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CANADIAN LITERATURE No. 14

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JACOBEAN POETS IN NEWFOUNDLAND

Articles

BY ALLAN PRITCHARD, WYNNE FRANCIS, V. L. O. CHITTICK, KEIICHI HIRANO, PATRICIA BARCLAY

Reviews

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editorial

CAUTIOUS INEVITABILITY

PROFESSOR DESMOND PACEY has rendered many services to writing in Canada, and particularly as the only considerable historian of literature in English-speaking Canada. To these we can now add another service, less substantial, but no less satisfying in its own way — that of persuading the *Times Literary Supplement* to admit, after having implicitly denied it twelve years ago, that something which can be called a "Canadian literature" has at last come into being. The new edition of Professor Pacey's *Creative Writing in Canada* — recently released in England — was the subject not merely of a review, but of an editorial in the *TLS* which has some salutary things to say about both the character of Canadians and that character's relation to their literary productions.

> No one need mistake a Canadian for other than what he is; and if "character" is given a more particular interpretation, the Canadian is as resolute as any other national in asserting his identity, in the face of considerable odds. England on the one hand and the United States on the other are set to lure him off his independent track. But whether it is that the caution needed for such a difficult navigation spoils with self-consciousness the free expression of his identity, or that his character in its realization on a national scale does not insist upon being imaginatively interpreted, it is certain that he has fallen behind other Commonwealth countries in arousing curiosity abroad and establishing a sympathetic image.

Yet, with what the *TLS* notes to be a cautious inevitability, a literature that can be called Canadian and nothing else has struggled into recognizable being during the past decade or so, and, as the commentator again notes shrewdly, this is largely because self-conscious nationalism has ceased to be an issue of importance

in Canada, at least as far as literature and the other arts are concerned. Of the writers now emerging, he remarks:

> They are not required to debate, as their predecessors were, whether or not they are or in what ways they should be Canadian. The lengthy argument over nationality has been talked out. However he is defined, the Canadian exists, and the writer can concentrate on what interests him, in the calm assurance that by being himself he best expresses the nation.

The editorial ends with an assurance which repeats what we have realized for a long time, but are nevertheless pleased to see appreciated by a viewer looking at Canada from the other direction and a long way off:

> While our attention has been turned to more flamboyant developments elsewhere, Canadian literature has come modestly into existence and must now be taken as a fact.

The only fault we have to find with this pronouncement is that Canadian literature is a much larger fact than one might be inclined to assume from an examination of the *TLS* editorial, which mentions Brian Moore but not Yves Thériault, James Reaney and Jay Macpherson but not Jacques Godbout and Anne Hébert, or from a comparison of Professor Pacey's comprehensive title, *Creative Writing in Canada*, with his book's index, which contains hardly a French name.

Despite the pioneering example of A. J. M. Smith's bilingual *Oxford Book of Canadian Verse*, those who speak English, whether in Canada or abroad, are still too much inclined to take for granted that Canadians — and Canadian writers — live either in the Maritimes or west of Montreal. By doing so they not only exacerbate, as Louis Dudek emphasized recently in our pages, the sense of division between Canadians who speak English and Canadians who speak French; they also fail to take into their own vision and to transmit to others an area of Canadian literature at least as rich and original as that with which they are familiar. We appreciate the acknowledgment which the *Times Literary Supplement* has made of Canadian literature's coming of age, but we are disinclined to accept it for writing in English alone.

FROM THESE UNCOUTH SHORES

Seventeenth-century Literature of Newfoundland

Allan Pritchard

Behold, e'en from these uncouth shores, among
Unpeopled woods, and hills, these straines were sung.
(George Wither on Hayman's *Quodlibets*)

IN THE CUSTOMARY VIEW, the colonial English poetry of Canada begins with the work of Nova Scotian contemporaries of Cowper and Goldsmith; yet a volume of verse written in Newfoundland and taking that island in part as its subject, Robert Hayman's *Quodlibets*, was published in London in 1628, when Milton was a youth of twenty, when Drayton, Donne and Jonson were still alive, and Shakespeare had been dead only twelve years.[1] In truth, *Quodlibets* can scarcely be regarded as a part of the indigenous literature of Newfoundland. Hayman came to the colony in mature years, with literary ideals formed in Oxford and London, and he did not remain there long. His verse has not exercised any influence upon later poets of Newfoundland and Canada. It has, indeed, been unknown to them, for *Quodlibets* has never been reprinted and exists today only in a few copies. Nor does it possess sufficient literary merit to deserve revival, but it has at least the claim to remembrance which Hayman states in his dedicatory address to Charles I. He writes there of his poems (which include translations as well as original works): "Meane and unworthy though they are, yet because some of them were borne, and the rest did first speake *English*, in that Land whereof your gracious Majestie is the . . . *Soveraigne* . . . and being the first fruits of this kind, that ever visited this Land, out of that Dominion of yours; I thought it my duty, to present and to prostrate these with my selfe at your Royall feet."[2]

Surprising although its appearance at so early a date may seem, *Quodlibets* does not stand altogether alone. Hayman was, if his claim is accepted, the first to publish poetry written in Newfoundland, but he was by no means the first to write about Newfoundland,[3] and his work is part of a small body of literature which sprang from a series of attempts between 1610 and 1630 to plant colonies on the island. A company of London and Bristol merchants, with which Francis Bacon was associated, established the first official settlement in 1610; other colonies were sponsored by a separate group of Bristol merchants, by William Vaughan, and by Sir George Calvert, afterwards Lord Baltimore; and still another was planned by Lord Falkland, although never realized. None of the projects met with much success, but they did not fail until they had inspired a number of writings. Captain John Mason, who succeeded John Guy as governor of the first colony, published *A Briefe Discourse of the New-found-land* in 1620, and Richard Whitbourne, who was for a time Vaughan's governor and later an advocate of Falkland's scheme, quickly followed in 1622 with *A Discourse and Discovery of New-found-land*. Vaughan published several volumes relating in appearance or actuality to Newfoundland, notably *The Golden Fleece* (1626). Like Mason and Whitbourne, Hayman was the governor of a colony, the one established by the group exclusively from Bristol, and *Quodlibets* is, in fact, nearly the last of the works prompted by these early attempts at colonization of the island, for by the time it was published fatal or near-fatal difficulties had already fallen upon them.[4]

Mason and Whitbourne do not aspire toward so distinctively a literary status as Hayman does. Writing as men of practical affairs, they profess to give in unadorned prose an accurate description of the island, and to present soberly the arguments for its colonization. They are concerned to show that permanent settlement would give England a great advantage in the fisheries, which had long been exploited by Europeans,[5] to demonstrate the existence of other valuable resources, and to give evidence of the suitability of the land and climate for agriculture. Despite their desire for accuracy, they are sometimes betrayed by limitations in their knowledge, and sometimes carried away by their zeal as propagandists, particularly when they attempt to argue that Newfoundland offers as great advantages for colonial endeavour as the rival areas of Virginia and New England.

But, if their works are occasionally less than fully accurate, they are occasionally more than narrowly factual, for they record the imaginative impact of the new land upon the Englishman of the earlier seventeenth century. Mason and Whit-

bourne see Newfoundland through different eyes from those of later writers because their view is coloured by characteristically Renaissance experiences and conceptions. On one level, this means that Whitbourne, seeking analogies in the familiar for the unfamiliar, sees the "Cannowes" of the natives as being "in shape like the Wherries on the River of Thames" in Jacobean London, and that he compares the Newfoundland winter to recent severe winters in England when the ladies of the court at Whitehall made sport on the ice of the same river.[6] On another, it means that his mind and Mason's move naturally from observation and experience toward the mythological. While their aim is utilitarian, the two men belong to an age which did not exclude the poetic from its prose, and their writings lack neither imaginative qualities nor artistry.

Mason, whose practical merits were sufficient to win him high appointment in the navy and later recognition as the founder of New Hampshire,[7] declares that concerning Newfoundland in his *Briefe Discourse* he has "set downe in few and plain tearmes out of that experience I have gained in three yeares and seventh monthes residence there, the trueth." His work, he says, is "unpolished and rude, bearing the countries badge where it was hatched, onely clothed with plainnesse and trueth" (sigs. A-A^{v}). In fact, his account is more sober and restrained than Whitbourne's, as well as much briefer, but it is not always clothed with plainness. In connection with his discussion of the climate, for example, he describes the ice floes (which were to figure in the work of Newfoundland's greatest poet three hundred years later) by means of a series of images which stop just short of converting the factual into the mythological, before his long sentence reaches a more prosaic conclusion:

> . . . the chiefest reason of the coldnesse in New-foundland in the Winter season is the Yce which beeing congealed into great firme Lands, Even from the North Pole, all alongst the Coast of *Gronland, Grenland*, The Northwest passage *Terra de laberador* & so towardes the Grand bay, all that tract having many Inlets and broken Lands apt as unnaturall wombes to breede and bring foorth such Monsters, which being nursed in their ruder armes, till the Winter season past, are turnde foorth of doores in the Spring to shift for themselves, and being weary of their imprisonments in those angrie Climes with one accord as if they had agreed with winde and streame take Ferrie into Newfoundland, which immuring us in the months of Febru. and March, both which are subject to northeast winds & blowing from this Yce causeth it very cold.

Like Mason, Whitbourne opens his *Discourse and Discovery* by stating his qualification to give an informed and accurate account of Newfoundland: a

knowledge of the country built up over a period of forty years.[8] And much in his work is severely practical and factual. Thus he lists the supplies necessary for outfitting a ship of colonists to the last bushel of peas and itemizes the cost to a penny. It is a practical concern too which causes him to utter what must be the first unheeded cry of the conservationist in Canada, a protest at the wanton destruction of timber by fishermen. Yet he has an eye also for less commercial resources, and he thinks it worth while to report that there grow in Newfoundland "flowers, as the red and white Damaske Rose, with other kinds; which are most beautifull and delightfull, both to the sight and smell" (p. 7). When he comes to describe a less pleasant aspect of the land, the mosquitoes which infest the woods, he abandons his concern for simple precision, just as Mason does in his account of the ice floes, in order to indulge in a vein of humorous moralizing and to develop an unexpected analogy with the system of law enforcement in Jacobean England:

> Neither are there any Snakes, Toads, Serpents, or any other venemous Wormes, that ever were knowne to hurt any man in that Countrey, but onely a very little nimble Fly, (the least of all other Flies) which is called a Muskeito; those flies seeme to have a great power and authority upon all loytering and idle people that come to the *New-found-land*: for they have this property, that when they finde any such lying lazily, or sleeping in the Woods, they will presently bee more nimble to seize on them, then any Sargeant will bee to arrest a man for debt: Neither will they leave stinging or sucking out the blood of such sluggards, untill, like a Beadle, they bring him to his Master, where hee should labour: in which time of loytering, those Flies will so brand such idle persons in their faces, that they may be knowne from others, as the Turkes doe their slaves.

Such was the hold of myth over Whitbourne's mind that he found in Newfoundland a more remarkable being than the mosquito. He describes very circumstantially his sighting (shared, he assures us, by other witnesses) in St. John's harbour early in a morning of 1610 a creature "which very swiftly came swimming towards mee, looking cheerfully on my face, as it had been a woman: by the face, eyes, nose, mouth, chin, eares, necke, and forehead, it seemed to bee so beautifull, and in those parts so well proportioned, having round about the head many blue streakes, resembling haire, but certainly it was no haire . . . ." Gaining a different view, he tells his reader: "I beheld the shoulders & back down to the middle, to be so square, white and smooth as the backe of a man; and from the middle to the hinder part, it was poynting in proportion something like a broad hooked Arrow." Unfortunately Whitbourne — who had commanded his own

ship in the fight with the Spanish Armada — lost nerve and retreated from the shore as it came toward him, while his servant and others who were out in a boat repelled it violently when it approached them: "the same Creature did put both his hands upon the side of the Boat, and did strive much to come in to him and divers then in the same Boat; whereat they were afraid, and one of them strucke it a full blow on the head, whereby it fell off from them: and afterwards it came to two other Boates in the said Harbour, where they lay by the shore: the men in them, for feare fled to land and beheld it." With a commendable concern for accuracy, Whitbourne concludes his account of the remarkable event at St. John's: "This (I suppose) was a Maremaid, or Mareman. Now because divers have writ much of Maremaids, I have presumed to relate what is most certaine, of such a strange Creature that was thus then seene at *New-found-land*, whether it were a Maremaid or no, I leave it for others to judge".

While MASON AND WHITBOURNE were only incidentally men of letters, Hayman had one contemporary among the early writers on Newfoundland who shared his more decidedly literary aspirations. William Vaughan declared in 1630: "The truth is, I am addicted both to the *Muses*, and *New-found Land*."[9] In contrast to Whitbourne, who was of obscure birth and went to sea at the age of fifteen, Vaughan was the younger son of an aristocratic Welsh family, the uncle of that Earl of Carbery who is remembered as Jeremy Taylor's patron, and he spent his youth in studies at Oxford and Vienna, taking the degree of Doctor of Laws. He had written works in prose and verse on a variety of subjects before he acquired his interest in Newfoundland through the purchase of a large tract of land there for colonization in 1616. He sent out settlers in the next year, but his project did not prosper, and he was obliged to abandon it within fifteen years. While he retained hope, however, he took every means in his writings, as he once put, "to stirre up our *Ilanders* Mindes to assist and support for a time our *New-found Ile*."[10] Sometimes one may suspect that his purpose was not so much to stimulate interest in Newfoundland as to advertise his own work by claiming for it a novelty of association. *The New-found Politicke* (1626) and *The Newlanders Cure* (1630) are connected with Newfoundland by little more than their titles and prefaces: the former is a translation from the Italian (in

which Florio had a hand) of a political treatise cast in fictitious form, the *Ragguagli di Parnaso* of Traiano Boccalini, and the latter is a medical handbook. However, *Cambrensium Caroleia* (1625), a volume of Latin verse commemorating the marriage of Charles I and Henrietta Maria, includes poems in praise of Newfoundland, as well as a map of the island drawn by Mason; and *The Golden Fleece* (1626), a prose work containing intermittent passages of verse, ostensibly takes Newfoundland as its subject, although much else gets in.

As one would expect, *The Golden Fleece* is shaped much more fully than Mason's and Whitbourne's works by classical learning and reading in Renaissance literature, and much less by practical knowledge of Newfoundland. Classical myth informs Vaughan's whole view of the island, and he describes the rich fisheries as "our *Colchos*, where the *Golden Fleece* flourisheth on the backes of *Neptunes sheeps*, continually to be shorne" (III, 9). Ironically in view of his own failure, he considered the legend of Jason so relevant that he actually gave his colony the name "Cambriol Colchos," combining allusion to it with compliment to his native Wales. Similarly, he saw his role in his writing as that of an Orpheus singing the charms of Newfoundland to the hard-hearted English. Hence in *The Golden Fleece* he employs the pseudonym "Orpheus Junior," in imitation of the "Democritus Junior" of Robert Burton, whose *Anatomy of Melancholy* had appeared five years earlier.

The Golden Fleece opens with a dialogue on the question how best to employ the muses in the service of Newfoundland, for which Vaughan, with a characteristic concern for literary tradition, cites Plato's *Republic* and More's *Utopia* as his precedents. The participants are Vaughan himself, the courtier William Elveston, and Sir William Alexander, the proprietor of Nova Scotia, who had written a colonizing tract, *An Encouragement to Colonies* (1624). Elveston and Alexander caution Vaughan that "unlesse a *Booke* containe light matters as well as serious, it cannot flourish nor live *Jovially*, but like leaden *Saturne* stand still in the stall," and they recommend some surprising models for his discourse on Newfoundland: "Excellent in this Art of Cookerie were those *Spaniards*, which wrot the life of *Guzman the Rogue*, and the Adventures of *Don Quixot de la Mancha*" (I, 10-11). Following their counsel, Vaughan devises what he terms "a *Poeticall* stile not too much degenerating from the *Evangelicall* gravitie" (I, 13). His fiction for the remainder of the book (which owes more to Boccalini than to Cervantes) is a court or assizes presided over by Apollo, before whom a number of causes are tried and various witnesses summoned. With a digressiveness worthy of Burton, Vaughan deals at length with the condition of England

in general and religious issues in particular, introducing as his witnesses a curious assortment of figures, Democritus Junior, John Florio, and the inexplicably knighted Sir Geoffrey Chaucer, among others.[11]

Although the tendency of the whole is to suggest that Newfoundland may provide the cure to all that ails England, it is only in the last third of *The Golden Fleece* that Vaughan comes to the subject of the island itself. There he makes Apollo deliver a verdict in favour of its colonization, following the testimony of a number of explorers and colonizers, including Mason, John and Humphrey Slaney (officials of the London and Bristol company), and Sir Thomas Button (who had sailed into Hudson's Bay in quest of the Northwest Passage). Vaughan no doubt derives the information which he attributes to them partly from conversations and partly from written sources. The comment which he gives Mason is clearly taken from the *Briefe Discourse*. It is likely, indeed, that he had the best of reasons for calling on the evidence of persons other than himself. He was credited later in the seventeenth century by Anthony à Wood with residence in Newfoundland, and more recently by D. L. Thomas in *The Dictionary of National Biography* with having composed *Cambrensium Caroleia* and *The Golden Fleece* there.[12] But, although the former work is described on its title page as "Reportata a Colchide Cambriola" and the latter on its as "Transported from Cambrioll Colchos," Vaughan does not in his writings themselves make any clear claim to first-hand knowledge of Newfoundland, as he surely would have done if he had possessed it. Hayman, whose word carries some authority, indicates in 1627-28 that Vaughan had not yet visited Cambriol Colchos, although he intended to do so.[13] He seems to have been kept in England first by the complexity of his affairs and later by illness, and he probably never saw the land which he advertised in his writings and into which he poured much of his fortune.

Hayman knew the works of Vaughan, Whitbourne and Mason, and he was conscious of following to a degree in their footsteps. In *Quodlibets* he commends Whitbourne's "wise, well-pend Booke" (p. 33), and compliments Mason. He praises Vaughan (whom he may first have met at Oxford, where they were contemporaries during the 1590's) both as colonial proprietor and as author of *The Golden Fleece*, and Vaughan provides a commendatory verse for his volume. In an appeal to Charles I to interest himself in the colonization of Newfoundland, which he wrote about the time of the publication of *Quodlibets*, "A Proposition of Profitt and Honor,"[14] he indicates that he would like to have produced a substantial prose treatise on Newfoundland himself but was deterred by the number already in print and by their poor reception. In practice, he makes *Quodlibets*

serve the purpose which such a work might have done.

Hayman combines some of the practical experience of Mason and Whitbourne with the addiction to the muses of Vaughan. His interest in the New World probably dates from his childhood. Born in 1575 (at least, baptized in August of that year), he was a native of Devon, a county which has long taken a leading part in the English fisheries in Newfoundland and which had given birth to many of the great Elizabethan sailors. To one of the latter he was probably related, for his mother appears to have been the illegitimate daughter of John Raleigh, Sir Walter Raleigh's half-brother. During his childhood at Totnes, where his father had established himself as a merchant, Hayman received by way of inducement to adventure on the seas an orange and a blessing from Sir Francis Drake. He describes the episode in an artless poem in *Quodlibets* entitled "*Of the Great and Famous, ever to bee honoured Knight*, Sir Francis Drake, *and of my little-little selfe*":

> This man when I was little, I did meete,
> As he was walking up *Totnes* long Street,
> He ask'd me whose I was? I answer'd him.
> He ask'd me if his good friend were within?
> A faire red *Orange* in his hand he had,
> He gave it me, whereof I was right glad,
> Takes and kist me, and prayes, *God blesse my boy*:
> Which I record *with comfort* to this day.

After studies at Oxford and Lincoln's Inn, and apparently a brief period at the University of Poitiers, he married in 1604 the daughter of a prominent family of Bristol merchants. As a result probably of this connection and of a similar one established through a sister's marriage, he was some years later sent to Newfoundland as governor of the colony of Bristol-Hope, which was planted by Bristol interests at Harbour Grace in 1617-18. How soon he went out and exactly how much time he spent there are both uncertain, and little is known of his activities as governor, but he states in his "Proposition," which is dated no later than 1628: "In this Iland [Newfoundland] at one tyme I Lived fifteene Monethes together, and since I have spent allmost every sommer in it."[15] By 1628 he was disappointed by the Bristol company's lack of support for the colony, and he evidently did not return to it after the publication of *Quodlibets*. Instead, he turned his attention to the establishment of a settlement in Guiana, an enterprise which

may have cost him his life. The time and manner of his death have not been determined, but his will was proved on January 24, 1632-33.

