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CANADIAN LITERATURE No. 41

Summer, 1969

TENTH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

Writers on their Work

BY MARGARET LAURENCE, P. K. PAGE, MORDECAI RICHLER, HUGH MACLENNAN, DOROTHY LIVESAY, NORMAN LEVINE, JAMES REANEY, A. W. PURDY

Critics on the Decade

BY A. J. M. SMITH, GERARD TOUGAS, LOUIS DUDEK, W. H. NEW, DONALD STEPHENS, PETER STEVENS, GEORGE WOODCOCK

Documentaries

BY MIRIAM WADDINGTON AND GEORGE ROBERTSON

Poems

BY A. W. PURDY, MIRIAM WADDINGTON, DOROTHY LIVESAY

A QUARTERLY OF CRITICISM AND REVIEW

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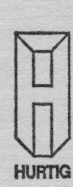
Last fall our collection of candid Canadian opinions about the U.S. was praised (and almost as often damned) in virtually every major newspaper and magazine in the country. This year we've focussed our attention on our own backyard (which a few of our critics seemed to feel we should never have left) with two books we feel will provoke the same explosive controversy and national dialogue. **The Unjust Society: The Tragedy of Canada's Indians** is a first, the agonizing story of bigotry, ignorance, bureaucratic incompetence and frustrated dreams, written by Harold Cardinal, a young native leader who is all too familiar with past betrayals and continuing tyranny. **The Unjust Society** is a blueprint for change and a warning that the new government policy is unacceptable to the native people. Also with slightly raised voices, three of Canada's leading foreign policy critics discuss diplomacy and "defence" in **Alliances and Illusions: Canada and the NATO-NORAD Question**. Lewis Hertzman, John Warnock and Thomas Hockin join forces in an attack upon the government's timid review of Canada's role in the world and conclude with an incisive analysis of our opportunities for independence. Writing last fall of **The New Romans**, the **Ottawa Citizen**'s Marcus Van Steen eulogized, "... perhaps the most important book published in Canada in the last decade. It could change the history of this country." We (being Hurtig's, 10411 Jasper Avenue, Edmonton) like to live up to the expectations we raise. And we believe that in **The Unjust Society** and **Alliances and Illusions**, Canadians should again discover new directions for the future.



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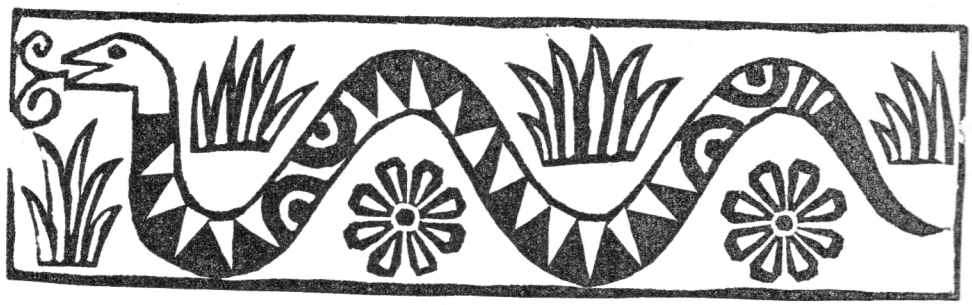
CRITICS ON THE SIXTIES

(Note: The interview of A. W. Purdy by Gary Geddes is being published by the Oxford University Press in an anthology, *Twentieth Century Poetry and Poetics*, edited by Gary Geddes).



The decorations to this volume are by George Kuthan. They are selected as the best among the designs he made specially for *Canadian Literature* during the seven years of his association with the journal from its beginning in 1959 to his death in 1966.

GETTING AWAY WITH SURVIVAL

George Woodcock

IT IS UNDOUBTEDLY a fiction that birthdays are occasions when one sums up the past and tamps it down as a good foundation for the future. Most adult birthdays, if they ever get beyond an attenuated ritual, are times of mild regret or mild relief; regret that another set of seasons has slipped so fruitlessly away, relief that it has slipped away without disaster. There are especially traumatic birthdays — as one hurries past thirty, as one races past forty-five, as one pants up towards the great climacteric, but there are few birthdays after one's teens that are the occasion for anything more joyful than the shared geniality that confirms a place in the world.

And perhaps this is the first reason for celebrating the birthday of that animate creature of paper and print called a magazine. It has not merely, like its writers and readers, got away with survival; it has also established a place in the world. And, if it has lasted as long as ten years, which is now the life span of *Canadian Literature*, and has shown the least sensitivity to the time in which it exists, it will have become one of many possible versions of that time, a symphonic version, as it were, with the writers as performers and the editor in the conductor's podium, striving to mark out a shape in a music in which each violinist and bassoonist and tympanist is bent on giving a solo performance.

In this sense *Canadian Literature* can be regarded as having been, up to this point near the end of 1969, a kind of interpretation of the Canadian Sixties. It has been concerned mainly with a single activity during that period — writing and the criticism of it — but writing brings much else in its train, and it is probable that a concern for the literature of an age will teach more about it than any other specialized viewpoint, for the historical, the psychological, the sociological, the political, the artistic manifestations, as well as the changing physical background,

all find their way into the eye of the writer and hence into the mind of the critic.

With this thought in mind, I decided to mark the first ten years of *Canadian Literature* with a symposium whose first aim would be to celebrate, not the magazine itself, but its time in literature. This is the aim of the two main groups of articles. In the first, eight Canadian writers — four novelists and four poets (one of whom writes as a dramatist) — talk of their own writing over the past decade, or in some cases over a lifetime. In the second, five Canadian critics give their views of ten years' achievements in the main categories of Canadian writing, both English and French — the novel, the short story, poetry, criticism. Two other items evoke an earlier decade in celebrating the Canadian literary journals which expired in the early Fifties and whose place was in a measure taken at the end of the decade by *Tamarack Review* and *Canadian Literature*. One, a documentary, commemorates *Contemporary Verse* in the voices of its editor, Alan Crawley, and of some of the poets who worked with him. The other, an essay by Miriam Waddington, brings to light for the first time the unpublished poems of John Sutherland, editor of the *Northern Review*. Many of us, editors and writers, still feel strongly our debts to both Crawley and Sutherland, who carried on their magazines under considerable difficulties at a time when there was no Canada Council to assist them, and this seems an appropriate occasion to acknowledge in some way their achievements.

As for *Canadian Literature* itself, A. J. M. Smith in another essay speaks of its record with a generosity and a perceptiveness that leave me little to say; in the court of opinion, as in the court of law, it is best to let a good advocate speak for one and to keep one's own peace. What does remain is to strike a historical note, talk briefly of the origins of *Canadian Literature,* and acknowledge the contributions which many people have made to its development.

Canadian Literature had a double origin, as a notion that began to form in my own mind round about 1954, and as a scheme for a journal of Canadian studies which had been developed independently by a group of faculty members and librarians at the University of British Columbia.

In London during the 1940's I had edited a literary review called *Now*, which one of the reprint houses has just re-issued, and had played a minor part in a number of other periodicals at the time. *Now* came to an end in 1947, I returned to Canada in 1949, and very soon afterwards I began to feel that, if a good enough reason presented itself, I would like to edit another magazine. I enjoyed, as a change from writing, the kind of intellectual carpentry that goes into the making of a good journal. Soon I realized that in Canada there was no magazine

devoted entirely to criticism. By 1954 I had developed my ideas on the question far enough to write an article, which the *Dalhousie Review* published in the autumn of 1955, in which I surveyed the state of critical writing in Canada at that time, and ended with these words:

> ... and it seems to me that a Canadian journal devoted specifically to the critical consideration of native and world literature is a goal to be aimed at, a minimum beginning. For now, more than ever before, we should foster that critical spirit which can bring Canadian writing out of the hesitations of adolescence and into the self-consciousness of maturity.

That, so far as I was concerned, was the beginning of *Canadian Literature*, though the magazine that eventually appeared was to be somewhat different from my first conception. In 1956 I joined the faculty of the University of British Columbia, with an understanding that there might be a possibility of my eventually editing a magazine sponsored by the University. In 1957 I went to France on a Canadian Overseas Fellowship (one of those grants from blocked francs which preceded the Canada Council awards) and when I returned in 1958 I was approached by Inglis Bell, of the U.B.C. Library, on behalf of an *ad hoc* group which had been considering the publication of a journal of Canadian studies at the University, but had narrowed the idea down to a journal dealing with Canadian literature; other members of the group, I remember, were Neal Harlow, then University Librarian, Geoff Andrew, then assistant to the President, and Roy Daniells and Stan Read of the English Department. There was enough common ground between my original idea and theirs for me to consider the proposal seriously. I had — as my *Dalhousie Review* article indicated — envisaged something broader in scope than a journal of Canadian literature, but I realized that for me the important question was not the actual area of writing that would be under study, but the development of a critical attitude among Canadian writers, and the fostering of a tradition of criticism as one of the attributes of a maturing literature.

So I accepted the task of editing the new magazine, and by the beginning of 1959 the University had agreed to sponsor it. My condition for accepting editorship was that I should have a completely free hand in selecting material, and this was granted without question, so that the committee which existed in the early days of *Canadian Literature* advised and assisted rather than directed, and discreetly faded from existence once the first practical difficulties of founding the journal were over. The narrowing of the field of reference to Canadian writing I

never found a real limitation; it was a subject that turned out to have endless ramifications, surprises and possibilities, doubtless because *Canadian Literature* started out at a time when writing in Canada was going through a series of very interesting changes in outlook and technique. The main thing was to avoid getting caught in the trap of a narrow nationalism. The study of Canadian literature is merely the study of writers who happen to live and work in Canada; it has no greater political implications than they choose to put into their works.

I will not pretend to be exhaustive in mentioning those who have helped in the many tasks of running *Canadian Literature* during its first decade, but I thank everyone collectively before I acknowledge the particular debts that the journal owes to those whose contributions were vital to its very existence. Inglis Bell took on at the start, and continued for several years with great resourcefulness, the direction of the journal's business affairs. It was he who suggested that Robert Reid be asked to give his advice on typography, and it was Robert Reid who created the classic design we still use, a design so simple and harmonious that its appeal has been remarkably durable. Reid also suggested that Charles Morriss of Victoria was the only possible printer to do justice to his design, and so started an association which has given us ten years of splendid craftsmanship in the production of *Canadian Literature.* Reid furthermore introduced George Kuthan, who provided the linocut decorations for the first seven years of *Canadian Literature* until his death in 1966; we reproduce in this issue a selection of the best of these designs.

On the editorial side, Donald Stephens joined *Canadian Literature* in 1960 and William H. New in 1965. I am indebted to them for good ideas, good writing, good and creative discussion, assistance in the humbler tasks of putting a magazine together as a physical whole, and particularly for conducting the affairs of *Canadian Literature* with skill and tact on the occasions when my writing commitments have taken me for months on end to Asia and elsewhere.

Anyone who searches the mastheads of past issues of *Canadian Literature* will encounter the names of many other people who have helped for shorter or longer periods in the circulation, advertising and financial sides of the journal. Among these I would particularly mention the contribution of Basil Stuart-Stubbs, who acted as first circulation manager, using a dark corner of the University Library as office and depot, and of Joan Symons who later took up the task and sustained it for most of magazine's life, resigning a year ago, and the equally important contributions as advertisement managers of Rita Butterfield and Dorothy Shields.

Like the conductor who, without his orchestra, can only wield his baton in si-

lence or at best attempt a disconsolate solo, an editor is nothing without his writers. When *Canadian Literature* first appeared there were many who found incredible the suggestion that a magazine devoted to writing in Canada could possibly last more than a year. There would not be enough subjects, they claimed. And, if there were, how could one find the writers? The subjects have never been lacking, because the literature of our country is constantly growing and thrusting up new manifestations. By the same token, the writers have been found, and by now they run into the hundreds, with new names appearing in every issue. They appear because *Canadian Literature* itself was launched at a time when the cultivation of a critical view of Canadian writing had become necessary; it is a natural stage in the maturing of any literature, and in this sense the magazine appeared when it was needed. In its way, I think, it caught the spirit that was afoot in Canadian writing during the 1960's, and that has accounted for its modicum of success.

"This money certainly is a devilish thing!" said Aphra Behn. "I'm sure the want of it had like to have ruined my dear Philibella . . . " The want of it would ruin also most literary magazines, since I have yet to meet one that did not rely on a subsidy to meet its deficit. For having saved it from the near fate of dear Philibella, *Canadian Literature* is indebted to the University of British Columbia, to the Leo and Thea Koerner Foundation, and to the Canada Council, all of which have contributed to its sustenance and, in the case of the Canada Council, to an expansion to the present size.

So much for history — and now for the Seventies . . . !

TEN YEARS' SENTENCES

Margaret Laurence

ALMOST EXACTLY TEN YEARS ago I was sitting in the study of our house in Vancouver, filled with the black celtic gloom which sometimes strikes. I had just received a letter from an American publisher which said, among other things, that their chief reader reported himself to be "only reasonably nauseated" by the lengthy interior monologues of the main character of my first novel, *This Side Jordan*. If I could see my way clear to reconsidering parts of the novel, they would be willing to look at it again. More revision, I thought, was out of the question. I had already rewritten half the book from scratch when I decided, after leaving Africa and getting a fresh perspective on colonial society, that I'd been unfair to the European characters. More work I couldn't face. A quick cup of hemlock would be easier. However, as we were a little short on hemlock just then, I got out the manuscript instead. I hadn't looked at it for months, and I saw to my consternation that the gent with the upset stomach was undeniably right in some ways. I managed to cut some of the more emotive prose (although not enough) and lived to bless him for his brutal criticism.

