa's National Museum of Man. It stands brooding and powerful — sculpture, yet still tree, as much a product of the forest as of the carver's hand.

This is one of the main facts of American Indian art — the intimate relationship between the people who made these objects and Nature. It is something that we have lost and although we can appreciate these objects as works of art we can only just glimpse the underlying motives of the artists.

Removed from their magical or religious context these works are judged more or less with our own "art for art's sake" standards (by which they succeed admirably). But the author presents us with the marvellous image of Iroquois masks being carved into the wood of living trees, accompanied by the appropriate rituals. Obviously the masks were meant to be worn, the gods to be invoked, the drums to be beaten. While we can justifiably admire them, there is an intense pathos in these silent objects.

As the author states, much contemporary Indian art is now oriented toward the tourist trade. A supreme irony is that the dying number of superior craftsmen are creating work that goes directly into the museums without any intermediate period of usefulness in life or reason for existence! □

JOE TATARNIC, a frequent contributor on both primitive and contemporary art, works as an artist and printmaker in Toronto.

INDIAN HISTORY STORY continued from page 2

disappearing into the New England States and New York. And that would have really helped us in our struggle to remain "separate and independent."

It is easy to sympathize with Creighton's dislike of Mackenzie King, surely an unlovely a politician as ever won and kept the votes of a democratic people for a quarter of a century. But King was not invented and sustained by a

conspiracy of Grit historians pulling anti-British wool over Canadian eyes. Canadian voters are not such fools as Creighton thinks. The voter was faced with a Hobson's choice. He knew better than Robert Borden or Arthur Meighen or even Richard Bennett that there was no *alternée* with Britain. He knew we were indeed alone and that the illusion that being "British" would make us stronger was just that — an illusion, and it would have the opposite effect. It was a divisive force and made us and our government less able to cope with the U.S. Knowing this the Canadian electorate made its only choice — its unhappy choice — William Lyon Mackenzie King.

Creighton's two theses are not much help to us. From the time of the American Civil War, Britain was in no position to defend anybody or anything in the Americas. She retreated from her positions in Panama, Mexico and Venezuela. She forced Canada to retreat on the fisheries, the Alaska boundary, the Sealing dispute. The men who embraced these empty ideas were never strong enough to achieve real power but they were influential enough to make us waste our strength in futile arguments just as the separatists are wasting the strength of the Québécois and French-speaking culture today.

It will, I am afraid, do us little good to keep harping on what the Fathers really meant or how much influence the French-speakers should have. The French-speakers have power because they have come to town and mean to play a great role. All those arguments about the birthrate, the mother-tongue and the rest have little relevance. The French-speaking majority in Quebec wields the power of the whole province, of its great resources and its great corporations, like it or not. And Quebec is and will remain one of the two great power centres in Canada. Our task is to make that power work constructively for the benefit of that separate and independent nation in North America and if we are going to do that we will have to listen to it.

Anything else I am afraid, Professor Creighton notwithstanding, is a waste of time. □

GLEN FRANKFURTER is the author of *Benevolent Domination: The Idea of Canada in the Atlantic World*, which was recently published by Longmans.

THE GAME GAME

FROM THE ROOF OF AFRICA

C. W. NICOL

Knopf

cloth \$11.95; Illustrated; 362 pages

OVERLAND TO INDIA

DOUGLAS BROWN

new press

paper \$2.95; 146 pages

reviewed by Peter Stollery

C. W. NICOL WAS Game Warden in the Simien Massif of north-central Ethiopia from 1967 to 1969. The Simien, a spectacular highland area of cliffs and moorland where the average altitude is over 9,000 feet, is home to several of the world's endangered animal species including the rare Walla ibex and the Simien fox. The job of C. W. Nicol was to establish boundaries for the new

Simien Mountain National Park and to ensure that these boundaries safely enclosed the last range of the Walla ibex. The Ethiopians insisted that there were at least 1,000 of the ibex. The author found that there were about 150.

His book is about his fights and frustrations in trying to get the place organized. Native farmers burn the forest indiscriminately causing erosion. When he tries to stop it he runs into local politics and finds that everybody is in cahoots. He finds out that poachers are killing thousands of leopards but no one will do anything about stopping the skin dealers that buy from the poachers. Major Glizaw, director of the Wildlife Conservation Department was previously the country's most notorious poacher. Nicol, then 27, walked into all this without seeming to have had any advance warning about what he was getting into. Two years later he was much wiser and I was sorry that he left.

When he tells about what he knows best, the Simien, corrupt officials and ignorant peasants, you shudder for the

fate of the Walla ibex. He certainly makes it clear to the most dim-witted fur coat buyer that just because there are game laws, that does not mean the animals are properly protected. The ocelot from Central and South America is even in more trouble than the Ethiopian leopard. Government must make it a serious offence for furriers to possess these skins.

The narrative, particularly at the beginning, is jumpy and sometimes unclear. In one paragraph we were at Awash on the Franco-Ethiopian Railway and in the next we were hundreds of miles away at Gondar. The author has the habit of leaving us dangling. On page 311 he walked past a local jail. "... somebody pushed his nose through the crack and said, 'Good morning, Mr. Nicol', in very fine English." We are left to wonder just who on earth that might have been? There is no map, which is the publisher's fault. I am fed up with having to get my atlas out, particularly when a book costs \$11.95. The photographs are terrible.

I was surprised that the author evidently never visited the stony cat-

A twist of fate could make this explosive novel a world-shaking fact.

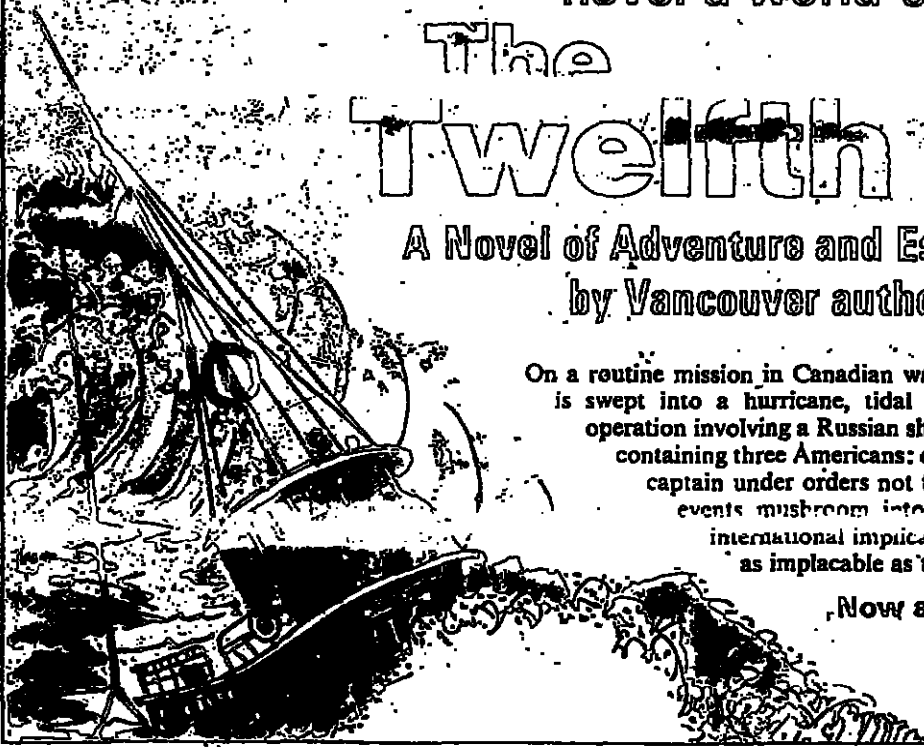
The Twelfth Mile

A Novel of Adventure and Espionage at Sea
by Vancouver author E. G. Perrault

On a routine mission in Canadian waters, the tug *Haida Noble* is swept into a hurricane, tidal wave and perilous rescue operation involving a Russian ship and a mysterious liferaft containing three Americans: one dead! With the Russian captain under orders not to be captured at any cost, events mushroom into a situation with perilous international implications, climaxing in a battle as implacable as the mountainous seas.

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Doubleday



characters of Lillbala which are close to the Simlen. That visit might have given him some insight; the book does suffer from his lack of background on Echthopli.

Still, I won't forget the Simlen fox. It is now so rare that its tragedy is to try to find a mate. The author recounts how, in its frustration, a male Simlen fox tries to mount a golden jackal. What could be worse than that?

Opinion to Inu is supposed to be a guide for the hip traveller on the drop-out route to India. If you want to go east, drop and are starting from Europe, buy a road map and head east. Don't waste your money on this book. At \$2.95, it's a rip-off. □

PETER STOLLERY, amateur of exotic travel and of Canadian history, is a federal Liberal candidate in a Toronto riding.

GRASSROOT CANADIANS

THE SNAKES OF CANADA

BARBARA FROOM

McClelland & Stewart
cloth \$6.95; illustrated, 120 pages

introduced by Janice Acton

A LITTLE KNOWLEDGE of snakes can be a dangerous thing, the most unexpected time. Even in Toronto's suburban world, waiting for a train, I could have benefited from a reading of Barbara Froom's book. Heedlessly exposing my wisdom to a young boy who had a writhing, striped snake about his wrist, I proclaimed, "A garter snake! Where did you find him?" The indignant reply: "Aristotle's, not a garter snake; he's a ribbon snake. I found him on the banks of the Humber. He came down from Texas." From my perspective of having read *The Snakes of Canada*, I now know that the proper comment would have been, "Oh yes, a northern ribbon snake. Only I'm sure he hasn't come from Texas." Aristotle, left in his natural state, would no doubt have spent his entire life pondering and playing near the Humber River.

The Snakes of Canada is more than a mere field guide. Its humble title belies the wealth of snake lore between its covers. Besides a classification and description of Canada's 23 snake species, it contains a collage of information regarding the evolution of snakes, the treatment of snakebite, hints for choosing, raising, feeding, and photographing snakes, and suggestions for conserving the species.