IN NEWFOUNDLAND, Hayman tells us in his "Proposition," "haveing onely had the overseeing others hard Labour to distract me, I had tyme to see, to confer, to enquire, to observe, and to discover . . . ."[16] No doubt it was this leisure which gave him the opportunity to compose *Quodlibets*, but the volume is the belated outcome of literary interests which had developed years earlier. They can be traced back to his time at Oxford, where he seems to have made friendships with Robert Burton and with the minor poet Charles Fitzgeffrey, during his residence at Exeter College from 1590 to 1596.[17] His entrance to Lincoln's Inn, in October, 1596, brought him to London at the finest moment of Elizabethan literary achievement. He tells us in *Quodlibets*, "I knew the Court well in the old *Queenes* dayes" (p. 38), and, according to Anthony à Wood, he was more dedicated to poetry than to the law: he "studied for a time the municipal Law, but his Genie being well known to be poetical, fell into acquaintance with, and received encouragement to proceed in his studies from, *Mich. Drayton*, *Ben. Johnson*, *John Owen* the Epigrammatist, *George Wither* the puritanical Satirist, *John Vicars* of *Ch. Ch.* Hospital, *&c.* and at length writing several *specimens* of his wit, which I think are quite lost, had, tho phantastical, the general vogue of a poet."[18]

In *Quodlibets* Hayman makes little allusion to the great drama which was flourishing during his time in London (although there is nothing to show that he shared the opinion of Vaughan, who wrote at the height of Shakespeare's career, "Stageplayes are the very mockery of the word of God, and the toyes of our life").[19] The volume, however, includes complimentary verse to Jonson (as non-dramatic poet), to Drayton, Donne, and a host of minor contemporaries, including Owen, many of whose Latin epigrams Hayman translates, and Wither, who reciprocates with a commendatory verse for *Quodlibets*. Hayman addresses "*the Reverend and divinely witty*, John Dun," primarily as Dean of Saint Paul's and preacher, but shows also that he knows him as a poet:

> As my *John Owen Seneca* did praise,
> So might I for you a like piller raise,
> His Epigrams did nothing want but verse;

> You can yours (if you list) that way rehearse:
> His were neat, fine, divine morality;
> But yours, pure, faithfull, true Divinity.

His verse to Drayton, whom he addresses more familiarly as "*my right worthy friend*," shows that he has followed the poet's long career since youth. Feeling his own age upon him, he pays tribute to Drayton's undiminished ability displayed in the composition of *The Battle of Agincourt* after his sixtieth year:

> When I was young, I did *delight* your lines,
> I have *admyr'd* them since my judging times:
> Your *younger muse* plai'd many a dainty fit,
> And your *old muse* doth hold out stoutly yet.
> Though my *old muse* durst passe through frost and snow,
> In warres your *old muse* dares her Colours shew.

As Hayman set about writing *Quodlibets* his mind evidently dwelt much on his earlier literary associations and on his long unfulfilled aspirations as a poet.

In the full title of his volume, Hayman advertises both its contents and the circumstance of its composition in Newfoundland (which he preferred to call "Britaniola," as he makes sufficiently clear): "*QUODLIBETS*,/LATELY COME OVER/*FROM NEW BRITANIOLA*,/OLD NEWFOUND-LAND./ Epigrams and other small parcels, both/*Morall and Divine*./The first foure Bookes being the Authors owne: the/rest translated out of that Excellent Epigrammatist,/Mr. *John Owen*, and other rare authors./With two Epistles of that excellently wittie Doctor,/*Francis Rablais*: Translated out of his French at large./ *All of them*/Composed and done at *Harbour-Grace* in/*Britaniola*, anciently called *Newfound-Land*./By R. H./Sometimes Governour of the Plantation there." In addition to the translations from Owen, Rabelais, and a few other authors, *Quodlibets* contains some three hundred and fifty "Epigrams and other small parcels," many of them being no more than a couplet in length. Most have as their subject general reflections, morality, and satire, following themes long conventional in the epigram, but a number have special reference to Newfoundland, and in these the kinship of Hayman's work with that of Mason, Whitbourne, and Vaughan appears.

Hayman writes, like his contemporaries, as a propagandist of the colonization of Newfoundland, and all their arguments recur in *Quodlibets*. He is conscious, however, that by the time of his work the earliest colonizers had already been

disappointed in their high hopes. In a verse which summarizes all the motives behind the endeavours to establish settlements, he reproves the London and Bristol company for failing to support its colony:

> What ayme you at in your *Plantation*?
> Sought you the *Honour* of our *Nation*?
> Or did you hope to raise your owne *renowne*?
> Or else to adde a Kingdome to a *Crowne*?
> Or *Christs* true *Doctrine* for to propagate?
> Or drawe Salvages to a blessed state?
> Or our o're peopled *Kingdome* to relieve?
> Or shew *poore men where* they may *richly live*?
> Or poore mens children godly to maintaine?
> Or aym'd *you at your owne sweete private gaine*?
> All these you had *atchiv'd* before this day,
> And all these you have balk't by your delay.

Similarly, he urges Falkland, Vaughan, and Willoughby to persist in their efforts despite setbacks which they have received, and holds up Lord Baltimore as the good example of a colonial proprietor who has actually settled in Newfoundland. He entreats Oxford and Cambridge to "send forth your Sonnes unto our *New Plantation*" in order to spread the gospel (p. 38), praises the Reverend Erasmus Sturton who had already ministered there, and, in a verse dedicated particularly to "*Mistris* Mason, *wife to Captaine* Mason, *who lived there divers yeeres*," he attempts to persuade women of the joys of life in the new land:

> *Sweet Creatures*, did you truely understand
> The pleasant life you'd live in *Newfound-land*,
> You would with *teares* desire to be brought thither:
> I wish you, when you goe, faire wind, faire weather:
> For if you with the passage can dispence,
> When you are there, I know you'll ne'r come thence.

In his zeal to overcome the current decline in interest, he urges the merits of Newfoundland even upon Henrietta Maria, asking her to make herself a "*second Isabell*" (p. 51), while in the prefatory epistle he makes implicitly a similar attempt to gain Charles' support, as he does more directly in his "Proposition".

Concerning his experience in Newfoundland and the conditions of life there Hayman provides disappointingly little detail, usually contenting himself with general assertions of the suitability of the island for settlement. He is anxious, as Mason and Whitbourne had been, to demonstrate that the climate is quite toler-

able for Englishmen, and he argues that it compares favourably with that of England itself, in a verse addressed "*To a worthy Friend, who often objects the coldnesse of the Winter in Newfound-Land*":

> You say that you would live in *Newfound-land*,
> Did not this one thing your conceit withstand;
> You feare the *Winters* cold, sharp, piercing ayre.
> They love it best, that have once wintered there.
> Winter is there, short, wholesome, constant, cleare,
> Not thicke, unwholesome, shuffling, as 'tis here.

He draws a similar contrast between the healthfulness of the new country and the disease-ridden Old World (addressing his lines this time "*To the right worthy Mistres*, Anne Vaughan, *wife to Doctor* Vaughan, *who hath an honourable desire to live in that Land*"):

> Those that live here, how young, or old soever,
> Were never vext with Cough, nor Aguish Feaver,
> Nor ever was the Plague, nor small Pox heere;
> The *Aire* is so salubrious, constant, cleere:
> Yet *scurvy Death* stalks heere with theevish pace,
> Knocks one downe here, two in an other place.

The punning allusion to scurvy, which somewhat weakens Hayman's case, is sufficiently accounted for, perhaps, by a verse on Newfoundland diet, written for a friend in Bristol:

> You askt me once, What here was our chiefe dish?
> In Winter, Fowle, in Summer choyce of Fish.
> But wee should need good Stomackes, you may thinke,
> To eate such kind of things which with you stinke,
> As *Ravens, Crowes, Kytes, Otters, Foxes, Beares,*
> *Dogs, Cats, and Soyles, Eaglets, Hawks, Hounds, & Hares*:
> Yet we have *Partriges*, and store of *Deare*,
> And that (I thinke) with you is pretty cheere.
> Yet let me tell you, Sir, what I love best,
> Its a *Poore-John* thats cleane, and neatly drest:
> There's not a meat found in the Land, or Seas,
> Can Stomacks better please, or lesse displease,
> It is a fish of profit, and of pleasure,
> Ile write more of it, when I have more leisure:
> There and much more are here the ancient store:
> Since we came hither, we have added more.[20]

Despite the eulogy of the "Poore-John" (or cod), the picture which emerges of Newfoundland is scarcely that of an earthly paradise. Hayman is both too naïve and too honest to be a very effective propagandist, as the rather unflattering imagery which he applies to the virgin land in the following lines illustrates:

> 'Tis said, wise *Socrates* look'd like an Asse;
> Yet he with wondrous sapience filled was;
> So though our *Newfound-Land* looke wild, salvage,
> She hath much wealth penn'd in her rustie Cage.
> So have I seene a leane-cheekes, bare, and ragged,
> Who of his private thousands could have bragged.
> Indeed she now lookes rude, untowardly;
> She must be decked with neat husbandry.
> So have I seene a plaine swarth, sluttish *Jone*,
> Looke pretty pert, and neat with good cloathes on.

Hayman displays great faith in the potentiality of Newfoundland, but he recognizes that his vision of its future is not to be achieved without labour, and he seldom confuses the vision with the actuality.

Writing with the enthusiasm customary in commendatory verses, George Wither professed to see in *Quodlibets* evidence that the muses could flourish in a new world, far from their traditional haunts:

> Why doe so many fondly dote upon
> *Parnassus, Tempe*, and that *Helicon*
> Renowned by the Greeks? why praise they so
> The *Muses* haunting *Tiber, Thame*, and *Po*;
> As if no other *Hill*, or *Grove*, or *Spring*,
> Should yeeld such *Raptures*, as these forth did bring?
> Behold, e'en from these uncouth shores, among
> Unpeopled woods, and hills, these straines were sung:
> And most of theirs they seeme to paralell,
> Who boast to drinke of *Aganippe's* well.
> Despaire not therefore, you that love the Muses,
> If any Tyrant, you, or yours abuses:
> For these will follow you, and make you mirth,
> Ev'n at the furthest Angles of the Earth,
> And those contentments which at home yee leese,
> They shall restore you among Beasts and Trese.

Wither's claim anticipates many that were to be made for the literature of the New World during the following centuries, but unfortunately, as the examples

which have been given sufficiently demonstrate, Hayman's verse is of a quite uninspired kind, and *Quodlibets* bears better testimony to his zeal for Newfoundland than to his imaginative power or literary ability. There is less evidence in it than in the prose of Mason and Whitbourne of an imaginative response to the new environment, no trace of that poetic skill which, according to Wood, won Hayman in his youth the encouragement of Drayton and Jonson, or of that wit, so essential to the epigram, which he was reputed to possess in his earlier years, and if there is humour it is of an unconscious variety. He makes it apparent, indeed, that he considers solidity of content more important than wit, and he tends to confuse the function of the epigram with that of the sermon, as the following lines imply:

> Sermons and Epigrams have a like end,
> To improve, to reprove, and to amend:
> Some passe without this use, 'cause they are witty;
> And so doe many Sermons, more's the pitty.

Concerned with matter more than manner, he defends his work thus:

> Though my *best lines* no dainty things affords,
> *My worst* have in them some thing else than words.

Hayman is quite aware, however, of the deficiencies of his verse, and he does not himself make so great a claim for it as Wither. Rather, he laments, with a modesty which is surely more than merely conventional:

> When I doe read others neate, dainty lines,
> I almost doe despaire of my rude rimes.

He recognizes in his address to "*Master* Benjamin Johnson, *Witty Epigrammatist, and most excellent Poet*" that his great contemporary far surpasses him in the genre in which he writes:

> My Epigrams come after yours in time;
> So doe they in conceipt, in forme, in Ryme.

The same modesty appears in his prefatory epistle to the king, where he describes his work as "some unripe eares of corne, brought by me from the cold Country of *Newfound-land*," and himself as "dull and aged," walking "with short turnes, leaning sometimes on others inventions." He states that he has attempted only "to testifie that the Aire there is not so dull, or malevolent, but that if better wits were transplanted thither, neither the Summers heat would dilate them, nor the Winters cold benumme them, but that they might in full vigour flourish to good

purpose," and he declares that his proof is "rather in hopes of others, than in any actuated performance of mine owne" (sigs. A2-A2^{V}). His own verse suggests that the muses were no more easily persuaded that the climate of Newfoundland was salubrious than the potential settlers to whom he addressed himself, but perhaps *Quodlibets* is best regarded as a declaration of faith in the literary destiny of the new land or as a challenge to the future. Hayman's humility gives way to pride when he sees himself as the earliest in a long succession of poets, which he believes will include those far greater than himself.

NOTES

[1] *Quodlibets* has received one recognition from a Canadian literary historian: it is the earliest volume catalogued by R. E. Watters in his *A Check List of Canadian Literature and Background Materials, 1628-1950* (Toronto, 1959).

[2] In quotations from the work of Hayman, Mason, Whitbourne and Vaughan the use of "u", "v", "i", and "j" has been modernized, but otherwise the spelling and punctuation of the originals have been retained. References given in brackets are to the first editions, all published in London except Mason's *A Briefe Discourse*, which bears an Edinburgh imprint.

[3] The first book published about Newfoundland appears to be Sir George Peckham's *A True Reporte, of the Late Discoveries, and Possession . . . of the New-found Landes* (1583), which relates to Sir Humphrey Gilbert's voyage. Several early accounts of Newfoundland were included by Hakluyt in his *Principal Navigations* (1589) and by Purchas in *Purchas his Pilgrimage* (1625).

[4] For accounts of these early colonies see D. W. Prowse, *A History of Newfoundland* (1896); A. P. Newton, "Newfoundland, to 1783," *The Cambridge History of the British Empire*, ed. J. H. Rose et al., VI (Cambridge, 1930), 119-45, and J. D. Rogers, *A Historical Geography of Newfoundland* (Oxford, 1931).

[5] In fact, however, the early settlements met with considerable opposition from fishermen based on the West Country of England, who regarded them, not without some cause, as attempts to monopolize the trade. See R. G. Lounsbury, *The British Fishery at Newfoundland* (New Haven, 1934), pp. 19-54.

[6] *A Discourse and Discovery* (1622), sig. R3^{V}, pp. 55-56.

[7] See C. W. Tuttle and J. W. Dean's *Captain John Mason, The Founder of New Hampshire* (Boston, 1887), which includes a reprint of *A Briefe Discourse* (pp. 143-58).

[8] See the autobiographical preface of *A Discourse and Discovery*, sigs. C-C4^{V}, and cf. the article on Whitbourne by E. I. Carlyle in *The Dictionary of National Biography, LXI* (1900), 23-24.

[9] *The Newlanders Cure* (1630), sig. A6^{V}. The "Epistle Dedicatory" of this volume contains some autobiographical passages.

[10] *The Newlanders Cure*, sig. A5^{V}.

[11] This Chaucer reference appears to have been overlooked by Caroline Spurgeon in her *Five Hundred Years of Chaucer Criticism and Allusion*, but the poet's role

in Vaughan's work is the one which she shows was commonly assigned to him in the earlier seventeenth century, that of Protestant reformer and supposed author of *The Plowman's Tale*. See *The Golden Fleece*, I, 110-31.

[12] See Wood's *Athenae Oxoniensis* (1691), I, 450, and the *D.N.B.*, LVIII (1899), 184-85.

[13] See Hayman's *Quodlibets*, pp. 32-33, and his "A Proposition of Profitt and Honor," to which reference is made below. Cf. Vaughan's *The Newlanders Cure*, sigs. A5-A8.

[14] Remaining long in manuscript, this work was published for the first time by G. C. Moore Smith in his "Robert Hayman and the Plantation of Newfoundland, *The English Historical Review*, XXXIII (1918), pp. 21-36. Moore Smith provides also some important biographical information, supplementing and correcting the lives of Hayman by Wood in *Athenae Oxoniensis* (I, 494) and by T. E. Jacob in *The Dictionary of National Biography* (XXV [1891], 297-98, and I have drawn upon his work in the two paragraphs below for details of Hayman's birth, parentage, and Bristol connections.

[15] Ed. Moore Smith, *EHR*, XXXIII, 31. Moore Smith seems to establish that Bristol Hope was distinct from the older Guy's colony, not a part of it, as historians of Newfoundland have usually assumed.

[16] Loc. cit.

[17] See *Quodlibets*, pp. 18, 43.

[18] *Athenae Oxoniensis*, I, 494.

[19] *The Golden Grove* (1600), sig. K.

[20] In a marginal note Hayman gives a little reassurance to his readers, explaining: "Dogs and Cats are fishes so call'd, and Hounds a kind of Fowle." "These" should probably be read for "There" in the penultimate line of the verse. *Quodlibets* is a carelessly printed volume.

MONTREAL POETS OF THE FORTIES

Wynne Francis

DURING THE WAR YEARS Stanley Street was the centre of Montreal's "little bohemia". In the section of Stanley between Sherbrooke and St. Catherine Streets stood a row of disreputable old tenements. Cheap rooms, blind pigs, private gambling clubs, bookies and numerous other nefarious enterprises thrived here. It used to be said that if you pushed the right buzzer and knew the password you could get anything illegal that you wanted at any time of day or night in that block. Shuttered and draped, the upper windows gave away no secrets. At street level shoe shine parlours, cheap restaurants, Jewish tailors and Chinese laundries crowded together, each blistering with bilingual signs. And up and down the sidewalk, catching soldiers and tourists like flies, strolled the girls, ignoring the complaints of the Y.M.C.A. authorities across the street. Painters and writers were to be found spotted through the tenements, in attics, in basements and in the back rooms of shops. The rent was cheap, the location central, the bookstores, art galleries and universities within walking distance.

This setting provided the backdrop for the activities of the young writers and artists later called the "First Statement Group". The notorious location lent atmosphere to the public image of these writers as "Montreal's Bohemians"; and talent and poverty, brash youthfulness, vociferous belligerence, their dishevelled personal appearance and irregular living habits gave the description further credibility.

The central figure, if not the leader, of the "First Statement Group" was John Sutherland. John came to Montreal from Saint John, New Brunswick, in 1941

to attend McGill University after a three year bout with tuberculosis. During his illness he had spent much time reading, writing poems, and corresponding with writers and editors of literary magazines both in Canada and abroad. By the time he arrived in Montreal, he was well acquainted with the Canadian literary scene and with modern American and British poetry. Shortly after arriving, he determined to launch a little magazine of his own and to this end he engaged the help of several undergraduates including R. G. Simpson and Mary Margaret Miller, and Audrey Aikman who later became his wife. Together, in 1942, these few friends turned out the first six or seven issues of an eight-paged mimeographed sheet which they named *First Statement.*

Sutherland's own talent lay not in creative writing (though he wrote poems and sketches) but rather in editorializing and criticism. He had a mission — to set Canadian writing on the right track — to provide an outlet for young talent whose work was fresh, close to experience and above all free from any kind of colonialism. He inspired in his colleagues a firm belief that no other magazine in Canada was thus oriented and their missionary zeal supported them throughout the first arduous year. But John soon found that he had no time left for classes at McGill; and unlike most "little mag" editors, he put the "little mag" first. He abandoned his formal studies within the year and concentrated his whole effort on the magazine. He was to spend the remainder of his life — a short fifteen years — at this chosen task and related publishing ventures.

It is doubtful, however, despite such zeal and dedication, that he and his original editorial board could have sustained their intentions for longer than the usual brief lifetime of a "little mag" had not a hat-check girl told a friend about her brother's venture into publishing. The hat-check girl was John's sister, Betty; the friend was the sister-in-law of Irving Layton.

Layton and his friend Louis Dudek had been writing and swapping ideas about poetry for a year or two. They had each had poems published in the *McGill Daily* and were seeking broader outlets. On a night that must be memorable for both, they walked together through the darkness over the long and beautiful Jacques Cartier bridge which stretches from east end Montreal across the St. Lawrence to the South Shore. The two young men talked poetry all the way, excited and tense, as if there might not be a next time soon enough. Irving was in uniform, billeted, for the time being, on the South Shore at Longueuil. Shortly after this, he was sent to Brockville and while there, heard from his sister-in-law about the new magazine in Montreal. The first poems of Layton's appearing in *First Statement* were sent from Brockville and appear in the 9th issue. Soon

after, on a trip to Montreal, Irving met Betty Sutherland whom he later married. And, upon Layton's discharge from the army, he and Louis Dudek joined forces with John Sutherland in the editing of *First Statement* magazine.

These three, Sutherland, Layton and Dudek, different as they were in many ways, formed the hard core of the "First Statement Group". They held some ideas in common about poetry in Canada and they dedicated themselves to promoting these views and their own talents in the pages of their magazine. They soon were publishing contributions from such important newcomers as Miriam Waddington and Raymond Souster. By 1943, the end of their first year of publication, *First Statement* had attracted writers from coast to coast and was making a distinctive contribution to modern poetry in Canada. By that time also, it had been threatened with a libel suit, attacked for its extreme views and violent verse, and become inextricably entangled with a rival Montreal magazine.

This rivalry was important. The tension set up between the two magazines generated much of the poetic activity that went on in Montreal and made the 'Forties Canada's most exciting literary decade.

THE RIVAL MAGAZINE, of course, was *Preview*. And if I were a scene-shifter now, I would replace the Stanley Street backdrop with a view of the McGill gates, the campus and stately buildings, with a shot of swank Sherbrooke Street, perhaps, and then one of the spacious lawns and lovely homes of Westmount. This would suggest the contrast in the backgrounds of the two magazines, but it wouldn't be exactly right. To get closer to the truth, there should be a shot, also, of rooms over a garage on a squalid side street below St. Catherine where *Preview* was conceived. Here, shedding their academic gowns along with many of their middle class conventions, the *Preview* editors gathered around Patrick Anderson, proletarian by choice, Canadian by desire, and poet aflame with purpose.

Out of this unlikely pastiche of settings, the polished, avant-garde *Preview* emerged, intermittently, over a period of five years, offering Canadian readers a sophisticated combination of modern poetry, party politics and editorial advice as to how we might shake off our colonial impotence and lethargy and claim our place in the cosmopolitan sun.

Preview was a year older than *First Statement*. From its beginning it had had

a confident, competent air about it, lacking the rawness and naïveté of the typical "little mag". It shared with *Contemporary Verse*, its Western counterpart, a conscious commitment to modern poetry but it had a distinguished, sophisticated tone of its own. It cultivated what A. J. M. Smith was to call (and what John Sutherland was to denounce) the Cosmopolitan Tradition. It had, too, an impressive roster of contributors. Names like Frank Scott, Neufville Shaw, Bruce Ruddick, P. K. Page, and later, A. J. M. Smith and A. M. Klein give some notion of the power and prestige that *Preview* commanded. These writers together with Anderson and some few others became known as the "Preview Group".