Ten years ago I was thirty-two years old and incredibly naive about writing and publishing. I had never talked with any publisher face-to-face. I knew only one other writer as a close friend — Adele Wiseman, whose letters throughout the years had heartened me. I had had one short story published in *Queen's Quarterly* a few years earlier, and had been encouraged by Malcolm Ross, the then-editor. I had also recently had a story published in *Prism*, and Ethel Wilson had graciously written to say she liked it — that meant more to me than I can ever express and began a friendship which has been one of the most valued in my life.

Can it only have been ten years ago? What has changed? Everything. The world and myself. In some ways it's been the most difficult and most interesting decade of my life, for almost everything I've written which has been publishable

has been written in these years. I've mysteriously managed to survive the writing of six more books, after that first novel. It's been said that for some writers the only thing worse than writing is not writing, and for me this is nearly true, for I don't write any more easily now than I did ten years ago. In fact, I write less easily, perhaps because as well as the attempt to connect directly with the character's wavelength, there is now also a kind of subconscious monitor which seeks to cut out the garbage (the totally irrelevant, and the "fine" oratorical writing which I have come to dislike more and more) before it is written rather than after, and the two selves sometimes work in uneasy harness. Simultaneously, of course, it's had its exhilaration, the feeling that comes when the writing is moving well, setting its own pace, finding its own form. I've learned a few things I needed to know — for example, that the best and worst time is when the writing is going on, not when the book is published, for by that point one is disconnected from that particular thing. I've learned that my anxieties and difficulties with writing aren't peculiar to myself — most writers have the same kind of demons and go on having them, as I do. (This seems so obvious as to be hardly worth stating, but I didn't really know it ten years ago.) I've lived for the past six years in England, and although I've picked up a lot of peripherally useful information about the publishing aspect of books and a sense of the writing going on in many countries, I don't really believe my being here has influenced my writing one way or another, certainly not to anything like the same extent as Africa once did.

This Side Jordan and the two other books I wrote which were set in Africa, *The Prophet's Camel Bell* and *The Tomorrow-Tamer*, were written out of the milieu of a rapidly ending colonialism and the emerging independence of African countries. They are not entirely hopeful books, nor do they, I think, ignore some of the inevitable casualties of social change, both African and European, but they do reflect the predominantly optimistic outlook of many Africans and many western liberals in the late 1950's and early 1960's. They were written by an outsider who experienced a seven years' love affair with a continent but who in the end had to remain in precisely that relationship, for it could never become the close involvement of family. The affair could be terminated — it was not basically for me a lifetime commitment, as it has been for some Europeans. On Africa's side, in its people's feelings towards me, it was, not unnaturally, little more than polite tolerance, for white liberals were not much more loved then than they are now, and with some considerable justification, as I discovered partly from listening to myself talking and partly in writing *This Side Jordan*. Another thing all my African writing had in common was that the three books were written by a person

who had lived in Africa in her late twenties and early thirties, and it all therefore bears the unmistakable mark of someone who is young and full of faith. In *This Side Jordan* (which I now find out-dated and superficial and yet somehow retrospectively touching) victory for the side of the angels is all but assured. Nathaniel holds up his newborn son, at the end, and says "Cross Jordan, Joshua." Jordan the mythical *could* be crossed; the dream-goal of the promised land *could* be achieved, if not in Nathaniel's lifetime, then in his son's. This was the prevailing spirit, not only of myself but of Africa at that time. Things have shifted considerably since then.

AFTER I CAME TO ENGLAND, in 1962, I picked up some of the threads of a relationship with Africa, although this time only as an observer and amateur friend, for I had had to abandon every *ism* except individualism and even that seemed a little creaky until the last syllable finally vanished of itself, leaving me ismless, which was just as well. I became extremely interested in contemporary African writing in English. It had seemed to me, a few years before, that if anything was now going to be written about Africa, it would have to be done from the inside by Africans themselves, and this was one reason I stopped writing anything with that setting. In fact, although I did not realize it then, already many young African writers were exploring their own backgrounds, their own societies and people. In a period of hiatus after finishing *A Jest Of God*, I read a great deal of contemporary Nigerian writing and even rashly went so far as to write a book of commentary on it. This book, called *Long Drums And Cannons* (the title is taken from a poem by Christopher Okigbo) I now feel refers to a period of history which is over — the fifteen years in which Nigerian writers created a kind of renaissance, drawing upon their cultural past and relating it to the present, seeking links with the ancestors and the old gods in order to discover who they themselves were. This exploration and discovery ended abruptly with the first massacre of the Ibo in the north, some two years ago. When Nigeria finally emerges from its present agony, it will be in some very different and as yet unpredictable form, and its writers may well find themselves having to enquire into themes they have so far hardly touched, such as the appalling grip on the human heart of tribalism in its hate aspect.

In London, in 1965, I got to know a few Nigerian writers when they visited this

country. I remember especially the times I met Christopher Okigbo, and how surprised I was at his external ebullience, his jazziness, so much in contrast to his deeply introverted poetry. And I remember, after having read Wole Soyinka's plays and seeing *The Road* performed here, having lunch with Wole and hearing him talk about the travelling theatre company he hoped to get going (he had already set up two theatres in Nigeria, the first contemporary theatres there). How much everything can change in a couple of years! Chris Okigbo is dead, fighting for Biafra. Wole Soyinka, undoubtedly the best writer that English-writing Africa has yet produced, and one of the best anywhere, has been in a Federal jail in Kaduna for more than a year. Chinua Achebe, that excellent and wise novelist, isn't writing for himself these days — he's doing journalism for Biafra, and all one can hope at the moment is that he manages to survive.

I guess I will always care about Africa. But the feeling I had, in everything I wrote about it, isn't the feeling I have now. It would be easy to convey the impression that I've become disillusioned with the entire continent, but this would be a distortion. What has happened, with Africa's upheavals, has been happening all over the world. Just as I feel that Canadians can't say *them* when we talk of America's disastrous and terrifying war in Vietnam, so I feel we can't say *them* of Africans. What one has come to see, in the last decade, is that tribalism is an inheritance of us all. Tribalism is not such a bad thing, if seen as the bond which an individual feels with his roots, his ancestors, his background. It may or may not be stultifying in a personal sense, but that is a problem each of us has to solve or not solve. Where tribalism becomes, to my mind, frighteningly dangerous is where the tribe — whatever it is, the Hausa, the Ibo, the Scots Presbyterians, the Daughters of the American Revolution, the in-group — is seen as "the people," the human beings, and the others, the un-tribe, are seen as sub-human. This is not Africa's problem alone; it is everyone's.

When I stopped writing about Africa and turned to the area of writing where I most wanted to be, my own people and background, I felt very hesitant. The character of Hagar had been in my mind for quite a while before I summoned enough nerve to begin the novel. Strangely enough, however, once I began *The Stone Angel*, it wrote itself more easily than anything I have ever done. I experienced the enormous pleasure of coming home in terms of idiom. With the African characters, I had to rely upon a not-too-bad ear for human speech, but in conceptual terms, where thoughts were concerned, I had no means of knowing whether I'd come within a mile of them or not. With Hagar, I had an upsurge of certainty. I wouldn't go to great lengths to defend the form of the novel, at this

distance, for I know its flaws. The flashback method is, I think, a little overworked in it, and I am not at all sure that flashbacks ought to be in chronological order, as I placed them in order to make it easier for the reader to follow Hagar's life. But where Hagar herself is concerned, I still believe she speaks and feels as she would have done. She speaks in the voice of someone of my grandparents' generation, but it is a voice I know and have always known. I feel ambiguous towards her, because I resent her authoritarian outlook, and yet I love her, too, for her battling.

I didn't know I was changing so much when I wrote *The Stone Angel.* I haven't ever decided beforehand on a theme for a novel (I know that where *This Side Jordan* is concerned, this statement sounds untrue, but it isn't). The individual characters come first, and I have often been halfway through something before I realized what the theme was. *The Stone Angel* fooled me even when I had finished writing it, for I imagined the theme was probably the same as in much of my African writing — the nature of freedom. This is partly true, but I see now that the emphasis by that time had altered. The world had changed; I had grown older. Perhaps I no longer believed so much in the promised land, even the promised land of one's own inner freedom. Perhaps an obsession with freedom is the persistent (thank God) dance of the young. With *The Stone Angel,* without my recognizing it at the time, the theme had changed to that of survival, the attempt of the personality to survive with some dignity, toting the load of excess mental baggage that everyone carries, until the moment of death.

I think (although I could be wrong) that this is more or less the theme of my last two novels as well. *A Jest of God,* as some critics have pointed out disapprovingly, is a very inturned novel. I recognize the limitations of a novel told in the first person and the present tense, from one viewpoint only, but it couldn't have been done any other way, for Rachel herself is a very inturned person. She tries to break the handcuffs of her own past, but she is self-perceptive enough to recognize that for her no freedom from the shackledom of the ancestors can be total. Her emergence from the tomb-like atmosphere of her extended childhood is a partial defeat — or, looked at in another way, a partial victory. She is no longer so much afraid of herself as she was. She is beginning to learn the rules of survival.

In *The Fire-Dwellers,* Stacey is Rachel's sister (don't ask me why; I don't know; she just is). Her boundaries are wider than Rachel's, for she is married and has four kids, so in everything she does she has to think of five other people. Who on earth, I asked myself when I began writing this novel, is going to be interested in reading about a middle-aged housewife, mother of four? Then I

thought, the hell with it — some of my best friends are middle-aged housewives; I'm one myself, but I deplore labels so let's just call one another by our proper names. I was fed up with the current fictional portraits of women of my generation — middle-aged mums either being presented as glossy magazine types, perfect, everloving and incontestably contented, or else as sinister and spiritually cannibalistic monsters determined only to destroy their men and kids by hypnotic means. I guess there are some women like the latter, but I don't happen to know any of them. There are no women like the former; they don't exist. Stacey had been in my mind for a long time — longer than Rachel, as a matter of fact. She's not particularly valiant (maybe she's an anti-heroine), but she's got some guts and some humour. In various ways she's Hagar's spiritual grand-daughter. When I finally got going at the novel, I experienced the same feeling I had had with *The Stone Angel,* only perhaps more so, because this time it was a question of writing really in my own idiom, the ways of speech and memory of my generation, those who were born in the 20's, were children in the dusty 30's, grew up during the last war. Stacey isn't in any sense myself or any other person except herself, but we know one another awfully well. She is concerned with survival, like Hagar and like Rachel, but in her case it involves living in an external world which she perceives as increasingly violent and indeed lunatic, and trying simultaneously within herself to accept middle age with its tricky ramifications, including the suspicion, not uncommon among her age-peers, that one was nicer, less corrupt and possibly even less stupid twenty years ago, this being, of course, not only a comprehension of reality but also a mirage induced by the point-of-no-return situation.

With this last novel (which interests me more than the others, because I've just finished it and am not yet disconnected) the writing is more pared-down than anything I've written yet, but the form itself is (or so I believe) wider, including as it does a certain amount of third-person narration as well as Stacey's idiomatic inner running commentary and her somewhat less idiomatic fantasies, dreams, memories.

A strange aspect of my so-called Canadian writing is that I haven't been much aware of its being Canadian, and this seems a good thing to me, for it suggests that one has been writing out of a background so closely known that no explanatory tags are necessary. I was always conscious that the novel and stories set in Ghana were *about Africa.* My last three novels just seem like novels.

OVER TEN YEARS, trying to sum up the changes, I suppose I have become more involved with novels of character and with trying to feel how it would be to *be* that particular person. My viewpoint has altered from modified optimism to modified pessimism. I have become more concerned with form in writing than I used to be. I have moved closer (admittedly, in typically cautious stages) to an expression of my own idiom and way of thought. These are not qualitative statements, of course. I don't know whether my writing has become better or worse. I only know the ways in which it has changed. Sometimes it seems a peculiar way to be spending one's life — a life sentence of sentences, as it were. Or maybe not a life sentence, because one day I won't have any more to say and I hope I'll know when that time comes and have the will power to break a long-standing addiction. (How is that for mixed metaphors?)

I've listened to the speech of three generations — my grandparents, my parents and my own, and maybe I've even heard what some of it means. I can listen with great interest to the speech of a generation younger than mine, but I can't hear it accurately enough to set it down and I have no desire to try. That is specifically their business, not mine, and while envying them meanly, I also wish them godspeed.

At the moment, I have the same feeling as I did when I knew I had finished writing about Africa. I've gone as far as I personally can go, in the area in which I've lived for the past three novels. A change of direction would appear to be indicated. I have a halfway hunch where I want to go, but I don't know how to get there or what will be there if I do. Maybe I'll strike it lucky and find the right compass, or maybe I won't.

QUESTIONS AND IMAGES

P. K. Page

THE LAST TEN YEARS span three distinct places — and phases — in my life: Brazil, Mexico, Canada, in that order. All countries of the new world.

Brazil pelted me with images. Marmosets in the flowering jungle; bands of multi-colored birds moving among the branches of the kapok tree outside the bedroom verandah; orchids in the kapok tree, cucumbers in the kapok tree, the whole tree bursting into cotton candy. Flamboyantes in flaming flower against the sky as one lay on one's back in the swimming pool. Doric palms waving green plumage, growing antlers and beads. Cerise dragon flies. Butterflies as large as a flying hand and blue, bright blue.

Drums from the favelas beat like one's own blood, accompanied by the deep bass viol of frogs in the lotus pond; volleys of rockets shattered the black night air, air wet as a sheet and rank with the smell of decaying jackos. Insistent, less obtrusive, the tiny fret of tropical vegetation, the sibilance of bamboos.

Churches, golden as the eye of God, were so miraculously proportioned that one wondered if proportion alone might actually alter consciousness. Enormous quantities of gold leaf. Entire interiors of it, changing space, vibrating strangely; at one moment flashing to blind you, at another reverberating on and on like a golden gong. Moorish designs in tiles and lattices created infinities of intricate repetition.