From time to time, we are asked to think about what we fear, by reading quotations from Montaigne, Thomas Spivay (in "Lavius Egyptus") *Lectures Before the Pythagorean Senate in the Temple of the Oracle of Dondona*, and, yes — even Aristotle. We learn that the only venomous snakes in Canada are three species of rattlesnakes, quite easily identified, and occupying only a small segment of our country. The other misunderstood 20 species, although some do manage to rattle their tails and bite when angered, are harmless and form a very crucial link in our ecological balance. Contrary to popular belief, the Racer does not chase people, the Milk Snake does not milk cows, the Hognosed Snake's breath cannot poison cattle, and garter snakes do not swallow their young to protect them. But, we myth-hungry Canadians have clung to these ridiculous tales rather than learn the truth. The truth is that the Black Rat Snake, the Blue Racer, and the Fox Snake are just three of several species that are ~~endangered~~. It's time we faced facts, the author shakes her finger at us, and "let them live."

Mature readers may have to wince through sentences that begin, "In most cases it is not difficult to tell if you have been bitten by a rattler," and "Rattlesnakes are not desirable in the vicinity of camp sites or human habitation." And it is unfortunate that the eight pages of excellent colour photos are placed at the beginning of the book. The black and white photos left to illustrate the text are helpful, but considering that the life or extinction of snakes depends upon our recognition of them, not ideal. The admirable quality of this little guide, which makes it worthy of a place on any camper or budding herpetologist's book shelf, is that the author's concern is never far behind the scientific



data. Lurking in the final paragraphs of nearly every species' description is the message, "in danger of extinction."

Of course, for Barbara Froom, for whom raising snakes has been a life-time avocation, conservation will be a labour of love. Willingness to capture snakes in urban areas and relocate them in a more natural habitat should not off the true ecologist from the armchair species. □

JANICE ACTON, a recent graduate from the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon, now works in Toronto with the Canadian Women's Educational Press.

HYMN TO THE TOILET

BEHOLD, I AM A WOMAN

DIANNA

Pyramid Books

paper 95¢; cloth \$2.95

THIS IS the autobiography of a transsexual before and after she had the first sex operation performed in Canada (at Toronto General Hospital in April, 1970). Dianna is a pseudonym but her attempt at anonymity is deflected by the inclusion of several photographs. The story makes a feeble attempt to be sensational but remains a compelling chronicle of human suffering.

One begins to read this book with compassion geared to the plight of the transsexual but this soon wanes as

the edited dialogue discloses the author's full measure of her female role. Most of the time the gender of the story is male and at times it is uncertain. The book seems to be completely unedited and there are many discrepancies in the story. A professional writer could have brought this story to the level of a novel.

Despite this, there is a poignant human quality that cannot be over-looked. One example: in childhood the author, born through another child, because he is adopted, he cannot care for an altar boy; the sacraments are refused until it is determined which denomination she was born into. Then there are the indignities suffered in the Dpn Fall when she (now a female

impersonator) was placed in the male cell after a car accident.

The final chapters are handled with skill. The author gets down to scientific facts on the struggle to obtain a sex operation in Canada and the subsequent problems encountered at the hands of the system that eventually rewarded her with an operation that should have been performed years before. There are explicit details on castration and the acquisition of a female organ which are recorded as cool facts.

The emotional, psychological, and physical stamina of the author is never doubted; she makes it quite clear that she has survived and will continue to survive. □ PR

development. So that if one were to define Jesse Gifford in the terms of E. M. Forster, he would be neither flat nor round but rather an elongated oval.

The remaining characters, especially Gifford's two sons, are interesting only because they are seen exclusively in interaction with the protagonist and never by themselves. The dialogue of the pre-teen boys seems a little too advanced and polished for their ages, but often this is more than offset by the humorous things they have to say.

In the early pages of the novel Jesse Gifford's wife is more a presence than a person. Spoken of rather than spoken to, eventually she is introduced formally by a flashback as unobtrusive as any of those of Wes Wakeham in *The Weekend Man*. Our familiarity with her accedes to intimacy as Gifford recalls these his most precious moments in her company. Why she married, why she learned dissatisfaction, why finally she left are all questions answered with the book's progression.

And it is a tribute to the subtlety of Harker's art that he can take the lives of such human anachronisms and very lost people — lost literally as is Gifford's son at one point and lost figuratively as are most of the adults in *Goldenrod's* world — and make their depressing failures and putrid successes as important to one's temporary peace as a new bottle of wine is to an alcoholic.

It may just be that a novel, as intelligently sentimental as *Goldenrod*, calls out to a portion of the soul long disregarded by a 1960s and '70s series of hard, cynical, and existentially anxious novels.

Any success it enjoys will undoubtedly be the result of a return call by a native reading populace proclaiming a need for Canadian books of this type. Fortunate then that *Goldenrod* is one of the first novels to go some way towards fulfilling this need. To say that it is a second-rate work of fiction would only be inaccurate. To say that it is a substantial secondary work of fiction would be much closer to the truth. □

WELL DONE BUT MEDIUM RARE

GOLDENROD

HERBERT HARKER

Random House

cloth \$6.95; 186 pages

reviewed by Greg Gatenby

ALMOST THREE-QUARTERS of a century ago in an essay entitled "The Day of the Rabblement" a man called James Joyce wrote, bitterly, of his country's cultural obeisance to the popular will. Joyce, of course, was speaking specifically of the Irish stage but his sentiments were generated by a nationalist movement which he felt and saw to be restrictive and increasingly provincial. It is in no way pejorative to say that Joyce may have been right for his time and wrong for ours. Rather, his essay serves as a negative map from which hopefully Canadians will arrive at the same destination.

Because for too long this country has been obsessed with producing genius and masterpiece to the neglect of a satisfactorily sized sea of secondary culture. To those Canadian diagnosticians of this literary and endemic anemia, the attainment of a great memorable Canadian art will be but

the product of a number game. The great Canadian whale called Culture has been, and is, starving to death from a lack of demotic plankton.

Herbert Harker to a partial rescue.

His is a tale uncomplicated and unpretentious in the telling. With deceiving simplicity, the reader is told of Jesse Gifford, an ex-bronco busting champion (deposed by a broken pelvis and spirit), and his efforts at regaining his riding supremacy, his wife who has run away with the new champion, and above all his human pride.

Goldenrod is a very moral book, almost hokey at times to the point that strong expletives by the characters seem out of place. And it is perhaps here that one may see what differentiates this novel from more seriously written fiction that strives to endure.

Harker concentrates on developing a series of amusing and touching events at the expense of intense character

GREG GATENBY, whose special interest is current Canadian writing, is also a regular contributor to the Toronto periodical *Grapevine*.

FOULING AND FEATHERING OUR NEST

BALANCE AND BIOSPHERE

CBC LEARNING SYSTEMS

paper \$2.00; 113 pages

PRACTICAL GUIDE TO HOME LANDSCAPING

READERS DIGEST

cloth \$11.95; illustrated; 480 pages

revised by Wayne McLaren

Recently, I was mistakenly introduced as an ecologist to a group of people because, I suppose, I am a naturalist and don't hide my contempt for the horde of machine shamans, grow crazies, and other assorted Coke suckers who treat our natural world — which I consider sacred — as a sewer, slaughter house, and drive-in movie.

To deny such a role would have required a long explanation of the science, however, so I smiled and shook my head, wishing, as I often do, for one slim book that I could recommend to such people which would stimulate their philosophical and political assumptions while laying the scientific fact of our environmental crisis on them hard.

Balance and Biosphere, a reprint of seven radio talks from CBC's excellent *Focus* series, may serve.

The scientists represented were Commoner and Ehrlich, Canadians, Watt and Fuller. Watt in particular may be more stimulating to some people than Commoner and Ehrlich. He shows how foolish the notion is that we will automatically take steps to curb our reckless depletion of finite resources, now that we know they are endangered. Citing the way in which blue whales and buffalo were killed off even faster when it was discovered they were endangered, he remarks that there is nothing in "current economic theory or any other theory that would lead any group of people to save anything once it became obvious it was going."

James Eays demonstrates how civilized countries still support international laws which make possible mass starvation through boycott, embargo, and blockade. The reason for

including his piece in the book is, I take it, to warn how these standing laws may make legitimate all sorts of evil deeds as competition for resources becomes keener.

Ivan Illich speaks of our absurd compulsion to export our cultural values to so-called underdeveloped countries. He also points out how left-wing revolutionaries are equally imprinted with the development mentality — an insight which hasn't yet reached many people.

Most satisfying of the talks to me, however, was one between Dr. John Arapura, a Hindu philosopher and historian of religion at McMaster, Brewster Kneen, and Dr. Philip McKeena, representing the Christian viewpoint.

Arapura claims that man's basic problem lies in the direction of his creativity, which has been turned outward, and which may now result in his self-destruction. He explains how Indian philosophy may help us turn inward again. This basic inwardness, or ascetic self-limitation of wants, argues Arapura, was best personified in Gandhi, and he points out how some of our more thoughtful economists in the overdeveloped countries are coming around to see Gandhi's wisdom.

The book ends with an annotated but skimpy list for further reading.

I WAS suspicious of the *Practical Guide to Home Landscaping*. I thought it was printed for the U.S. market, and any relevance to Canadian conditions would be accidental.

Not so, and, moreover, the way in which it was altered for the Canadian market is acceptably clever. The first two consultants listed are from Mon-

tréal. No matter if the remaining ten are Americans. You don't notice. A special map showing climate/growing zones in Canada was trimmed neatly off at the border and dropped in.

The short introduction was also inserted especially for Canadians, and states, briefly but eloquently, the case for the landscape architect. It makes the point that landscape architects aren't registered in Canada, and warns against dealing with tyros and second-raters. They are now registered in Ontario, however, so if you live in this province make sure your man belongs to the Ontario Association of Landscape Architects.

What the introduction doesn't caution against is the common practice of consulting architects on landscape design. The arrogance of architects in thinking they are capable of this art is equalled only by their ignorance of it. One glance at our cities, and especially our streetscapes, proves it.

Otherwise, this is quite the best book I've seen on the subject. It is well illustrated, and takes the average homeowner through all stages of development, tosses in a few such helpful details as how to load a heavy rock into a wheelbarrow, and proceeds right out to such branches of knowledge as topiary and creating a bonzai. □

WAYNE McLAREN, an advertising copywriter who lives in Toronto, is a concerned amateur naturalist.