Despite the name, most of the "Preview Group" were not newcomers to the Canadian literary scene. Many of them had already, by 1941, gained considerable recognition. As far back as 1925, A. J. M. Smith and Frank Scott had founded the *McGill Fortnightly Review* which, though it lasted a bare two years, had devoted itself to introducing Canadian readers to the "new poetry". In 1936, the work of the "Montreal Poets" (Scott, Smith, Kennedy and Klein) was published together with poems by E. J. Pratt, L. A. Mackay and Robert Finch in the refreshing anthology *New Provinces*. Smith was well known, also, by the Forties, as a critic who had been calling for maturity and modernism in Canadian poetry for over a decade. And most of the other poets on the *Preview* roster had published frequently in such magazines as *Poetry Chicago, Canadian Forum* and *Queen's Quarterly*.

Apart from their achievements in poetry, the *Preview* poets were older, some by half a generation, than most of the *First Statement* writers. Most of them were well-educated, widely read, well-travelled; and by the early Forties, several of them were comfortably established professionally in the fields of teaching, law and medicine. They had status in the community, even dignity as public figures. Their accomplishments, age, prestige, sophistication and talent all combined to present an irresistible target for the raw, impecunious parvenus of Stanley Street.

It was the clear intention of the "First Statement Group", from the beginning, to challenge *Preview* and all it stood for. Indeed, it is claimed by some that *First Statement* magazine was conceived on the day that *Preview* rejected a poem submitted by John Sutherland. Be that as it may, the compulsion to challenge *Preview* had deeper causes and was much more complex than it first appeared.

The *Preview* elders in many cases represented father images. Several of them were McGill professors. Some members of the "First Statement Group" had literally gone to school to them. Irving Layton regarded A. M. Klein as a beloved mentor — and Dudek's respect for Scott was deep and lasting. Individually, like

indulgent fathers, members of the "Preview Group" showed a kindly interest in *First Statement* and gave encouragement, advice and support on many occasions.

Yet these overtures of friendship had an air of condescension. *First Statement* writers could not rid themselves of the belief that they were being patronized, that their *Preview* elders did not really take them seriously. Furthermore, while awed by *Preview*'s sophistication, *First Statement* people were suspicious of it. They detected an artificiality, an effete quality, in *Preview* verse which struck them as precious, like an exotic forced growth, lacking indigenous roots. With such convictions, they became acutely conscious of their own lack of polish; but such awareness only strengthened their compulsion to challenge. They set out to sharpen the distinctions between themselves and *Preview* wherever possible. Perhaps they even exaggerated their gaucheries both personal and literary by way of contrast, turning their lack of sophistication into virtues of simplicity and directness. Certainly they were driven to clarify and justify their own critical views and poetic practice to a degree which they might not have attempted, had *Preview* not existed.

The pages of *First Statement* reverberate for four years with attacks on and denouncements of *Preview*'s position. But, reading the pages of *Preview*, one could not have guessed it. For *Preview* was otherwise preoccupied. Editor Anderson, writing in the February, 1943, issue, declared "Two events of great importance to the writer have occurred in recent weeks. One is the Russian offensive, the other the conference at Casablanca . . ." and, he claimed, "Our task is clear: not only to help in the winning of the war by our literary work . . . but also to supply something of the personal, the graceful and the heroic to the atmosphere of this half-empty Dominion." The rude snorts from Stanley Street could not have reached his ears or if they did he would have shrugged them off as further evidence to support his point.

They did not, of course, meet each other with daggers in the street. On the contrary, more than cordial relations were maintained, on the surface at least; and in several instances lasting friendships cut across these lines of contention. The two groups occasionally joined forces to entertain a literary figure from out of town or from abroad. They sometimes held readings in each other's homes — sometimes in the large private houses of *Preview* supporters, sometimes in the humbler rented rooms and small apartments of *First Statement* people.

But in the pages of *First Statement* magazine, the attack went on. Looking back almost twenty years, it is difficult to sort out the real issues from the imagined ones. They were confused even then perhaps and certainly they were a mixture

of personal, literary, social and political.

Both groups, for instance, were politically conscious. The *Preview* poets were more doctrinaire, and more markedly committed to the Left in varying degrees. Many of them displayed strong sympathies with a continental communism of the Auden-Spender-MacNeice variety. Anderson's orientation was for a time thoroughly Marxist; and Scott was committed to the less revolutionary socialist ideals of the C.C.F. Much of the poetry that appeared in *Preview* had a clear political intention and a strong Leftist flavour.

First Statement writers objected not so much to the political ideas as to the subservience of poetry to politics. Yet their confusion on this point is illustrated by the following buck-shot blast from Dudek—

> *First Statement* does not deny that poetry may express matters which are not in themselves essentially poetry: matters geographical, sociological, etc. It even encourages literature which will reflect the atmosphere and currents of Canadian life. . . . But it underlines the "reacting honestly . . . first hand", as the chief concern of the poet.

and, he claims that much modern poetry (i.e., especially the *Preview* brand) is suffering from the following corruptions—

> (1) a clever aptitude for exploiting the unreal universe of language; (2) a pedantic absorption in the second-hand universe of books, literature and erudition; and (3) a falsified devotion to a special universe of ideas, chiefly sociological and political ones . . .
>
> By way of correctives, *First Statement* can suggest three slogans for the poet's masthead. No polyglot displays. No poetry about poets and poetry. No high party politics.

Dudek was speaking for the editorial board but it should be noted that in these days Sutherland showed little interest in politics, and Dudek's own political views were mild. It was Layton who held the most doctrinaire socialist views among *First Statement* writers.

"No polyglot displays. No poetry about poets." These grim injunctions are directed against two interrelated characteristics of *Preview* poets — their technical virtuosity and their devotion to the British moderns. Much of their poetry was in the tradition of Eliot, or after the manner of Sitwell, of Auden, and of Dylan Thomas. *Preview* poets excelled in tightly-structured metaphysical exercises, in sophisticated, witty satiric pieces of social comment, in highly metaphoric poems rich in Marxist and Freudian allusions. The cold, intricate brilliance of their

intellectual gymnastics and verbal legerdemain dazzled, awed and exasperated *First Statement* people. In their eyes, it was "precious", artificial. Moreover, it was imported; it was English. Which is not to say that *Preview* poets did not write of Canadian subjects, or use Canadian images. On the contrary, some of their most successful works do just this. But the manner was English and their masters were the modern British poets.

This is partly explained by the fact that several members of the "Preview Group" had been educated in England or had come to Canada comparatively recently and were quite naturally steeped in modern British poetry; while others, like Smith, had long maintained a predilection for Eliotian, metaphysical poetry, terse, elliptical, intellectual, literary.

By contrast, *First Statement* poets prided themselves on writing a masculine, virile "poetry of experience" — their own experience. They would not write of the phoenix and the hyacinth but of Berri Street and De Bullion. Scorning the artifice of metaphor and symbol, they preferred to shout huzzahs and hurl insults, to fight, spit, sweat, urinate and make love in their poems, and did so in a deliberate defiance of *Preview*. They eschewed all abstractions and swore that "words" would not come between their poetry and life. "Celebration, not cerebration" as Layton was later to phrase it.

They chose, as models, not the British poets, but the Americans, and sang the praises of Whitman, Masters, Frost, Sandburg and Hart Crane, writers who "reacted honestly . . . first hand". In a poem "On a bridge at Point St. Charles" (a near-slum district in Montreal) Dudek writes

> Well, well — Venice . . . and The Bridge of Sighs . . .
> Shall I batten on the moors
> Of a foreign culture? Hah!
> Here's the true germ
> Of a European renascence! . . .

The real bull's-eye of the *Preview* target, as *First Statement* saw it — was Patrick Anderson. Whatever degree of application there was, in the *First Statement* attacks, to other members of the *Preview* roster, it was certainly Anderson who was in the most direct line of fire.

Audenesque in appearance and mannerisms, Anderson also owed much to Auden in terms of poetic techniques and in the use he made of poetry to further socialistic ideals. His verbal facility and metaphoric pyrotechnics derived more from Dylan Thomas. If this were all, he would not have meant much more to

us than a transplanted Englishman of considerable poetic talent and sophisticated eccentricity.

But the fact is, that Anderson fell in love with Canada, and the heat of his passion glowed in his poetry. Not before, and not since, has he written as brilliantly as he did during his sojourn here. "Fell in love" is not quite the term. Canada fascinated him and if he loved it, he also feared it. He described it as "a great, white, empty prison" and saw it as a beautiful monstrous challenge which he must somehow meet. He felt towards the end that he had failed, that Canada had somehow won. His leave-taking was more like a baffled retreat and he retained the hope that he would return some day to the land that he wanted to call his own.

But while he was here the physical aspects of this country appealed to his imagination. Native-born readers of his poems are delighted and amazed in turn as they encounter in Anderson's imagery his vivid treatment of aspects of Canada's physical environment which we take for granted. Snow and ice, Mount Royal, skiers, skating and hockey, our great empty spaces, our lakes, have never been so brilliantly — exploited.

Exploited is the word. Anderson was not a nature poet. His Montreal mountain is a political symbol; snow is our chloroform and ice our state of social anæsthesia; skiers are capitalist entrepreneurs, or sometimes Leftist propagandists.

Anderson's influence on the *Preview* poets is clear. He acted, as is well known, like a catalyst among them. Under his influence, both personal and literary, they were stirred to experiment. Their poetry takes on a new depth of insight, new breadth of subject, a new intricacy of construction and new verbal textures.

Though Anderson himself and P. K. Page supplied the bulk of the poetry appearing in *Preview*, the remainder of the "Preview Group" contributed a creditable number of very good poems, indeed. To *First Statement* eyes, *Preview* presented a veritable galaxy of accomplished writers. They were more than impressed; they were also influenced more than they would admit at the time. Irving Layton had confided recently—

> Not that we wanted to be like them but we wanted to be as good as they were in our own way. It made us tougher than we would have been and provoked us into working harder than ever. I secretly read and studied Anderson's style and went back beyond it to his sources and models and I gained a great deal for myself in the process.

But at the time, frustration and envy too often reduced *First Statement* attacks

to the personal level. In Vol. 1, No. 19, Sutherland independently goes straight for the bull's-eye. In a lengthy criticism of Anderson's poems, he ignores the political dimension and concentrates on an analysis of Anderson's images of Freudian terms which make libellous suggestions about Anderson's private life. It was an illuminating study at many points, but intemperate and callous. If Anderson had been dead, Sutherland might have got away with it. But Anderson was far from dead. *First Statement* found itself threatened with a libel suit; and the very next issue — a delayed publication — carries a front page retraction, made, no doubt, grudgingly. John Sutherland was stubborn enough, but *First Statement* was not rich enough, to risk going to court.

By this time, as might be expected, the paternal interest shown by *Preview* members in the *First Statement* venture had cooled considerably, had turned indeed into a wary watchfulness. These snapping puppies had sharp teeth as well as loud barks. Furthermore, they now had something that *Preview* did not have.

In the very same issue that bore the retraction, Sutherland announced exultantly: "We Go To Press." — "The first printed issues of *First Statement* will appear within a few weeks . . . the new magazine will be issued as a monthly . . . new features will be added, including a review of Canadian books and literary magazines."

THE ACQUISITION OF THE PRESS had important consequences. The magazine took on some dignity, attracted new subscribers, and new contributions, some even from *Preview* poets. Its policy, however, remained the same and it kept its favourite set of opponents clearly in view. But apart from the magazine itself the press was used to begin an important publishing venture. Early in 1945 announcement was made of the first chapbook in a *New Writers Series* to be published by First Statement Press. The book was Irving Layton's first published volume *Here and Now*, redolent even in its title of his *First Statement* alliance.

But the choice of the second title for the series is a tribute to John Sutherland's devotion to literature. Patrick Anderson's *A Tent For April* was published by First Statement Press in 1946. It was followed, over the next few years, with Miriam Waddington's *Green World*, Raymond Souster's *When We are Young*, Anne Wilkinson's *Counterpoint to Sleep*, Kay Smith's *Footnote to the Lord's*

Prayer and a second volume by Layton, *Now is the Place*. Only now, looking back, can we appreciate the perspicacity and courage it took to claim for these writers a public hearing at a time when no commercial publisher would take the risk.

One other book published by First Statement Press has a significance of its own. *Other Canadians*, subtitled "An Anthology of the New Poetry in Canada 1940-46", is edited, with polemical introduction, by John Sutherland.

The book is puzzling to students of the period who are not familiar with its background. The title, of course, is a defiant reaction to another recently published anthology, A. J. M. Smith's *The Book of Canadian Poetry*. The poets that Sutherland chose to represent are the younger poets whom Smith overlooked or gave scant notice. Apart from a few new names, the seventeen poets in *Other Canadians* fall quite readily into two groups — *Preview* and *First Statement*. To this degree at least, Sutherland's acumen as an editor and publisher overrode his partisan interests. But he is quite clear, in Part II of his Introduction, about where his sympathies and hopes for the future of Canadian poetry lie. With poets like Layton, Dudek and Souster active, "The future in this country is already beginning to move."

What is different about the Introduction is Sutherland's championing of the cause of socialism — a socialism which will be truly national as opposed to colonial and which will be furthered most effectively by the "social realism" of the poetry of "proletarian" poets like Dudek, Layton and Souster.

This is a new note in Sutherland's criticism and if it does not ring true it is because Sutherland was not a socialist. He was at this period very closely associated with Irving Layton who was at the height of his Marxist phase; and it seems likely that Sutherland simply assumed the guise of a socialist as he understood it, the better to badger Bishop Smith. Having laid aside the disguise very soon after this, Sutherland was to look back on his Introduction with increasing embarrassment. It is probably the one critical article which he sincerely regretted having written and by 1950 he would have recalled all copies from circulation if he could have had his way.

John Sutherland, in private life, as a man, as a brother, husband, friend, was a kind, warm-hearted, rather shy, soft-spoken person. In appearance he might have been taken for a timid accountant. As a member of the literary world he made quite a different impression. Not an accountant in any sense, his bookkeeping was hopeless, he never made any money, his accounts were never in order and his files were in a perpetual state of confusion. His soft-spoken mild

manner was disarming and left one unprepared for the frequently caustic import of his remarks. When you had blinked and taken a second look you discovered that the set of his jaw was stubborn and his eyes mocking. What could be taken for a blush of shyness was more often the flush of anger. He was hot-headed and quick-tempered. He lived to argue and he gave no quarter. He had an astonish- range of profanity; he loved beer and cigars and could be quite a wild man at a party.

As an editor and publisher, he was courageous and dedicated but also ruthless, opinionated and high-handed. As a critic he was perceptive and analytical but too often brutally frank and intemperate. These very qualities, which fitted him well as the aggressive leader of the "First Statement Group", incurred the animosity of many others, and, combined with certain changes that took place in his thinking, eventually alienated even his closest confreres.

It is well to keep John Sutherland's personality in mind when trying to understand the next significant development in Montreal's literary world of the Forties. *First Statement* magazine, in its printed form, had appeared for two years, from 1943 to 1945. *Preview*, meanwhile, was issued sporadically in mimeograph, but its impetus had flagged noticeably. The war being over, political issues which had absorbed *Preview* editors were fading. Patrick Anderson's influence was dwindling, the initial shock of his techniques having been absorbed. But most important, *Preview* poets were increasingly preoccupied with their professions, and with publishing projects of their own, which left them little time for the magazine. Smith had published *News of the Phoenix* and *The Book of Canadian Poetry* in 1943; A. M. Klein, *Poems* and *The Hitleriad* in 1944; F. R. Scott, *Overture* in 1945; and P. K. Page, *As Ten as Twenty* in 1946.

In view of all this, a merger of the two little magazines seemed most practical. As the *Preview* people were likely to state it "We had the talent, and they had the press!" But it was a while before negotiations were concluded. Neither little magazine wishing to give up its identity, a new title had to be chosen. *Northern Review* was a neutral enough name and it presented to the public a deceptive impression of unity. One would not have guessed how carefully the editorial board was chosen to give equal representation to the same old constituencies of *First Statement* and *Preview*.

This equality, however, was rendered unreal from the outset by two significant facts — the new magazine was published by First Statement Press (operating now as an independent organization) and its managing editor was John Sutherland.

Northern Review was an ambitious project. It ran an average of forty pages, had a handsome format and carried poems, stories, articles, reviews and reproductions, accompanied by criticism of works by contemporary painters. Its list of contributors was a catalogue of Canada's best talents and during the ten years of its existence it won a reading audience that no literary magazine in Canada had so far been able to command.

The first issue appeared in January, 1946, and for four issues, thereafter, despite stormy editorial sessions, the uneasy alliance of *Preview* and *First Statement* factions was maintained. But in the sixth issue, managing editor Sutherland shattered it. In defiance of his editorial board, and without his regional editors' knowledge, John Sutherland printed his own review of Robert Finch's *Poems*, winner of the Governor-General's Award for 1946. The review was at once a withering and bitter denunciation of the judges who gave the award and a harsh criticism of Finch's work. It should be remembered that Robert Finch was an early colleague of members of the "Preview Group" and still commanded their respect and loyalty. Thus the attack on Finch, combined with the caustic, intemperate tone of the whole review, aroused the ire of the entire *Preview* bloc of *Northern Review*'s editorial board.

The very next issue of *Northern Review* carries a drastically reduced editorial roster and, on the last page, this notice:

> Certain changes have taken place in the editorial board of *Northern Review*, effective from the last issue. The following editors have resigned: Neufville Shaw, Patrick Anderson, A. M. Klein, F. R. Scott and A. J. M. Smith. Two regional editors, P. K. Page and Ralph Gustafson, have also resigned . . .
>
> The present editors are John Sutherland, R. G. Simpson, Mary Margaret Miller, John Harrison, Irving Layton and Audrey Aikman . . . We intend to carry on *Northern Review* in its present form.

In other words, by January 1948, the original "Preview Group" had virtually withdrawn from the merger, leaving Sutherland and the "First Statement Group" in control of *Northern Review*.

THIS WAS THE CLIMAX of the drama of poetry in Montreal in the Forties. The crisis over the Finch issue accelerated the decline of forces which

for seven or eight years had generated the most exciting and prolific poetic activity in Canada's history. Within two years, by 1950, the poets of both groups had dispersed, taking the divergent paths which private circumstance dictated. For some, like Patrick Anderson and P. K. Page, this meant leaving Canada; for others, poetic oblivion since they simply ceased to publish; others, continuing to write, were individually to achieve considerable recognition and success.

Meanwhile *Northern Review* continued to appear and for a year or two retained the interest of a growing list of subscribers and contributors. But it became increasingly the reflection of the tastes, opinions and radically changing ideas of one man.

About 1948, a certain souring had begun, in John Sutherland's views, which was to spread like a stain through all his thinking during the next few years, transforming his hopes for the future of Canadian letters into a complete and bitter disillusionment. The process was gradual, but as early as 1950 he had turned so far away from the beliefs with which he had begun his literary career that he had alienated even his *First Statement* friends. Irving Layton was among the last to go.

These changes in the editor's thinking are expressed, issue by issue, in *Northern Review*. In Vol. 4, No. 2, which appeared in January '51, Sutherland has an article entitled "The Past Decade in Canadian Poetry". It is perhaps the best of his critical essays; but the early Sutherland is barely recognizable in it. The tone is sombre, almost sad. He sums up the period to 1947 and then remarks "How suddenly it all changed! . . . What were the causes? Not *Other Canadians*, or my introduction to it: it went deeper than that." He explores some of the reasons for the decline in the late Forties, expresses his disappointment in what he considers the collapse of the movement, points to the new religious dimensions he senses in current poetry and says, with astonishing humility—

> I criticized Mr. Smith . . . [in *Other Canadians*] . . . for his religious emphasis . . . Well, I take it back . . . the event has shown that he was substantially right.

Later in the same essay he says:

> It is generally better for the poet to accept than oppose the values inherent in his society . . . and for the Canadian poet not to completely ignore his relation to the tradition of poetry in Canada . . . The question is whether the poet can find a new point of stability and re-discover the basic moral and religious values of our society.

This is a new Sutherland, one so changed as to baffle his closest friends. Relations with Irving Layton, strained for some years on several levels, were at this point broken off completely. It is significant that in this issue of *Northern Review*, Layton's name does not appear on the masthead. Nor, in his otherwise balanced, perceptive review of the Forties and predictions for the Fifties, does Sutherland so much as mention Layton's name — a lamentable omission, to say the least, in view of Layton's early connection and subsequent success.

The ensuing issues of *Northern Review* turned away from contemporary Canadian writing, from political radicalism, from experimental modernism. The magazine became increasingly international, conservative, traditional, as Sutherland the man moved steadily towards disillusionment, orthodoxy and death.

The mid-Fifties found John Sutherland a lonely, embittered man. He had long lost his belief in his own creative powers. His efforts to establish *Northern Review* on a sound economic basis had failed miserably. First Statement Press had had to be shut down for lack of funds. His old friends in Montreal had been driven away one by one. And when he left for Toronto in 1954, in a desperate effort to make a fresh start, he was already physically ill with the disease from which he was to suffer so much.

In the year of his death, he was sustained mainly by three things — his devotion to the poetry of E. J. Pratt, the love of Audrey Aikman, his wife, and his new-found peace in a very old religious faith. The magazine died with him in 1956. It was his own wish that *Northern Review* should not survive him.