My first foreign language — to live in, that is — and the personality changes that accompany it. One is a toy at first, a doll. Then a child. Gradually, as vocabulary increases, an adult again. But a different adult. Who am I, then, that language can so change me? What is personality, identity? And the deeper change, the profounder understanding — partial, at least — of what man is, devoid of words. Where could wordlessness lead? Shocks, insights, astounding and sudden walls. Equally astounding and sudden dematerializations; points of view shifting

and vanishing. Attitudes recognized for what they are: attitudes. The Word behind the word . . . but when there *is* no word . . . ?

("Why did you stop writing?" "I didn't. It stopped." "Nonsense, you're the master." "Am I?") Who would not, after all, be a poet, a good poet, if one could choose? If one could choose. Most of one's life one has the illusion of choice. And when that is removed, when clearly one cannot choose. . . . Blank page after blank page. The thing I had feared most of all had happened at last. This time I never *would* write again. But by some combination of factors — co-incidence, serendipity — the pen that had written was now, most surprisingly, drawing. ("Why did you start drawing?" "I didn't. It started." "But why start something you know nothing about and chuck up all the techniques and skills. . . . ?") Why, indeed, why?

What was that tiny fret, that wordless dizzying vibration, the whole molecular dance? Is that what Tobey's white writing wrote? What was that golden shimmer, the bright pink shine on the anturias, the delicately and exactly drawn design of the macaw's feathers? Why did I suddenly see with the eye of an ant? Or a fly? The golden — yes, there it was again — web spun by the spider among the leaves of the century plant? Surely the very purpose of a web demands invisibility? Yet this was a lure, a glistening small sun, jewelled already with opalescent victims. Victims of what?

The impotence of a marmoset in a rage, pitting itself against me, its fingers like the stems of violets, unable to break the skin of my hand. How quickly one learns about scale with a marmoset for companion. Man in a rage with his gods, or, equally superficially, pleased with them. The glorious macaw, the flesh of his Groucho Marx face wrinkled and soft, his crazy hilarious laughter and low seductive chuckles making him kin until one looked into his infinitely dilatable eye and was drawn through its vortex into a minute cosmos which contained all the staggering dimensions of outer space.

I wonder now if 'brazil' would have happened wherever I was? As to where it pointed I hadn't the least idea, nor, I think, did I ask any questions beyond the immediate ones. But I drew as if my life depended on it — each tile of each house, each leaf of each tree, each blade of grass, each mote of sunlight — all things bright and beautiful. If I drew them all. . . . ? And I did. Compelled, propelled by the point of my pen. And in drawing them all I seemed to make them mine, or make peace with them, or they with me. And then, having drawn everything — each drop of water and grain of sand — the pen began dreaming. It began a life of its own.

Looking back with my purely psychological eye through the long clear topaz of that day, I appear as a mute observer, an inarticulate listener, occupying another part of myself.

If Brazil was day, then Mexico was night. All the images of darkness hovered for me in the Mexican sunlight. If Brazil was a change of place, then Mexico was a change of time. One was very close to the old gods here. Death and the old gods. Their great temples rose all around one. Temples to the Sun. Temples to the Moon.

Objects dissolved into their symbols. All the pyramids and stairs, plumed serpents in stone, masks of jade, obsidian knives, skulls of crystal — or sugar.

In the rain forest stood the bone-white ruins of buildings — tangible remains of a whole mythology. Buildings so intricate — (tarsal, metatarsal) — one was tempted to believe they were skeletons from which the flesh had long since rotted. Motionless. Beautiful. Great ivory kings and queens beneath their lacey cranial combs. Palaces and gardens of the Sleeping Beauty.

The villages seemed unchanged since the beginning of time. The same adobe huts, the same fields of maize, the same ancient languages of clicking consonants, and surely, the same gods. Gods hungry for human blood. (Too much Lowry and Lawrence?) The plazas of Catholic churches were stages for the old rituals of costumed dances, stamped out to the music of conch shell and drum.

In Oaxaca the women of Yalalag wear triple crosses which led Cortes' priests to the mistaken belief that Christian missionaries had preceded them. Oaxacans perhaps understand the symbolism of the cross: time passing, time eternal — "the intersection of this world with eternity." In Chichen Itza the Caracol or Snail — an observatory dome from which the Mayans probed the heavens — has four small openings exactly pointing to the cardinal directions. Temples of the Cross. Temples of the Foliated Cross.

Coming as I do from a random or whim-oriented culture, this recurrence and interrelating of symbols into an ordered and significant pattern — prevalent too in the folk arts of pottery and weaving — was curiously illuminating. One did not feel restricted by the enclosed form of the 'design'; rather, one was liberated into something life-giving and larger. I could now begin to understand how the "little world is created according to the prototype of the great world."

Great or little, for me it was still a night world — one into which the pattern was pricked like a constellation — bright, twinkling, hard to grasp, harder still to hold. A dreaming world in which I continued to draw and to dream. How to

make a noumenal doll; how to fly; the man with one black and one white hand — (Hari-Hara?); Osiris — (The Seat of the Eye); the room with the invisible walls; the circular dance beside the sea — (Initiation? Into what? A non-religious Christian? A religious non-Christian?) Poetry was more than ever now in the perceiving. My only access to it was through the dream and the drawing.

I had my first two shows during this period. The age of my graphic innocence was past. I had acquired another mask, another label. Each additional one seemed to move me further from my own centre. I was now suddenly and sharply reminded of the young Rilke, bored on a rainy afternoon, coming upon the clothing and paraphernalia of disguise in the wardrobes of a spare room; and how, masked, turbanned and cloaked, he had struck a pose before a mirror. "I stared," he wrote, "at this great, terrifying unknown personage before me and it seemed appalling to me that I should be alone with him."

Which is the mask and which the self? How distinguish, let alone separate, two such seemingly interpenetrating matters? As if pursued by the Hound of Heaven I raced back and forth among the Collected Works of Jung, The Perennial Philosophy, The Doors of Perception, Zen, C. S. Lewis, St. John of the Cross.

"See how he who thinks himself one is not one, but seems to have as many personalities as he has moods."

"Understand that thou thyself art even another little world, and hast within thee the sun and the moon, and also the stars . . . "

I began to suspect, in what would once have been near-heresy, that drawing and writing were not only ends in themselves, as I had previously thought, but possibly the means to an end which I could barely imagine — a method, perhaps, of tracing the 'small design'. And the very emergence of these ideas began to clear a way, remove the furniture and provide a new space.

But when something one has thought opaque appears translucent, transparent even, one questions whether it might not ultimately become entirely invisible. Solid walls dissolved disconcertingly into scrims. For the moment I was uncertain where to lean.

The dark Mexican night had led me back into myself and I was startlingly aware of the six directions of space.

A day and a night had passed. My return to Canada, if the pattern continued, should be the start of a new day.

The culture shock of homecoming after many years abroad is even greater, I think, than the culture shock of entering a new country. One returns different, to a different place, misled by the belief that neither has changed. Yet I am

grateful for the shocks. The conditioning process which turns live tissue into fossil is arrested by the earthquake. Even buried strata may be exposed.

I had a small retrospective show shortly after coming home, followed by the publication of a book of 'retrospective' poetry. The shutting of twin doors. Not necessarily on drawings and poems but on *those* drawings and *those* poems.

The questions had now become more pressing than the images. Some of the questions were retrospective: had the move from writing to drawing been a return to the primitive in myself — to the 'first man' of Van der Post? Was it a psychological starting again from the pre-verbal state? If in the life of the individual and the life of the race, drawing precedes written literature, was this step back really a beginning? Certainly the varied scenes through which I had journeyed had provided no lack of subject matter.

More urgent however, were the questions raised by Alan McGlashan: "Who or what is the Dreamer within us? To whom is the Dreamer talking?" What, indeed, is this duologue, so like an effortless poem? Can projected images be manifested as dreams? Are all dreams projected? Or some? Is the Dreamer active or passive? Initiator or recipient? Sometimes one, sometimes the other? And what about the waking Dreamer? Are thoughts the invisible dreams of a daylight world? Projected by what, or whom? Jung's collective unconscious? Rumi's angels?

I don't know the answers to these questions but merely posing them moves more furniture. I begin to sense another realm — interrelated — the high doh of a scale in which we are the low. And in a sudden and momentary bouleversement, I realize that I have been upside down in life — like a tree on its head, roots exposed in the air.

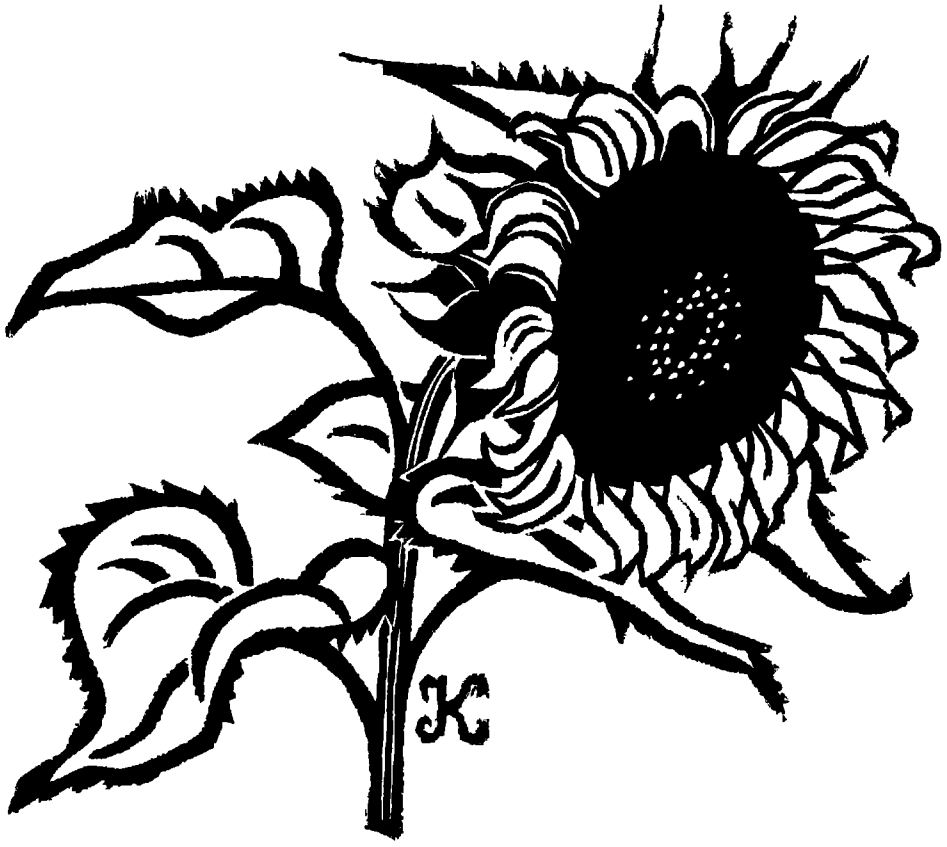
The question of the mask which confronted me with such violence in Mexico has subtly shifted. In our popcorn packages when I was a child, along with the tin rings, jacks, marbles and other hidden surprises, one was occasionally lucky enough to find a small coloured picture complete with strips of transparent red and green celluloid. The picture, viewed alone, was of a boy with an umbrella and a dog. Seen through the green filter, the umbrella disappeared. The red filter demolished the dog. My subconscious evidently knew something about the tyranny of subjectivity years ago when it desired to go "through to the area behind the eyes/where silent, unrefractive whiteness lies". I didn't understand the image then but it arrived complete. It was not to be denied even though only half-glimpsed, enigmatic. It's pleasant now to know what I was talking about!

Whether or not the handful of poems written recently means that writing has 'started' again, I do not know; whether there is any advance over earlier work, I

shall have to let others decide. For the time being my primary concern is to remove the filters.

Meanwhile the images have begun again and the questions continue.

"What do I sing and what does my lute sing?"



THE UNCERTAIN WORLD

Mordecai Richler

FREQUENTLY, I FEEL I'VE LOST something somewhere. Spontaneity maybe, or honest appetite. Now I'm harnessed to this ritual of being a writer, shaking out the morning mail for cheque-size envelopes — scanning the newspapers — breakfast — then downstairs to work. To try to work. This morning I'm breaking off on a novel I'm still attempting to finish after five years, shirking it by making a start on this piece.

If I get stuck, I can switch to a book review, already overdue.

If it turns out an especially sour, unyielding morning, I can return, in my mind's eye, to Paris, the innocent days, or recite a lecture to myself that begins: Your father had to be out at six every morning, driving to the junk yard in the sub-zero dark, through Montreal blizzards. You work at home, never at your desk before nine.

And then, if I'm not even up to a book review (*What do you mean, not up to it? It pays more for a day's work than your father ever earned, hustling scrap, in a week.*), I can stroll downtown. St. Catherine Street. Montreal's Main Stem, as the doyen of our gossip columnists has it. A time-consuming walk while I await, as the columnist recently put it, the Last Big Deadline In The Sky.

Pretending to browse for books by lesser novelists, I can surreptitiously check out the shops on stacks of the paperback edition of *Cocksure*.

Or I can take in a movie maybe.

Ego dividends. Possibly, I can pick a movie that I had been asked to write myself, but declined. Whatever the movie, it is quite likely I will know the director or the script writer, maybe even one of the stars.

Gee whiz.

Say the star, delicious, twinkly-eyed heroine, wronged in her cinema time by all the cads ever contracted to J. Arthur Rank, who turned to me between takes

one afternoon on a restaurant location in Bradford, indicating the crowd assembled since seven a.m., rehearsed — spun into action — shushed — spun into action and shushed again and again — only so that she, the camera tracking after, might sweep through them, making a poignant exit: turned to me, her smile entrancing, and said, "Aren't they marvellous?"