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GOIN' WITH THE WIND

THE TWELFTH MILE

E. G. PERRAULT

Doubleday
cloth \$5.95/\$2.56 p/b

BASILEUS

MAURUS E. MALLON

Carlton Press, New York
cloth \$2.95; 166 pages

reviewed by Douglas Marshall

FAMINE, PESTILENCE, War and Death have never provided scope enough for the writers of a certain genre of adventure fiction. They've always sought a Fifth Horseman of the Apocalypse to harness to their doomsday plots. Forty years ago it was political Totalitarianism. Twenty years ago it was perverted science and The Bomb. Today the Fifth Horseman is Nature. No longer something to be communed with around Tintern Abbey, no longer even a coldly indifference force blasting across a Wessex moor, Nature swirls in and out of contemporary literature as an elemental Mum-abominating fury. This is the way the world ends; not with a whimper but a hurricane.

In E. G. Perrault

Life the hurricane is called Faith. In mid-book it collides head on with a huge tidal wave or tsunami, triggered by a volcanic eruption in the Aleutian Trench. Between them they devastate much of the northwest Pacific coast. In *Basileus*, Maurus E. Mallon concocts Hurricane Aeolus (named after the Greek god of wind) and sends its record 60-foot waves crashing out of the Atlantic toward the southeast United States. In this case, the hurricane is vanquished by Mallon's Nature-defying protagonist, a crazed Greek shipping billionaire. Three times he sends in a massed fleet of 120 B-52 bombers "to cut the heart out of Aeolus with dry ice."

Perrault gives us a novel of suspense, barely credible in its concatenation of circumstances but taut as a towline. He never lets his hero, the Canadian skipper

of an ocean-going tug, get swept aside on a seascape that includes - besides the storms - a colossal off-shore oil rig, a fleet of Russian trawlers, and the highly romantic captain of a Soviet spy ship. The research is excellent and the wetter and wilder the scenery becomes, the drier and tighter grows Perrault's style.

Mallon has attempted to mix an epic out of ancient myth and last month's gossip. The object was a modern Odyssey in search of immortality. The result is a half-baked moussaka containing such bewildering

ingredients as Ulysses and Eichmann, Chedabucto Bay and hubris, Poseidon and pot smuggling. It's a first novel and a noble disaster that sometimes reads as if 20 or so separate creative-writing assignments had been poured into one fragile plot.

The message of both novels, however, is for readers to batten down their hatches. The new Fifth Horseman has just begun to ride. Even now, I suspect, there are earthquakes and massive oil spills, typhoon and global temperature inversions grinding out of typewriters toward us. □

VIVE LA DIFFÉRENCE MAIS VIVE L'ÉGALITÉ

THE LACE GHETTO

MAXINE NUNES & DEANNA WHITE

new press cloth \$7.95; illustrated

reviewed by Maureen Scobie

IN THE POSTSCRIPT to their book, Deanna White and Maxine Nunes write, "The greatest hope we have for this book is that it will help bridge the gap between women and the women's movement . . . We wanted the book to have the effect of a low-key consciousness-raising meeting." Having used this

months to introduce talks in public libraries and university classrooms on sex role stereotypes in children's books, I believe the authors' hopes are going to be realized.

The Lace Ghetto, beautifully designed by Peter Maher, is a book that gets picked up and leafed through. From the intriguing cover painting by Anne Fines, through advertisements, comic strips, pictures from children's books to the fine photographs by Laura Jones and John Phillips, the reader is presented with many views of woman. The visual material alone makes strong impressions. Women are "chopped up in sections" to sell products; girls, in comic strips, win entry to the boys' club only to sweep and dust; girls, in children's books, seek out boys to solve their problems, "to fix things" for them.

The visual material is well supported in the first section of the book, "Women through the eyes of others", by short quotations from a variety of sources, the Koran, Thackeray, Simone de Beauvoir, etc., which confirm that woman, as she is defined, seems to be a deficient creature, trying vainly to be

these quotations (although taken out of context, they validly represent standard attitudes toward women) with that voracious appetite common to compulsive Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable readers. Once this state is reached the book is read straight through.

Other sections cover such topics as the history of feminism, socialization, sexuality, motherhood, consciousness-raising and male roles. Although the treatment is brief and each topic demands more exploration, the authors' intelligent and compassionate selection of the right detail tantalizes the reader to continue exploring beyond this book not as one dissatisfied with shallow treatment but as one intrigued by the possibilities of exploring such fascinating material further. Notice how Queen Victoria's statement opposing women's

... asking, "And where would be the protection which man was intended to give the weaker sex?" is related to the testimony of Betty Harris, age 37, Victorian working woman, who hauled coal in the mines. "I have drawn till I have had the skin off me; the belt and chain is worse when we are in the family way."

Nell Hall-Humpherson and Thérèse Casgrain are interviewed; the former talks about the early struggle for the vote in Great Britain; the latter, one of the leaders of Quebec's women's rights struggle, tries to explain why Quebec women, who had the vote prior to 1849, did not vote again until 1940. These interviews alone will encourage women to seek more information about the history of feminism.

Elizabeth Janeway, in her book, *Man's World Woman's Place: a study in social mythology*, writes "... There is little need to believe that men and women are born with psychological differences built into their brains because the workings of society and culture, by themselves, are perfectly capable of producing all the differences we know so well..." White and Nunes, in "Socialization", the section of the book I found most important, present the materials used and the

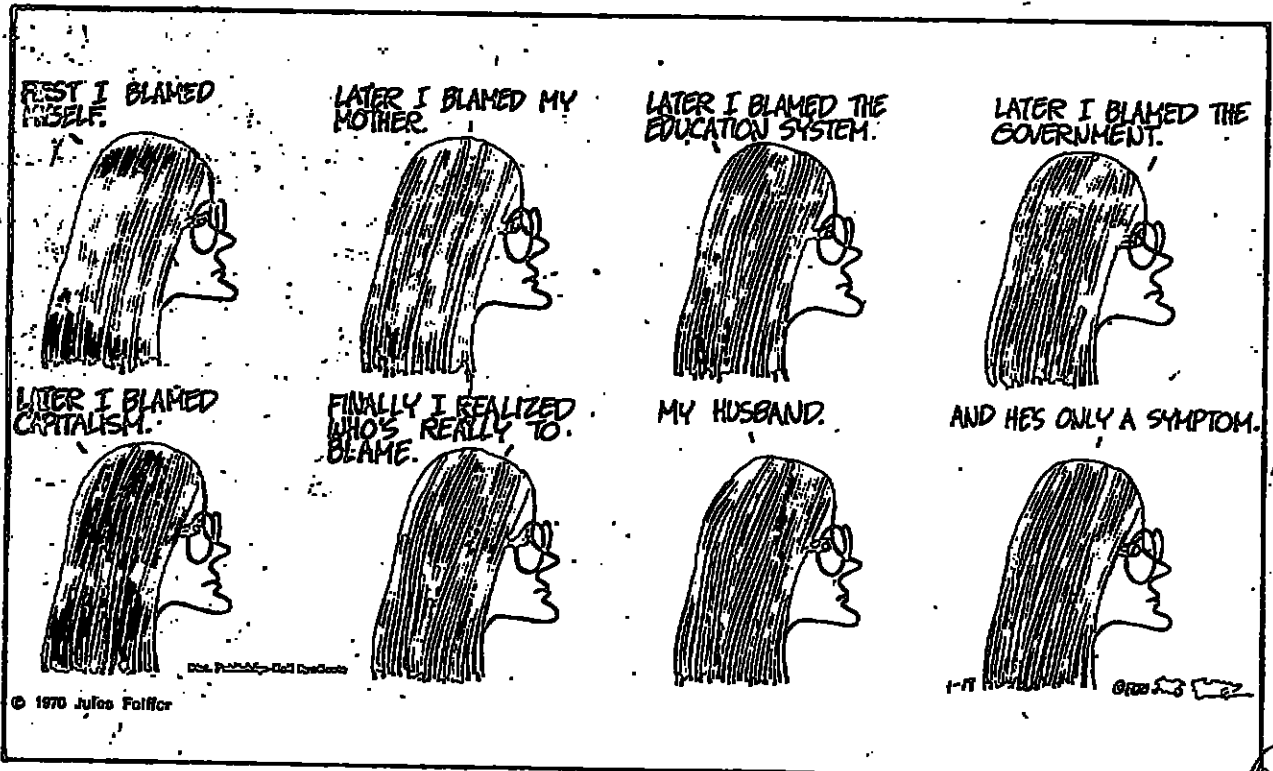
effects of this socialization on young children and high school students. From the time of birth children are taught what behaviour is expected from the female child, what from the male child until children believe as Bob, age 7, does that "Girls are stupid. They can't do many jobs. They are retarded." Or as Carol, age 6, does, that "Girls can't be doctors because they would look silly if they were doctors."

The consequences of these ill-fitting sex role stereotypes are revealed in the moving conversations and interviews (the strongest means of presenting material in the book) with high school students who talk about the restrictions of their sex roles and their fears in transgressing others' expectations of them; with women who confide in each other their feelings about their sexuality and the myths of female sexuality; with two women who found the institution of marriage inadequate for them; with five women whose statements about motherhood give that myth of instinctive maternal feelings an airing; with women, exploring with other women, the alternative ways to attempt to transcend the stereotypes; with men (executives, working class, pro-feminist) who talk about the shortcomings of their own roles.

The Lace Ghetto is a book for women and men who are making that "first step . . . in reaching towards freedom." It will matter to women who have not the motivation to read de Beauvoir and Juliet Mitchell. Its price will put it out of reach of many women; it is therefore important that it be available in libraries. (One of the people to whom I showed this book, an administrator with the Human Rights Branch, decided to purchase the book for a branch of the Edmonton Public Library to make it available immediately.)