The demise of John Sutherland and the extinction of *Northern Review* provide a tragic anti-climax to the story of poetry in Montreal in the Forties. One should, perhaps, backtrack, to 1945 to discover the true significance of the movement at its peak. The fact is that the interaction of the two magazines had created a milieu in which good writing was able to thrive. Close communication, diverse views, a variety of talents, sharp criticism, and publishing outlets combined to produce an unprecedented volume of good poetry and gave us, by the Fifties, at least one poet of considerable stature. The emergence of Irving Layton as Canada's most significant, and most controversial, poet, is best understood against this background. The Forties were Layton's formative years. "I was lucky", he says now, "to have known them all — so many exciting personalities, living poetry twenty-four hours a day, thinking, talking, analyzing, arguing, reading and above all writing. I learned something from every one of them."

THE HYBRID COMIC

Origins of Sam Slick

V. L. O. Chittick

THE SPEECH of Haliburton's clockmaker, Sam Slick, far from being the "genuine Yankee" it has often been held to be, is as palpably synthetic as his person. Not that Haliburton could not have heard the real thing spoken in his native environment. His forebears on the parental side, with whom he lived in close contact, were "tolerable pure" New Englanders, "about one half apple sauce, and t'oher half molasses". Since they came, however, from what Haliburton termed "the gentry" class in contrast to "the mob" in their pre-Revolutionary homeland, it is doubtful if much more than an occasional Yankee phrase was heard in even their most intimate family circle, though their ears were surely well attuned to the idiom of "down East" country folk. But that Haliburton himself had plentiful opportunity to listen to that type of drawling loquacity we know from his account in *The Old Judge* of the annual spring-time arrival on the South Shore of Nova Scotia of a miscellaneous assortment of itinerant Yankees, including, besides circus performers and crews, quacks, and promoters, pedlars with their usual stocks of "notions". And he could also have listened to it closer to home, in the talk of the sailors on board the Yankee "hookers", that were often obliged to lay-up at Windsor just across the street from the house where he was born, while awaiting their turn to sail up-stream to take on their loads of "plaister" from the still-worked quarries along the St. Croix river.

The subjects toward which the moral of Sam Slick's long-winded yarnings was most persistently pointed Haliburton found readily at hand and everywhere about him. These were, in his earlier satirical-humorous works, the rising tide of

colonial complaint against the unrepresentative form of government in Nova Scotia and the poverty-stricken condition of the shiftless Jack-of-all-trades Bluenoses, as he depicted them, who habitually voiced that complaint. His later works, the provincial government having been reformed, were confined chiefly to the second of these topics. (During his middle period he departed from this pattern to consider current affairs in both the United States and Great Britain.) In presenting the more steadily recurring half of his double theme of what he vigorously maintained were the ruinous faults of the "lower orders" among his fellow colonists, Haliburton had a distinguished predecessor who could, and did, show him a gentler, though unheeded, way of correcting those faults. This was the Rev. Dr. Thomas McCulloch in his series of *Stepsure Letters,* contributed to the Halifax *Acadian Recorder* intermittently from 1821 to 1823. McCulloch, like Haliburton, employed for his principal spokesman — the biblically named cripple Mephibosheth — a comic dialect. But it was a dialect common in Nova Scotia, not a pretended imitation of one spoken by transient visitors there. Haliburton's choice of a clock-peddling Yankee, with a well-established reputation for long-headed "cuteness" in driving a bargain, to lampoon the down-in-the-mouth, out-at-heels Bluenoses into some awareness of the ridiculous figure they cut by always blaming everyone but themselves for their economic plight was a stroke of genius. Yet it can hardly be regarded as original.

Sam Slick, save for his clockmaking skills, was obviously modelled closely after Jack Downing, the creation of a State of Maine journalist, Seba Smith. Jack Downing made his first appearance in print as a gawky-looking country bumpkin sent into town to peddle a load of farmer's wooden by-products, axe-handles, hoop-poles, and the like. After proving himself no fool in a trade, he wandered into the locally sited legislative halls, and observing the amazing amount of political stupidity being enacted there, wrote a letter about it to the folks "back home." It was by means of this letter that Smith, early in 1830, undertook to regale the readers of his newspaper, the Portland *Daily Courier,* who by then had become completely disgusted with their lawmakers' indifference to civic welfare. Its success was instantaneous. All Portland laughed, and clamoured to be still further diverted. Other letters followed in response to this demand. As they increased in number their fame spread.

Jack Downing's social status heightened with his reputation. Commissioned in turn captain and major in the Downingville militia, he was sent to the disputed territory between Maine and New Brunswick to report on the progress (and futility) of events there. Later he became the private adviser of President Jackson,

and in that capacity accompanied the Chief Executive on his once much chronicled hand-shaking tour "up North." By that time in spite, or because, of his creator's using him to ridicule the Jacksonian administration, he had attained a truly national celebrity, and shortly afterward his popularity having led to an unwarranted reprinting of his opinions, his *Life and Writings* was issued as a protection against the altogether too complimentary circulation of Smith's uncopyrighted "down East" wisdom. To quote the publishers' Preface to the second edition of this work, the letters of Jack Downing "were copied into every paper all over the land, and his name was in everybody's mouth. Next to General Jackson he was decidedly the most popular man in the United States."

Imitations of the original Jack Downing letters appear to have been legion. Most conspicuous among these spurious communications, and rivalling if not equalling the successes of the genuine, were those contributed by Charles A. Davis, a New York iron and steel merchant, to the New York *Daily Advertiser* during 1833-34, and in the latter year collected and published under the title of *Letters of J. Downing, Major, Downingville Militia.* While in Attic cleverness they were but slightly inferior to their prototypes, the undoubted favour which these simulated epistles of a secondary Jack Downing enjoyed was perhaps as much due to lucky accident as to merit. Living where he did, Davis found it possible to get his satires on the passing parade of political and other events of interest before the metropolitan public several days in advance of those of his State of Maine inspirer, with which they seem to have been indiscriminately confused and praised. But though both Smith and his publishers protested with much resentment against the unfair use of the name "Downing" by others, it had no discernible effect in checking the outpouring of Davis's "rascally conterfeits".

With two streams of this distinctly new brand of Yankee humour thus combined in full flood, not to mention the countless trickles from various unknown sources helping to swell the tide, it is no wonder that the merry torrent of literary production emanating from "Downingville" suddenly broke through its former bounds and overflowed from the United States into the British American colonies and Great Britain, and that as a consequence from 1833 on Jack Downing letters were copied and read in both these countries with as much avidity as in the land of their origin.

HALIBURTON'S OBLIGATIONS to the epistolary humours of the Jack Downing vogue constitute the most obvious of his literary indebtednesses. However consistently ignored in recent years, they were well enough known among his contemporaries to be freely and frequently made the subject of comment. Moreover there is evidence to show that not only was Haliburton not unfamiliar to his fellow Nova Scotians as "the Jack Downing of British America," but that he was also commonly believed to have endeavoured to become such. And he himself, though perhaps with quite other intentions, pointed pretty clearly to the most likely source of a much favoured part of his Yankee entertainment, when at the testimonial dinner ostensibly given him by his Haligonian admirers in 1838 as the Historian of Nova Scotia (but in actuality a vain attempt to stem the raging torrent of local newspaper abuse directed against him for his indiscreet attacks on Lord Durham, the vice-regal advocate of reform in colonial government) he responded to the toast to Sam Slick by proposing one to "J. Davies, Esq., the author of Major Jack Downing," who, he explained, was a "friend" of Sam Slick's that the Americans were "considerable proud of," "most popular in England," and "highly esteemed in the colonies". Whether this seemingly generous reference to "J. Davies" may be interpreted as an acknowledgment of his dependence for either inspiration or material in the shaping of Sam Slick upon any or none of the numerous exponents of the Downingesque style in humorous composition, the fact remains, as the publishers of *Jack Downing's Letters* remarked, that "had Major Downing never written the public would never have heard of Sam Slick." And, in spite of his apparently meaning to pay tribute to Charles A. Davies when he named the otherwise unidentifiable "J. Davies", it is not to the skilful copyist but to the true originator of Jack Downing that Haliburton owed his chief debt in creating Sam Slick.

From Seba Smith, in the first place, came the suggestion of a "live" Yankee among the Bluenoses, imparting for their guidance much needed advice in politics and still more useful concerns, just as Jack Downing was doing for his state and nation. It was from Seba Smith also that many of the comic devices employed by Haliburton for the amusement of his readers in the *Clockmaker* series were derived. Jack Downing's father, for instance, never wearies of telling over and over his Revolutionary War experiences at the "fatigue of Burgwine," while the elder Slick never tires of recounting his exploits at the Battle of Bunker Hill. Jack Downing attempts to trace his ancestry from Sir George Downing of England, and Sam Slick's father visits England for the express purpose of proving his

descent from the "Airl" of Tunbridge. Jack Downing indulges in the hope of getting an opportunity to "flog the whole British nation," and Sam Slick cherishes no illusions about a good American's ability to "lick" his full share, if not more, of that "consaited" people. Both Yankees aspire to the Presidency of the United States, and both raise themselves to positions that justify that ambition, Jack Downing becoming the confidant of General Jackson, and Sam Slick accepting the appointment of "attachy" to the American minister at London. Again from Seba Smith there were often extracted the various stray items of information which Haliburton called into requisition in his discussions of, or allusions to, such definitely American topics as the threat of nullification, the expected failure of the United States Bank, the political aspirations and oratorical eloquence of Daniel Webster, the terrors of May Day moving in New York City, and the conditions prevalent among the manufactories and factory "gals" "to Lowell."

Had Haliburton followed Seba Smith in the art of transcribing the Yankee dialect, the hearing of which, as we have seen, must have been a happening of almost every day occurence in Nova Scotia, as carefully as he did in these other respects, it would have been the better for Sam Slick's credibility, for Smith had an undoubtedly well-deserved reputation for fidelity to the speech of his "down East" countrymen, and depended upon his genuine Yankee wit rather than on ludicrous misspellings to provoke the smiles of his readers. Unfortunately from the point of view of realism, Haliburton, who was prone to laying his colours on thickly, chose the easier method of caricature and grotesqueness, and fashioned his recording of Sam Slick's language, in so far as it was tolerable Yankee at all, upon what he presumably found in the Jack Downing letters of Charles A. Davis, who to a much greater degree than Smith resorted to perversions and distortions of New England pronunciation in pursuit of his comic effects. Apart from this probable borrowing of some slight share of his dialect humours, Haliburton seems to have been beholden to Davis for practically nothing.

Haliburton's ill-assimilated borrowings give substance to the angry rejection by Professor (later President) C. C. Felton of Harvard of Sam Slick as a passably representative Yankee. Felton, to be sure, was prejudiced against Haliburton for mercilessly exposing the hollowness of the far-famed omniscient sounding rhetoric of Edward Everett, the American ambassador at the Court of St. James (and Felton's friend) as that of the "Sockdolager" in *The Attaché*. Still, angry though he was, he had too high a reputation as a discerning critic of Yankee mannerisms to warrant one's brushing aside his opinions regarding their genuineness. Nevertheless he went on to admit that Sam Slick was "widely circulated" and

"praised" in the United States. James Russell Lowell, than whom there was then no better authority on New England characterization, stated in the Introduction to his *Biglow Papers* that he "had always thought 'Sam Slick' a libel on Yankee character, and a complete falsification of Yankee modes of speech." And G. W. Curtis in one of his "Easy Chair" essays placed Sam Slick in the category of "extravaganzas and caricature" of American character-types "seen without imagination and drawn without skill".

ODDLY ENOUGH, none of these repudiators of Sam Slick's authenticity puts a finger on the one ingredient in his make-up that most emphatically proclaims him as no true Yankee. This was the ever recurrent intrusion into his speech of the western "ring-tailed roarer's" lusty idiom. The archtypical roarer was, of course, Davy Crockett, whether actual or mythical. (Given time, Davy was both.) The ring-tailed "half horse, half alligator" Kentucky river-man brawler when genuine would rather fight than eat; when spurious he merely boasted that he would. Both sorts announced themselves as ready for a fistic (or any other kind of rough-and-tumble) encounter by going through a ritual of neighing like a stallion, or crowing like a rooster, and flapping their "wings." The roarers' bravado, too, often fell into the ritualistic mode. Mock or real dire threats of bodily injury and vaunts of physical prowess were phrased to terminate in some variant of the formula "I hope I may be shot [or meet with an equally horrendous fate] if I don't [or if I can't] . . ." Crockett made his initial entry into extended print in the anonymous and partly apocryphal *Sketches and Eccentricities* of 1833, and his next in the *Narrative* of his life, allegedly written by himself, 1834. (Whoever wrote the former almost certainly wrote the latter, in each case with the help of a "ghost".) Within a year of the publication of these books, Haliburton in Nova Scotia was familiar with the first, and perhaps with both, and was drawing upon their common store of Crockett yarns and jests before the serialization of Sam Slick's soon to be famous "Sayings and Doings" was more than barely begun.

From the first *Clockmaker* on through *The Season-Ticket* the trail of Crockett's influence can be plainly traced in every one of Haliburton's humorous works, with the exception of *The Letter-Bag*. No later than the third chapter of the

earliest *Clockmaker* Sam Slick refers to "Col. Crockett as the greatest hand at a flam in our nation." Davy's valediction to his constituents after they had failed to return him to Congress, concluding with "You may all go to Hell, and I'll go to Texas," is summarized and praised in *The Attaché*. His insistent motto "Go ahead" is urged by Sam Slick on anyone who will listen to him, no fewer than sixteen times each in three of his creator's volumes. Davy's addiction to stump oratory, or to "speakin' off a whiskey barrel," is recalled in two of Sam Slick's allusions to "politickin'," and once he reminds his hearers that Davy was as physically formidable as he was forensically eloquent. "Lord bless you," he said, while bragging of how "we [Americans] licked the British when we had only three millions of people," "we have fellows like Crockett that would sneeze a man-of-war right out of the water."

Of Sam Slick's employment of the ring-tailed roarers' boast formula the instances are innumerable. (The unexplained referents in the following examples are of no significance in the present context.) "I'll teach him the road to good manners) if he can save eyesight to see it — hang me if I don't." "I'll put you on trial so sure as you are born; I hope I may be skinned alive by wild cats if I don't." "I am a pickaxe, and will dig you out of your hole like a badger, I hope I may be gouged, if I don't." And, slightly varied, "If they had dared to venture that sort of work in Old Hickory's time, I hope I may be skinned alive . . . if he wouldn't have blowed every cursed craft they have clean out of the water." "I hope I may be darned to all darnation, if I would n't chaw up your ugly mummified corpse, hair, hide, and hoofs this blessed minute as quick as I would mother's dough nuts." Sam Slick himself was once called a "very ring-tail roarer . . . a rigular sneezer." Though he denied the charge as spoken ironically, he was capable to asseverating on his own: "We can out-talk thunder, out-run a flash of lightning, and out-reach all the world — we can whip our weight in wild cats." And in the third *Clockmaker* he introduced a full-scale specimen of the roaring breed (though a phony one), symbolically labelled Lucifer Wolfe, bragging ". . . you will find me just a leetle the ugliest colt you ever undertook to brake [*sic*], there is no back out in me, for I'm a snappin' turtle, so you'll fight or play, that's a fact, and no two ways about it, so take your choice, for I feel intirely wolfish and savagerous, and have half a mind to give you a tickler [bowie knife] in the ribs that will make you feel monstrous amiable, and set you a considerin', I tell you." To that extended display of ill-natured belligerency Sam Slick's tongue-in-the-cheek comment was, "Only thinkin' of fightin' such a ring-tail roarer as that, nearly broke two of my ribs short off."

Eventually Sam Slick, as might be predicted from what we have seen of his evolution, or rather of the multiple changes in his line of talk, approached the standing of a fully accepted "out West" folk-hero. Witness the broadside *Sam Slick, the Yankee Pedlar,* hawked about the streets of London in the early 1860s, its verse, sung to the tune of "Yankee Doodle," alternating with spoken prose passages. Two brief excerpts from the latter will serve to illustrate its special quality:

> . . . Now look at me. I'm cast iron all over, and pieced with rock. One of my blows is either sudden death, or long sickness. If I was to hit a fellow it would knock him into mortal smash, and it 'ud take about eternity to pick up all the pieces — it would, I reckon! We Yankees are a tarnation 'cute race; we make a fortune with the right hand, and lose it with the left. I'm half fire, half love, and a little touch of the thunderbolt! . . . I — Sam Slick the Yankee Pedlar — can ride on a flash of lightning and catch a thunderbolt in my fist. I've the prettiest sister and the best shooting rifle in all Virginia. I'm the most glorious, original, and never-to-be-forgotten, smash-biler-bu'sting, free and enlightened nigger-whipping Pedlar as ever was raised, and no soft-sawder. So, go-ahead.

A comparison of these samplings with two fragments of Davy Crockett "flyting" at his ring-tailed best shows how closely the popular version of Sam Slick merged with its exemplar:

> I'm that same David Crockett, fresh from the backwoods, half horse, half alligator, a little touched with the snapping-turtle; can . . . ride upon a streak of lightning and slip without a scratch down a honey locust; can whip my weight in wild cats, . . . hug a bear too close for comfort, and eat any man opposed to Jackson. . . .

> Ain't I the yaller flower of the forest? And I am all brimstone but the head and ears, and that's aqua-fortis. . . . [Now] you know what I'm made of. I've got the closest shootin' rifle, the best coon dog, the biggest ticlur, and the ruffest racking horse in the district. I can kill more lickur, fool more varmints, and cool out more men than any man you can find in all Kentucky.

Sam Slick, as Haliburton said of him, was indeed "quite a character." But even so, and long before the folk took him over, his manner of speaking clearly reveals that he was no genuine, "down East", Yankee comic.

THE ABORIGENE IN CANADIAN LITERATURE

Notes by a Japanese

Keiichi Hirano

I REMEMBER READING with interest and even with fascination the following remarks of Marius Barbeau:

> A rich vein for poetic inspiration lies within native themes and surroundings. The writer, the painter, and the musician may discover treasures in this virgin field of human endeavour, so far untrodden. In the conflict between aboriginal races and the white conquerors, thinkers and moralists will find wide vistas on every side. The door is wide open for all to enter who would rather venture into new avenues than blindly follow the herd in beaten trails.
>
> (*The Downfall of Temlaham*, 1928.)

Another remark which caught my attention at about the same time was that of Diamond Jenness, another noted Canadian anthropologist. After surveying in detail the interaction of Indians and whites, he had this to say:

> Culturally they [the Indians] have already contributed everything that was valuable for our own civilization beyond what knowledge we may still glean from their histories concerning man's ceaseless struggle to control his environment.
>
> (*Indians of Canada*, Fifth edition, 1960.)

This, of course, does not mean that literature has nothing more to gain from the Indians. Yet there does seem a considerable difference in emphasis between the remarks of these two writers. One appears to be saying that there are still treasures to be discovered, the other to be denying it. Not only here, but in many other cases these anthropologists have shown that their approaches differ somewhat.

Barbeau is the more literary and romantic, Jenness the more scientific and sober. (The latter's article, "Indian Background of Canadian History", seems to me one of the best antidotes against the "noble-savage" concept of Indians.)

Even when reading books on Indians by other writers I have found myself constantly falling back on Barbeau and Jenness. Perhaps no-one will disagree with me when I say that Canadian Indians seem to be far better treated in the works of anthropologists than in literature. I would certainly refer anyone who is curious about the aborigenes of this country to the works of Barbeau and Jenness rather than to the writings of Richardson or Mair. Yet an anthropologist can write as a creative writer, as in the case with Barbeau (cf. *The Downfall of Temlaham*, *Pathfinders of the North Pacific*, etc.) and a novelist may not infrequently write like an anthropologist as, for example, is the case with John Richardson (cf. *A Trip to Walpole Island and Port Sarnia*, written 1848, published 1924). So we should not be too particular about the distinction. There certainly seems to be little sense in excluding the works of Barbeau from Canadian literature.

Indeed, if we insist on excluding the anthropologists from our treatment of Indians in Canadian literature, what have we left? One can think of Canadian writers who have in one way or another dealt with the Indians — Mrs. Frances Brooke in her *History of Emily Montague*, Howe in his *Acadia,* Mair's *Tecumseh, A Drama*, Richardson's *Wacousta*, Hunter Duvar's *De Roberval*, D. C. Scott's numerous Indian poems, Pratt's monumental *Brébeuf and His Brethren*, Birney's *The Trial of a City*, to give the names of the few which I can recall instantly. Indians do have a place in Canadian literature. But when one considers the whole current of that literature, one must admit that it is a secondary place. They belong to the peripheral or the merely ornamental; their chief function seems to be that of adding colour and flavour to the central theme, whatever it may be.

When, after some wandering around in search of "treasures" I did not discover, I turned to D. C. Scott, I realized that after all his Indian poems remain unsurpassed, at least in Canadian literature. Beginning as a temporary copying clerk, D. C. Scott worked with the Department of Indian Affairs for more than fifty years and served the last eighteen years as the administrative head of the department. Thus he was able to know the Indians in a way few other Canadian writers could.

"The Forsaken", which is usually and with justice regarded as the best of Scott's Indian poems, is really a small masterpiece. The contrast between the Indian woman's youth and old age, and that between the cruel mores of society

and her warm human affection, add up to a moving and haunting piece of art. But perhaps the reason the poem particularly caught my attention was the familiarity of the theme itself — the deserting of old and useless members of society. This custom, which was formerly not unusual among the Eskimoes, was also prevalent in Japan centuries ago. In central Japan we still have a mountain called "Oba-sute-yama" (literally: Old-woman-deserting-hill). There are folk-stories dealing with filial sons who just could not face the problem of having to desert their mothers. A few years ago a Japanese guitarist-and-writer, Fukazawa Shichiro published a short novel titled *The Song of Narayama* dealing with this theme; it instantly became a sensational best-seller. Though the parent-deserting custom was abolished long ago (people even pretended the custom had never existed), the story shook our Japanese complacency. I myself remember the weird and uneasy feeling it evoked in me when I first read the story — more piercing and more haunting than Scott's "The Forsaken" because it dealt with our own latent mores. I have at hand neither the original Japanese text nor its English translation (by D. Keene) so I cannot quote from it, but the similarity of Scott's poem with *The Song of Narayama* in spirit and evocation is astonishing. In Scott's poem towards the end, that is on the third night after the woman has been left to die alone, we have the following description:

> Then on the third great night there came thronging and thronging
> Millions of snowflakes out of a windless cloud,
> They covered her close with a beautiful crystal shroud,
> Covered her deep and silent.