"What?"

"The faces he chose."

The director, she meant. "Oh."

"Are they real people," she then inquired softly, "or only extras?"

So there you have it. In London and New York, I skitter on the periphery of festooned circles, know plenty of inside stories. Bombshells. Like which Fabian cabinet minister is an insatiable pederast. How Jack Ruby came to die of cancer. What best-selling novel was really stitched together by a cunning editor. Which wrinkled Hollywood glamour queen is predisposed toward gang shags with hirsute Neapolitan waiters from the Mirabelle. Yes, yes, I'll own up to it. I am, after eighteen years as a writer, not utterly unconnected or unknown, as witness the entry in the indispensible *Oxford Companion to Canadian Literature*.

> Richler, Mordecai (1931——) Born in Montreal, he was educated at Sir George Williams College and spent two years abroad. Returning to Canada in 1952, he joined the staff of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. He now lives in England, where he writes film scripts, novels, and short stories.

The key to Richler's novels is — talent. Hard work. Canada Council grants. Favourable winds.

After eighteen years and six novels there is nothing I cherish so much as the first and most vulnerable book, *The Acrobats*, published in 1954, not only because it marked the first time my name appeared in a Canadian newspaper, a prescient Toronto columnist writing from London, "You've not heard of Mordecai Richler yet, but, look out, she's a name to watch for"; but also because it was the one book I could write as a totally private act, with the deep, inner assurance that nobody would be such a damn fool as to publish it. That any editor would boot it back to me, a condescending rejection note enclosed, enabling me to quit Paris for Montreal, an honourable failure, and get down to the serious business of looking for a job. A real job.

Don't blame me, but André Deutsch. To my astonishment (and I say this without false modesty), the novel was published in England and the U.S., and translated into five languages. Now, when somebody asked me what I did, I could

reply, without seeming fraudulent to myself, that I was indeed a writer. If I still tended to doubt it in the early hours of the morning, then *The Acrobats*, in shop windows here and there, was the proof I needed. My novel on display side by side with real ones. There is no publication as agonizing or charged with elation as the first.

Gradually, you assume that what you write will be published. After the first book, composing a novel is no longer self-indulgent, a conceit. It becomes, among other things, a living. Though to this day reviews can still sting or delight, it's sales, man — sales, that's the stuff — that buys you the time to get on with the next. Mind you, there are a number of critics whose esteem I prize, whose opprobium can sear, but, for the most part, I, in common with other writers, have learned to read reviews like a market report. This one will help move the book, that one not.

Writing a book, as George Orwell has observed, is a horrible, exhausting struggle. "One would never undertake such a thing if one were not driven by some demon whom one can neither resist nor understand." Something else. Each novel is a failure, or there would be no compulsion to begin afresh. Critics don't help. Speaking as somebody who fills that office on occasion, I must say that the critic's essential relationship is with the reader, not the writer. It is his duty to celebrate good books, eviscerate bad ones, lying ones.

When I first published, in 1954, it was commonly assumed that to commit a film script was to sell out (Daniel Fuchs, Christopher Isherwood, Irwin Shaw), and that the good and dedicated life was in academe. Now, the inverse seems to be the Canadian case. The creative young yearn to be in films, journeymen retire to the universities. *Seems to be the case*, because, happily, there are exceptions.

All of us tend to romanticize the world we nearly chose. In my case, academe, where, like all good spellers on tenure, I would own a Ph.D. Instead of having to bring home the meat, I would only be obliged to stamp it, rejecting this shoulder of beef as Hank James derivative, that side of pork as sub-Jimmy Joyce. I saw myself no longer a perplexed free-lancer with an unpredictable income, balancing this magazine assignment, that film job, against the time it would buy me. No sir. Sipping Tio Pepe in the faculty club, snug in my leather wing-backed chair, in the cherished company of other disinterested scholars, speculating on the significance of the comparable Frederick Philip Grove, I would not, given the assurance of a monthly cheque, chat about anything so coarse as money.

— Why don't you, um, write a novel yourself this summer, Professor Richler?

— Well, Dr. Lemming, like you, I have too much respect for the tradition to sully it with my own feeble scribblings.

— Quite.

— Just so.

Alas, academe, like girls, whisky, and literature, promised better than it paid. I now realize, after riding the academic gravy train for a season, that vaudeville hasn't disappeared or been killed by TV, but merely retired to smaller circuits, among them, the universities. Take the poets, for instance. Applying for Canada Council grants today, they no longer catalogue their publications (the accomplishments of obsolete linear man), but, instead, like TV actors on the make, they list their personal appearances, the campuses where they have read aloud. Wowsy at Simon Fraser U., hotsy at Carleton. Working wrinkles out of the act in the stix, with a headliner coming up in the veritable Palace of the campus circuit, the U. of T.

If stand-up comics now employ batteries of gag writers because national TV exposure means they can only use their material once, then professors, playing to a new house every season, can peddle the same one-liners year after year, improving only on timing and delivery. For promos, they publish. Bringing out journals necessary to no known audience, but essential to their advancement.

Put plainly, these days everybody's in show business, all trades are riddled with impurities. And so, after a most enjoyable (and salaried) year in academe — a reverse sabbatical, if you like — I now return, refreshed, to the uncertain world of the free-lance writer, where nobody, as James Thurber once wrote, sits at anybody else's feet unless he's been knocked there.

Why do you write?

Doctors are seldom asked why they practice, shoemakers how come they cobble, or baseball players why they don't drive a coal truck instead, but again and again writers, like house-breakers, are asked why they do it.

Orwell, as might be expected, supplies the most honest answer in his essay, *Why I Write.*

"1. Sheer egoism. Desire to seem clever, to be talked about, to be remembered after death, to get your own back on grown-ups who snubbed you in childhood, etc. etc." To this I would add egoism informed by imagination, style, and a desire to be known, yes, *but only on your own conditions.*

Nobody is more embittered than the neglected writer and, obviously, allowed a certain recognition, I am a happier and more generous man than I would otherwise be. But nothing I have done to win this recognition appalls me, has gone against my nature. I fervently believe that all a writer should send into the marketplace to be judged is his own work; the rest should remain private. I deplore the

writer as a personality, however large and undoubted the talent, as is the case with Norman Mailer. I also do not believe in special licence for the so-called artistic temperament. After all, basically, my problems, as I grudgingly come within spitting distance of middle age, are the same as anybody else's. Easier maybe. I can bend my anxieties to subversive uses. Making stories of them. When I'm not writing, I'm a husband and a father of five. Worried about air pollution. The population explosion. My sons' report cards.

"2. Aesthetic enthusiasm. Perception of beauty in the external world, or, on the other hand, in words and their right arrangement." The agonies involved in creating a novel, the unsatisfying draft that follows unsatisfying draft, the scenes you never get right, are redeemed by those rare and memorable days when, seemingly without reason, everything falls right. Bonus days. Blessed days when, drawing on sources unsuspected, you pluck ideas and prose out of your skull that you never thought yourself capable of.

Such, such are the real joys.

Unfortunately, I have never been able to sustain such flights for a novel's length. So the passages that flow are balanced with those which were forced in the hothouse. Of all the novels I've written, it is *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* and *Cocksure*, which come closest to my intentions and therefore give me the most pleasure. I should add that I'm still lumbered with the characters and ideas, the social concerns, I first attempted in *The Acrobats*. Every serious writer has one theme, many variations to play on it.

Like any serious writer, I desperately want to write one novel that will last, something that will make me remembered after death, and so I am compelled to keep trying.

"3. Historical impulse. Desire to see things as they are . . . "

No matter how long I continue to live abroad, I do feel forever rooted in St. Urbain Street. This was my time, my place, and I have elected myself to get it exactly right.

"4. Political purpose — using the word 'political' in the widest possible sense. Desire to push the world in a certain direction, to alter other people's idea of the kind of society that they should strive after."

Not an overlarge consideration in my work, though I would say that any serious writer is a moralist, and only incidentally an entertainer.

REFLECTIONS ON TWO DECADES

Hugh MacLennan

IF SYSIPHUS WERE A SAINT he could serve for my patron, and perhaps for a good many others of my generation whose oldest members passed the barrier of childhood amnesia during World War I and whose youngest joined the ranks immediately after the Hitler War. We now find ourselves assaulted and blackmailed by the Youth with unprecedented contempt as The Establishment — a word, incidentally, coined by one of our own members to describe a still older generation, the one on which we threw all the blame for World War I and the Depression.

We seniors, more naive and idealistic in our youth than our later adherents, are the ones who have made the whole trip. To mingle our mythologies, we embarked on a lifelong Odyssey that took us through more than one cave of the winds, under the legs of more than one man-eating Cyclops, but we never deviated in our unconscious aim, which was to recreate the old Victorian patrist world in the image of an indulgent mother wearing pants. Now we find ourselves cursed by the young for all the things we were proud of, for our voyage did not end in the Ithaca we had deserted, but in the land of the Lotus Eaters. Out of nowhere came a combined earthquake and hurricane and we had to take once again to our ships. And only now does it become apparent that our captains were not like Ulysses after all. Those in politics turned out to be Macwhirrs, those in command of universities Chamberlains and Mackenzie Kings.

As this piece is mainly about my own reflections as a writer over the past two decades, it is only fair to admit what has been for some time an heretical attitude toward my trade. A true child of my epoch, I believed that a writer should also be a citizen. I am disturbed by the kind of detachment that enables some writers to rub their hands over the crimes, follies and misfortunes of mankind because they

furnish such exciting materials for literature. This attitude seems pretty poor at any time, but now it is just plain stupid. In this field no writer has a chance against television, not even with the professionally angry men who have established themselves in the medium as professional lovers of The People.

What most worries me now is what has always worried me: the disastrous rise in the price of personal freedom which has become almost prohibitive in the Affluent Society produced by the unions, the corporations and the Welfare State, the latter being the biggest corporation of them all.

To be free is surely to be able to do what you like doing and do best; to be able to tell the truth to somebody even if that somebody is only yourself; to do this and stay sane. I have craved this state of being as a claustrophobe craves fresh air. With me it may even be an addiction interesting to a psychiatrist, for I slept summer and winter in a tent in the family back yard from the age of eleven to twenty-one. This kind of freedom has always been costly, and the collateral of it is security. By the time I reached my fiftieth birthday I was less secure than I had been in 1932, for my youth was over and I had less than a thousand dollars to show for thirty-five years of hard work, no steady job and no pension. But I was still free in the sense that I was doing what I liked and owed no man a penny.

Free, but edgy and worried deep, for I knew this couldn't last much longer. I had the guilty anxiety of a gambler, my own bet being that at some time one of my books would make a financial breakthrough big enough to keep me and those dependent upon me off relief when such talent and energy as I possessed ran out. My novels had earned me a certain reputation, but the most successful ones had been published in the days when the Canadian book trade was almost entirely controlled in England and the Canadian mentality was so colonial that if a book were published only in Canada it was automatically regarded by our own reading public as insignificant.

For the writer in those days such a state of affairs was almost fatal. If you signed with a Canadian publisher, you lost your essential rights abroad. If you signed with an American or English publisher, and your work was successful in the home market, the kind of contract you drew meant that your royalties on Canadian sales were minuscule.

Any Canadian writer of my age knows all this by heart, and I believe Morley Callaghan has told the story more than once. I'll make my story as succinct as possible. My *Barometer Rising* sold 110,000 copies in all editions in the first two years in Canada and earned me barely $600. My *Two Solitudes* sold 68,000 in hard covers in Canada in approximately the same time and this Canadian sale

netted me slightly less than $5,000. This was ruinous economics in a time when there was no Canada Council, when even the Governor General's Award was only a medal with no cheque attached. So I lived without vacations, without even resting on weekends, and supported myself by writing sometimes thirty essays or articles a year for very small prices, because even in this area I was too self-protective to write to order. But by the time I reached my fiftieth birthday I don't mind admitting that I was groggy.

It was shortly after this that the breakthrough came, though it was not a very large one and far from sufficient to protect a pension-less man in an Affluent Society of rising costs. So here begins the next chapter of my little tale. The fashion of its coming, no less than its aftermath, is ironic. It may also be instructive of the mentality of publishers and critics in the psychic earthquake which began rocking civilization shortly afterwards.

ON CHRISTMAS DAY 1957, at 6:42 in the evening, I typed "The End" on the final page of the novel which was offered to the public a year and a quarter later under the title *The Watch That Ends The Night*. It had taken me five years to reach those two little final words. After a few weeks of revision I mailed one copy to Toronto (by that time I had separate contracts) and another to Boston. Weeks passed before I had any news of it and my experienced nose smelled that something was going wrong. It was past mid-March before one of the Boston firm's senior editors came to Montreal on what for both of us was a painful mission.

This very kindly man had to tell me that his firm believed my book was such a total failure that no amount of rewriting could salvage it. He knew I had been under a long period of personal strain and supposed that this had affected my judgment. We parted friends and I wondered what the matter was, because the book he had been describing to me was so unlike the one I thought I had written that we both seemed to be talking of different things. I guessed there was something wrong technically, and there was, but it was so slight that a few days' work cleared it up. Another American publisher not only rejected it, but rejected it flatly. It was not until mid-summer of 1958 that Scribner's accepted it with enthusiasm and my worries with that particular novel were over. But I still wondered, and wondered for some time, why it had run into so much trouble at its birth.

Now that this book has been with the public for ten years, has sold more than half a million copies in English and is again being reprinted; has sold a quarter of a million in German, has done well in Sweden, has been translated into French, Spanish, Esthonian[1] and Norwegian, I think I can account for that initial resistance. There was something in the book's atmosphere which evoked it at that particular time at the end of the 1950's.