Since this book will become a basic text, it might have been useful to have the sources of all the quotations united in a bibliography. However, I can see that the authors might have intended that the individual reader turn next to the group for study and action to continue the dialogue started with the reading of this book. For it is time for women to come out of their isolation. With Doris Lessing's *Martha Quest* and Maxine Nunes' and Deanna White's *The Lace Ghetto*, every woman can step out now. □

MAUREEN SCOBIE, who lives in Edmonton, is a specialist in children's literature.



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BY THE BOYS

MY NEWFOUNDLAND

A. R. SCAMMELL

Harvest House

paperback \$2.50; 140 pages

reviewed by Harry Brown

THIS IS a collection of stories, poems and songs by the Newfoundlander who made "The Squid Jigging Ground" the unofficial anthem of his native province. Arthur Scammell writes from a totally authentic background. His Change Island home was typical of the homes of the 1,300 other fishing villages that flourished culturally if not economically, up to 1949, the year confederation became a fact and altered the future of these tiny settlements for all time. His characters are absolutely real, as real and honest as the lives they lived, close to the sea and their families and God. No frills here, no pretensions nor lies — tall tales and fishermen's stories but no lies. A Newfoundlander will read these dozen or so anecdotes from the lives of Scammell's subjects with laughter and tears. An upplonger — one of the remaining 21.5 million Canadians — will gain a new insight on those strange creatures with their outlandish accents who refuse, steadfastly, to give up their values and mores of their 20th-century compatriots to the west. The two meet head-on in "Fish and Brewis," when Uncle Jasper Cooper's nursing student daughter-home on vacation would substitute his traditional breakfast with victuals to be found in Canada's Food Guide replete with vitamins et al. The race for prolific inshore fishing berths becomes a matter of family affluence or poverty in "Trap Berth." The roles of parson, teacher, tradesman and merchant are accurate and clear; Scammell has met and dealt with them all and

and we enjoy listening and learn thereby. About 100 pages of yarns in all, and then a dozen pages of verse, some blank, some doggerel, none of it really memorable. Scammell is better as a writer of songs. Together with "The Squid Jigging Grounds," here are "Squarin' Up," "The Six Horse-Power

Coaker" and "The Caplin Haul," really as much a part now of Newfoundland Folklore as "T's the B'y," hearty songs of a hearty people — all the better understood after reading this book and the glossary of Newfoundland words at the end. □

HARRY BROWN, a Newfoundlander, is well-known as an announcer with the CBC network and as co-host of the daily radio show *As It Happens*.

SEEING THE WAY CLEAR

THE CANADIAN ROCKIES TRAIL GUIDE

BRIAN PATTON & BART ROBINSON

paper \$3.95; illustrated; 207 pages

reviewed by Ron Beltz

WHILE PLANNING a three-day hike to Floe Lake in Kootenay National Park this past summer, I stopped in to see a park warden to check on travel restrictions due to the extreme fire hazard in the area at the time. While chatting with the warden, an old friend, I noticed a copy of this guide on his desk. With some embarrassment, he admitted that since he was new to the district and since, much to his dismay, a warden's duties these days tend to keep him close to his radio and the highway, he had not in fact seen too much of his area. He admitted that the *Trail Guide* was his chief source of information about it.

He could have done much worse. I have used this book on many occasions, and its accuracy and detail has never failed to astound me. It is a basic hiking guide for Canada's seven Rocky Mountain National Parks and offers short descriptions of over 60 "primary" and "secondary" trails, and many more remote and lesser-used trails. The authors have hiked each primary trail dragging a cyclometer attached to a bicycle wheel behind them. This has enabled them to record the exact length of each hike, and the mileage en route at which the outstanding features may be found.

Since government trail markers at the start of each hike are sometimes inaccurate — Flax Lake, for example, is nearly two miles less than the marker indicates — a book like this is invaluable.

This book does much more. Most of the main trails described are accompanied by the authors' photographs of some outstanding feature of the hike, which gives the reader visual proof that the hike really is as rewarding as the other, informative text suggests. It provides accurate data about the life zones the hiker will pass through, and the

plants and animals he will encounter. Many of these descriptions also deal with the geological strata, and include historical excerpts about early explorations of the area, and the origins of many place names of interest — we learn, for example, that Skoki means marsh or swamp, and that Zigadenus Lake was named after the Death Camas Lily. There is also a brief description of the proposed 350-mile Great Divide Trail written by its chief planner.

The book has a few minor shortcomings for veteran hikers of the area. The indexing is incomplete; for instance Luellan Lake or Abbot's Pass are not in the index, although they are to be found in the detailed descriptions of the area. Descriptions of more remote areas are often cursory — the Devon Lakes, for example, are not mentioned anywhere — but as the authors point out, they intend to revise and add as information becomes available.

For the avid fisherman will not learn that there are ten-pound trout caught occasionally in Cerulean Lake, nor much else about the lake fishing the gunks offer. However, as my years as a guide have proved, the temperamental High Alpine lakes make predictions of success a fairly precarious business.

All in all, the book is an invaluable asset to novice and expert alike, whatever his special interests. It is difficult to imagine successfully planning a hiking season in the Rockies without it. □

RON BELTZ, ordinarily a school-teacher in Barrie, works as a licensed guide in Banff National Park during the summer.



FOREIGN FABULOUS FREE

SELECTED POEMS ELDON GRIER

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cloth \$5.00; paper \$2.50; 129 pages

A SAVAGE DARKNESS MICHAEL BULLOCK

Sono Nis
cloth \$5.00; 72 pages

GREEN BEGINNING BLACK ENDING MICHAEL BULLOCK

Sono Nis
cloth \$6.95; 189 pages

THE STORY SO FAR

Edited by GEORGE BOWERING

Coach House
paper \$3.00; 112 pages

reviewed by Frazer Sutherland

"AS A POET I'm largely self-taught," Eldon Grier says in the jacket notes for his book. Although widely published in Canada he cannot easily be consigned to any one group of poets here. The 100 poems in this collection have a foreign texture that comes from his study of poets outside the country, like Apollinaire, whom Grier counts as an "antecedent." Apollinaire figures in the book's longest poem, "An Ecstasy".

*Apollinaire
I am almost asleep,
but I feel a transfusion of fine little
letters
dripping slantwise into my side.*

Grier has read widely and well, though sometimes he transplants rhetorical forms which do not fare well in cold Canadian soil. All 11 lines of "Sylvia," for instance, begin with "your": "your smile which cuts me off which opens Asia to the slaves," etc. Such poems stick out like exotic plants in a rock garden: lovely to look at but rather frail.

Indeed, Grier seems most concerned with how things look. His painter's perception provides detail like "biscuit-coloured stones"; "the patterned zebra stripes of sumacs"; "unscored zinc of



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June, 1971. \$4.50

This study of Malcolm Lowry is the third volume in the *Canadian Literature Series*, which includes **THE SIXTIES: Canadian Writers and Writing of the Decade**. Forthcoming in the series this autumn is

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Ed. William H. New

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the cat." His composition is often superb. In "Quebec":

*Esop is in the hotel lounge;
the Calista Wolfe
lying in a bed of flags
out of control, propped in the backstage
area of battle.*

Gator is strongest with images, weakest with ideas. One encounter stole homilies like this from "An Ecstasy":

*As you sit I tried to experience ecstasy.
[Lips] like a party never went crazy, a
Frenchman said
It was not a compliment.]*

The Frenchman could not have read Elzko. This passage, though trite, at least is straightforward. But he tends, when writing about art, to precipitate a kind of verbal fog, as in "Charles Olson as the Other":

*Letter Seven of the Maximus Poems
intervals and sounds withdrawn
like Eastern landscape
words of character provided like
milk, and tape.*

A poem ought to exist by itself; this one does not. It is this private "frame" of reference which, when combined with obscured ideas and greenhouse rhetoric, muddles the clean colour and sure line of his poems.

THE COUNTRY that the Vancouver poet and translator, Michael Bullock writes about in the 31 poems of *A Savage Dream* is not fit to live in, nor to visit. One finds "barbed wire entanglements," "mephitic vapours," "an army of earthworms," a "black abyss." Flora and fauna do unlikely things: a chestnut tree emits "a cry of pain." Miscellaneous creatures are always emitting cries in these poems; in the end the reader emits one himself.

The book's second section is made up — if that is the phrase — of 18 prose-poems. Prose-poems are notoriously ill-suited to English, and Bullock makes the worst of it. In one paragraph of "Sumiko":

*You raised your hand and the stars
dropped hissing into the sea. A whale
rose out of the water and looked at
us sadly, knowing that once we em-
braced it would die*

The bullock landscape, sau whares and all, is pockmarked with precipices, abysses, chasms, and, one might add, sibilants. "The dark madness of the valley pullulates with seeds as the chasm widens and swallows up the trees." Nor is *Green Beginning Black*

Ending, subtitled "Fables," the stuff of which tourist brochures are made. In one fable a farm cat grows to monstrous size, kills the farmer and after some sadistic feline fun and games, impregnates the farmer's daughter. When the daughter bears a cat-headed baby Bullock says solemnly:

*Horrified by this monster, and perhaps
suffering from the post-pregnancy
mental and emotional disturbance
that sometimes afflicts even women
who have given birth to perfectly
normal children, the girl threw her-
self down the well with her child and
both were drowned.*

The remorseful cat then releases a bull and, after a fierce struggle, both die of wounds. It suffices to say that Aesop is in no trouble.

When all is said, however, Bullock's fables do not fail because they have repellent qualities: the poems of Ted Hughes' *Crow* and the paintings of Francis Bacon are often unpleasant, but we are held captive by their great power. Bullock fails because he cannot muster enough imaginative force to make us accept his nightmare landscape, nor the language with which he presents it.

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THE STORY SO FAR is written in English, not some surrealist dialect, though George Bowering gives the book a bad start with a murky preface that attacks the idea of artistic "control." Bowering claims that "people who want to control Nature, including their own, must elevate their egos above all else, and the control mechanism must emanate from an authoritarian intellect."

Of course, control only means that a writer must be skilful and not splatter all over his pages, as Bowering tends to do in his own story, "Wild Grapes and Chlorine." The best of the 12 stories selected reveal this control. The sustained tone of Clark Blaise's "Extractions and Contractions," for instance, is possible only through a disciplined, poised shaping of one's materials. The controlled tone makes an emotional amalgam from a Montreal professor's day: he has a tooth-nerve removed; his Indian wife goes to hospital to have her baby; his young son shits on the living room floor. From such improbable material a unity is born, and that is Blaise's art.