In *The Song of Narayama*, when the son finally carries his old mother to the hills to forsake her, it begins to snow heavily. The heavy white snowfall, contrasted with the black of the carrion crows, was one of the most haunting and impressive descriptions of the Japanese version. Fukazawa did not know Scott's poem (Scott is practically unknown in Japan), so of course this is mere coincidence. But sometimes when comparing Indian customs with those of rural (or ancient) Japan I am often made to realize that there is something more than mere coincidence. After all the Indians are supposed to be of Asiatic origin, so this is nothing to wonder at.

To return to Scott's poem. The part of the poem I felt unnecessary — or unnecessarily Christian — was the ending:

> Then all light was gathered up by the hand of God and
> hid in His breast.

Here Scott was apparently not thinking of a pagan Indian Manitou. I know that many aborigines were converted to Christianity and also that Scott himself was a devout man of faith. However, Christian moralizing sometimes seems to spoil Scott's poetry. In "The Forsaken", God was uncalled for.

What about Scott's general attitude towards the Indians? There is no doubt that Scott understood the Indians well. But on the whole his attitude does not seem to have gone much beyond that of a well-meaning and conscientious government official. (Or should I say white man official?) The Indians, if not inferior to the white race, were of "a weird and waning race" ("The Onondaga Madonna") with "the tragic savage" lurking in their faces. In *The Administration of Indian Affairs in Canada*, the paper he prepared for the Fourth Bi-Annual Conference of The Institute of Pacific Relations (held at Hangchow from October 18th-November 3rd, 1931), as deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, Scott gives a concise and well-balanced description of the present and former situation of Canadian Indians. However, as is to be fully expected, the paper is after all written in defense and justification of the British and subsequently the Canadian way of Indian administration which has proved to be much more humane than the Spanish or French way. For example:

> . . . to Britain alone belongs the credit, if credit there be, of recognizing an inherent aboriginal interest in the soil whence arose what we now call the Indian title.

He also believes that the Canadian management of Indians may be deemed a "success" and that

> all [Indians] have had their needs provided for and the [Canadian] Government has more than fulfilled the letter of its obligations.

Here is a touch of complacency which one might expect from a government official but not from a poet. Scott is also aware of the dark side of the picture and offers some solutions for the plight of the hunting and fishing Indians, but sometimes he is able to say that "these conditions, needless to say, are not within the control of this department." One must not confuse Scott the government official with Scott the poet, but there is no evidence that privately as a poet he took a completely different view. In an earlier article "The Last of the Indian Treaties" (*Scribners' Magazine*, December 1906), referring to the status of Indians dealing with the fur-traders, Scott is perceptive enough to declare that "it is evident that he [the Indian] is but a slave, used by all traders alike as a tool to provide wealth, and therefore to be kept in good condition as cheaply

as possible." But Scott is never aroused to a humanistic or crusading kind of anger for the Indians. He seems to have remained throughout his life a believer in the Canadian or the white man's way of administering the Indians and the general approach to Indians inherent in that kind of administration. He never doubted that his department was working for the well-being of the Indians. There is nothing wrong in this attitude and I am by no means criticizing Scott's stand. (It would be like criticizing Charles Lamb for not opposing the British Indian policy when he worked at East India House.) I am just saying that Scott's approach to the Indians was fundamentally an aloof one; be kind and take good care of them — a "humane society" attitude; one might say. It also seems to lack critical insight. That the present established way of treating Indians (allotting them a reservation to live on) leads inevitably to a kind of ghettoization never seems to have entered Scott's mind.

Yet, say what one will, one cannot deny the fact that Scott's Indian poems have charm, dignity, music and evocative power. And what more does poetry need? Scott's official complacency and aloofness, his lack of anthropological insight (if such an expression may be used) do not in the least detract from the intrinsic value of the poems. At least not as much as the occasional Christian overtone for which he seems to have a certain weakness.

I WOULD NEXT LIKE to look briefly into the works of a poet named Wallace Havelock Robb. W. H. Robb is the author of *Indian Christmas Carol* (1940), *Thunderbird* (1949), *Tecumtha* (1958) (all published by Abbey Dawn Press, Kingston, Ontario) and others. I came upon this poet by accident, wandering about the stacks of the library. To give the conclusion first, it was only after reading Robb's works that I came to realize how good Scott's poems are. In contrast to Scott's aloofness from the Indians, here we have Robb's self-glorifying identification (he has been initiated into the Mohawk Indians and given the sacred name Gon-*rah*-gon O-*don*-yoh *Go*-wa, meaning "Great White Eagle"). In contrast to Scott's classical restraint, we have Robb's ebullient disorder — one may even go as far as to say that in contrast to Scott's poetry, we have here sheer bombast.

Nevertheless, Robb's poetry (or whatever it is) is not without interest. It is a heroic attempt to interpret and restore to life the mythology and spirit of the

Indians. His works are based on years of strenuous research (seventeen years for *Thunderbird* and thirty years for *Tecumtha*, so he says). His good intent and seriousness none can doubt.

Thunderbird is "a historical novel inspired by the author's original discovery of hitherto hidden Mohawk lore on the Kente (Bay of Quinte)." It is a story of a Viking youth, Ron-wa-ya-na, captured by the Mohawks, his escape with his Indian lover, and the return of their son O-do-ne-o years later to become the leader of the Mohawks. According to the author the legend of pre-historic Vikings on the Great Lakes is an authentic one. *Thunderbird* is no mere fantastic fiction. The story itself is not too complicated and the reader with a little patience will be able to follow it. But the author seems to aim too much at authenticity. He wants to make the mood as genuinely Indian as possible, thus putting in a plethora of Indian characters all with Indian names (fifty-five in all) and many unnecessary (so it seems) Indian expressions.

Robb's description and presentation of Indian (or rather Mohawk) oratory is probably authentic — he at least seems to be well-versed in the Mohawk tongue. But his English, or rather his English rendering of the Mohawk tongue, seems to be far from faultless. For example, look at the following lines:

> What more fitting to a life growing old in the fames of peace, than that its flaming glory, merged as a leaf in this great fire, should fall, forever a part of it, that it might be lived and loved, worshipped and possessed in Kente's wonted peace forevermore! (*Thunderbird*, p. 64).

or

> Oh! Sagonaska, lovely Sagonaska!
> And O-no-wa-la-go-na — my canoe
> Like swan awing, farewell, O Sagonaska!
> To Sunset flying — Love, I'll wait for you. (*ibid*, p. 116).

No matter how faithful they may be to the original Mohawk way of expression they do not seem to be worthy examples of the English language. If the original were in Japanese, I would not hesitate to brand these lines as extremely poor translations. Overflowing ebullience does not guarantee a work of art. The fact that *Thunderbird* has been hailed as "a modern Odyssey" and Robb praised as "Canada's Homer-and-Yeats-in-one" (according to *Tecumtha*'s dust-jacket blurb) is something that baffles me.

Nevertheless *Thunderbird* is still readable and one does manage to get a glimpse of a primitive unsophisticated way of life. But what can we say about *Tecumtha*, the product of thirty years of research?

Tecumseh (which is the usually accepted form) is one of the most colourful and greatest Indian figures. One may recall that John Richardson was made prisoner at the battle of Thames (1812) where Tecumseh fell. Richardson had nothing but respect for this Indian hero.

Robb's work is not a mere biography of Tecumseh but a eulogium — and a very ambitious one at that. He even declares his work to be a "revelation" (*Tecumtha*, p.1). Yet the faults and defects which were apparent in *Thunderbird* are magnified to an almost unbearable degree in *Tecumtha*.

The self-importance, the Messiah-complex, of the author is also astonishing. He urges the reader to read his poetry aloud or at least attempt "the rolling and majestic pauses" (!) of recital in his mind. He is trying to communicate "the obscure, poetical beauty of native words — a single word hinting at a whole burst of beauty!" (p. 3). Tecumseh who was after all a shrewd and practical warrior is romanticized and sentimentalized to the utmost degree. Referring to Tecumseh's achievement the author has this to say:

> He did it as an immortal Swan Song for the passing of a beautiful way of life — the departure, in bewilderment, of a people of light and peace — a mortal cry of anguish in remonstrance to the gods.

Robb's rendering of one of Tecumseh's songs runs as follows:

> Ah, Beloved, trillium purple are the Eagle's wings —
> Wake-robin red!
> The fulgent passion of the Plumed Star!
> The orichalcum couch of love
> Untrammelled in the Evening Sky!

This also may be a faithful word-for-word rendering of the original tongue (Shawnee and not Mohawk this time), but it does not seem to make much sense. Or take another passage which is not a rendering:

> When fell the Shawnee Star, the Universe was shuddered with reverberation! The incense of Tecumtha's fire permeated Heaven — and, lo! it has come to pass: the influence and culture of the Redman orders much we are and do; more and more his blood courses through our veins, his idealism leavens our lives.

Throughout the work Robb indulges in the use of polysyllables and seems to be intoxicated with his own poetic flights. (One may recall I. V. Crawford's riotous imagery, but in her case the images are kept well under control and do not give the reader a sense of disorder. So with D. C. Scott.)

The reason I have bothered with Robb is that, in a sense, he seemed to be

responding to Barbeau's invitation which I quoted in the beginning. Robb has apparently struck "a rich vein" and has "discovered treasures". But what counts is the resulting product — if it is not a work of art (and Robb's poetry seems to be a far cry from it), it means little.

Before I came upon Robb I was, it seems, unconsciously looking for someone who could catch the Indian spirit — not from the outside but from within (Pauline Johnson was not a real insider), not as an anthropologist but as a poet— and give expression to it, thus adding a new dimension to Canadian literature. Robb, however ambitious, ebullient, and well-meaning he may be, does not measure up to the required standard — at least, so it seems to me.

AT PRESENT we do not appear to have genuine Indian poetry of high quality. One cannot say in fact that the Indians are more than a peripheral part of the contemporary literary scene. Their presence is hardly felt, and no one seems to miss them. Perhaps the problem lies not so much in the poet or in the presentation (the competence of the poet) as in the subject-matter (the Indian spirit, or imagination, or approach to life, or whatever you may call it) itself. That the North American aborigines had (or still have) their own mythology, their own thought-patterns, their own way of responding to outer reality, their heritage of animal lores and folk lores — one cannot deny. Barbeau's *Indian Days on the Western Prairies* (1959) and Jenness's *The Corn Goddess* (1955), to take at random two recent examples, are both extremely charming and readable collections of Indian stories, and far surpass in quality Robb's works. Likewise in E. E. Clark's *Indian Legends of Canada* (1960) we can enjoy a wide variety of Indian myths (creation, culture, nature &c) covering most of the tribes in Canada. The traditional Indian legends are not without charm (one does not have to condescend to say so), but on the whole one must admit that they are neither profound nor rich. The impression the reader gets on reading one story after another is that of monotonous repetition, a lack of depth and insight. In Barbeau's *The Downfall of Temlaham*, for example, the chief Neetuh is shot down by his rival Kamamalmuk, who seeks to avenge the death of his son. Neetuh moans feebly in his death agony:

> Here am I, still alive, yet nearly dead. . . . . Robin-woman, my immortal friend of spirit-land, Robin-woman will cure me, will heal my wound in my breast, heal the wound in my loin, the wound that drips streams of blood, will lead my shade on her wings to the abode of the Sun. Robin-woman, my immortal friend!

This is Neetuh's spirit song, the song which had hitherto proved to be an unfailing aid in his critical hours of life. One can say that it is charming oratory, but page after page of this kind of chanting can be extremely monotonous.

The proportion of what one may call "stereotype" in the Indians' ways of reaction and description is considerable. The first contact with the white man is one of the interesting themes of Indian folk-lores, but the white man's ships are almost without exception described as "the floating island" (e.g. in Micmac and Nootka legends) or the "white-winged canoes" (in Cowichan and Nootka legends) and one seeks in vain the individual or the unstereotyped note.

The nature-worship of the Indians, charming as it is sometimes, never reached the speculative or spiritual depth of a religion. It is not something you can take really seriously. Spiritually and culturally the Indians lacked the wherewithal to withstand the onslaught of the white man's civilization. I am not trying to disparage the heritage of the Indians, but there seems to be little sense in idealizing or glorifying it. One must admit that it offers no alternative (much less a challenge) to Western civilization in the way the Arabic, Hebrew or Far Eastern civilizations do. It is simply not of that calibre.

The Indians undeniably form a part of the Canadian literary landscape. They are, as it were, part of the Canadian "experience". However, any attempt to incorporate their heritage into Canadian literature — not as a mere ornament but as an integral part — seems more likely to fail than to succeed. Trying to adopt the Indian's approach to life uncritically and wholeheartedly would be for a writer rather a sign of "retrogression". We already have the case of W. H. Robb.

Admitting that the Indian's approach to life is primitive and backward, may it still not serve as a soothing antidote to the sophisticated Western approach? I do not agree. Western civilization is not in need of a primitive or naïve antidote. What it needs is a deeper and more religious, in some sense more sophisticated, antidote — something that will shatter its self-righteous complacency. We cannot expect this kind of antidote from the Indians.

This is not to say that the study of the Indians and their ways of life would be useless. A study of any primitive people will help us understand the various "patterns of culture" we have (or had) on earth. Anything that deepens our understanding of mankind cannot be deemed useless. To read, for example, Ruth

Benedict's description of the Kwakiutl Indians of Vancouver Island (see *Patterns of Culture*, Ch. VI) can be an extremely revealing and stimulating literary experience. Likewise the work of Barbeau and Jenness deserve our attention and deepest respect. However, the state (or level) of the Indian world-view (or thought-pattern) being what it is, we cannot expect it to make any strong impact on Canadian literature. It cannot re-orientate or add any new dimension to the existing and prevalent thought-patterns.

This brings us back to the sentimental or "noble-savage" view of Indians as seen in Canadian literature. It seems hard for a Westerner to escape from this "noble-savage" illusion. Though the Japanese have experienced a long struggle with the Japanese aborigenes (the Ainus), there is not one example of the "noble-savage" concept in Japanese literature. It is surprising, but it shows how European the "noble savage" idea is. (Likewise, Japanese literature lacks the pastoral tradition, another product of European sentimentalism). Even Barbeau is not wholly free from the golden-age-noble-savage approach. He not infrequently shows a tendency to beautify and lyricize: for example:

> For a millenium, their ancestors long ago thrived in pristine innocence and peace. The tribes of men lived side by side in Arcadian friendliness. (*The Downfall of Temleham.*)

Perhaps a comparative study of English-Canadian and French-Canadian literature in this respect may prove interesting. Concerning the aborigenes I have a suspicion that the French-Canadians may have been more realistic. After all, is not their term for the Indians "*les sauvages*"?

chronicle

REGIONALISM AND THE WRITER

A Talk with W. O. Mitchell

Patricia Barclay

THE SENSE OF ENVIRONMENT, vast, challenging and relatively unexplored, still dominates the Canadian consciousness, and a panoramic view of the history of our arts could aptly be depicted in a series of bas-reliefs in which the figures are seen gradually emerging from, yet still supported by their backgrounds. The greatest artists stand freest. They have resisted the pull of their surroundings enough to use them for their own ends; to use them in the creation of universal statements, true not just for one man, region or nation, but for all men. Through Emily Carr's brush, for example, the forests of British Columbia become an expression of the innate spirit of living things; with comparable artistry E. J. Pratt has used his knowledge of the sea to reach an understanding of the deeper currents beneath the course of human action. To the truly gifted artist, the particular character of his environment is secondary; it is the use he is able to make of it that counts.

But persons of such gifts are rare. They are individualists, untypical of an artistic community that spends much of its time interpreting the Laurentians to the prairies, the hamlet to the city, French Canada to everyone. The interpreters, indeed, are performing a vital task, for without self-knowledge we will never become culturally mature. And the interpreters are themselves interpreted by the critics, who seek by analysis and classification to uncover the patterns in our ambiguous cultural landscapes.

Yet art resists analysis and classification, and the artist resists it even more.

Perhaps, to return to the question of environment, one can best illustrate this difficulty by considering the position of the so-called "regionalist" writer. We all know him. He is the man who knows, and understands, a certain district, a way of life, an ethnic group; and who writes about it in a way that brings his subject to life for those who have never known it or awakes nostalgic recognition in those who have. He is an interpreter of his own particular corner to the rest of the world, and hence his title, "regionalist".

But what if the writer himself rejects the title? Consider the case of W. O. Mitchell. Mitchell is probably best known for his novel, *Who Has Seen the Wind*, which appeared in 1947, but he has also written other novels and many shorter pieces, for print, radio and television. His humorous and often moving descriptions of small town prairie life have gained him a recognized place in Canadian literature; he is often cited as an example of the successful regionalist writer. This, however, is not how W. O. Mitchell sees himself.

I met Mr. Mitchell one warm Alberta day last summer at his home in High River, a small ranching town about thirty miles south of Calgary. We talked in his study, a bright, spacious room divided into areas for work and relaxation. Filing cabinets and tall bookshelves stood within easy reach of a broad bookkeeper's desk "such as Dickensian characters used to slave over"; beyond these a brightly-covered chesterfield sat before an open fireplace and beside a window looking out on to the neat garden.

When I asked him what he thought of the "regionalist" label, Mitchell's reply was prompt: "I think labels are all right—for beef, and even for judging orchids, fancy diving, horse shows; they don't apply to art." Later, he expressed his convictions more specifically: "I can't go to work on a piece unless I have some essentially human truth that I believe very passionately and that I hope shall transcend time and region. For instance, Galsworthy or Shaw or Wells certainly were not considered regionalists. To me they were much more regional in regard to time — because they were platform novelists — than was Hardy, for instance. Hardy had a core of philosophic, timeless truth in everything he wrote, which stopped him from being a regionalist. Already, Wells and Shaw have lived beyond their region in time, but Hardy never will."

Mitchell works with a strong sense of purpose and continuity. He has been writing steadily from the age of eighteen, largely in the field of fiction. His first published short stories appeared in 1942, among them the first "Jake and the Kid" story. As he continued to add to the Jake series, Mitchell wrote only one in five of the stories about the boy and the old man; other inhabitants of the mythical

community of Crocus were created with the intention of providing "semi-polished material" from which he could draw future novels. So far, besides *Who Has Seen the Wind*, Mitchell has published in *Maclean's* during 1953 a third of a second novel, *The Alien*, while yet another novel, *The Kite*,[1] has just appeared, and a fourth, *Roses Are Difficult Here*, has been completed and awaits publication.

In discussing *The Kite*, Mitchell remarked that its central figure, Daddy Sherry, had his genesis in Daddy Johnson, a familiar "Jake and the Kid" character. In this novel, a journalist comes to the West for a brief interview with Daddy Sherry, the world's oldest known living human being, and finds himself so deeply affected by his contact with the old man that he remains long past the appointed time so as to reconstruct Daddy Sherry's past life. The theme of the novel is symbolized by the pervading figure of a kite. In Mitchell's own words: "The idea of a kite, a lively thing held by a thin thread of life, is comparable to man and his mortality, and the novel is a study in mortality, and awareness of the shortness of man's days upon the earth — it's quite a serious novel with a picaresque surface. Any novel will probably involve a search, and a questioning — and in most cases, an answer. When I wrote *Who Has Seen the Wind*, I didn't have an answer. It was just a question, which is a perfectly fine reason for writing a novel. In *The Kite*, there is an answer, in *The Alien* there is an answer, and in *Roses Are Difficult Here* I try to make an answer—three answers to things I believe in."

The writers whom W. O. Mitchell recognizes as having had some influence on his own work are not other "regionalists". Rather, he points to Joseph Conrad, for his handling of serious theme and the articulation of universal truth, and to Virginia Woolf and Katherine Mansfield for their skill in capturing the exact expression for sense experience. He mentions Tolstoy, E. M. Forster, J. M. Barrie, Galsworthy, Wallace Stegner and John Steinbeck. It is with the eye of a craftsman that Mitchell evaluates a writer's importance to him. When I mentioned Hemingway, he replied, "If Hemingway were more of a stylist perhaps I might have gone to him. But I think of fishing — I'm a great believer in the proper pattern of fly and a properly balanced rod and a beautifully tapered line, and that the fly shall drop right and the hatch shall be matched, and this is style, grace, care and patience. I do not find Hemingway a stylist at all. I can't see it. Another man that didn't help me any, too, was Thomas Wolfe — or Theodore Dreiser, for the same reasons again. I can appreciate their power and passion, but I don't think a writer can learn too much if he has the power and passion and

[1] *The Kite* will be reviewed by Margaret Laurence in the next issue of *Canadian Literature*.

appetite for life himself. He won't learn it from any other man, and then there is nothing else too much to learn from Hemingway, or Dreiser, or Wolfe, since there's not evident style and polish and control and discipline."