If a serious novel lasts even as long as five years in the mid-twentieth century, its author must have been in some kind of extrasensory relationship with a few important feelings in the world around him. Feelings, not ideas; as D. H. Lawrence put it, ideas never bother anyone, but what he called "art speech" usually does if it is in any way off the norm. I have never been particularly intelligent, and abstract ideas are usually incomprehensible to me. My brain is far slower than my intuitions and in every novel I have written my brain has hung me up because it keeps refusing to accept what my intuitions shout at it. That is why I have taken so long to write my novels, especially the last two.

When I was writing *The Watch That Ends The Night* I did not understand until the last few months that I was like a snake shedding its old skin. If it is not stretching the simile, the skin I was shedding was the intellectual skin most men of my generation had been wearing since the beginning of the Thirties. So long as I wore it myself, my novels had been essentially optimistic. I had believed the barometer was really rising; I had believed (and in this I may have been partially right) that the two solitudes were bound to come together in Canada. But my last two novels have been tragic. My original title for *The Watch* was a dead give-away: it was *Requiem*. Requiem for one I had loved who had died, but also for more: requiem for the idealists of the Thirties who had meant so well, tried so hard and gone so wrong. Requiem also for their courage and a lament for their failure on a world-wide scale. My intuitions knew this before I began writing the novel in 1952, but my intellect did not know it until 1957.

What *The Watch* was trying to say in the atmosphere of its story was that the decade of the 1950's was the visible proof of my generation's moral and intellectual bankruptcy. For the 1950's was the decade — remember? — when the students, our own children, were known as "The Silent Generation." Many of them married the moment they graduated, had their first child ten months later and their fourth within five years, and the beginnings of most of these marriages were subsidized by fond parents who were determined that their children should not suffer the privations and inhibitions which had afflicted themselves. It never occurred to them, and it still doesn't, that they had encouraged their children to

give hostages to something far more implacable than fortune. In a word, their hostages were given to The System and in the 1950's The System was an international version of Henry Luce's American Way of Life. In that strange interlude it was virtually unchallenged. Communism had been discredited by Stalin, who himself was discredited in Russia after his death. Technological democracy had destroyed Hitler, had stopped communism in Berlin and Korea, had recovered a devastated Europe and after a time had even rid itself of Joe McCarthy. What else was there, what else could there be in the 1950's, but The System?

Perhaps because The System had done nothing for me except increase the cost of my freedom, I was unable to believe in it with my heart and feelings, though I accepted it with my brain as one accepts the inevitable. In the Fifties I worried a lot about the explosion that might come from the sky, but my intellect never grasped that a far more imminent explosion was gathering heat underneath us all, that it was buried in the trauma of little children who had been cheated of a balanced childhood. The incontestible public fact was that the depression generation had come through on all fronts. It had discarded the puritan hairshirt. It fancied that it had emancipated itself sexually from the Victorians. It lavished luxuries on its young including what it believed was the greatest of all luxuries, the freedom to choose as adults before they had reached their 'teens. We softened the discipline of the educational system. We summoned up the new Social Sciences to counteract the authority of the physicists, chemists and engineers who had furnished the armies with weaponry including the H-bomb. So thoroughly did we put our faith in the good old liberal notion that man cannot but choose the better path when it lies open to him that our hubris in its own way was as staggering as Hitler's. We came pretty close to accepting that technology "controlled" by liberal democrats would bring in the millenium.

In *The Watch That Ends The Night* my intuitions were forcing me to utter something socially blasphemous in those years. They were asserting that God had not been outmoded by the Christian Church, Bertrand Russell, the social scientists and modern education. My brain did not grasp this, and that was why I had so many hang-ups. Not even when I finished the novel had I reached the place where I could say, regardless of whether anyone laughed at me or not, "I believe in God — and that is what scares me." In the God manifest in evolution, which I am told some geneticists now question? Yes. In the God of love? The existence of that One surely depends upon the individual. In the God of the Book of Job? Watch out for Him, everybody. But there is no point these days in discussing what cannot be scientifically proved, so let it pass. Speaking personally, I am at least telling the

truth when I say that the *papier-maché* intellectual armour I had picked up in the Thirties contained more built-in obsolescence than any shiny new model you see advertised on the TV screen.

For the chief delusion of the Depression Generation was that it was revolutionary. By now it is obvious that we never were that because our "revolution" was nothing more than the climax of a philosophy which had been consolidating itself for a century and a half. We had swallowed all the way down to the small bowel of our digestive tract the materialistic notion that the *quality* of a civilization depends upon its living standards, together with the concomitant that a man's morality can be satisfactorily judged by his political opinions. To think otherwise was to be reactionary, if not an outright fascist.

Let's look History in the eye and ask ourselves an embarrassing question — what was our famous quarrel with the capitalists based on? Their assumption that man's chief end is the production, consumption and distribution of goods and services? Their faith that if affluence does not necessarily create happiness, happiness cannot exist without it? Surely these questions answer themselves. Our quarrel with them was merely this, that under their *laissez-faire* control the economic system wasn't distributing justly and in the 1930's was hardly distributing at all. Therefore, so we believed, let us change all this. Let us plan and make it a real System. Above all — for we had dragged Freud into it without understanding what Freud had really been telling us — let us change the whole tone of education so that it will not torture children with the repressions that tortured us. I have often thought that the main reason why the post-war capitalists climbed aboard the reformer's bandwaggon was their instinctive understanding that if you remove a child's inhibitions the chances are pretty good that you will turn him into a compulsive consumer.

We can see now — or can we? — that we so-called revolutionaries of the Thirties were no more and no less revolutionary than Henry Ford, Mikoyan and Walter Reuther, the latter of whom in the late 1940's persuaded the Detroit manufacturers that it was in their own interests to accede to the unions' demands. The result of that historic decision is now clearer to Asiatics, Africans and South Americans than to the new bourgeois workers of America. It has produced a unique brand of Imperialism which hunts the globe not only for raw materials, but for hundreds of millions of new consumers who then must be brain-washed — no difficult feat to accomplish on brains filthy with poverty — into keeping the American Way of Life from dying of its own surfeits.

No, this revolution of ours was never for real. A genuine revolution cares noth-

ing for the repair, enlargement or take-over of an existing way of life. It happens by some mysterious alchemy in the soul of millions of people who reject without argument, regret or thought for the future not only the values of centuries, but even the apparatus of living which those centuries have accumulated.

In recorded history there have been few revolutions of this kind, probably because the evolutionary process cannot tolerate many of them. In the West (what happened among the Greeks between Homer and the invention of the alphabet is unrecorded) I would estimate that there have been only three. The first was begun by Ikhnaton of Egypt and perpetuated by Moses. The second, of course, was the work of Christ and St. Paul and destroyed the Roman Empire by giving a rationale to its death-wish. The third is somewhat more blurred, but it centred on the replacement of "faith" with "reason" and over the past few centuries has triumphed in the technological society which in our time has replaced the wings of the dove with the thrust of the rocket and sent men around the moon and back with the soul-stirring news that the Sahara would be as desolate as the moon if it had no atmosphere.

Compared to these psychic and moral revolutions, the French and Russian affairs were mere political spectaculars accelerating the triumph of a life of materialism founded on reason and know-how. The recent revolution in China is exactly comparable to this last recorded one in the West, with the difference that with western help it has managed to produce in a century the psychic change that took the West some three hundred years. Today the Chinese are as convinced as we were in the Thirties that the combination of politics and technology is just what the Doctor of History ordered. "When you grant priority to politics, actions and people become good. When you do not, people and their acts become bad." Who said this — a French or American intellectual of the late eighteenth century? An activist professor of Political Science in a modern multi-university? Of course they all said it, one way or another, but this actual quotation comes from Marshall Lin Piao.

I don't want to stray too obviously from my subject, which is supposed to be my own state of mind as a writer and my own feelings about my profession at the present time. But before crossing the Great Divide into what the students are calling "the modern age", let me not leave my generation entirely desolate. We were fake revolutionaries sure enough, yet nevertheless the directions we encouraged politics and science to take have produced some notable improvements in the world we inherited.

I am old enough to have known men who had witnessed floggings in the armed

services. In World War I, thousands of shell-shocked British soldiers were shot under the authority of Field Marshal Haig for "cowardice" *pour encourager les autres*. It must be nearly twenty years since the press has reported the lynching of an American negro and twenty-five since one was burned alive. It may sound corny, but it remains true that in advanced western countries poverty no longer excludes a man from good medical care and very seldom excludes him from education. Science has virtually obliterated the terror of venereal disease which haunted the West for centuries. The employer who dismisses an employee without cause does so at his peril. In Canada an artist no longer has to apologize for wasting his time, and EXPO '67 was certainly not created by the activist students who sneer at the men who had the courage and ability to make it possible. Chief of all — though whether or not this is an improvement in human happiness remains to be seen — we have witnessed the average human life-span so enlarged and the average sexual potency so prolonged that men in their fifties now look younger than men in their late thirties did forty years ago and a good many of them can act like men in their late twenties and get away with it.

These are colossal improvements by matrist standards for which, of course, our well-meaning generation has received no thanks and should expect none from children who have been raised to expect much more than this. But our matrist triumph has been purchased at a price which has only recently become apparent. The price has been something mankind has never been able to endure for even a short length of time without becoming hysterical if not destructively insane. That something is the validity of the father, the idea accepted throughout human history that the word "father" implies trust, reliability, a certain valiancy, a deserved authority and continued respect when he is old. And this, of course, brings me over the Divide into the 1960's.

THIS PRESENT DECADE is too immediate for me to trust my inferior brain with many generalizations. Trying to write novels while swimming in the broth of several hundred students, I have become so closely involved that detachment is impossible. But one thing at least must now be clear to everyone. The most important feature of the 1960's is the phenomenon that John Grierson, that perennially youthful observer of what is and not of what somebody says ought to be, calls The Children's Crusade.

From China to Peru, from Montreal to Buenos Aires, Youth is on the march,

but in so many different external directions that not even a sociologist would venture to claim that he has found a single common denominator for their behaviour. Our obsession with the Youth has made the moon-race as corny as Batman. At any rate, I claim no authority beyond my own personal observation for anything I am going to say about this — which is something that obsesses me especially because I am not only a teacher but am still a writer.

Of all the cities to live in, Montreal has probably been the most mentally confusing during these years. Here the revolt of Youth has not only been against their own parents; it has also been against one of the toughest Catholicisms in the modern world. This double-barrelled revolt has been an agony to French Canadians. To put it simply, where can an angry young French Canadian find a rock to stand on? He wishes to realize his own potential above all else. He is against his traditional Church, which has traditionally instructed him that close association with the Protestant *Anglais* will not only destroy his soul, but annihilate his identity as a French Canadian. He loves Quebec passionately. He wants the good things of the Affluent Society, but at the same time he is told that if he separates from *Les Anglais* he will not obtain them. The history books he has read have fed his paranoia, just as the student press all over English-speaking America feeds the paranoia of those who read it.

At any rate it was not in Berkeley that the first post-war student riot occurred. It was in l'Université de Montréal, and it happened well before the Viet Nam War or the Cuban crisis. The revolting students expressed the usual separatist sentiments, yet their particular target was not *Les Anglais*, but the clergyman who was their Rector, and this at a time when many Catholic priests were preaching separatism, one even going so far as to write a letter to the press claiming that *Les Anglais* were treating the French Canadians as Kikuyu and that the suitable response would be Mau-Mau. In retrospect, therefore, it would seem that in Quebec as elsewhere hatred of the paternal role was the dominant force, but that here it was unconsciously projected onto what had been a really tough parental authority, the Church. For the fathers of nearly all these boys belonged to the new Affluent Society of Quebec, and had been just as permissive with their sons as their English-speaking counterparts.

I was no quicker than anyone else to adjust to the 1960's, for the usual reason that my brain was so much slower than my intuitions. My last novel, *Return Of The Sphinx*, took four years from my initial notes in 1962 to its completion in the fall of 1966. My mental hang-ups ceased only when I realized that the separatist movement, its external theme, had no more to do with the real theme than a

revolver with the mind of a man who uses it to shoot somebody. The real story was the destruction of a well-meaning father by an unhappy, ambitious, confused, guilt-ridden, idealistic son. It was not until well after the novel was published that I learned that even while I was writing it this had been the fate of a prominent French-Canadian statesman, or that a little later the son of Willi Brandt was arrested as one of the ringleaders in the student riot which selected him as its prime target. This novel was so savagely attacked by Canadian reviewers that it occurred to me that I had quite unwittingly written something that had enraged them in the secret places where the most important parts of them live. But as this is a frank essay, I would be hypocritical if I pretended that the reception of this book in Canada did not stun me for a time and make me want to find a mental tent that would serve me as the actual one did when I used to sleep in it during my 'teens in Halifax.

A year and a half has passed since *Return Of The Sphinx* was published and during that time I have been reading some of the new novelists of the 1960's. I must admit, not caring how old-fashioned it may make me appear, that the work of some of them is alien to any literary tradition I have known or respected, and that it seems to me a symptom of something terribly serious. I can't believe that this present tide of pornography, self-hatred, self-contempt and boring drug-fed egoism can last indefinitely, or even much longer, and this I infer from the tastes of my students, with whom, incidentally, I have managed to get along very well. As they are the readers of the future, their tastes and values interest me more than those of the neobourgeois of the age-group between mine and them.