Overall, the book does not measure up to this kind of art. Badly printed, which is unusual from Coach House Press, it includes a centre-section of photographs on glossy pink paper. The photos — Princess Margaret and then a series of airbrushed nudes — have for captions lines taken from the first pages of the stories. What this achieves I don't know, since the cross-references have no point, ironic or otherwise. random quality which Bowering apparently admires.

Besides Blaise's, the other outstanding story in the book is "Polly Wants a Cracker" by the Montreal writer Valerie Kent. It is also one of the few stories included that haven't appeared elsewhere. Short, savage and harrowing, it tells how an adolescent girl is brutalized. Miss Kent's alert, incisive style puts the book's other contributors to the test, and finds most of them failing in artistic courage and artistic control. □

FRAZER SUTHERLAND, freelance writer and book-reviewer, lives in Ottawa.

A BAS LES MANGE CANAYENS

POVERTY IN MONTREAL

EVELYN PUXLEY
Dawson College Press
paper \$1.95; 84 pages

reviewed by Nancy Naglin

IN THIS SHORT study of poverty (one of the first books to come from the newly founded Dawson College Press) Evelyn Puxley, political science student, indicts business and government for maintaining profitable poverty in Canada.

The research presents the now familiar arguments absolving the poor of their poverty. The thesis is predictable: social differentiation is not a chance individual affair. "Poverty is the result of economic monopoly." Puxley adequately documents the plight of the urban poor abandoned in inner-city housing with inferior medical and educational opportunities. Confirming a "culture of poverty," she goes one step further to categorically denounce capitalism as the number one evil.

Capitalism is not to be exonerated of all blame, particularly of its crippling manipulation of the Quebec economy. Facts and statistics prove more than Puxley's anti-capitalistic bias. Alarming figures assess almost half the population of Metro Montreal to be "economically weak" with at least two thirds of the urban population living under or just over the poverty line. (\$6,000 for a family of four).

If our social conscience can be assuaged by believing in the government's efforts to combat poverty, this study shatters any of those wild illusions. Puxley is at her best in showing government's unwillingness to innovate programs to match the findings of its own reports. She discredits tax reform for reinforcing divisions in the Canadian class system and uncovers the lunacy in wage increases that still allow for subsistence wages.

In her eagerness to explain Canadian poverty, she superficially treats the political and economic complications of Montreal's impoverishment. What promises to be a detailed inquiry into Montreal's poverty remains a generalized exposé of the root causes. Puxley's presentation makes Montreal more the star example of Canadian poverty than the subject of the study.

While nothing very new or startling in the way of poverty psychology appears, *Poverty in Montreal* collects the evidence in one handy source. And if the arguments are familiar, it doesn't hurt to hear them one more time. □

NANCY NAGLIN is a Montreal writer now living in Toronto.

FROM MINDING TO FEELING

CIVIL ELEGIES AND OTHER POEMS

DENNIS LEE

Anansi

cloth \$6.00, paper \$2.50; 57 pages

SILT OF IRON

MARYA FLAMENGO

Ingluvin Publications

cloth \$3.00; illustrated; 59 pages

reviewed by Susan Swann

THESE DAYS an awful lot of Canadian poetry is written from the gut. A general outpouring of feeling, if you like, framing an insight.

Of course, there are exceptions and when you run into them it's something of a shock — like discovering grandmother's lace table cloth in a drawer filled with paper napkins.

Lee, by the way, is an editor and co-founder of *Anansi*, and he was also one of the co-founders of Rochdale College. His *Civil Elegies*, first published

In 1968 in a limited edition, has recently been revised and re-published along with 17 new poems about a young man's loss of idealism.

In his elegies, Lee laments the death of Canadian citizenship. The title is a joke because the event is a non-death to Lee who believes Canada never existed in any true sense. It just moved from British colony to American satellite. Sitting in Toronto's civic square, not far from Moore's sculpture *The Archer*, he watches the noon hour cruise and tries to come to terms with himself and his "nation of losers and quibblers".

The poem is an awesome 25 pages long and its mood pessimistic, almost hopeless. Canada has peddled its birthright, its waters and skies are polluted, its shield defies conquering, its politicians are honourable sell-outs, its people disheartened cogs and there are American cars on Queen Street.

But for Lee, the answer no longer lies in denouncing his country's failings. "A man does well to leave that game behind", he says. Instead, he moves toward a simple acceptance of life; he must learn to exist like the leaves:

*although they cling against the wind
do not waste their time of dying.*

Even so, if the problem of Canada is not solved in his lifetime, Lee still hopes his country will be rescued by those fighting with "motherwit and guts" and "the long will to be in Canada".

The same move from idealism to acceptance shows up in his newer poems. They amount to a portrait of his marriage, now badly tarnished by phony reconciliations, whiskey, fights, pills and children "needing more than they can give".

Time is catching up with Lee who admits:

*I can't talk brave palaver like
I did 10 years ago.*

But a different and maybe greater kind of courage is at work. It is the courage of a liberal academic discovering that life isn't won solely through the will and the intellect. Lee is coming to a philosophical appreciation of life as being.

In a sense, the poetry hasn't kept up with the man. It is sometimes pompous and over worked but the labour pains of the emerging per-

sonality whistle from every page. And there is something courtly and touching about the struggles of a head poet breaking into a new dimension.

Feelings are the domain of Marya Fiamengo who was born in Vancouver and now lives and teaches there. In her second book of poetry, *Silt of Iron*, she appears first as a pan-Russian romantic, as overblown and gaudy as the mimosa and bougainvillea which crop up in her poems.

In the second half of her book, she adopts a sparse and more conventional verse form. But her Serbo-Croatian heritage is always the central theme. It spins in and out of her work with names like "Vorkuta", "Ossip Emilyevich Mandelstamm" and bits of dialect like "earthen indryhte ealdath and searath".

The effect is gay the way fairy tales are gay but the nostalgia gets tiresome after a while. Personally, *Silt of Iron* is not a sentimental journey I'd like to make again. □

SUSAN SWANN is a writer and broadcaster, living in Toronto.

UNLISTED CASUALTIES

THE BATTERED CHILD IN CANADA

MARY VAN STOLK
McClelland & Stewart
paper \$3.95: 127 pages

reviewed by Pauline Rhind

THIS BOOK not only searches out and presents statistics on the battered child syndrome in Canada but in the United States. In fact this reader was concerned that most of the statistics and data had been quoted from American sources. The title is not that misleading, with perseverance one learns that very few, if any, figures are available for the provinces of Canada. It is obvious that it was a matter of writing the book using the available statistics, and perhaps promoting some

interest. The author proceeds page by page to blast doctors, social workers, educators and the law along with parents for the abuse suffered by children at the hands of battering parents.

The battered child syndrome acquired its title from the child's injuries, which result from twisting, throwing, or generally knocking about. These injuries include bites, bruises, hematoma, and combination fractures of the arms, legs, skull or ribs. X-rays often reveal old fractures in various stages of healing, thus indicating that abuse has been repetitive. This type of abuse results in fatalities in 2% to 4% of reported cases. The author claims that for every abused child who receives medical attention there are at least 100 who remain untreated. These cold facts in black and white could also be a possible deterrent to child abusers.

Figures quoted by Ms. Van Stolk from *Newsweek*, June 3, 1968, report that at least 60,000 children are wilfully burned, beaten, smothered, and starved every year in the United States. For Canada, there are no substantiated figures and the author makes a guess of 7,482 cases. With figures like these, is it so surprising that more funds are invested yearly in the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals than to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children?

The absence of more Canadian statistics is due to a variety of factors. Parents make up believable stories; children are usually too young or too frightened to say what actually happened. Physicians often refuse to admit that parents can terminate the life of the child and some remain silent for the fear of legal entanglements. Public health authorities claim that parents are probably among the largest killers of Canadian infants.

The author says alcohol is not a major factor in child abuse, and divorce and remarriage have little bearing on rates of child battering. The battering parent is usually the mother, but when the mother works and the father is in charge then the opposite holds true. It is stressed that there is no definite background, such as low income, middle income or higher income family and that child battering occurs throughout

all areas of the population. But the myth is still upheld that child abuse occurs only among poor people.

Ms. Van Stolk discloses a role reversal in which parents act like a needy child. The super-ego of the battering parent is quite rigid and punitive, she says. The child is punished in order to force it to meet the parent's needs and demands. If the child continues to "disobey" these parents believe they have a right to administer stronger punishment. One battering parent had this to say: "Children have to be taught respect for authority and be taught obedience. I would rather have my children grow up afraid of me and respecting me than loving me and spoiled."

Why doesn't the parent respond to the screams of the battered child? The author says quite coldly: "Because no J." It is a frightening form of misplaced retaliation.

The major protection of the child usually comes through early diagnosis and treatment. This depends directly on the physician's reporting and his willingness to support his initial diagnosis by medical testimony in court.

The author claims the battered child is abandoned not only by the physician and hospitals but often by the law and judicial bodies. And of the schools, of social work contacted it was learned there was no formal study of the battered child syndrome. □

PAULINE PHIND, a poet and journalist, is about to publish a magazine devoted to child health.

ME AND MY CHATEAU

CHATEAU FRONTENAC

ROSEMARY PITCHER

McGraw-Hill Ryerson
cloth \$5.95; illustrated; 104 pages

ALL THE DETAILS of running a hotel are contained in this book on the Chateau Frontenac except the direct route to the wine cellar. It is packed

with information on the French, the English and the Iroquois, and spiced with recipes straight from the Chateau kitchen.

The story behind the Chateau is full of intrigue and family togetherness. Two, original rooms from Champlain's Fort St. Louis were incorporated into the building of the present Chateau at the insistence of historians.

The Quebec Conference, held at the Chateau in 1943, included such notables as Winston Churchill, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Anthony Eden, Lord Louis Mountbatten, W. L. Mackenzie King and assorted chiefs of staff.