We spoke of Canadian writers, of Frederick Philip Grove, and Mitchell said: "I can recall discovering Grove when I was beginning work on my own first novel, and being terribly excited with *The Master of the Mill*, and I said, 'Here is a fellow that's going to be Conrad of the prairies and is going to write another Lord Jim!' "

Mitchell is keenly interested in poetry. He even wishes he were a poet, and says that he often scans his lines for atmospheric or lyrical effect. He is also interested in the formal resemblances between music and prose in such areas as motif, repetition and pattern: though he does not describe himself as musical, he feels that an appreciation of music can be of benefit to the writer.

Mitchell, who follows a regular regimen of work from November to May and tends to ease up during the hunting season and during the season for conducting writers' workshops, lives in comparative isolation from the literary community, and, in keeping with his general individualism, he is convinced that the writer himself is his own best critic. He has no interest in writing what he terms "pulpit novels"; it is the "essentially human truth" that he wishes to reveal in his serious work, whether his subject is a boy in search of the meaning of life, or a man face to face with the fact of his own morality.

The questions that arise in one's mind about W. O. Mitchell — how far he has succeeded in his declared aim, how far he remains a "regional writer" in the narrow sense, and perhaps also a hint of the eventual standing of this writer still in his 'forties — will be revealed much more clearly when all the novels on which he has been working in recent years are finally made available to the reader.

review articles

ILLUSIONS OF SIMPLICITY

Margaret Laurence

RALPH ALLEN. *Ask the Name of the Lion.* Doubleday.

"A MODERN NOVEL OF THE CONGO", the dust-jacket says. But Ralph Allen's latest novel really tells us more about the dilemma of a western liberal whose lifelong attitudes of tolerance and goodwill no longer seem to have much relevance in the midst of the horrors and irrationalities of the Congo situation.

Richard Grant, a Canadian doctor and a man of intelligence and compassion, goes to the Congo for the Red Cross, having sacrificed a brilliant career (in a somewhat overly noble fashion) for the sake of working where he feels his work is most needed. When the political situation explodes after Independence, some Congolese soldiers attack the isolated hospital. Grant escapes, with the others who happen to be there — Mary Kelvin, a Canadian nurse; Sierra, the U.N. representative; Songolo, an African *evolué* and a cabinet minister; Chartrand, a Belgian plantation owner; and Astrid Mahamba, Chartrand's African mistress. They are pursued by the soldiers, led by Sergeant Albert Tshibangu, who calls himself Nkosi, the Lion, and who has proclaimed himself president of Mgonga province.

Sierra directs the escape. He is all hero — the man of steel, veteran of many wars, putting his faith in action, but acutely sensitive as well (an art lover and once a talented musician). Always with Sierra there is the twisted inner grin — he knows he is dominated by the hungry "I". But he dares and dares again, and finally manages to wrest a pirogue away from an evil old witch of a Congolese bush woman. There follows a short and puzzling triumphal scene. "'*Mon Dieu, monsieur,*' Chartrand said in total homage." The others gaze at him in adulation, and even Dr. Grant murmurs "You are a great man, Monsieur Sierra." Whether we are meant to take this hail-Caesar sequence seriously or not, I was unable to decide.

When the rampaging soldiers catch up with the party, Astrid, who is portrayed appealingly as a mixture of naïveté and cunning, saves the situation by offering herself to the Sergeant and his men. Ultimately the drunken renegade soldiers are captured by U.N. forces, but not before they have killed the two men who could most have helped the Congolese people — Sierra and Songolo. The bit-

ter irony of these deaths is movingly and convincingly shown.

The effect, unfortunately, is marred by the subsequent arrival of the Fourth Nigerians to the rescue, led by a British major who says "Dr. Grant, I presume?", quickly followed by "Sandwiches in a jiffy" and brandy in silver cups. The staunch major, unlike the Congolese soldiers, can hold his liquor and keep his head. Thank God for the English.

But these occasionally jarring notes do not represent the essence of the book. The real journey is not the outer one through the jungle but the inner one of Dr. Grant, a journey away from innocence. In the beginning, when a reporter tells him ". . . even if these people were white, yellow or God-damned emerald green, they'd still only be one step ahead of the baboons", Grant is shocked. But gradually he discovers the Congolese are not what he thought they would be. The Congolese soldiers really are "drunk and doped and illiterate and crazy and full of hate". He has wanted to think the best of Africans, and now can no longer do so. His sense of despair and futility grows, until he comes to the conclusion that the reporter was right. He knows the standard reasons for the country's collapse — the Belgians' past brutalities, the cruel exploitation of the Congolese, their total lack of political and educational preparation for independence. But do these factors adequately explain the atrocities committed by such men as Tshibangu? Grant feels they do not.

> I never cut off anybody's hands . . . . None of us ever ran a slave ship . . . We've all tried a little bit to repair the sins of the past, sins not our own, and here's how our grateful black brothers reply. The black brothers have just killed Sierra, a good brave man, for trying to lend his services to the brotherhood. They've killed Songolo, another good brave man, for trying to rise above their chapter of the brotherhood and lift the chapter with him.

Disillusioned, angry at himself for his former idealism, Grant decides to leave the country. At the last moment, however, he changes his mind. As he contemplates an African ivory carving, he makes his decision. "The human figure, with its short spear poised for combat, was unlike any living Congolese he had ever seen; it bore no relation to the weak, diseased, braggartly, and half-starved tribesmen he had known, and yet it was as relevant to their condition and their dreams as is the hidden god that dwells in every man." He will stay and do what he can in his miserably inadequate hospital. Fair enough. Or is it?

For Dr. Grant to have lost the first fine careless rapture of the essentially patronizing do-gooder is unquestionably, one feels, a step in the right direction. And for the author to have expressed very clearly the fact that we need not feel hag-ridden with guilt or menaced by the spectre of racial prejudice if we happen to find some Africans repulsive— this, too, is a good thing to have stated, if only as an antidote to the false liberalism of those who conscientiously condemn Dr. Verwoerd for silencing his opposition but are quite prepared to excuse Dr. Nkrumah for doing the same thing. Most of all, this novel is worthwhile because it frankly points out that for Europeans or Americans going to work in such countries as the Congo, goodwill is a very flimsy defense against the bewilderment, revulsion and anger which they will inevitably experience at some time or other.

Nevertheless, there is a glibness about this book which disturbs me. Dr. Grant is too ready to take things at their face value, too ready to accuse the Africans of ingratitude without determining whether or not *they* feel they have anything to be grateful for, and apparently without recognizing that his own cry of outraged justice (". . . here's how our grateful black brothers reply") is at least partly the cry of someone who has hungered for the Africans' gratitude more than he could have realized when he started out and who is almost childishly piqued when it isn't there.

Only once, it seems to me, does he touch upon what may be the true diagnosis. "I'm beginning to wonder if at least some of the problem out here isn't a psychiatric problem. . . . They're scared, always have been, always had good reason to be . . ." I wish this line of enquiry had been followed further. In the main, however, the Congolese soldiers are shown only as they undoubtedly appeared on the surface — drunken, stupid, irresponsible, murderous. Tshibangu is a sadistic ape-man, snatching eagerly at power, but clownishly unaware of what power means. He boasts constantly of his physical strength, of his courage, of his education (which has actually been pathetically slight), but where the author might have used this boasting to reveal inner stresses, I get the impression instead that he views Tshibangu's pretensions only with disapproval and distaste, as though he really did not suspect at all the vulnerability that might lie behind them. Tshibangu's men are portrayed as dangerously cruel children, gleefully fondling the toys of war. They are all motivated only by lust — for drink, for women, for power. I wonder if they can really have been so uncomplex and so easily explained? I have known a number of tribal and semi-tribal people in East and West Africa, and while I certainly do not claim to have understood them, I know at least that not one of them could have been called simple.

It is, of course, exceedingly difficult for us to comprehend the motivations of tribal and semi-tribal people. By semi-tribal I mean those who no longer live within their tribes but whose concepts and values are still largely those of the tribe. The Congolese soldiers appear to be in this group. Tribal man differs from individual man in needs and values as much as it is possible for humans to differ one from another. This is not, I need hardly say, a racial difference; on the contrary, it explains why many educated and de-tribalized Africans are so lonely — their wide educational differences from their own people are slight when compared with their psychological differences.

The best outline of the tribal personality which I have seen is to be found in O. Mannoni's *Prospero And Caliban: The Psychology Of Colonization*, in which, incidentally, the description of the Madagascar uprising in 1947 bears an uncanny resemblance to the Congo situation. "When faced with a serious difficulty," Dr. Mannoni says, "the typical European tends to rely on his self-confidence or his technical skill. His main concern is not to prove *inferior* either to his own idea of himself or to the situation. But the main concern of the Malagasy, when his security is threatened, is not to feel *abandoned*. He has practically no confidence in himself and very little in technique, but relies

on certain protective powers without which he would be utterly lost."

The same could be said of most parts of Africa, although anything which is said in a general way will obviously be an over-simplification. Tribal man never stands alone. He is guided from his earliest childhood by the tribal customs and by the tribal elders, who in turn are guided by what they consider to be the voices of the ancestors. Past, present and future are thus seen as a continuum. The individual has little or no sense of his separate identity, and cannot even contemplate a life apart from the tribe. He depends for his sense of security on the observance of rituals and on the essentially magical or spiritual power of protectors, the elders and chief, the ancestors and the gods. When the European enters the picture, breaks all the local taboos and apparently gets away with it, he frequently takes on the role of protector. This dependence relationship has nothing whatsoever to do with personal likes or dislikes. To the tribal man, what matters is not whether he likes his protector, but the degree of power that the protector is believed to possess. Significantly, as Dr. Mannoni points out in regard to the Malagasy uprising, and as subsequently happened in the Congo, it is not when the European is the most stern that the revolt occurs, but when he has suddenly decided to be more liberal. In giving a greater degree of responsibility to people who are utterly unprepared for it, he thrusts those with tribal concepts into a state of abandonment, the appalling uncertainties of which will be felt most keenly by those who have already once been uprooted from their birth-tribes and who have found substitute tribes within, say, the police or the army.

Many of the Congolese soldiers had been recruited forcibly, torn from their ancient protections and put into an army which must to some extent have taken the place of the tribe. Although they probably detested their Belgian officers, the officers were self-assured and capable of maintaining an order which must have had more ritual than military significance to the tribal mind. With the arrival of independence, the order of things, the patterns of propitiation, the most basic guarantees of inner security, must for the Congolese soldier have quite literally fallen apart.

I have no doubt that the soldiers were "drunk and doped and crazy and full of hate". But I also think it is possible that they were men filled with terrors which they did not begin to understand but which compelled them towards the false

buoyancy of bottled courage or empty boasting and towards the momentary release found in violence, a violence which conveniently provided them with scapegoats for their own turmoil. I may be quite mistaken, and the true explanation may lie along other lines entirely. But whatever the explanation may be, I do not believe it is likely to be a simple one. A statement such as Dr. Grant's, "By God, they *are* just down from the trees", tells us nothing about the Congolese, although it does tell a good deal about a western observer who is bitterly disappointed at what he takes to be the ignoble savage. In fact, of course, both noble savage and ignoble savage are equally myths, creatures of our own imaginations. The reality of tribal men is not to be found in such subjective judgments as these.

As Dr. Grant in the end sets out stoically on his round of the wards, I have the feeling that unless he somehow begins to see the Congolese in terms of their own concepts and background, rather than his own, "the hidden god that dwells in every man" will very likely remain permanently hidden.

SLUICES OF LITERACY

Paul West

The Arts as Communication. The President's Lectures, Summer 1961: Albert Trueman; Robertson Davies; Pierre Berton. Edited by D. C. Williams. University of Toronto Press. $2.50.

HERE ARE THREE EXPERTS with something of the amateur about them. A pedagogue-administrator, an all-round man of letters *cum* Principal-designate, and a columnist-panelist, they talk as reasonable, unsolemn men whose true expertise is in the space between man and man. I would have been happier if the title had read Communication as Art — upgrading Communication rather than downgrading art. But all three speakers, with their respective emphases, dispel the apprehensions of the reader who has seen too many pompously dogmatic uses of the word "communication". Flair, not methodology, is their touchstone; and in contact with it the sacred cows of this identity-seeking country disintegrate into sacred hamburger.

Dr. Trueman considers communication "as it is related to the work of the Canada Council". The arts and the humanities, he unexceptionably declares, are "our most effective, subtle, and enduring means of communication"; and the most exhilarating part of his exposition is his onslaught on "the cheap, the illiterate, the glib vulgarity that communicates nothing of consequence and degrades taste and judgment by stupefying volume and unabashed persistence". Alongside the Canada Council Dr. Trueman sets the C.B.C. and the National

Film Board: these are "among the finest achievements". Of course they are (although it seems to me that the Council is putting too much power into the hands of university presidents). The C.B.C., like the presence of oxygen, is all right, especially in comparison with the hebetating rubbish put out by radio and TV stations whose only criterion is the fast buck. The blank TV screen is a promised land needing survey in the Pilkington manner. And the Film Board: some good things, yes; but surely its output is for the most part either raw or gimmicky, lacking in genuine style and handicapped by poor scripts. All in all, however, Dr. Trueman's silk purse does exist; so too does the swinish tastelessness of the advertisers and sponsors whose omnipresence he notes with dignified distaste while he advances by means of quotations (Gibbon, Crane Brinton, Samuel Johnson, F. L. Lucas and Shakespeare) towards an affirmation which I find particularly appealing: "we all have", he says, "a personal, private, individual life to lead, and . . . we should make it as interesting, as warm, as coloured, and as passionate as possible." Such statements make you want to cheer. The Canada Council is in safe, very human hands here; its job is to minister to privacies and, I suggest, by taking risks, to link itself to the world of arts and humanities at large rather than to homebodies and diligent young foresters who can guarantee to cut safe wood. If we interpret Dr. Trueman in the fullest sense, he surely means that, ultimately, creative ability will out; masterpieces will arrive. But people are queer things, and hard to fit into the localized light industry the Canada Council could become unless the Truemans keep hammering away on behalf of the private and even irresponsible nature of creative intuition. Dr. Trueman's listeners at the Toronto summer school must surely have heard him with some relief and much gratification. An urbane trust in unruly individuality is always welcome.

Robertson Davies's address on "The Theatre" exemplifies what Dr. Trueman wants. Davies stands for style; indeed, takes his stand on it, thank God. He offers a quotation in keeping: "When a monkey looks in a mirror, no apostle can look out". (Take that, Mr. and Mrs. Viewer!) With owlish hyperbole he describes the theatre as "a temple of feeling" and, in the course of his eloquent and wide-ranging lecture, hits at modern plays ("bepoxed by sentimentality" and not a patch on Restoration drama, not to mention the Elizabethan and Jacobean), modern timidity, as well as Canadian "national nervousness and hypersensitivity" and obsession with "the national image". He asks for some national iconoclasts and anti-utopians. And I bet, when he sees the vacuous antic which is the Shirley Harmer show or the Country Hoe-Down which Dr. Trueman derides, he asks for a hammer. I have not the space here to quote Mr. Davies's longer assaults: he writes in short, uppercutting paragraphs which reflect a full, darting mind. Where Dr. Trueman concentrates on communication between individual and individual, Mr. Davies brings all his subtlety to bear on the real truth about audiences: people responding in concert are easily beguiled into simplistic atitudes — and the playwright must safeguard us against this. The theatregoer should be as much an individual as a person in church; being utterly yourself is a strenuous business

because conformity consoles and prefabricated 'national' attitudes spare us the burden of self-definition. Mr. Davies's final question, "Dare we look?" also implies judging and damning.

Mr. Berton offers a fascinating piece on the press and periodicals. He thinks newspapers are becoming more like magazines and *vice versa*. Carefully enumerating the factors which are changing our society — comic books, pocket books and TV — he speaks not without affection of the old thrillers (Dr. Death and Wu Fang evoked) and the more recent Sweat and Confession mags ("I was Luke's Wife and Barney's Mistress But I Never Stopped being Tragedy's Child") and identifies a new reading public: young men with university background and spare money (*Playboy*) and "teenagers . . . more sophisticated today than . . . twenty years ago" (*Mad*). He also discusses the fact-fetichism created and encouraged by quiz programmes and predicts a boom in specialized magazines ("the 'mass' is a much more complicated structure than it used to be") as well as the rise of the specialist writer — the educated columnist who is a master of "background knowledge". He closes with a lament for the two-paper town and a rebuke to the chains which, keen on that buck, want to offend no-one. "If we get conformity in the press", he says, "we will certainly get it in the public, and there lies a threat to all of us."

These lectures hang together pointedly well. Messrs. Trueman and Davies express misgivings about blinkered experts, especially the mass-media experts who may or may not have taste, but usually fail to exercise it. (A smug society loves experts because they flatter it into feeling knowledgeable and efficient.) As these two speakers remind us, the individual is always a spiritual amateur, making his own rules for self-fulfilment. And Dr. Trueman's plea for individual richness of experience (at times echoing Pater) and Mr. Davies's invitation to brave honesty (echoing Ibsen) coincide in cautioning us against the rising expert spotted by Mr. Berton.

The danger to communication is triple: experts will (1) fit us out with ready-made attitudes which stereotype us, (2) claim to be honest on our behalf, thus relieving us of the pains of even stereotyped awareness, and (3) finally disqualify us from mental initiative at all — except for thinking about pipes if we are plumbers and pedagogy if we are teachers. The real humanist is always an oddball: fascinated, fumbling, rather unsystematic, always eclectic, mostly his own man, and liberal. He is in danger of disappearing, and even the best efforts of the Truemans, Davieses and Bertons will be unavailing if efficiency-minded modern man elects to let experts do his judging for him. These lectures, the first to be given, were meant, as Dr. Claude Bissell says in his Foreword, "to broaden the context within which the members of the summer University community pursue their studies". They must surely have done that. And in a short Introduction Mr. D. C. Williams observes that each lecture is concerned with "the inescapability of artistic judgment". Yes indeed; and the more "communication" multiplies its media and volume the more judging we must do for ourselves. These lectures challenge and blame; challenge us to do our own challenging and blame us for not doing it often enough.

REVOLUTIONS IN COMMUNICATION

Tony Emery

MARSHALL MCLUHAN. *The Gutenberg Galaxy.* University of Toronto. $5.95.

IT IS TEN YEARS since Marshall McLuhan examined, in *The Mechanical Bride,* the impact of advertising, journalism, movies and comic books on the North American public, and held up for scrutiny "the folklore of industrial man". Since then he has widened and deepened his study of the effects of the invention of typography and the photo-engraving process to include all the mass media of communication. Interim reports of his progress and that of his co-adjutor, E. S. Carpenter, have appeared in the magazine *Explorations,* and in a book, *Explorations in Communication* (1960). In *The Gutenberg Galaxy* Dr. McLuhan offers us the first full-length exposition of the conclusions to which these studies have led.

In his preface to *The Mechanical Bride* McLuhan warned the reader that he had adopted a "circulating point of view", and that there was therefore "no need for it to be read in any special order". *The Gutenberg Galaxy* also carries a note on its flyleaf advising the reader of the method employed in the pages that follow. The book, we are told, "develops a mosaic or field approach to its problems. Such a mosaic image of numerous data and quotations in evidence offers the only practical means of revealing causal operations in history. The alternative procedure would be to offer a series of views of fixed relationships in pictorial space." This lively challenge to deep-rooted academic convention and habits of mind sets the pace for a vital, breathless, searching and most important book.

The main argument of the book can be stated briefly enough. Primitive, illiterate man lives in an "audile-tactile" world until he reaches that stage of development at which he settles down to a sedentary life, begins to specialize, and starts "on the way to the discovery of the visual mode of experience". This mode becomes the dominant one with the invention of the phonetic alphabet which "gives the barbarian or tribal man an eye for an ear": but in a world in which few people are literate the effects of this revolution are kept within fairly narrow limits. Then comes the Gutenberg "breakthrough", which changes everything for everybody in the civilized i.e. literate, world. "The difference", says McLuhan, "between the man of print and the man of scribal culture is nearly as great as that between the literate and the non-literate."

Print culture leads to the separation of functions, the fixed point of view, homogeneity and uniformity, nationalism, polyphony, the discovery of perspective, a new "consumer world", the possibility of "bad grammar" and "wrong spelling",

a "market economy" and a "market society", to name a few of the more important results. I have reeled them off in a catalogue, not to make fun of McLuhan's thesis, which I find at most points persuasive and everywhere provocative of thought, but to give some idea of the wide range that he covers. What he is dealing with, he insists, is a great configuration, a galaxy: it would be quite inappropriate, as well as wasteful of time, space and energy, to treat it in a sequential, linear fashion: the whole trap of print culture, he points out, has been to inculcate all but indelibly that "notion of moving steadily along on single planes of narrative awareness (which) is totally alien to the nature of language and of consciousness. But it is highly consistent with the nature of the printed word."

There is a sense of urgency behind McLuhan's words. He locates man today at "a moment of interplay of contrasting cultures"; the Gutenberg-galactic world was shivered by the invention of the telegraph and fragmented further by the advent of moving pictures, radio and photofacsimile procedures; it should have come to an end with the discovery of curved space, but it has tottered on until the mass media of communication made possible by electronic progress have finally dissolved it. The new world now taking shape is the result of these new media. Just as the monk reading aloud from a manuscript was replaced by the man reading silently from a printed book, so the visual world of the print-reader now gives way to the "mosaic" of the television screen and the astringent forces of mass communication which have shrunk the world to the size of a large village, and, making man oral once more, have re-tribalized him.

The McLuhan approach in *The Mechanical Bride* was by means of large photographic reproductions of the advertisements, book jackets, and comic strips which he called in evidence; the present work makes considerable use of quotations culled from a staggering variety of works. By this means McLuhan is enabled to come as close to his aim of "simultaneous presentation" as the nature of the printed book will allow, and though the effect on the reader is at first bewildering the technique becomes easily acceptable after a short period of familiarization. And the quotations are from books of the utmost importance which do not seem to have had the attention in general that they deserve. From this point of view, John Wain's description of *The Gutenberg Galaxy* as "one of the great panoptic books of our time" is no more than just.