We are told by many observers, and by some spokesmen for the young, that they detest the technological system. Some certainly do detest it, but not many detest it for aesthetic reasons. They fear it, and with good reason, because it is part of the knowledge explosion which threatens to outmode within a decade not only the little they have learned, but even the techniques they have acquired, including the technique of student leadership. But no simple over-all judgment can be made here. College administrations are making fools of themselves because they judge the student-bodies by the activists who corral student societies and the student press. These young men may or may not be on a wave of the future, but their avowed aims are certainly archaic. These latest converts to Marxianity are all disguised puritans, and as such are symptoms of what may well be a patrist reaction. But because they speak in the language of Political Science and Sociology, this means they are speaking in the language of the past, and of course this is the great bond they share with their dear enemies, the college administrators.

To anyone with eyes in his head, the most anger-making aspect of the present Generation Gap is sexual.

When we look back on the past forty years, what else are we viewing but the most colossal explosion of the libido in history? In an age so permissive and luxurious, its intellectual leaders permissive even with the truth, the father is beginning to appear as the sexual rival of his son on a scale seldom seen since the Stone Age, while the mother, rejuvenated by the cosmetician, the pharmacist and a college education, has in the cities become a most potent rival of her inexperienced daughter.

When I use the word "sexual" I am not thinking entirely as a Freudian; I am thinking also in the context of the new biology with its emphasis on the inviolability of "territory" among all living creatures, including man. I am thinking in terms of rivalry for admiration and the kind of power that accompanies it. Not for nothing was *South Pacific* the most successful and popular musical of the 1950's, for it gave a veiled public endorsement to a code of social behaviour which is inimical to man's survival. When I was young the good old Oedipus Complex was just as valid as it is now, but the naked Oedipal conflict was seldom prolonged in the form of open war when the son was in college. The only area of an earlier society sufficiently affluent to afford this kind of thing was the high aristocracy, as Shakespeare carefully noted when he made Hamlet both a prince and a student, and put into the mouth of the unimaginative Marcellus the familiar sentence that something is rotten in the state of Denmark.

I am not suggesting, for it would not be true, that this crossing of territorial boundaries between generations is in practice large on a percentage basis. I am, however, stating the obvious when I say that many members of today's parent generation *appear* to the young as potential rivals on a scale wider than ever before. Madison Avenue lost no time in following up the success of *South Pacific*. For years it has flooded the advertising market with pictures of lovely young things dining out, yachting and conspicuously consuming with well set-up, confident, rich, exciting men with steel gray hair. It takes no genius to understand that these men are either divorced or two-timing their wives, which means something far more important in the sense that they are also two-timing their own children. What can you say to the student activist who shouts, "There's no decency here!"

Here, surely, is the explanation of the outlandish hair-dos of young males in the late 1960's and of clothing styles among students which so affront their elders. These say, with perfect unconscious symbolism, "Older people — keep off! Daddy, go home!" I may be guessing in many things these days, but it's not much

of a guess that at the close of the 1960's we are in the last stage of a dramatic *fin de siècle*, and that the cycle that is ending is the matrist-permissive one, together with its archaic faith in politics based not upon biological science, but upon the naive rationalism we inherited from the eighteenth century.

How to close this without completely tailing off?

All I have known about myself as a writer is the live feeling that comes when I know I must and can continue writing. For two years, the first time since 1932, this feeling left me and left me pretty desolate. I did little but work with students and listen more to what they didn't say than to what they did say. But two months ago the old feeling returned and I began a new novel. Whether this one will be stalled as others have been I don't know, but the feeling is there that I can write it. I can still say, "I believe in God and that is what scares me", for it does scare me when I look at the mayhem the commands of evolution are making and are going to make of the dearest illusions of intellectuals and the costliest plans of politicians and organizers. But it also fills me with awe and wonder to know that once again the species to which I belong is stubbornly, blindly determined to remain human and not be converted into an abstraction in the super-mind of a computer.

[1] The Esthonian edition was published in Canada by Esthonians who had lost their country.

SONG AND DANCE

Dorothy Livesay

BEHIND ALL POETRY is the song: what Ezra Pound called *melopeia* — melody. And sometimes it is very hard to write a poem without hearing, in your mind, the music behind it. Take a few simple copula-type English sentences: "You are a woman. You are a man." Now link them with a prepositional phrase that is, in itself, an archetypal image: "under the moon, under the sun." As you say them over they begin to re-align themselves, thus:

under the moon
under the sun
you are a woman
you are a man

The accentual stresses here are extremely simple; one secondary and one primary stress create the phonemic phrase that is basic to the English language: ùnder the móon, ùnder the sún. In each phrase there are two stresses, one being slightly stronger. You feel this as a beat, so you pause to stress it; but you also hear it as a melody. Perhaps a tune insinuates itself amongst the words, and you begin to hum:

under the moon
under the sun
you are a woman
you are a man

rise up the woman
rise up the man
you are a moon
you are a sun

Immediately the stress pattern has become more complicated; so has the vowel assonance; and so has the thought. They build on each other.

Now I do not know how it is with other poets, but as far as I am concerned I am always hearing this other *beat* behind the ordinary spoken language and I'm always hearing the melody. Perhaps this consciousness developed in me quite early, for of course we had no radio or television in those pre-World War I days; but we had a piano. While my mother played nursery rhymes or songs like "Little Brown Jug" my sister and I sang the words. During and after the war Ukrainian immigrant girls came successively to live with us and act as mother's help, until they knew enough English to get a better job. They sang rollicking or melancholy ballads in Ukrainian, songs which so interested my mother that she began strumming them on the piano, and asking for their "story." Soon she was learning to read Ukrainian herself, so as to translate the folksongs into English.[1] Thus it was that as a small child I "felt" words as being linked with music. In my mind a poem was a tune; and I began to make up tunes before I found the words for them. Always I loved to hear poems read aloud; but soon became independent of my mother's voice, and would take Robert Louis Stevenson's *A Child's Garden of Verses*, or Irish ballads, and say them over to myself, sotto voce. By the time I was ten I was trying to write a few such verses, myself. By the time I was thirteen they began to flow easily and freely, so that a day wasn't a day unless I found a song in it.

At that young time it never worried me that I could not sing beautifully or keep my voice true; when alone, in the garden or the woods, I just let go and sang. In the same way I accompanied myself in a dance, my body moving and swinging as I sang. In the teens, however, my real problems began to come to the fore.To dance! the most primitive creative expression. But what happens if you are born clumsy? I wrote about that, much later, in "Ballad of Me":

Misbegotten
born clumsy
bursting feet first
then topsy turvy
falling downstairs:
the fear of
joy of
falling.

Butterfingers
father called it
throwing the balls
which catch as catch can
I couldn't.

When I was a child in wartime Winnipeg there were no ballet classes and no one had heard of "Modern Dance," a style that might well have suited my temperament. Instead, in winter when the wind waged its battles around the frame house, I trembled; outside, I whirled with the snowflakes. But for the first mad "letting go" into dance I had to come to Ontario. At "Woodlot" in Clarkson the spring winds running through naked birch trees called me to run alongside. In deep summer at Lake Simcoe I preferred to avoid the family outings and run along the beach alone, or fling myself into green meadows: no one around, anywhere, to hear! I was free to whirl about and shout.

In school, learning to dance was a different story. I remember vividly the agonies of a dancing class where a stout woman bellowed at us from a platform whilst we, straggly little girls with hair clipped back to bounce down our backs in a pony tail were each given a chair to push: a chair to waltz with! Most of my companions in that girls' day school graduated to the level of having a dancing partner, prim arm upon rigid shoulder. But I never managed that. And though there were later lessons, in my final high school year, I never did learn to waltz. The formal imposition of having to memorize where your foot went next seemed to paralyze me. Only once did I get a glimpse of how music could relate to natural bodily rhythm; and that was at university when I registered for a course in Dalcroze Eurythmics. Even at that, the technical knowledge required seemed formidable. Once or twice perhaps, in those varsity years was I sufficiently abandoned (because in love) to be able to 'follow' unselfconsciously without treading on my partner's shiny black patent leather toes. Mostly, I remained a wallflower. Yet how I longed and longed to dance all night! At home, I bought foxtrot records (for by now we had got a gramophone). I flew around the room in my own way, alone.

WAS IT AS A COMPENSATION that I wrote poetry, more and more? Most prolifically, at eighteen. Recently an English student of mine who has since become a teacher of Canadian literature gave the following assessment of the mood of my personal poems. As I cannot say it better than he did, I set it down herewith:

> This clumsy, awkward child will be with us throughout the poetry. She can't catch ("butterfingers"); she can't keep her playmates when the fire-engine comes

("games fall apart"); she is only a "shrunken, bowed and heavy-bellied form"; and in bed, as wife and woman, she feels "inadequate." This sense of inadequacy is always there, and one way of exorcizing it is to set it down in verse. . . . Thus it is that word play and puns haunt Livesay's poetry. . . . Her wit and punning are experimentation with what words will yield; they are part of her intellectual growing pains, and are therefore linked with her hesitancy and lack of self-confidence.[2]

Early on, then, the mood was set. A good many quatrains or loose couplets emerged, in the metaphysical manner:

> One day's sorrow is not much
> When there's grief still to touch
>
> or
>
> I shall lie like this when I am dead
> But with one more secret in my head

But I was happiest breaking into free verse (encouraged by reading *Poetry: Chicago* which my mother subscribed to). This free expression was suited to my own rhythmic sense and was dictated, no doubt, by my own breath groups (for I always said the poem aloud; or if that was not possible I heard myself saying it in the mind's ear).

> I remember long veils of green rain
> Feathered like the shawl of my grandmother —
> Green from the half-green of the spring trees
> Waving in the valley.

It seems evident now that the free verse poems were all solitary, myself talking to the wind; whereas the more structured lyrics envisage a partner. Through my twenties an experimentation with sex (since called "the sexual revolution"!) was simply this search for the perfect dancing partner. I had read Havelock Ellis's *The Dance of Life* and I believed of the consummation of two bodies into one, the merging of self in other self. Also, it goes without saying, I had read *Lady Chatterley's Lover*! But the dance, I found (when I came back from the Sorbonne in 1932 to discover a changed social scene), the dance could extend to an identification with a community, a nation, a world. I threw myself into the struggle for peace, "against war and fascism." The results, in 1935-36, were the socially committed poems such as "The Outrider" and "Day and Night" and a bold attempt at narrative poetry based on the Spanish civil war called "Catalonia" (never

published). E. J. Pratt gave me a great lift when he printed "Day and Night" in the first issue of the *Canadian Poetry Magazine*, in 1936. Mine must have been the first Canadian poem to ignore maple leaves and to concern itself with the desperate condition of people caught in a technological revolution. Here, the dance became ironic:

> One step forward
> Two steps back
> Shove the lever
> Push it back

A sense of deep frustration followed, as the Spanish war led into world war. But by the forties marriage and the rearing of children compensated for external frustrations. The social commitment became integrated with my own personality, as in "Lorca":

> You breathe. You be.
> Bare, stripped light
> Time's fragment flagged
> Against the dark.
>
> You dance. Explode
> Unchallenged through the door
> As bullets burst
> Long deaths ago, your heart.
>
> And song outsoars
> The bomber's range
> Serene with wind-
> Manoeuvered cloud.

And I began to write poems about children or about my own childhood. These appeared in the volumes *Day and Night* (1944) and *Poems for People* (1947).

The story has been told elsewhere of the encouragement I received during the war years from Alan Crawley's critical listening and from his editing of *Contemporary Verse*. This little quarterly gave western poets an opportunity to appear in print which was denied us in the east. Patrick Anderson did write more than once to ask me for material for *Preview*, but soon that magazine developed a very definite Montreal slant. (John Sutherland's *Northern Review* did, however, publish short stories of mine, and Louis MacKay reviewed my social poetry there, very sympathetically.)

From 1939 to 1946 I wrote some fifty poems, many of them still unpublished.

Right after the war I went to England for the *Toronto Star* and wrote my responses to the post-war world, its hopes and doubts. On my return, encouraged by Malcolm Lowry, I worked at my most thoroughly documented "public" poem, "Call My People Home." I feel that this poem for radio managed to combine a sense of personal poignancy and alienation with a sense of social purpose. Many of the dance routines in this poem are perhaps simple to the point of being banal, but I insist that the nursery-rhyme and ballad pattern are essential elements in poetry, not to be ignored. I suppose that all my life I have fought against obscurantism! For me, the true intellectual is a simple person who knows how to be close to nature and to ordinary people. I therefore tend to shy away from academic poets and academic critics. They miss the essence.

The essential remains: Song and Dance. During one period of my life I almost lost these talismen. For someone who believes in man, in his potential for growth and change, no more depressing period occurred than the 1950's. Everything that we believed might come out of the holocaust of war: free independent nations living in harmony of economic and cultural exchanges, moving from competition to co-operation — everything was shown to be a mockery. Man was not capable of social intelligence! He was a ravager. The Korean War proved it. Despair, almost an existential despair, took hold of me in those years. The resulting poems were alienated, groping, as in the little chapbook Jay Macpherson published for me, *New Poems*. From the gaiety of "Bartok and the Geranium" I moved to the confusion of "The Dark Runner":

> Around the circle of this light,
> This self, I feel his nudging nerve,
> His prying finger seeking the concealed
> Small crack where my intent might swerve.
>
> He's sensitive to softness; hurries out
> The all-too-eager love; the willingness
> To let a fault grow large in wilfulness
> Until it swings a window upon doubt.
>
> The integer is I; integral while
> I'm centred in sun's round;
> But O, how swift the door is swung
> And fumbling darkness found.

In poems such as this I came closer to mystical experience than heretofore; and also closer to despair. I was reading Simone Weil.