And although Churchill and Roosevelt were housed at the Citadel, the

rest were quartered at the Chateau. For security reasons all guests with the exception of six permanent guests were requested to leave until after the conference.

The author herself has vivid memories as a member of the press corp at the Chateau during the visit of Queen Elizabeth and Prince Philip in 1964 when Separatists rioted outside the hotel.

It is a refreshingly different kind of travel book with a well-researched background. Besides the Chateau recipes and holiday menus there are notes on the interior decoration of the Chateau, and on places to visit in Quebec. □ PR

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SHOWING AND TELLING

NATURE'S HERITAGE: Canada's National Parks

Text & photography by
DAVID M. BAIRD
Prentice-Hall
paper \$4.95; illustrated; unnumbered

STANLEY PARK: An Island In The City

Photography by **RALPH BOWER**;
text by **BARRY BROADFOOT**
November House
paper \$2.95; illustrated; unnumbered

reviewed by *Bill Brooks*

ON MY NUMEROUS trips through Canada's National Parks I have never failed to be amazed at the beauty and variety of the animal and plant life and the grandeur of the landscape that our Ottawa mandarins have seen fit to put aside for the enjoyment of future generations.

It is unfortunate that David M. Baird in his picture book, *Nature's Heritage*, has been unable to capture this beauty. Instead we are subjected to a series of boring, clichéd, postcard-type photo-

graphs originally shot as part of his job as a geologist with the federal government. The pictures were used in a series of excellent geological guide-books to the parks, and that is where they belong. To try to pass them off as superb examples of the photographer's art, as this volume does, is to insult good photographers everywhere.

One only has to look at the publications of Elliot Porter and The Sierra Club, or the work of Canadian photographers such as John de Visser, Freeman Patterson, Tom Hall, Chic Harris, George Peck and Cyril Hampson to realize that our parks have been short-changed. It is also unfortunate that we are not shown any of the flora and fauna that could have made this book real. Canadian publishing at its worst.

Ralph Bower's photo essay on Stanley Park, something that Bower takes the reader through the seasons of the park by means of a series of good, carefully selected, interpretive photographs. Introductory essays to each seasonal section by Barry Broadfoot match the excellence and catch the mood of the photography.

Everything is here — the moods, the beauty, the happiness of people given a place to be themselves in the middle of a large city. □

BILL BROOKS is a well-known Canadian photographer. His most recent work will be seen in the forthcoming *Canada In Colour* by Hounslow Press.



OPEN HIGHWAYS

THE SUN HAS BEGUN TO EAT THE MOUNTAIN

PATRICK LANE
Ingluvin Publications
cloth \$7.00, paper \$3.00;
illustrated; 142 pages

reviewed by *Clyde Hoseln*

PATRICK LANE forewarns readers, especially critics, in the poem that blurbs this collection.

*and if you hasto believe
something else
find yourself
another poet*

To me he need not have done that; but I understand his motive. All writers will.

I found excitement and adventure in these 88 poems, and a healthy stink from the ordure of life as he ponders upon the little squabbles of our tenures upon the earth. Lane treats life and death as simple things which must be squarely confronted. He questions time and our passings. He articulates finely the hopelessness of our optimisms, and cries before us the reasons why optimism must remain anchored to our hearts; despite all sorrows, despite all fear, despite all illusion.

Yet, some of the poems are so subjective that, at times, one feels guilty of invasion upon private dreams. But they breathe our own breath.

And so we look upon the poet as man, subjected to our own passions and weaknesses, condemned to seeing with a perpetual hope (though there is none to see) owing to the circumstances of our never knowing.

Therefore, while some poems break into clumsiness as if repetition of the same imagery leads to exhaustion, the depth and honesty of the suffering wins through. Our consciences bear them out.

That little fault might be traced to the punctuation, which though formalizing Lane's own stylistic unorthodoxy, tends to muddle and invalidate his deepest imagery.

The title poem is an indicator of the wide perspective over which Lane

has concentrated his gaze. Speaking about a stalking death and illusory change in the helplessness of our limitations, he utters:

*Birds are silent when day ends
In my silence
Fowls again at the far cities
tell me again
the story of the beginning
You who are near enough to death
please tell me
where the beginning is...*

The pervading spirit is the longing for light in a time of horrible darkness; and this spirit saturates every nook and cranny of Lane's consciousness, no matter where his search might be: in lovers (real or imagined), in children, or in animals that people our love with their strange closeness. That spirit reaches out also from Lane's line-drawings which come with, but do not necessarily illustrate, the poems. Instead, as acts of pure definition, they reinforce the intense futility of the vision and the everlasting voyages to discovery of the verse.

He makes us feel always that danger is real, and near; in the house of the earth in which we are apartmentalized, and strangers. A good example of this is in the poem "Directions". The poet is observing a child on a tricycle. The child is perhaps his own, and from him the poet drives away on the highway somewhere to some amorphous duty. From their mental distance, the poet wrings out the pity of love that aches in their different acts within that exact date; truth is born from purposelessness and immutability:

*from the white line
and watch you
see
your mouth open
say something
I cannot hear*

*And now that it is
four in the afternoon
and I am tired
I would ask you
for directions
but you are
too far behind
and it is
too late
to stop the car*

Those who look around and agree with Lane that the sun has begun to eat the mountain, just as light will gobble up all kingdoms, might ask: Is it too late? □



AN EDITOR REGRETS

ONE OF OUR readers asks: "How are manuscripts chosen? Who decides what will be published, and on what ground is the decision made?" Now, anyone who has ever been asked a simple direct question like "Why does the wind blow, Daddy?" will know that simple direct questions are often as simple and direct as a striking rattlesnake. So it is with "How are manuscripts chosen?" For this question goes right to the heart of publishing. Companies that choose wisely go on to fame and fortune — those that choose unwisely go broke, or to the Ontario Government.

Let's assume that in this case we're talking about an unsolicited manuscript that has come to the publisher out of the blue. The first thing to understand about the publishing process is that publishers are deluged by manuscript. Thus when an editor prepares to judge a manuscript he doesn't recline languidly while a liveried flunkey brings him "This week's manuscript, sir" on a silver platter. No, if he reclines at all it's probably because he's taking cover behind his desk from the hail of manuscripts being thrown into his room by the mailman.

Seriously, a manuscript will first be read in the editorial department, where several new manuscripts arrive every day. Simply to keep the department functioning, most of these have to be weeded out — usually for very obvious reasons — after the first reading. But when a manuscript survives this weeding-out process and receives an approving second reading, one of the

two editors involved will "adopt" it. This means that he will write reports on it and will organize a campaign inside the house to have as many people as possible read it.

At this stage many companies like to hedge their bets by having salesmen or sales managers read the manuscript. The two types of readers — editors and salesmen — demonstrate very effectively the split nature of the publishing decision. For a manuscript must fulfil two conditions if it's to be published: it must be well-written and "good"; and it must be a sound commercial prospect. If a manuscript fails to fulfil one condition it must fulfil the other very amply before it will be published. And, in theory, an editor knows a "good" book when he sees one just as surely as a salesman knows a sound commercial project.

Of course, what bewilders the businessmen in publishing — the men with neat slide-rules and neat side-burns — is the fact that nobody knows. Nobody can tell them that, yes, this manuscript will sell *x* thousand copies. The most any editor will say is yes, I like it and yes, I think that it will sell as many as, say, *x* thousand copies, perhaps.

The trouble is that the publishing decision is a quality decision; in other words it's a matter of taste. It would be so much easier if quantity were the thing: "Dear Mr. Jones, Congratulations! Your manuscript has passed the 100,000 word test with fewer than 5,000 typographical errors. Consequently we should like to publish it."

The failure rate among manuscripts is very high — perhaps 2% of all manuscripts received are published in the end. What distinguishes the sheep from the goats? (And which do you publish, sheep or goats?) Well, surprise, surprise, the essential for any manuscript is that it must be interesting. (And it must sound interesting so that people will buy it.) If it doesn't keep the reader turning the pages, it's dead. If it does, it just might survive all the readings until the editor can persuade the businessmen — "Let's publish it!" □ STET

STET is the pseudonym of the editor of a large publishing house. He wishes to develop his theme in coming issues and would like to hear from our readers about aspects of book editing they would be interested in learning.

POETIC CREDITOR

SELECTED POEMS

F. R. SCOTT
Oxford University Press
paper \$2.75; 176 pages

reviewed by Audrey Gibson

THIS IS the paperback reprint of a book first published in 1966. No short review can do justice to the many fine poems it contains or to its importance as a documentary of the history of modern poetry in Canada. Mr. Scott was Canada's first modern poet.

The book is divided into four sections. Roughly speaking, the first section contains imagist and metaphysical poems, 19 of them. The second section contains poems about Canada and Canadians mostly in the satiric mode, with a selection of poems brilliantly translated from the French Canadian. War and travel poems are grouped in the third section of the book. The poems in the last section are the most personal. Certainly some of the poems here, notably "Meeting", "Vision", and "A l'ange Avantgardien" are more than sufficient to counter the charge levelled at Mr. Scott that his poetry is dated and derivative.

Even if some of the poems have their own justification in selection is justified on the grounds that Mr. Scott was a major influence on the poets of his own generation and those of the generation that followed his. But are they dated and derivative? One reads "The Canadian Authors Meet" and thinks, my gawd, unassimilated Eliot! But the poem is so obviously this that one must conclude that it is a parody of Eliot. There are poems in the collection that parody Yeats and Edith Sitwell. Scott is a poet of masks. Perhaps the point is in the parody. Mr. Scott is never as simple as he sometimes seems and certainly not simple-minded which one would have to conclude if one took his "derivative" poems at face value.

It is a testimony to Mr. Scott that a poem such as "W.L.M.K." written

on the death of Mackenzie King hasn't dated:

We had no shape
Because he never took sides,
And no sides
Because he never allowed them to
take shape.

He seemed to be in the centre
Because we had no centre,
No vision
To pierce the smoke-screen of his
politics.