In particular, McLuhan has focussed attention on Lord's *The Singer of Tales*,

Harold Innis's *The Bias of Communications,* Ivin's *Art and Geometry: A Study in Space Intuitions,* and the same author's *Prints and Visual Communication,* Tobias Dantzig's *Number: The Language of Science,* Chaytor's *From Script to Print,* Mellers's *Music and Society,* and Gombrich's *Art and Illusion.* And he has placed in an entirely new light what he calls "the four massive myths of the Gutenberg transformation of society", namely *Gargantua, Don Quixote, The Dunciad,* and *Finnegans Wake.*

Readers of *The Mechanical Bride* will recall that the aim of that book was to "use the new commercial education as a means to enlightening its intended prey", and "to assist the public to observe consciously the drama which is intended to operate upon its unconsciously", in the spirit of Poe's sailor scrutinizing the flotsam in the maelstrom. The present work is less didactic in its aim. "Value judgments have long been allowed to create a moral fog around technological change such as renders understanding impossible," says the author in one place; and "But lest it be inferred that this effect of print culture is a 'bad thing' . . ." elsewhere. However, towards the end of the book, the author points the way out of the maelstrom of twentieth-century mass media which is already beginning to engulf our society with a daily increased momentum. "Is it not possible," he asks, "to emancipate ourselves from the subliminal operation of our technologies? Is not the essence of education civil defence against media fall-out?" And elsewhere, "The point is . . . how do we become aware of the effects of alphabet or print or telegraph in shaping our behaviour? For it is absurd and ignoble to be shaped by such means."

Again the answer lies in education. "Knowledge does not extend but restrict the areas of determinism. And the influence of unexamined assumptions derived from technology leads quite unnecessarily to maximal determinism in human life. Emancipation from that trap is the goal of all education." If we do not heed this warning we shall be headed straight for Orwell's 1984; that is the implicit message of this vital and electrifying book. For a deep scrutiny of the electronic age in which we live now, we must wait until McLuhan's *Understanding Media* is published. If it comes near to his examination of the Gutenberg era in scope and range it will be a book worth waiting for.

CANADIAN LEXICOGRAPHY

Robert J. Gregg

Dictionnaire canadien — The Canadian Dictionary. Université de Montréal, McClelland and Stewart. $5.95.

LEXICOGRAPHICALLY CANADA seems to be coming of age. A year or two ago we had Bélisle's *Dictionnaire Général de la Langue Française au Canada*; we are awaiting a Canadian English dictionary from the Oxford University Press; the first volume of Gage's *Dictionary of Canadian English* has just appeared; and now we have the first fruits of the work done at the *Centre de recherches lexicographiques de l'Université de Montréal*: the bilingual French-English, English-French dictionary entitled *Dictionnaire canadien* or *The Canadian Dictionary.* The editorial team responsible for this "Concise edition" (a term which we assume implies larger, more comprehensive volumes yet to come) is headed by Jean-Paul Vinay, Director of the Linguistics Department at the University of Montreal, and includes Pierre Daviault, Henry Alexander, Jean Darbelnet (who collaborated with Vinay on the *Stylistique comparée du français et de l'anglais*, Beauchemin, Montréal, 1958), R. W. Jeanes, and, as special editors, F. E. L. Priestley, D. E. Hamilton, G.-R. Lefebvre and G. des Marchais.

Behind all this lexicographical activity lies obviously a recognition of the separate identity of both Canadian English and Canadian French and of the need for their special treatment *vis-à-vis* other varieties of the two languages. The volume under review underlines the further necessity of matching Canada's two official languages in sets of bilingual equivalences.

The solid linguistic basis of this work and the editors' interest and experience in the field of translation, or we might say more accurately comparative semantics, are everywhere in evidence. As the editor-in-chief stresses in his preface, the placing of words in their context and the clear indication of levels of usage give those who resort to the dictionary the power to utilize its store of words in the most effective way, whether translating English or French, especially if they study carefully all the introductory material in which the dictionary's underlying principles are set out.

The inside covers, front and back, provide keys to the French and English phonetic transcriptions which are given for each word. These keys set up a basic 36 items for the French phonological system and 45 (plus 2 stress marks) for the English, which seems to cover all requirements adequately.

Some introductory notes on the idiosyncrasies of Canadian French pronunciation will prove informative to those who wish to interpret the phonetic transcriptions in more precise Canadian terms and will certainly help to bridge the gap perceived by English-speaking Canadians

who — exposed exclusively in school to French *à la parisienne* — find themselves at a loss when they first visit Montreal or Quebec. The notes on diphthongization, and on the lengthening due to secondary stress, cover points not always sufficiently recognized. Important general innovations in the transcriptions are the recognition of post-Passy trends in current French towards the neutralization or phonetic fusion of /a/ and /ɑ/, both of which are represented by /a/, especially in pretonic position, and of /e/ and/ɛ/ whose opposition often fails to function in final open syllables where only /e/ occurs.

The consistent indication of the suprasegmental feature of vowel length (which is admittedly for the most part a subphonemic matter) will also be a useful reminder to the English-speaking student that his allophonic habits with vowels are often in conflict with French practice. In this connection it seems rather confusing that in the French table given on the end papers one heading reads: (Vowels) *Followed by a LONG consonant* and another: (Vowels) *Followed by a SHORT consonant,* when what is actually short or long is the vowel itself. The so-called LONG consonants might better have been termed LENGTHENING. One particularly useful feature of the transcriptions is the treatment of [ə] (the misnamed "e-muet") which is printed between parentheses whenever it may be elided, is omitted altogether when it is normally silent (e.g. in **médecin**) and printed without parentheses when it is compulsory to sound it (e.g. in the first syllable of **crevette**).

Special features found in the pronunciation of Canadian English are also treated in the preliminary notes. Those conversant with the problems involved here are well aware of the tricky nature of the terrain and of our frequent lack of definite statistical information covering the whole of Canada when it comes to deciding which of two or more current forms is the preferred one among English-speaking Canadians. In general it often boils down to an impressionistic judgment, and for the most part the editors of this dictionary have made judicious decisions.

The spelling of French in Canada — or elsewhere — raises no particular problems, and certainly none of a regional nature. With English, since the innovations adopted by Noah Webster in 1828, the situation is different.

English-speaking Canadians, because of their continuing traditional links with Britain and of their geographical proxim-

ity to the United States, have for a long time been exposed to conflicting spelling practices and have characteristically made their own choice, sometimes sticking to the traditional form and sometimes adopting the new. The editors have once again acted judiciously in this area by retaining **-ll-** in words such as **traveller**; **-ce** in **licence**, etc; **ae-** in **aesthetic** and the like (although with **encyclopaedia** the **-ae-** seems less well-founded, cp. *Encyclopedia Canadiana*); **-re** in **centre**; **-ize** in **recognize**. The opposition between **-ize** and **-ise** is not strictly an American-British conflict as **-ize** finds support everywhere, in the OED as well as in Webster. The main disagreement lies rather with spellings such as **analyze** versus **analyse**. The *Dictionnaire canadien* fluctuates here, giving **analyse** as the translation of French **analyser** and later **analyze** as an English entry word. Here, of course, etymology — for what it is worth — backs the **-s-** spelling. The preference of **-our** over **-or** may, however, not meet with general approval. Many may feel that the Websterian **-or** should have priority.

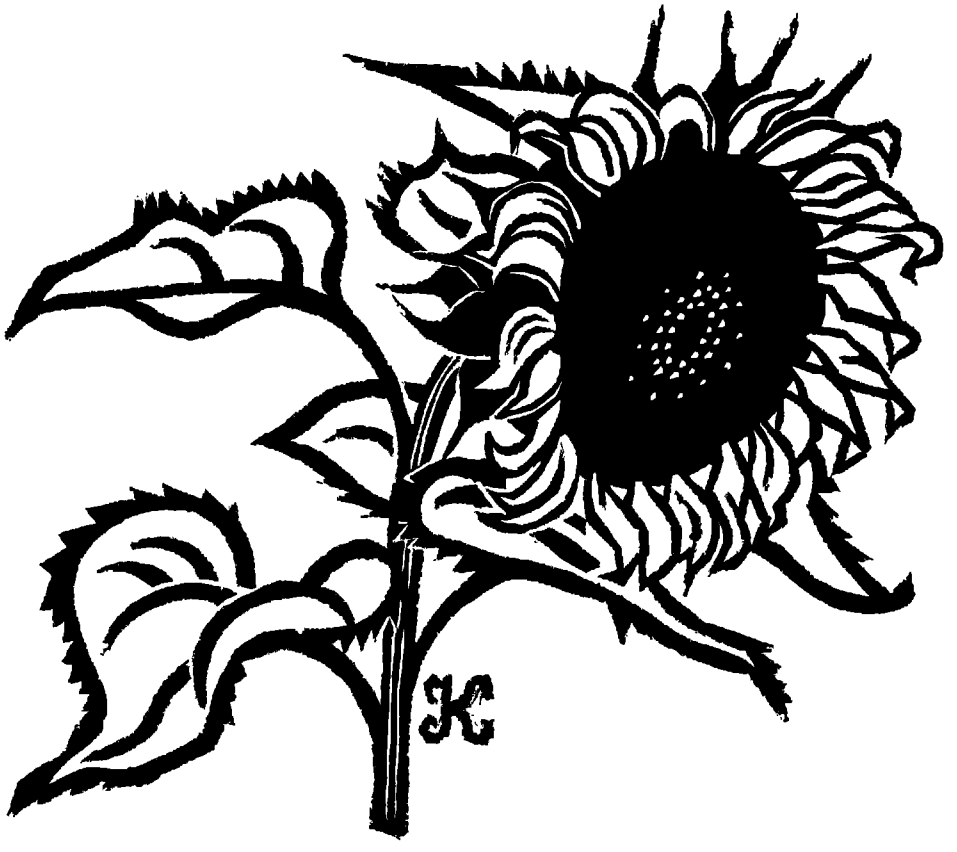
The various symbols used throughout the dictionary merit careful preliminary study. They have been well thought out and are consistently used to convey essential information in as brief a form as possible, e.g. the use of special signs to indicate when we are dealing with translations on the same or on different semantic levels; familiar usage (**avachi, gueule**); archaisms (**futaille, ambages**); neologisms (**alunir, autoroute, stylo à bille**); adstratum influences (**char usagé, réaliser**); brackets to enclose grammar or usage notes (**achever** [souvent rendu par UP], **aussi** [followed by inversion and meaning "therefore"]); deceptive cognates, better known perhaps as *les faux amis*; a circled C to mark Canadianisms, both French (**achaler**, to bother) and English (*to be elected by acclamation*, i.e., unopposed). A skilfully devised table of French verbs is provided which is referred to by numbers from the body of the book. All irregular or difficult verb forms are listed separately in the dictionary and the reader is cross-referred to the main entry word. The pronunciation of such forms is generally indicated but it has not been given in at least two cases where the student might easily need it, viz., with the "**ai**" and "**eu**" forms of *avoir* (pp. 11 and 165).

With regard to the main body of the book its most striking characteristic is the thoroughness with which, under entries requiring several equivalents in the other language, the various semantic equivalents have been classified and placed in a rational order. This self-evident framework makes it easy for the student to find with minimum delay the subdivision he requires and a wealth of well-chosen illustrative phrases and sentences provide him with working models in his task of translation. Thus under **tirer** we have seven numbered subdivisions ranging from concrete equivalents (pull; shoot; print) through figurative uses (draw — a conclusion) and idiomatic phrases (be hard up; come out even) to Canadianisms (*tirer les vaches*, milk the cows); and under **end** we have eight, classified under [conclusion], [place where a thing stops], [remote section of town], [purpose], [result], [death], [fragment], and various idioms including the Canadianism *end of steel* translated as *bout m. de la ligne.*

A detailed comparison of the first part of the dictionary with the second shows that in general cross-references have been adequately checked from one language

to the other. Thus **abattu** is rendered by *depressed* (which shows typically the priority given to contemporary equivalents, *dejected* and *downhearted* being relegated to second and third place) and **depressed** is translated by *abattu* (as well as *déprimé*) in the English-French section. There are a few oversights in this respect: **aboîteau** is listed in the French-English part but its not very helpful rendering, *aboiteau*, is missing in the English-French lists although the word is used among English speakers in the Maritimes; **noix d'acajou** is translated by *cashew-nut* but the latter word is missing from the English entries; **accrocher** in one sense means *to sideswipe* (*a car*) but *sideswipe* is not listed.

The editors would undoubtedly regard it as a useful service if users of the dictionary were to note and list minor blemishes of this type along with any mistakes or misprints, for the first printing of this very valuable work is already exhausted and there will certainly be an opportunity to correct such small points in future editions. In any case all such information will feed into the archives for the larger volumes of the dictionary to which we now look forward.



books in review

OTHER SIDES OF MOONS

GEORGE ELLIOTT. *The Kissing Man.* Macmillan. $3.50.

ETHEL WILSON, W. O. Mitchell, Irving Layton have each published collections of short stories in the past little while, and it is good to see a new collection by a new author join them. Volumes of short stories, like books of poetry, seldom ring up sales which even remotely justify them as worthwhile business ventures, but publishers continue to print occasional collections with the result that the reputations of some very good authors rest partially, if not wholly, on their abilities as writers of short fiction — Angus Wilson, William Sansom, John Updike, and J. D. Salinger come immediately to mind. I would hope that this collection by George Elliott is the beginning of a literary career which might allow a reviewer some time to call out his name in the same breath with those I've just mentioned.

Certainly, the man can write. He is a very conscious artist. He does not waste words. He knows how the real world around us looks and smells and feels. He senses strongly the other side of the moon of human personality. And he is sensitive: I mean he knows when to chop and when to add. He knows about time and its limitations and its elasticity within a story. He is not academic about point of view, nor tyrannized by place and scene and transition. What he lacks, most of the time, is the secure knowledge that his characters can tell the story better than he can. When he learns this I predict a fine talent will be loosed among us.

The stories in this volume called *The Kissing Man*, then, are not short stories in the usual sense. Some are prose poems; others are simple allegory; others are bits of fantasy; and one or two are such colossal failures as to be unidentifiable. The title story, perhaps, falls into this latter category. But before going any farther it should be said that these eleven pieces were written as a book. They have a single setting — a small, anonymous, Ontario town — and a group of recurring names, which, while they do not connect the stories, contribute to the author's strong sense of place. The whole work, without much change of pace or direction and with the addition of a unifying central agency, could be made into a novel.

Writing about small towns in North America most often turns out to be writing about grotesques. Perhaps Southern Gothic is to blame for this, but I doubt it. In a small town, the bare facts of a man's life hang out farther and authors tend to pounce on them like gulls on a fish barge. Mr. Elliott does not pounce. For him, people are situations, sometimes carriers, sometimes simply exhibit "A" submitted in evidence for or against the human condition, and he works among them, stringing allegorical webs to catch the moral fly. Thus, the Kissing Man enters the store where young and pretty Froody works and kisses lonely, unhappy women, making them feel that some-

thing kind and pitying and perhaps magical has come into their lives. When Froody asks him, as he is escaping out through the back of the store, why he doesn't kiss her he calls back, "You've been one of the lucky ones. You haven't needed me yet." Or, in the piece called "The Way Back", Dan's mother gives birth to him without the grinder man in the street beneath her window. The grinder man has attended every birth in town for a long, long time—in fact, he is always called with the doctor—and because he was not called when Dan was born the boy is a kind of outcast. Other children will have little to do with him. He finds girls shy away from him and when he marries he must choose a bride from out in the country where the grinder man does not attend births. In the end, Dan appeases the grinder man at the birth of his first child by taking knives and axes and scythes out to the street to be sharpened by the grinder man while the baby is being born. In "What Do The Children Mean?" a real old man walks down a real road and into a real bank and demands three infants to give to three families in order to save them from Pride and Lost Principles (the capitals are mine). Finn, the young dreamer in "A Leaf for Everything Good" finds a wise philosopher sitting under the willow tree near the village pond. Everyone knows there are no trout left in the pond. The old man tells the boy there are if you have patience enough to fish for them. The old man dies. Finn fishes, trying to think what the old man was really saying to him. The town wonders at him and his father is very stern and angry. In the end Finn's father finds a fishing pole and an old gray trout under the willow tree, and hears that Finn has left on the one-twenty flag-down. Charming tales, warm, sentimental; but they are told in a style that does not fit the telling of them. There are no fairies at the bottom of Mr. Eliott's garden, and no Thurber at the top of it. The disparity between that he is saying and how he is saying it is too great.

Yet, there are good stories in this volume too. Any reader might ask for more like "A Room, A Light For Love", where the characters come alive and do not talk exclusively for the author but react as individuals. The two pieces about Dr. Fletcher are good, too, because here the whole town is involved in a way that makes Mr. Elliott free his people to think and feel a bit. Beyond this your own taste must guide you. My own hope is that you will buy the book and judge for yourself: there is enough in it to be rewarding to any reader: and there is more than enough in it to make me hope George Elliott will publish again soon.

ROBERT HARLOW

ACTING OUT HISTORY

JOHN COULTER. *Riel.* Ryerson. Cloth, $4.95. Paper, $3.00

BOOKS ABOUT LOUIS RIEL and the rebellions of 1869-70 and 1885 are not rare; this, however, is the first attempt to raise him from the contradictory pages of history to the stature of drama. It must be said that Riel's career has all the stuff of which drama is made: he was an intelligent, wilful man, a reluctant revolutionary, inspired by a sense of divine

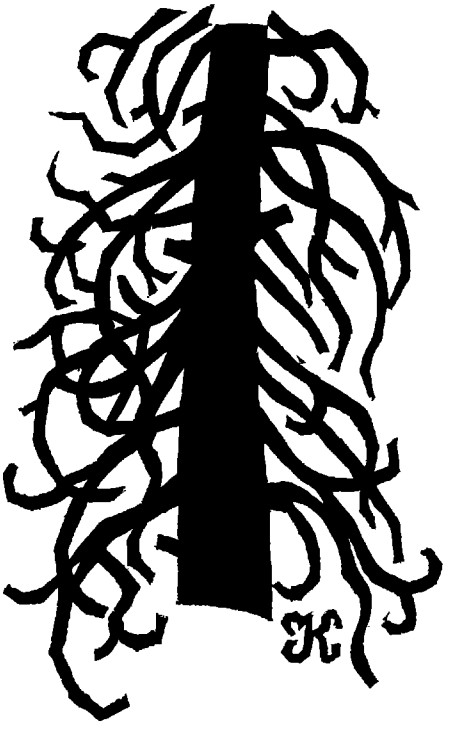
mission and profoundly aware that he alone stood between his people, the half-breed Métis of the western plains, and their fate — dispersal and absorption into an English-speaking and Protestant Western Canada. In the end, he set himself against the westward expansion of the Canadian nation and lost. He was bound to lose, so it seemed then as it does now; but the cause he at first fought for was not a dishonourable one. It was nothing more than a demand that the land rights of the Métis — who had been hunters and freighters for the Hudson's Bay Company for generations — be respected by the new Dominion of Canada, and it is not a very partisan view that holds that the bitterness of 1869-70 would have been avoided had Canada shown greater wisdom in feeling out the attitude of the Métis before sending its survey parties into the Red River.

Riel, whose character bears a passing resemblance to that of Patrice Lumumba, like him emerged as a natural leader when he could influence but not control the rush of events. Like Lumumba, he was a megalomaniac whose frustrations deepened his mental instability, and like Lumumba his life became a drama played out against a host of enemies, as satisfying in their personal diversity as any dramatist could wish for: among them, the odious Dr. Schultz of the Canadian party at Red River, antagonizing the halfbreeds and laying the seeds of the conflict to come; the arrogant McDougall, sent by Macdonald to be the first Lieutenant-Governor of the new province but — in a master-stroke of political judgement — prevented by Riel from setting foot on it; and the brutish, fanatic, and doomed Orangeman, Thomas Scott, executed by Riel when

Riel knew he could no longer control his own men if Scott were to remain alive, and as a defiant sign to Ottawa of his personal authority. It was Scott, cursing Riel to the end, whose death brought down the rage of Orange Ontario on to Riel's head, and arguably terminated his usefulness as a political leader, as someone with whom the Canadian Government might honourably treat.

Much of Riel's political work was enshrined in the new Manitoba Act, but Riel himself went into exile. While his Métis were scattering before the waves of immigrants that came from Ontario into the West, Riel lived in the United States and imagined himself the prophet of a new Catholic Church, with Bishop Bourget of Montreal as its Pope. Yet, when he answered the call from his people in 1884, he came to Saskatchewan and spoke in terms of such moderation that Macdonald wrote to Lord Lansdowne, "There is, I think, nothing to be feared from Riel . . . I think we shall deal liberally with him and make him a good subject again." A few months later, Riel was whipping up Métis and Indians in a new revolt against the government, dreaming of a great Métis nation in the northwest, and Macdonald had no choice but to put down the insurrection. The half-breeds made their last stand at Batoche, the Indian chiefs Poundmaker and Big Bear surrendered, Riel was captured and — after pleading his own sanity in defiance of counsel — was executed.