IT REQUIRED a tremendous, traumatic break before I could escape from the defeatism of the Fifties. The opportunity came when I won an educational fellowship from the Canada Council, for a year's study in London. Ironically, the stimulation of that environment was countered by deep personal loss . . . the sudden death of my husband and the growing independence of my children — one working, one away at boarding school. Yet, for the first time in some twenty years, I was a free woman. I took off for Paris, where a former professor of mine, Felix Walter, was stationed at Unesco. He helped me to get a job there, and from that vantage point I applied and was accepted for a teaching post in Northern Rhodesia.

The experience of three years in Africa was so intense and fascinating it cannot be set down in a few words. It needs a book. Lacking the time to write that, I made jottings for poems. And when I returned to British Columbia at the end of my Unesco tour, in July 1963, I was a changed person. The great developments I had hoped to see in Canada towards a just society had not materialized. Instead I had participated in a sudden and traumatic changeover from a tribal society (in which there was much of goodness and beauty) to an industrial society in which the people were to a large extent participating intensely. All the evils of capitalism and automation were rearing their heads in the new Zambia; but opposed to these destructive forces were human beings who commanded my deepest respect. Such a one was Kenneth Kaunda, the new president. After hearing him address his people from an anthill on the Copperbelt I was moved to write that part of "Zambia" titled "The Leader."

And so Africa set me dancing again! My students, I discovered, woke up singing; no sooner was their breakfast of "mealie-meal" over when they would cluster in a common room, turn on the record player, and dance. Most of their dances were unsophisticated, jive and jitterbug; it was easy for my feet to catch the beat. Best of all, you didn't need a partner. You could dance opposite a girl student as easily as opposite a youth. Not a dance of touch, but one where the rhythm itself created an unseen wire holding two people together in the leap of movement. I had never been happier!

My poem "The Colour of God's Face," later revised and published as "Zambia," is a documentary, presenting an impersonal view of a country wresting itself from a tribal way of life into the modern world. It is not a documentary in the sense that the Japanese-Canadian "Call My People Home" was: a presentation

true to the "found" facts. It is rather a white outsider's appraisal, interpretation, of what was happening to the blacks. (The section "The Prophetess", however, is based on historical events.) It seems to me therefore that "Zambia," written in 1964, is a freer expression of the impact of socio-political events, written in a more contemporary style. The music and dance is there, but more subtly conveyed.

At first I was extremely hesitant about showing this poem to anyone, for I had long been out of the Canadian literary scene. I scarcely believed I was a poet any more. However, one afternoon my old friend Anne Marriott, the poet from North Vancouver, came over for lunch. On the back lawn, sitting in the sun, I had the courage to read her a section, "The Prophetess." "Why," she said, "it's fine . . . exciting! You've really got the feel of it."

I was most grateful. One has to be believed in, or perish! From then on I began to write, stirred also by contact with the Black Mountain group and by discussions with Milton Acorn. The next year I fell deeply in love and poems "sprang from my loins," as it were. All the yearning to sing and dance revived again; but this time I did so with more confidence. This time I spoke out of immediate experience. I disguised nothing. The result was the book, *The Unquiet Bed.*

If I were asked now to relate these new poems to my earliest lyrics in *Green Pitcher* and *Signpost* I would find many elements in common: music; dance rhythms (metred and free); speech rhythms; and, in tone, a sense of isolation leading to a game of wry wit, a play on words. Behind it all a belief in love, in communication on all levels; and a sense of grace, a call to praise. Two lyrics illustrate these interrelationships. Here is one, written about 1929:

> Now, I am free
> but prejudice
> will creep like moss
> on an olding tree
>
> Soon shall I be
> my parents' child
> a desperate grasp
> towards fixity?

and another, the title poem to *The Unquiet Bed* (written 1965):

> The woman I am
> is not what you see
> I'm not just bones
> and crockery

the woman I am
knew love and hate
hating the chains
that parents make

longing that love
might set men free
yet hold them fast
in loyalty

the woman I am
is not what you see
move over love
make room for me

Although it has been said that my most intense poems are the private ones, I myself believe that the public poems contain the same elements, mentioned above. Between the types, however, it is the *intention* that differs. Some critics will prefer one genre, others another; but I believe them both to be valid, as poetry. In forty years I have written over a thousand poems . . . many unpublished. But whether "public" or "private" each poem is a part of me and belongs as my skin belongs. Good, comfortable old clothes in which I sink or swim.

Recently I read in a *New Republic* review of my admired critic, Herbert Read, that although he had achieved the modern techniques sufficiently to be a great poet, he admitted failure because he lacked the necessary modern concomitant, "a sense of the tragic." Perhaps that sums me up also? We are optimists, Blakeian believers in the New Jerusalem. We cannot see man's role as tragic but rather as divine comedy. We are alone — so what? We are not always lonely. Laughter heals, the dance captures, the song echoes forth from tree-top to tree-top. I won't stop believing this until every tree in Canada is chopped down! I thumb my nose at those who say that nature and with it, human nature, is becoming "obsolete."

NOTES

[1] Florence Randal Livesay: *Songs of Ukraina.* Toronto; Dent, 1917.

[2] D. A. Yarrow: "Dorothy Livesay, poet; towards an assessment." Unpublished article.

THE GIRL IN THE DRUG STORE

Norman Levine

I MUST HAVE BEEN about ten or eleven when my parents arranged for my sister and me to spend the summer holidays at Markovitch's farm on the outskirts of Ottawa. I was a city kid — but that summer I was taught how to pitch horseshoes, drink water out of a tin ladle, gather corn, ride a horse, throw a lasso, listen to cowboy songs on the wooden verandah from the gramophone inside. There were five other Ottawa kids on the farm for the summer. One of them was a girl called Mona. I liked her. And I decided to write a play for her. We put it on in one of the barns and charged the adults a button by way of admission.

Then later in High School (I went to the High School of Commerce) they had a magazine called *The Argosy*. It carried short stories. I wrote a short story for it, about a hangman who has to hang his own son. I called it "A piece of string." When I showed the story to Mr. Benoit, our English teacher who was also my basketball coach, he said:

"You can't use that title. Maupassant has a story called that."

I didn't know who Maupassant was. For we had no books in the house. My main home reading was the funnies. My uncle, who lived on the Driveway, used to get American newspapers and he would save me the funnies. Once, a second-hand book did get in the house. It was a novel. All about Vienna. I read the first chapter — about the hero wandering through the streets of Vienna with his coat-collar turned up. And that was enough to make me do imitation after imitation in exercise books.

As soon as I could leave High School legally I did and went to work for the government in the Department of National Defence. One of my jobs was to operate the duplicating machine, running off specifications. Some evenings I

would come back and do stencils of something I had written — short sketches, mostly descriptions — like going out fishing very early in the morning near Ottawa in a boat on a river with the mist close to the ground. I would then give these mimeographed pieces to my friends.

In 1942, when I was 18, I joined the air force and eventually ended up on Lancasters with 429 Squadron in Yorkshire. When the war in Europe was over, and while waiting to go back to Canada, I went to Trinity College, Cambridge on a special leave course. There a lecturer gave me a thin wartime production of Pound's *Selected Poems*. It was the first modern verse I had read.

Four months after returning to Canada I went to McGill. And it was at McGill that I started to catch up, and how, for my lack of good reading. Perhaps it was because I read too many classics too quickly. Or perhaps I read these books knowing I had to pass exams on them. Whatever the reason — I have only the haziest notion of those books today, unless I have re-read them since leaving McGill. The only book, from all the reading lists, that has left a definite memory is *The Sound and the Fury*. And the reason is not entirely because of the book.

I began to read it one evening in the basement room, on the corner of Guy and Sherbrooke, that I rented from the Dean of Christ Church Cathedral; he lived with his family above. I read it right through at one sitting. And when I finished it was early in the morning and I was far too excited to go to sleep. So I put on my black winter coat and went out. It was very cold. Hard-packed snow on the ground, icicles from the roofs. The only place open at this time was the drugstore on St. Catherine near Guy. I walked down the few blocks. And went in. The place was empty except for a woman sitting on a stool by the counter having a cup of coffee and smoking a cigarette. She was in her twenties. She had on a fur coat that was undone. She had her legs crossed. She wore galoshes. We both looked at each other. Then she crossed herself. I turned and walked out.

After twenty-two years *The Sound and the Fury* has become vague and hazy. But that girl in the drugstore crossing herself has remained vivid and there are times when she haunts me still. Later, I was to find out in writing that this is the way things emerge.

At McGill I had some flying war-poems, full of bad alliteration, published in the McGill Daily. And for a year I edited *Forge*, the university's literary magazine. I also took Professor Files' course in writing. This meant going to see Professor Files once a fortnight with something new I had written. In this way I started to write what I called a novel, which turned out to be *The Angled Road*. Every second Saturday morning I would go into his office and show him a chapter or

part of a chapter. Often I wrote it the night before. And he would go over it, sometimes correcting the grammar of a sentence. Sometimes suggesting parts to leave out.

I am unable to read *The Angled Road* today. But at that time Files' encouragement was vital. He helped to build up confidence on the shakiest of foundations.

My wartime stay in England was very unliterary. But when I returned in 1949 with the manuscript of *The Angled Road* in my Gladstone bag and a chapbook of juvenile poems that Ryerson had brought out, and a promise from McClelland to look after my books in Canada if I could get them published in England — I thought of myself as a writer and headed for literary London.

I had no letters of introduction nor did I know anyone. But it wasn't the kind of time when you needed these things. A lot of people had come to London from different parts of Britain and the Commonwealth. Writers and painters congregated in certain pubs. And there was still a hangover of the war in the loosened class barriers, the romanticism, the idealism. Wanting to be a painter or a writer was equated with wanting the good life. The rationing, the bomb-damage, the general seediness, also helped. And because of the wartime boom in reading it was still, comparatively speaking, easy to find a publisher for one's work. Literary standards were, on the whole, not high. What I didn't know, at the time, was that I had come in on the end of something that was in the process of breaking up.

I spent the summers down in Cornwall. And while St. Ives, then, was an outpost of what was going on in London, especially in the painting — the physical impact of Cornwall was another thing.

I had come straight from city life. And to be exposed, unexpectedly, to so much varied nature gave me an exhilarating sense of personal freedom. I spent most of the time outside just walking and looking. For much of what I was seeing I was totally ignorant. The names of the birds (apart from plain gull and sparrow) I didn't know. I didn't know the names of the flowers or what was gorse or bracken or heather or blackberries or these stunted English trees. The fish I saw up for auction every morning at the slipway with their fat human lips and small eyes were anonymous. A hard and new physical world seemed to have suddenly opened before me, and in such splendid colour. I'd get up before six in the morning and go out. And late at night I'd be sitting by the window, just so I wouldn't miss anything.

Then it was seeing the painters go among the beached boats with a sketch pad and do sketches that probably made me go out with a pencil and notebook and try to describe what I saw. I would spend a whole morning on a beach trying to

describe the way a wave broke, how the far-shore fields changed colour with the passing clouds. Then in the harbour: there were the boats, the gulls on the sand bar facing the wind, the sand eels swimming by the harbour wall, the way the sunlight fractured like fishing nets on the sandy bottom.

The physical presence of Cornwall anl these exercises stopped me from writing the self-indulgent prose-poetry in the prose. And cut out all those inflated rhetorical bits in the verse. The writing became much more simple and direct.

But I still had to come to terms with something else.

At McGill I was running away from being a Jew. It sounds silly now. But at the time it was mixed up with coming from Murray Street, Ottawa, with the peddlers' horses and sleighs, and going around with boys and girls from rich parents. I made-up so many identities. It all depended on who I was with. This helped to give my life there a certain dangerous edge. But it was to prove near fatal to the writing. For at that time I was writing *The Angled Road*. And in it I cut out the fact that my characters were Jewish. And by doing this, a whole dimension is missing; I made them smaller than they should have been.

Then, when I came over to England I was running away from Canada. All my early stories, which were to do with Canadian life, I set in England. The result was the same sense of paleness and unreality. And I find that none of that early writing means anything now to me.

A couple more years had to go by before I was able to recognize my material and use it without trying to make it more acceptable. And the first book to come out after that was *Canada Made Me*. My writing begins with that book.

It seems a complicated and long way to have to go in order to come to terms with one's material. But then some people take longer than others to grow up. And perhaps it also took longer because I had to recognize that one of the conditions of my being a writer is of living in exile. I felt it in Canada, as the son of orthodox Jewish parents in Ottawa; then as the poor boy among the rich at McGill. And now I feel it as a Canadian living in England. It's not the way I would have planned it. And I still have fantasies of some day living in a community where I will take an active part in its everyday affairs.

TEN YEARS AT PLAY

James Reaney

I STARTED OFF writing plays at a desk in an office, one of the English Department offices at Acadia University, Wolfville, Nova Scotia when teaching summer school there about eleven years ago.

My latest theatre has been working on the Book of Genesis with no script, simply a list of images and turning points nailed up on a post where both the actors and myself go occasionally to see what is coming next. On the floor (it's the loft of an old Legion Hall) are strips of coloured tape put there for organizational purposes; also a drummer, a pianist, and a prop table filled with the things you need to put on Genesis with. For example, mailing tubes for the angels to beat Adam and Eve out of Eden with; a long strip of cheesecloth to hold in front of the Eden scenes to give that effect of dream. Cardboard boxes to build the Tower of Babel with, and a green garden hose for the serpent. Anything else we need can be suggested with the human voice or body, and in my Listeners' Workshop at London, Ontario, I usually had 25 of these ranging in height from two feet to six, and in age from three to sixty. Every Saturday morning at ten.

I started off eleven years ago in the midst of marking essays writing a play for a contest (the Stratford Festival-Globe contest as a matter of fact) — completely innocent of what actors, directors, producers could do. And might not be able to do. I was out to tell as strong a story as I could devise, as richly as possible. You end up, of course, giving everybody too much — four hour play with thirty in the cast and a plot that needs a hallful of detectives to unravel; also with no idea how to get help with the monster-child you are trying to bring into the theatre. But everything written down on paper.