From how many poets do we get so much? Intelligence, wit, perception, a fine sensibility and technical virtuosity. I think it is important to remember that Mr. Scott, son of an Archdeacon of the Anglican church and a poet, was Dean of Law at McGill, one of the founders of the C.C.F. and the New Democratic Party, and a member of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. I wish we had more in this tradition. □

AUDREY GIBSON teaches English literature at an experimental school in Toronto

LIP PROJECTS

AUTOBIOLOGY

GEORGE BOWERING
Georgia Straight Writing Supplement 7
paper \$1.00; 104 pages

THE DAY

STAN PERSKY
Georgia Straight Writing Supplement 6
paper \$1.00; 136 pages

reviewed by Ray Frazer

GEORGE BOWERING'S *Autobiology* could have been subtitled "Hey, want to be a poet? Here's how to do it." (since credit ought to be given where it's due) "after Richard Brautigan." It's a short book, about 15,000 words, subdivided into 50 or so little chapters, most of them about Bowering's nose getting repeatedly broken, and about his broken finger, and his aching teeth, and the times he fainted. These hair-raising incidents are tem-

pered by the frequent scatterings of philosophical and psychological gibberish and other assorted profundities. The writing style, when not Brautigan, wavers between classic Joey Smallwood and what I presume is original Bowering bumbling.

Here's a bit from his Brautigan act:

Back in the yard in Greenwood where the pickets of the fence were from the graveyard a deer hung from a wire and it was dead. In the backyard in Greenwood the chicken lost his head and flew to the roof crowing blood from his white neck turning red. From the roof in Greenwood my father threw water on the dog where their necks were red with bites to the bone . . .

And a little Smallwood (the style, not the content).

You wanted to watch them when they were frogs but you never did. I can't remember why you never did. Not in jumping but in swimming. Not in the grass but in the water. Not in the crouching-out in the silent swimming with a tail.

And finally, for some profundities.

The word from my hand follows the release of my eye from the dream of my release from the ground but just.

It is not so much composing as the imposing and breaking the code to break the imposing. Malediction triggers euthanasia.

I would always say I don't know what kind of childhood was it really I suppose sometimes it was happy and sometimes I was unhappy but it was not unhappy it was that I was unhappy but not it because even when I was unhappy it was in all probability happy.

Stan Persky's *The Day* is a book of 136 pages, and of that number I would estimate 120 pages are impeccable, substanceless rhetoric. Rhetorical questions, rhetorical statements, random rambling verbiage. It is difficult to distinguish one page from another. The reader is enjoined at the beginning to read the work aloud, but the author should have shown he meant well by adding "to insomniacs only."

The book comes to life only when the author describes his obsession with the real and imagined encounters with it, both his own and others, real and imagined.

If you were to ask me what *The Day* is about I couldn't possibly tell you. The closest I can get is from Persky's own rationalization, which is a common one used by incoherent artists: on p. 85 he says, "it is not that these are fragments in that they have been

broken off, but it is because the world is fragmentary, inside out . . ."

Here is a fairly typical paragraph (I quote it as it looks on the page).

There is, simply, as I've said before, the day, a day, any one, and come, or some strung together, or a few, as a unit, and what it does, and that conception takes in the day, this one, with each thing or person that comes into it, finally.

Admittedly there is better writing in the book than that, but on the whole *The Day* reminds me of a leisurely after speech. It might even, for that reason, enjoy good sales among politicians, as a kind of handbook on the art of endless rhetoric. □

RAY FRAZER is a New Brunswicker living in Montreal. *The Black Horse Tavern*, a collection of his stories, is due this fall from Ingluin Publications.

THAT'S MY BOY!

INTENSE PLEASURE

DAVID McFADDEN
McClelland & Stewart
cloth \$4.95; 94 pages

reviewed by Bill Howell

A GOOD book of poems. You pick it up again, open it up pretty well anywhere, it's the kind of book you keep coming back to. And sure, you're not going to get to the meat right away. Because the guy's a born storyteller, which means that these poems are inseparable from the original time and space place they were written in. And this makes even the little whimsical nothing ones important, because if they'd been edited out of the book the best of the McFadden context would've been lost.

So here it is, all rough-edged and buzzing around everywhere, at once, like a fly inside a Volkswagen. But don't get me wrong, it's well-crafted stuff. And the fun comes from the way the guy comes on mocking himself and taking his poem seriously both at the same time:

*An old witch cast a spell on me,
I couldn't move from head to toe
all down the left side,
the right side was OK*

ARTISTS

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Travel Grants

For professional artists to travel on occasions important to their careers. Cost of transportation only. (Applications accepted at any time in the year.)

Project Cost Grants

For costs of a particular project which are beyond the financial means of the artist, such as the purchase of materials for work in various media, the mounting of an exhibition, temporary rental of studio space, typing of manuscripts, collating, music copying. Up to \$2,000. (Applications accepted at any time in the year.)

For a brochure giving more details write to:

The Canada Council
Awards Service
P.O. Box 1047
Ottawa, Ontario
K1P 5V8

ARTISTS

None of that artsy-fartsy bullshit here. I'm sure McFadden would not be displeased if some critic just said this book was some of the best around and left it at that. Which I will. Because people do think in generalizations most of the time. This poetry comes from working out all the possible/impossible particulars and trying to add them up. And that's really important.

Having thrust Greatness aside, then, to come to terms with the everyday mechanics of living, and be himself being real, McFadden is one of the best representatives of what seems to be a new development in our most durable literary tradition, The Hoping For What You Can Expect School of Canadian writing:

*Like waves on a beach
are the lines of our poems
& the lines of all poems
are ours.*

BILL HOWELL, a poet from Nova Scotia whose most recent collection was *The Red Fox*, has written for *Maclean's* and is currently working on a TV film on Canadian music.

THE EXTERNAL TRIANGLE

THE CANADIAN SOCIAL INHERITANCE

JACK A. BLYTH

Lipp Crowl
paper \$5.00; 408 pages

reviewed by R. A. O'Brien

CANADA IS LISTED as fourth in the world in terms of wealth — the United States, Sweden and Switzerland outranking her in this respect. We are one of the high-income countries, averaging between \$2,500 and \$3,000 gross national product per head (1969). It is odd then, at first sight; to find that the opening chapter of this social history of our country is headed "Poverty." But if we have read the introduction by Professor A. R. M. Lower, we are prepared: "Our position

as members of this affluent society conditions our perspective on the specific social problems discussed in this book. Yet most of us today may be standing on a pinnacle from which we have nowhere to go but down — down to a future where we witness interplanetary flight while standing ankle-deep in garbage, or down to a past in which the following scene was recorded in Chicago less than 40-years ago: "We saw a crowd of some fifty men fighting over a barrel of garbage . . . American citizens fighting for scraps of food like animals."

The author, a professor at Sheridan College, deals with the social history of Canada by reference to the past and present history of our relationships with Britain and the United States. In the chapter of poverty, for instance, he begins with mediaeval England and progresses to Canada through North America generally, weaving the threads back and forth so that the whole cloth finally emerges in the present Canadian experience. Anybody who deals daily with Canadian affairs will feel perfectly at ease in these pages. That is how Canadian life, from politics to art, must be viewed. Not a piece of legislation nor a happening in a school, a factory or a municipal council but has its connections with the threads: Britain, the U.S., Canada.

Logically, the next chapter deals with trade unions and unemployment. Then come chapters on medicine and health insurance, housing, cities, liquor, religion, education, law and order and reform politics. In each chapter the same interweaving keeps the story within what Professor Lower calls "the North Atlantic Community." Nothing of the welfare state, for instance, can be properly understood in the Canadian connection without a knowledge of how that concept developed in Britain after the last war, how the United States shunned all its implications until the Left began to rebel.

The detail within chapters must, in a book of this size, be kept down to make the thing readable. Professor Blyth has wisely and expertly done this. But he has not neglected the need for expansion and each chapter is followed by several pages of notes. At the end of the book supplementary

reading, chapter by chapter, is suggested in the form of critical bibliographies. There is also a very good index.

With all this critical apparatus plus the historical method of treating the subject, the main requirements of a sound — and, thank God! readable — introduction to the social history of Canada have been provided at a reasonable price. *The Canadian Social Inheritance* should be a desk book for all who write about, teach or just talk about what goes on in Canada from day to ever-more-complicated day. □

R. A. O'BRIEN is Editorial Page Editor of the Kingston *Whig-Standard*.

THE OWL AND THE WILDCAT

DEVIL IN DEERSKINS

ANAHAREO

new press
cloth \$7.50; 190 pages

reviewed by Pauline Rhind

ANAHAREO met Grey Owl (Archie Belaney) when she was 19 years old. He was then a trapper-guide in northern Ontario and had yet to set foot on a lecture platform as author and naturalist. It wasn't long after his death that she learned he was not of Scots and Indian blood as he claimed, but a "full-blooded Englishman."

She first heard of his new name when he sent her a telegram saying she was to meet him in Montreal at the Windsor Hotel and she was to ask for "Grey Owl." When she learned he was going to England on a lecture tour she promptly set to work to make him a useful naturalist. The newspapers' headlines after his lecture read, "Full-Blooded Indian Gives Lecture on Wildlife." The public believed the "error of ancestry" and the more he wrote the more Indian he became in their eye. What mattered most to him was the fact that people were reading his

work and were turning out in full force to hear his lectures.

When Grey Owl was guest speaker at the Canadian Forestry Association's annual convention one of the audience commented after his lecture: "I don't know if I've just heard a poem or an encyclopedia on wildlife."

Devil in Deserts is written with a deceptively light touch and catches, often wittily, the tone of the-1920s.

Although it primarily concerns the last years of Grey Owl's life it is really a joint-biography, for Anahareo, with her liberated and petulant ways would take off for the northland at the drop of a prospector's pick. She also took an active part in conservation along with Grey Owl and helped set up the beaver stations. Although half Indian, Anahareo had never been in the bush and it is amusing to read of her initiation to a trap line. Perhaps I enjoyed it so much because it recalls the days I walked a trap line in northern Ontario with an uncle. Like Anahareo I carried a rifle but couldn't pull the trigger.

As she adjusted to life in the bush Anahareo's interest in prospecting developed. At one time she made a 600-

mile canoe trip by herself. Anahareo says living with a person who is writing is worse than living alone and her antidote for enforced isolation within their cabin was to head for the bush.

