

but not explained. Recent Canadian and British works on aesthetic perception would do much to set Brown in a proper context and to help the reader understand his journal. Hayman has made more solid anthropological connection but, even here, the reader is left without sufficient insights into the emerging discipline.

Irrespective of these criticisms, this is an attractive volume, carefully edited and deserving of a wide readership. Too few books of substance have been published about Vancouver Island. This one is a significant addition.

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The Journals of George M. Dawson: British Columbia, 1875-1878, edited by Douglas Cole and Bradley Lockner. Vancouver: UBC Press, 1989.

The transfer of the North West to Canada in 1870 and the addition of British Columbia the next year opened a vast new region that was, from a geological perspective, largely unexplored. The result was that over the next quarter century Canadian geologists and surveyors faced a task that was both daunting and challenging: the investigation of thousands and thousands of square miles of territory. The men of the survey became well-known public figures whose reports were awaited by government officials, railway magnates, and land promoters. The geologists themselves worked under arduous conditions, travelling vast distances under often adverse conditions. It was the "heroic age" of Canadian geological work.

This high profile and the sense of newness about their work meant that many felt it worthwhile to publish diaries, notebooks, sketches, or anything else that they might have. In some instances the works quickly became standards of travel narrative. Typical was George Munro Grant's well-written celebration of the potential of the North West, *Ocean to Ocean* (1873), written after he accompanied railway engineer Sandford Fleming across the west. In other instances, as in John Macoun's *Manitoba and the Great Northwest* (1882), spontaneity and enthusiasm spilled over into outrageous hyperbole. In between there were works from the mundane to the ridiculous.

One individual who was neither outrageous nor ridiculous was George Mercer Dawson. This young man (he was in his twenties when these diaries were written) was the well-brought-up son of the famous J. W. Dawson, principal of McGill University. Meticulous in geology and experienced

through his earlier work on the Boundary Commission, George Dawson set out in these seasons to record something of the geological nature and resource potential of British Columbia. For him nature was something to be observed in a careful, detached manner. Conclusions must await evidence, and opinion was secondary to observation. As the editors themselves note, "Dawson's personality and temperament emerge only vaguely from the field letters and journals" (23). The result is that many of the entries in the diary are fairly straightforward comments on local terrain, geological formations and weather. Typical is this one in the Shuswap area written in June 1877: "Left Camp at 7 Am. and was soon overtaken by packs, as discovering a fossil in black shales associated with problematical green igneous series" (328). It is not exactly the material of poetry.

Such straightforward writing means that Dawson's diaries will never become as widely read as some other travel accounts. This excellently produced work will be used primarily as a research tool rather than as a piece of travel literature. Yet the diaries as put together here do contain more than careful geological observation. Dawson was a complex individual who was aware of his own inability to overcome his quiet, even repressed, nature. "I don't know how it is but when I sit down to write my thoughts never flow freely enough," he wrote home at one point (109). Yet the quiet scientist had other facets that surface from time to time and deviate sharply from the normal careful observations. He was, for example, increasingly fascinated by Indian folklore and customs, and sets down in some detail stories recounted to him by local natives.

The editors have maximized the human face of Dawson by including his letters home. These not only enrich the travelogue but give more opportunity for the reader to see Dawson's personality as he writes about the country, the people, and the nature of what he has seen. Even in his inhibitions he is revealing. He converses with his father, a person with strong geological interests, only about geological matters, and the impression is given of a friendly but basically distant relationship. With his sisters he is friendly but stoutly resists any attempts to be guided emotionally.

When he does open up, it is even more revealing. Incongruous bits of melancholy poetry are scattered throughout his work and seem to reinforce the belief of the editors that he has been deeply affected by an unrequited love. There are also moments when, in letters and in the diary, he comes out for a moment from his quiet demeanour to express strong opinions on the country, the natives, or colleagues. When the mood struck him he could write passages with the humour and insight of some of the best of the era's travellers. California, to give one brief example, causes him to turn to bibli-

cal citation. It is the place "where every prospect pleases but only man is vile" (305).

The editors are to be congratulated on the meticulous job they have done. Their work is impressive in its annotation, handling of the text, and the thorough and complete Introduction. I do have one small quibble from the perspective of the researcher. The editors decided to leave Dawson's numerous spelling mistakes, grammatical slips, and other such quirks unchanged and unnoted. This makes sense, but it is difficult for the researcher to be absolutely sure that every mistake he runs across is really Dawson's. Typographical errors have been known to occur. Still, there would have been no easy way around the problem. As a whole, the work is of such a high standard that it could serve as a model to others engaged in similar ventures.

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They Call Me Father: Memoirs of Father Nicolas Coccola, edited by Margaret Whitehead. *Recollections of the Pioneers of British Columbia*, Vol. 7. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1988. Pp. 231. \$29.95 cloth.

By editing the memoirs of Father Nicolas Coccola on the 1880s to 1930s, Margaret Whitehead has presented students of British Columbia history with a valuable primary source. This priest of the Roman Catholic Oblate order laboured briefly in the Fraser Valley, Kamloops, Nicola, Okanagan, and CPR construction camps; then for eighteen years in the Kootenays; and, after that, for over thirty in the northern interior. As Whitehead's preface indicates, Coccola's memoirs were not written to defend or burnish his own image. He composed them at the request of his superior. For this reason, she argues, they throw "more light on Indian/white relations than the exceptional lives of the 'great men' of mission history." Coccola's memoirs shed light, too, on other neglected areas of British Columbia history such as the multicultural population of frontier communities and the territory outside coastal urban industrial development. His work and his recollections were limited by the missionary's paternalism toward native peoples. But, as Whitehead comments, "Indians always have determined their religious future. . . . while some native peoples have bitter memories of some missionaries and certain aspects of their schooling, they have affectionate and grateful memories of others." They called Coccola "Father."