The play by John Coulter was written in 1950, and was given a performance that year in Toronto, and a revival in Regina in 1960. It was produced for television in 1961. My feeling is that it works better as a play for television than for the stage. The numerous short scenes, some of them only a page or two long, are compatible with television's ability to move around in space and time without interrupting the flow of narrative; and the close-up, that sometimes overworked device, helped to knit together an historical drama in which the motives of men were of paramount importance. But I am not here criticizing the method, which Mr. Coulter describes as "a continuous flow of scenes on a bare stage with the aid of no more than indicative settings and properties and modern stage lighting." Rather I think he has unwisely forfeited the aid of some narrative or choral device which would have enabled him to set his drama more richly in its historical context. His scenes have thus had to be both foreground and back-



ground; his characters are acting out history, one feels, rather than acting under the stress of history. The effect is unfocussed, and the characterization, which I can only describe as simple and worthy (everyone has a dialect according to his national origin) does not help very much to sharpen it. Most disappointingly, though Riel himself is given passionate utterance, I can't help feeling that the essential ambiguity of the man, an ambiguity felt by everyone with whom he came in contact, and still a cause of argument after his death, is hardly reached in this creditable and honest dramatization.

GEORGE ROBERTSON

ROOTS OF SEPARATISM

HELEN TAFT MANNING. *The Revolt of French Canada, 1800-1835.* Macmillan. $7.50.

THE CURRENT SOCIAL and political ferment in Quebec has encouraged English-Canadians, even isolationist British Columbians, to take a more serious look at the sources of French-Canadian nationalism than they have given it since the conscription controversy of World War II. In shaping the French-Canadian will to survive no period in our history has been more important than the first three decades of the nineteenth-century. The author of this account of these decisive years is Emeritus Professor of History at Bryn Mawr and a life-long student of British colonial history. Her father, President William Howard Taft, was one of that group of prominent Americans and Canadians who had summer homes at Murray Bay, and from childhood Mrs. Manning has had a personal interest in the people who live beside "the noblest river in the world".

In spite of its considerable merit this book is unlikely to find many readers outside of specialists in colonial or Canadian history and students to whom it will be assigned by grateful professors for essay writing, since much of it is constitutional history in a narrow sense, and the style is often forbidding. This is regrettable, for Mrs. Manning's work will reward the persevering general reader as well as the scholar with valuable insights into the social history of Lower Canada. The first chapter provides a good picture of the structure of the society of the province in the first decade of the century. There is also ample illustration of the energy which French-Canadian leaders devoted to the study of English constitutional history and of the skill with which they learned to use the representative institutions established by the Constitutional Act — among other weapons derived by the French party from their historical studies was the knowledge that the barons of Runnymede spoke French, a fact which they used to refute the contention of English members of the Assembly that the British constitution could only be properly studied and understood in English! Relations betwen Irish and French in their mutual hostility to the English are explored, and the impact of large-scale immigration and the cholera epidemic of the early 1830's on French fears is rightly emphasized. In her treatment of matters such as these Mrs. Manning is at her most readable.

Many earlier versions of the constitutional struggle in Lower Canada obscured the underlying social and economic

causes of the conflict by excessive attention to the details of the disagreements between governors and assemblies. The result was that the personality of the governor often seemed to be the most important factor in the situation. The "good" governors, of whom Sir. George Prevost was pre-eminent, liked the French and there were no regrettable incidents; the "bad" governors, like Sir James Craig, were anti-French and the "Reign of Terror" was the inevitable result. While the character of the governor was undoubtedly significant on many occasions, Mrs. Manning draws attention to the limitations of this exaggerated emphasis and her book shows how much more there is to the story. Yet the longest of the five main divisions of this volume is largely a recapitulation of the governor *vs.* assembly theme; although its extensive and skilful use of official documents is impressive it adds more detail than depth to the standard picture. If the material in this section had been integrated with the rest of the book to make clearer the relation between the basic social and economic issues and the political struggle the result would be a more original contribution to scholarship. Mrs. Manning does show that the controversies over land tenure, taxation, and union with Upper Canada arose from the conflict between the interests of an agrarian society represented by the French majority in the Assembly and the commercial ambitions of the English merchants who dominated the executive and legislative councils, but the bearing of these sources of tension on the actual course of the constitutional battle requires further clarification.

The termination of this account at 1835 is unfortunate, for some characteristics of the revolt of French-Canada only became clear after that time. In particular, the break between Papineau and his English-speaking lieutenant, John Neilson, revealed that Papineau, unlike Neilson, had little concern for British constitutional practices as such; he saw self-government as a means to an end — the preservation of a distinct French-Canadian society. In their uncompromising devotion to this end lies the continuity between Papineau's movement and French-Canadian nationalism today.

MARGARET PRANG

TWO DOMINIONS

J. P. MATTHEWS. *Tradition in Exile.* University of Toronto. $5.00.

EVER SINCE THE BEGINNING, critics of "colonial" literature have commented fully on the derivative quality of the verse they examine. Only rarely have they suggested other influences on the poetry, and when they do it is usually vague talk about environment and social forces. *Tradition in Exile* attempts to examine, not always with meticulous care, the common roots of Canadian and Australian creative writing, mainly poetry, and to understand the social settings of writers in these countries in the nineteenth-century.

But social influences are not enough, and Mr. Matthews moves on into a study of influences from abroad, for a new country is in everything constantly stimulated by foreign ideas. This seems particularly true of poetry. Mr. Matthews gives a careful insight into the traditions which influenced the writers in the new countries he discusses. He points, as all critics do, to the Romantics and Victorians who influenced much of the character of the poetry in both Canada and Australia.

The study of influences, particularly in poetry, is at any time a dangerous thing, for all poets are consciously or unconsciously influenced by earlier poets. A poet in the act of creation may consciously imitate the verse of another poet, or his poem may be unconsciously shaped by his previous reading. When the poem is finished, the most obvious borrowings and surface similarities may be noted. The conscious influences — the form of a poem, a way of shifting accents, a preponderance of certain vowel sounds — are easily discovered. These may be borrowed and then absorbed into what is generally a quite different æsthetic. The profound influence which one can hardly note, however, may work indirectly, and possibly in ways the borrowing poet does not fully understand or acknowledge to himself. A particular ascendancy is difficult to assess because it is all but impossible to follow it through the unique and subtle transformations it undergoes in a poet's mind. An influence may go through many phases and may be shelved in the poet's sub-conscious only to reappear in a different context from the original. It may fuse with another influence to manifest itself in a new form. With the creation of a new poem the obvious influences are lost and it is difficult to trace a new form back to its original impetus. The prevalence of certain images, vowel sounds, peculiarities of syntax, verse forms, and particular subject matter may indicate an obviously

recognizable influence, but in the shadows of a poem there may be reminiscences of other poets that are less easy to trace back to a definite source. At first these overtones seem to be naturally evident, but when one attempts to find their roots they become more obscure and the general problem of influences becomes more difficult.

Mr. Matthews recognizes this, and largely as a consequence he has done an admirable job. But the most rewarding facet of his book is that the author moves at times beyond his study of influences into a comparative study of the two literatures; more is discovered, as the jacket blurb promises, about both literatures when they are discussed together.

There is one weakness in the book, however, and that lies in the stress on the work of Charles Mair in Canada. Although both Roberts and Carman started to write in the 1880's they both categorically and historically belong to the nineteenth century and mention of them in passing is not enough for a full study of nineteenth-century Canadian poetry. The quality of Roberts' "Tantramar Revisited" and Carman's "Low Tide on Grand Pré" was produced by poetic influences from England and natural influences from the environment of the Maritimes. The whole literary milieu of the late nineteenth century, the steeped tradition of the United Empire Loyalists, the cultural influence of the Maritimes, Fredericton in particular, and the whole cultural climate of Upper Canada—these demand a more thorough investigation when nineteenth-century Canadian literature is examined, especially when "social influences" are the focus of the book.

All this does not render valueless the main thesis of Mr. Matthew's book, though it does seem to qualify it. Mr. Matthews does do for the most part what he sets out to do, and does it well. He gives a well-balanced study of both literatures, and examines their quality ably. He does nothing so foolish as to speculate or interpret, as most academics do when studying influences. And it is refreshing that he also does not attempt to assign literary merit to the writers he examines in a time when there is an onslaught of appraisals and reappraisals from anthologists, surveyists, and, in Canada, a multitude of hacks.

DONALD STEPHENS

LIBRARIANS AND PUBLISHERS

RONALD A. HAGLER. *The Selection and Acquisition of Books in Six Ontario Public Libraries in Relation to the Canadian Publishing System.* Occasional Paper No. 29. Canadian Library Association.

THE TITLE OF THIS Ph.D thesis refers to the public libraries of Chatham, Fort William, Kingston, Kitchener, Peterborough, and St. Catherines. The thesis itself takes the form of a statistical analysis of their newly published acquisitions—disappointingly without reference to actual titles—between October the 1st, 1958 and May the 31st, 1959 (3,755 titles, of which fifty-five per cent were American and forty per cent British). It also contains background information about Canadian publishing—the agency system and the problems of original publishing in Canada are concisely outlined—and discussions of purchasing, jobbers, rights, and the significance of

price, format, availability, and content in British and American books and of the promotional material and reviews depended on in actual selection.

It is a detached, knowledgeable compilation of statistics and information. Its data reveal no startling information, but Mr. Hagler does say among other things that selections vary widely from library to library and that library purchases reflect, as might be expected, the unique wonderful situation that enables Canadian publishers to supply and buyers to procure virtually any book published in the English-speaking world. As it is possible for libraries in Canada to acquire, given the funds, a richer collection of English-language books than those in the United States and Britain, and as libraries rather than bookshops not only reflect the demands for books, "but also in a very real way guide those demands, and therefore set the patterns of book use among those which the libraries serve", any inquiry into their procedures and problems and scope must have great value not only for librarians but for their suppliers (for whom they form the largest trade market) — the publishers.

Even — though not in this case — for users. Mr. Hagler says that a study of "the actual results of selection [i.e. in terms of generalized statistics on country of origin, average price, &c.] . . . is inevitably more revealing than an investigation of principles and policies of book selection, which are necessarily phrased in intangible generalities." Yet as an inveterate library user I wondered at the exclusion of any qualitative discussion of the books acquired — to me the most interesting, and surely revealing, aspect of book selection, which Mr. Hagler admits is an art. How this art was practised in the six libraries seems to me to be an inherent part of his subject. Standards of book selection appear to be those laid down by American library schools and text-books and regularly published guides to book selection. In Canada they have to undergo more than the usual local modifications because of the greater flood of books to draw on. What are these standards and how were they adapted to the community needs of each library under examination with regard to specific titles — those available versus those purchased? How are these needs and interests gauged? Is it desirable that medium-sized collections should vary so much? What criteria are used in building up a stock of books of lasting value? It is not unknown for a patron of an adult library who has noticed the lack of a book that seems a natural, worthwhile (and not necessarily specialized) library choice to suggest its acquisition, giving reasons, and be told that the book was undoubtedly considered by the system, rejected, and that any further recourse is impossible. Dismissed, the patron is left to feel that the "system" represented by this library (supported by public funds) is a hierarchical in-group, some of whose members seem to see a basic antipathy between the idea of a well-ordered library, planned, stocked, and operated according to clear-cut modern methods, and the fullest public use of it. These are ungrateful thoughts — unfair, perhaps — but they might be dispelled by an open discussion of the subject, an extension of Mr. Hagler's own — "The Selection and Acquisition of Books . . . in Relation to the Library User".

Facts and figures have been notoriously lacking in the Canadian book field;

public information has been kept to a minimum and for this publishers are in great part to blame. A significant step was taken towards an exhaustive survey not only of libraries but of publishing itself and bookselling — the whole complicated, expanding book industry — when these six libraries coöperated with Mr. Hagler in providing information for his thesis. The result is a commendable piece of research, an admirable beginning.

WILLIAM TOYE

DIPLOMATS AT WORK

Documents on Canadian Foreign Policy 1917-39, selected and edited by Walter Riddell, Oxford. $13.50.

THE FOREIGN POLICY of Canada has developed *pari passu* with the growth to nationhood inside Canada and the gradual emancipation from the apron-strings of the British mother-country. Demands for the separate and independent determination of Canadian policy abroad began with the First World War. The great efforts and sacrifices made by Canadians resulted in pressure being brought to bear on Sir Robert Borden's government for a specifically Canadian policy, which led in 1919 to the separate signing of the Versailles Peace Treaty. In the next twenty years, both the scope of policy and the machinery to execute it were greatly extended, facts which were marked by Canada's separate declaration of war on September 10th, 1939.

The documents in this handsomely-produced reference work — the first of its kind — illustrate various aspects of this embryonic period of a separate Canadian foreign policy. However, they are not the equivalent of the current British and German series of documents, since they do not contain any material from files of the Department of External Affairs. These documents are all part of the public record, and hence almost all have already appeared in print, including, of course, the important sections of Hansard. Nevertheless Mr. Riddell has rendered all those interested in Canada's foreign policy an inestimable service in collating clearly and reliably the significant documents, drawn from many sources not easily obtainable. His introductory essay is also sprightly and informative, while written from a Canadian nationalist point of view. Students, especially those aspiring to Canada's Foreign Service, will find this volume indispensable in drawing their attention to the problems which Canada faced, and in some cases still is facing, in attempting to project her own national image abroad in her foreign policy.

JOHN S. CONWAY

GROVE COLLECTION

The University of Manitoba announces that it has acquired the manuscripts and papers of the late Frederick Philip Grove, from the author's widow, Mrs. Catherine Grove of Simcoe, Ontario. Included among the manuscripts are several unpublished or unfinished novels, a number of unpublished short stories, and a volume of poems.

opinions and notes

LITTLE MAGAZINES

Sir:

I have just read with considerable interest Mr. Davey's article in *Canadian Literature*, Number 13, "Anything but Reluctant", in which a great deal of loose and charged language is thrown about and in which innuendo is indiscriminately employed — all to create unsubstantiated and false impressions.

The history of the "little mag" in the United States from 1912 to the present is sufficiently impressive to breed a healthy respect for that medium of literary publication, and the knowledgeable reader (and writer) ought thereby to be moved to investigate the offerings in this area with humility. Your journal is an eminently suitable place for such an investigation of the current "renaissance" which in the past three years has spawned a number of "little mags" in Canada, and I am happy to see that the process has begun, though I deplore the manner of Mr. Davey's article. Admittedly, its tactics are highly provocative, but its implications and conclusions fall so far short of usefulness and accuracy that I must reply to Mr. Davey and challenge his contemptuous references to "the *Prisms*" and his implied contempt for the "parasitic" editors of such publications.

Mr. Davey has a right to his contempt; I do not resent it so much as regret it. He has not, however, the right to communicate that contempt to others in slovenly language and with disreputable devices — and without providing the necessary substantial critical base which justifies the contempt. Nowhere in his article does Mr. Davey deal with literature as literature.

Let me make clear at the outset that I am not influenced in my remarks by a retaliatory contempt either for Mr. Davey or his magazine *Tish*. I approve wholeheartedly of the current manifestation of creative expression evident in the emergence of "little mags". I approve of "energy", of "enthusiasm", and of "anything but reluctance" even though I do not necessarily equate these with high quality in literature.

I must quarrel initially with Mr. Davey's definition of a "little mag". From his article one is forced to deduce that a "little mag" is a mimeographed publication edited by writers united by their similar views on literature. The term has never to my knowledge been so restricted or interpreted. Historically, the term has been applied to magazines which appeal to a limited group of intelligent readers.[1] To suggest that *Tamarack Review* and *Prism* fall outside this concept, and then to characterize them with adjectives; "semi-professional", "commercial", "glossy-paged", is childishly naïve. *Prism* does not depend on "name" writers in order to develop "a sensible commercial policy". We are not publishing for commercial reasons any more than *Tish* is. *Prism*'s "limited group of intelligent readers", its normally shaky financial circumstances, its energetic

[1] *The Little Magazine*, Princeton U.P., 1946, p. 3.

struggle merely to exist, and its eagerness to publish writing which is unacceptable to commercially oriented markets stamp it unequivocally as a typical "little mag".

"Some of the semi-professional literary quarterlies, such as Canada's *Tamarack Review*, tend to become coterie magazines depending for almost fifty per cent of their material on a particular fixed circle of writers . . . ," writes Mr. Davey. Surely only to hoist himself with his own petard! An examination of *Tish* reveals a very pronounced coterie — in proportion far higher than the fifty per cent *Tamarack* (and by implication, *Prism*) is accused of. The difference lies, of course, in the fact that, in the opinion of Mr. Davey, the *Tamarack* and *Prism* coteries are "safe" established writers, whereas the *Tish*ists are, in his view, neglected poets of high talent. This suggests that Mr. Davey considers "safe", established writers to be inferior *ipso facto* to the energetic, enthusiastic newcomer. The illogic of this assumption is self-evident. Some day, possibly the *Tish*ists will be "name" poets; one assumes their anxiety to burst into print is motivated by their desire for recognition. Similarly, the so-called "name" writers were once in the present position of the *Tish*ists, struggling to be heard.

Mr. Davey regards with horror the fact that "the editors of the *Tamaracks* and the *Prisms* seldom have any new work of their own to exhibit." The condemnatory implications of this suggest, with similar illogicality, that if you cannot write poetry or fiction you cannot read it discriminatingly either.

Further, Mr. Davey's article fulminates against " a large number of very low-energy mags with no particular editorial policy" and cites as an example "*Prism*'s often nondescript collections". The error Mr. Davey has fallen into is to consider a magazine which determines to be eclectic as "low-energy" and without conscious direction. This is of course quite invalid. *Prism*'s editorial policy is clearly set forth in its first-issue editorial, and the mere assertion that its content is "low-energy" does not take the place of a critical examination of the writing which *Prism* publishes. The fact that a magazine does not subscribe to or emphasize a particular "school" of writers does not in itself suggest that its content is valueless as literature. The eclectic "little mag", though indeed it may, generally speaking, be more conservative in taste, can and does make a valuable contribution to writers and readers. *Prism* has faithfully adhered to its editorial policy including "responsibility to young people seriously interested in writing and with gifts of mind and sensitivity which give value to their work."[2] In our current issue, for example, ten poets are represented. Four of these are "high-energy" poets who have sufficiently appealed to Mr. Davey to find a place in *Tish*; two are newcomers whose work we liked and wished to encourage, another is a New York poet whose work I think Mr. Davey would like to publish, and yet another is a poet who has published sporadically in various Canadian periodicals, and, finally, only one is a poet of "safe" established (and deserved) reputation. Moreover, *Prism* has actively searched for and published new and experimental writing to which it has devoted two special issues: one (2:3) was a collection of outstanding writing by

[2] Editorial, *Prism*, 1:1.

university students throughout Canada; the other (3:2) brought together a range of experimental writing in prose, drama, and poetry in which Mr. Davey himself was represented. This generous willingness to represent contemporary experiment in writing does not suggest staid conservatism, nor does it suggest the closed-shop coterie. What it does suggest is adherence to the policy of eclecticism which we originally proclaimed as our intention. Surely Mr. Davey would not persist in being so foolhardy as to suggest that only the literature produced in the energetic beehives of literary "schools" is worthy of publication? Where, if he maintains this view, is the talented writer who does not buzz with the others to go to have his work published? For such writers, particularly in fiction, the eclectic "little mag" is essential.

If the contribution of Canada's "little mags" is to be examined and evaluated (in my view a highly worthwhile endeavour), let us at least begin with a recognization of what we are talking about, and of the variety of contributions that can be made. The radical innovation, the courageous attack on restrictive literary tastes, the experiment in word and sound, the shifting emphases in points of view — all are stimulating and desirable manifestations of good health. Let us also remember that values in literature are not solely dependent upon such indications of "energy". Fashions and novelties come and go, but the word goes on forever.

J. DE BRUYN
Editor, *Prism*

THEATRE IN CANADA

THE PURPOSE OF THIS BIBLIOGRAPHY is to give a list of materials outlining theatre history in Canada from the earliest recorded performance in 1606 to the end of 1959. A general survey of the subject has so far been lacking, the nearest approach being Jean Béraud's "350 ans de théâtre au Canada français", a section of the *Encyclopédie du Canada français.*

With a wide field to cover, the entries in the present bibliography have been selected on fairly strict criteria. Ballet, music and opera have been excluded. No attempt has been made to list Canadian plays, although a number of sources are mentioned in the appendix. It was originally intended to exclude references to Canadian dramatists from a purely literary point of view, but such references have proved to be so few that they have been included. Reviews of plays, Canadian or otherwise, simply as dramatic art, were also thought to be borderline material, but in most cases reviewers relate their comments to the general state of the Canadian theatre, and as much of such material as possible has been listed. Section C.1 deals with the cultural background of the Canadian theatre with general comment on both quality and quantity, for many years a widely discussed topic among those interested in the subject.

The arrangement of the entries is chronological as far as possible both in the general classification and in the individual sections, in order to show the historical development of the theatre. In section B the chronology relates to subject matter and in section C to date of publication. However, there has been some compromise with the secondary adjustment by place, and some adjustments to strict chronological order have been made, to group together material related by place. Sections A and D, which are not susceptible of chronological or topical arrangement, are arranged alphabetically.

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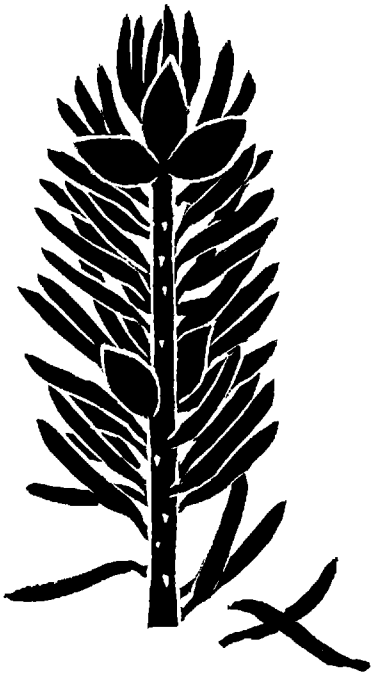

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