With the advent of a child she decided her prospecting days were over and that studying mineralogy now would be like "knitting by day and unravelling by night." But the lure of prospecting recurred again and again and when letters came telling her of new discoveries she left her nine-month-old baby and headed for Chapeau. She was so homesick that she turned around and went right back.

She made one prospecting trip too many and the space between these two became too wide to bridge. This time Anahareo returned from the north only when she learned of Grey Owl's lecture tour in England. After his return the space became a chasm and so their turbulent union was ended. One wonders at times just which one was the "Devil." □

PAULINE RHIND, poet and journalist, is at present planning to launch a magazine on health food from Toronto.

HUGH AND ALICE AND MORD AND WHATSIT

KALEIDOSCOPE

Selected by JOHN METCALF;
photographs by JOHN de VISSER
Van Nostrand Reinhold
paper \$3.50; illustrated, 138 pages

reviewed by Greg Gatenby

ONE IS acutely conscious of recent progress that has been made in anthologizing Canadian short stories, and in light of that awareness, each subsequent collection must offer some new ethos for selection of either story or author.

The group of 12 tales chosen

for us by John Metcalf unfortunately reminds one of a drunken acrobat. Both have some refined and potential talent, but in their present state they lack the assured footing to perform their tricks well.

"These stories," we are told on the expensive-looking dust jacket, "offer

a variety of themes and styles." What the writer of that particular blurb forgot to mention was that the greatest variety is in their quality. Of the older writers represented (Margaret Laurence, Sinclair Ross, Hugh Hood, Mordecai Richler, Brian Moore, Alice Munro, Hugh Garner, and Morley Callaghan), most would concede that six of them are much better novelists than short story writers.

Yet even their stories outclass the efforts of Kent Thompson ("Professor ... blurb's Prediction") and David Helwig ("Streetcar, Streetcar, Wait For Me"), two stories that would give any high school student, for whom the book seems primarily intended, a most inferior and inaccurate representation of the present status of this particular art form.

The inclusion of "Early Morning Rabbits," the first story ever written by John Metcalf, and "The Huntsman," written at the age of 19 by David Lewis Stein, bespeak an arrogance unmatched since the pick-pocket went to work at the policemen's ball. In themselves they may be interesting enough stories but to claim consideration in the company of Alice Munro or Callaghan, to present themselves as excellent examples of two Canadian short story styles is like an ambulance driver tendering himself as the equal of surgeons at a medical conference.

The nebulous photographs of John de Visser interspersed throughout the book are supposed "to suggest . . . mood, image, and settings" although any connection between them and persons or stories living or dead is purely coincidental. There are far too few stories and even fewer photographs for there to be a meaningful mood-setting nexus between the two.

It is ironic and pathetic and all too typical that the best contemporary collection of Canadian short stories remains the Dell *Original* by such

as the persons responsible for the expensive production of *Kaleidoscope* would have been better advised to study that Dell edition, and learn that people buy anthologies not because of a posh price tag and dust jacket, but rather for the number and quality of stories that those book covers contain. □

GROUP GROPING AND SINGULAR SENSING

CONTEMPORARY POETRY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA, VOL. 1

Edited by J. MICHAEL YATES
Sono Nis Press
cloth: 252 pages

TWO SIDES

CHRISTOPHER JAMES
Co-published by Austin C. Clarke and
Christopher Jones
paper: unnumbered pages

"SHAPELESS FLAME"

ALASDAIR LEIGHTON
calligraphy by Desmond Beavis;
illustrated by Kelvin Browne
paper: unnumbered pages

reviewed by Fraser Sutherland

THE FIRST VOLUME of *Contemporary Poetry of British Columbia* is more a bookend than a book. It comes with a crisp typeface and arctics of white space, in scale enough to make one turn in relief to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

The contributors, says editor J. Michael Yates, "have participated intensely in contemporary British Columbia." At least 20 have participated in the creative writing schools of UBC and the University of Victoria, the contributors' notes indicate. Their poems are almost uniformly stilted, with images half-realized, symbols half-sustained, and ideas half-cooked. Exceptions are a few poems by Andreas Schroeder, Yates himself, and the lone poem by Earle Birney, "Canada: Case History: 1969." Forcefully confirming the rule is Robin Skelton's lugubrious

"Night Poem, Vancouver Island", a kind of condemned "Dover Beach":

*Turn in the bed, my Love,
Reach out. We almost touch
but, swimmers pulled apart
by arbitrary tides,
are swept out on the night*

For some strange reason, the poems rain cats and dogs, from Rona Murray's "The Power of the Dog" ("Keep my darling from the power of the dog") to Derk Wynand's "Sheet Music For Alley Cats." In "Vision of the Cleaning Girl", Elizabeth Gourlay's dog "leaps back into my rib cage" while Paul Green confesses in "Sabotage": "I crammed the dog with dynamite and started walking."

Fortunately, the anthology does include poets one can trust John Newlove, Lionel Kearns, Dorothy Livesay and P.K. Page. The wit and poise of Newlove's "The Fat Woman Dreamed" help release the doldrums.

*The fat woman dreamed. The sailor
complained of the beer and cigarettes here,
the girl spoke of her marriage
and husband. It would be alright, she said,
if he wouldn't burn me with cigarettes.*

In contrast to *Contemporary Poetry*'s lavish display are two do-it-yourself productions. The poems of Christopher James' *Two Sides*, privately printed by James and novelist Austin Clarke, are filled with internal rhymes and typographical errors. The poems are rhetorical yet with an odd kind of courtly restraint. The subject matter is hard to get hold of but no less valuable for their dying, darkness, "winterwoods" or "winterwinds." One finds moments of awkward beauty and some lovely lines: "she's been of late an aging lady/and of late she dies of sighs." For those lines alone one is glad that the poems have come into being.

Published last year in Winnipeg, *Shapeless Flame* had a printing of 400. Written by Alasdair Leighton of Vancouver, with illustrations by Kelvin Browne and calligraphy by Desmond Bevis, the book attractively works out some implications of its title, taken from a phrase of Donne's. The 12 sonnets that do part of the work are competent, nothing more; the illustrations dominate the book. The illustrator, a student at Winnipeg's St. John's-Ravenscourt School, has created a lunar world of black and white—cold, stark, but full of interest. □

INSIDE WRITERS

EARLE BIRNEY

FRANK DAVEY

Studies in Canadian Literature;
Copp Clark, 1971
paper \$1.95; 128 pages

EARLE BIRNEY

RICHARD ROBILLARD

JAMES REANEY

ROSS G. WOODMAN

MALCOLM LOWRY

WILLIAM H. NEW

NORTHROP FRYE

RONALD BATES

All four in *Canadian Writers' Series,*
New Canadian Library, 1971
paper, 95c each; 64 pages each

reviewed by Pierre Cloutier

FRANK DAVEY'S *Earle Birney* unfortunately reminds one that Canadian criticism may still sometimes be the spontaneous overflow of uncertain feeling; especially when compared to Richard Robillard's very fine *explication de texte* on the same; Davey proposes the old form-matter dichotomy. Richard Robillard's study does not. Davey doesn't distinguish the narrator's persona of Birney's poems and the personality of their author. Richard Robillard very explicitly does. Davey speaks of "unnatural syntax," "natural syntax," "rhetorical syntax," "external form," and "the authentic voice of the poet." Richard Robillard speaks of rhyme, rhythm, metaphor, metonymy, contrast and paradox—in short, of poetry.

Woodman's *James Reaney* proposes a wealth of facts, anecdotes and views on Reaney but the text tends to be somewhat uncoordinated, sometimes long-winded, occasionally wordy. "The apocalyptic fireworks attendant upon the description of the end in the gospels" is simply "New Testament apocalyptic imagery." "Reaney's sense

of the demonic is grounded partly in the image of the tick-tock heart-sun and partly in a horror of the sting of sex" could be "the tick-tock heart-sun and the sting of sex are Reaney's hell."

Woodman also oscillates between biographical data, literary analysis, Reaney's theoretical views and a description of the major influences exerted upon him. The compound is unstable. Especially as Woodman tends to stress the on-campus achievements of Reaney: his MA, his Ph.D., his professorships, his Governor General's awards — and to drape Reaney in cap and gown. Biographical information could have been relegated to a short introductory note. A selection of representative works should then have dealt with, preceded, if necessary, by a separate discussion of the influences and theory pertinent to a presentation of the works. This is a thematic. But the New Canadian Library's 60-page format requires texts which are lean, terse, trimmed down to essentials.

I find William H. New's *Malcolm Lowry* clear, lucid, witty and really much more than a handbook. New's study tends to center on a number of structural relationships and radiate from there. It includes the elements it describes within a series:

The book traces an identity conflict, then, from fragmentation through to completeness, a progression that de-

pends largely for its success on recognition.

The twelve chapters, like the stories of *Hear Us O Lord*, function as separate units within the whole as well as form integral parts of it.

New will make those unfamiliar with Lowry want to go and read the works. He may also bring others already familiar with him to see Lowry's *oeuvre* in a new light. This can only be said of the very best criticism.

It is to Ronald Bates' credit that he should attempt the presentation of a skeletal outline of the Frye corpus in less than 60 pages. Perhaps McClelland and Stewart should have allowed for the exceptional scope of Frye's work and not imposed such a stringently formal format on Bates. A more flexible policy would give more leeway to the scholars and critics writing for the *Canadian Writers* series.

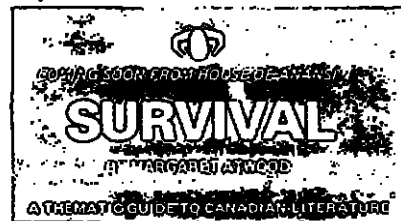
As it is, the format may encourage the publication of a preface or abstract whenever *Canadian Writers* is dealing with a major figure. The optional addition of some 40 pages to the standard 60-page package would be recommended. □

PIERRE CLOUTIER, who teaches at the University of Montreal and whose major interest is comparative literature in Canada, contributes to *Canadian Literature* and *The Journal of Canadian Fiction*.

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