Right now, probably I couldn't write down what happened on those Saturday mornings of March 1968, when we finally in the Workshop broke through to doing the Babel sequences with all the rest of Genesis behind us. Just lately I repeated some of Genesis at a workshop with 50 kids and 25 spectators at an

Oak Bay school gym in Victoria, British Columbia. The B.C. kids came up with some new solutions as to how you show the sun or the creation of stars — I'm glad someone videotaped it because otherwise there's no record; impossible to write down, only try it again and see what it's like this time. There are certainly disadvantages to the no-script evolvement of plays, but one thing they do force the people taking part to do is to remember, and where memory fails to make it up again — new.

In a moment I'll give the list of Genesis things that is the core of an hour and more of stage action, the list taking up one normal ditto page: right now I'd like to talk some more about my first play *The Sun and the Moon* which in its original script ran to close on 200 typed pages. In 1965 Keith Turnbull started a Summer Theatre in London, Ontario; I was invited to submit a play, and to co-direct it, a totally new experience for me. Playwrights are eager to see their scripts performed and I agreed to this. By this time the script had been slimmed to 75 pages, the plot cleared up, and the cast decimated. "Why does Reaney always write about Witches?" Marigold Charlesworth is reported once to have said, with I think the implication that I should get over my witch fixation. The plot of the play does indeed involve a strolling witchlike abortionist who comes to a small Ontario hamlet pretending to be the local minister's first light-of-love. His early diaries were tossed out to be burnt and fell into her hands instead. There is a denouement with real identities and false identities sorted out and a young man who works at the local Chicken Hatchery discovered to be the minister's real son, etc. Whatever else it is, at least it tells a story and those who gave into it a bit found enjoyment. My first time directing I found myself completely paralyzed. I did not know what to tell people, how to move, how to make things flow. Now I feel that given this kind of script the all-important person is the bookholder. I hardly knew there were such people; nor stage managers who took down blocking, nor producers who managed the casting, in short all the organization that lies behind even the least expensive amateur Little Theatre production. Besides meeting my own painful ignorance and shyness, I also met situations that recur in the world of amateur theatre around colleges and schools, and little theatres. One wild idea I had, for example, was to drop the script, get everybody together and run through the whole story in mime and improvising it as if we were making it up among ourselves. This idea was pooh-poohed by a really good actor in the cast, who just was not used to thinking of plays in that way; no, there had to be a script and you followed it word for word. What I wanted, of course, was for them and me to get a physical feeling for the design of the play, the sort of thing you do get when you think

about *Macbeth* after having seen it, or watch a ballet version of *Hamlet*. I have a feeling that *Twelfth Night* started with thinking about a clown with a little drum: and that's the way I would direct it. Gather the cast around, listen to the drum, improvise along the main lines of the Shakespeare plot and then start adding the text. Well. Amateur theatre is more frequently obsessed with such goods of this world as lighting, physical production and the private ego: all that these things could support — the meaning of a play, the feel of souls, words and their magic — gets forgotten. It can't be bought, so it can't be of much value. Some typical scenes go like this: (1) Mr. Reaney, when are we having a technical rehearsal? Reaney replies, "We're not." Gasp of shock, disbelief this play is really a play. (2) Bertram is not going to show. Why? Well, he'll come to the rehearsals, but I doubt very much if he'll make any of the performances. (3) Listen, stop bugging me about the way people used to act in church when you were a kid. I know pretty well, and I'll do it the night of the performance. (4) Edwina likes to get inside a production and destroy it from within. It goes without saying that this was, even at the very first, when my inexperience let it flourish, not the total picture, and eventually what I have described either disappeared or ceased to matter under the influence of actors who could forget themselves, and of technical things that worked with the play. I remember being particularly grateful for the know-how behind the costumes which re-created the very difficult world of the thirties. The shoes (from Segal's) were good enough to fool my mother. What I learned most, however, was not to avoid writing scenes that come on top of one another as in a movie (someone pointed this out to me as a fault when I could see a thousand directional ways around the crack in the play's performing surface), but to get away from that backstage mystique of the bunch of ego atoms, some bitching, others suffering gladly, and all for the sake of *My Fair Lady* or *Lil Abner*. The tendency in the society in which I lived was to see drama as, first, something somebody else wrote thousands of miles away, and as something that you could evolve physically, as out of a can. I wanted a society where directing a play is not equated with stage managing, where the important rehearsal is not the technical rehearsal, where the lighting, costumes, all that money can buy disappear and what we have instead is so much group skill and sense of fun in imagining out things that richness re-appears all over the place for nothing.

HERE IS THE LIST I promised earlier:

REVOLT OF THE ANGELS: WAR IN HEAVEN

SING: "Jacob and the Ladder" — spiritual — everybody comes in "climbing ladders."

(a) Let's all go to Sunday School — hum, drum fingers on the floor for the rain on the roof.

(b) the Minister reads the first verses of Genesis.

(c) the People suddenly start chanting those verses, each word repeated three times!

CHAOS! CHAOS!

(d) the people divide into the hands of God, or the colours taped on the floor.

"WE ARE THE HANDS OF GOD"
"ON THE
FIRST DAY — let there be light and there was
SECOND DAY — he divided the waters
THIRD DAY — dry land and grass
FOURTH DAY — sun, moon and the stars
FIFTH DAY — fish, great whales and birds
SIXTH DAY — animals and man
SEVENTH DAY — he rested"

Before going on I think I should do some sketching in of what is happening because of this list: The revolt of the Angels starts when a young child is raised by the oldest person who generally plays God. Some angels bow, others retreat and mill and then attack. Groups menace, press force fields of presence at each other, topple over at invisible signals to do so and then the Christ Child on a chariot of shoulders with whirling arms for wheels pushes the evil angels over a cliff. Don't ask questions — just do it. The room is empty, then people coming in with their Bibles on their heads and that unearthly quiet of Sunday Afternoon. Get a score of people quietly drumming their fingers on the floor of an old Legion Hall and you'll see what I mean. All of this splits open in the chaos sequence. Everybody making strange sounds. Out of this come ten people who mime the hands of the Creator. With skill and work you can get an effect of thumbs, index fingers, hands moulding planets, only it's a finger with a waist, not a joint. Get

the people in the hand group to make up songs about being the left little finger of God and so on. Then these hands chase the chaos people around until they have kneaded them into a ball of human mud — like a football scrimmage which then slowly starts revolving and we're about at the second day already. Here some lie down and ripple; others create a fountain, endlessly lifting infants up, up into the clouds. For the fourth day several balls of people: sharp hand rays for the sun; blunt the hands for moonlight, and wink the hands for starlight. Or talk to the actors — they have their own solutions; for example a kid in Oak Bay did the sun by simply crouching down as if in worship, whereas in London, Ontario the hands flared out. For Fish two bigger people propel a smaller person around who agilely "swims" while being held in mid-air. For birds a band of people have earlier withdrawn — what for? — well now we know. They have been making a host of paper darts which now come floating over our heads as that part of the list gets chanted. For the making of man, actors lie down on the floor as the various parts of Adam: a whole body for a limb. The Hands of God command various actions such as "Beat your heart" and "raise your arms." The various bodies making up Adam generally work together to make the somewhat eerie illusion that there is a huge giant out there on the floor, struggling to get up. Have a big discussion here about Frankenstein and are we a monster or are we Adam etc. There's been piano and drum going all the time here and over a month or two of Saturday sessions the whole group of Listeners evolved chants and imagery and sounds.

(1) SING THE BIG ROCK CANDY MOUNTAIN

(m) Adam and Eve get tangled with the Serpent

(n) they are banished from the Garden

(o) Cain and Abel — a big session here doing scenes with parents and children, improvising out one's past sulks at parental favouritism. Abel can be some infuriatingly sweet child.

(p) the story of Lamech — to go with the curse on Cain; Lamech shoots someone by mistake and again fascinating conversations about justice with the cast. Also about the Bible, since no one seems to know about Blind Old Lamech and the naughty boys who gave him the bow and arrow to play with — just invented.

(q) Adam, Seth, Methusaleh and Enoch: Adam lived for 930 years and he died

Seth lived for 912 years and he died
Methusaleh lived for 969 years and he died
Enoch lived for 365 years and was taken to heaven on a chariot of fire!

This is done with a mime that involves four people walking across the room, getting older as the rest of the cast chant off the centuries. The chariot of fire involves a monumental group of people bunched together with whirling arms for wheels.

(r) SING THE OLD ARK'S A-MOVERING

(s) everybody gets drowned except the good people and the animals. Again, a group of people form an ark, and other actors get inside the ark. This ark glides around the room, occasionally trampling some strong swimmer in his agony.

(t) sacrifice — the colour lines make songs about the new rainbow

(u) Nimrod the Tyrant/Tower of Babel/Ur of the Chaldees/
Abram escapes.

We build a tower out of cardboard boxes. Then every one starts speaking a different language — whole mornings are spent in finding out just how many languages the cast knows. In the Ur scenes, all put paper bags over their heads and answer roll calls by numbers they have made up. Break them up into groups and let them discuss regimentation etc. Abram refuses to answer by number, insists that he is Abram and escapes from paper bagville.

One morning in June 1968, I watched the Listeners' Workshop do Genesis before an invited audience. There had been no dress rehearsal, we were not worried about forgetting, there were lots of people in the group who were directing from inside the mass of actors. And it unfolded, like some homemade thing out of brown paper with all sorts of fascinating rough edges and accidental effects. In the Babel sequence the ingredients of the tower engulfed anything moveable in the room the audience wasn't sitting on. I think there were some participants who had just arrived that morning, but it made no difference — they were folded in to the goings on.

MY EXPERIENCE IN MAKING UP PLAYS then lies between the two poles I have been describing, and I would now like to list some titles so arranged: *Three Desks, Killdeer, Easter Egg, Sun and Moon* . . . and . . . *Listen to the Wind, Colours in the Dark, Names and Nicknames, One Man Masque, Geography Match, Donnelly,* the Genesis I've been talking about.

If I were to tell the story fully of the first group of plays, what would a few peaks be? First of all, the finding of a director who was interested in new plays, encouraged me to finish *Killdeer*, and who really gives in her productions a sense of listening, and this director was Pamela Terry who at the time was working with the Toronto Alumni. Secondly, just watching rehearsals in class rooms, factory lofts, renovated synagogues, green rooms, and then waiting for audience reactions on opening nights in a gamut of places — lofts again, university auditoriums, little theatres and big theatres. This particular group of plays are constructed like rivers in voyageur journals. You go smoothly along in an apparent realistic way, and then there is this big leap — which director, actors and audience have got to take, or is it just bad dramaturgy? and are they going to take it? Let me give an example. At the end of *Easter Egg* one night some one came up to me and said, "But no one ever feels he has to get married just because he killed a bat." The murder in *Desks*, the circle dance in *Killdeer* (well, the whole trial scene), the recovery of the "idiot" boy in *Egg* have all at one time or another produced a feeling of "rapids" with audiences and the occasional muttering actor. I'm still working on this; one solution is to declare myself mad — I don't think the way other people do, and what to you seems melodramatic, surreal, arty, etc., etc., to me seems utterly *verismo* and Zola. An interesting case in point: *Killdeer* first had a really wild scene where the old judge had a heart attack, caused in a Richard III way by the villainess suddenly revealing a lurid scene from his past. After I wrote that out, Margaret Avison came up to me and said, "I liked it the first way — more poetic." There are signs that maybe if I hold on eventually the audiences will be also impelled by ripples from the *zeitgeist*, i.e. the imagery in the new pop music and the uprush of sympathy for dream visions. This was most apparent in a recent production of *Egg* at Simon Fraser with music from a Big Pink track (the pianist is from my home town, by the way) and, with Kenneth imprisoned in a polyethylene bag for most of the evening, what I would call a Strawberry Fields approach. And I didn't feel that scrunch feeling, "here we come to the rapids," that I had with earlier audiences, sometimes, and, of course, back in the age of the Johnny Mercer lyric.

But it's tiresome waiting for either the audience to catch up, or for one's own imperfect self to mature and steady, so after watching the Peking Opera at the Royal Alex one evening I decided to try writing a different kind of play altogether. That is, a play where it's all rapids. In *Masque*, *Names* and *Geography Match* I proceeded with mostly lists of names which are chanted; well, *Masque* isn't like that, but you should see the list of props. In *Names*, the words are all shouted

eventually *against* somebody. Here, a director whose production of *The Enchanted* I had seen many times with the feeling again that here was somebody who listened — John Hirsch, midwifed the script with the additional mime and movement I hadn't quite realized would be necessary and a group of actors appeared at Manitoba Theatre Centre who caught on beautifully to the bare stage, just words and you approach. Then I was ready to write a script so odd that nobody seemed willing to chance it, and I had to direct it myself — *Listen to the Wind.* Here was a play about young people putting on a melodrama. Their predicament throws light on the inner play; the inner play throws light on their tragedies. The big thing was a chorus of youngsters who were on stage sitting or kneeling most of the time, and a prop table presided over by a girl who became almost the pivot of the whole production, also a book holder in a rocking chair, also a piano, a drummer and a guitarist. Whenever a sound was needed the chorus provided it; whenever someone needed a prop they walked over and got it. The miming of the coach scenes is an example of the whole method: whenever the actors had to go from one manor house to another, a boy appeared with a wheel which he coasted along, they following him behind running in time with him. Before they get into the coach they walk or limp or whatever; once in the coach they glide along with it. Cocoanut shells for hoofbeats and gravel sounds are provided by the chorus. Someone in mathematics remarked to a friend that the longest distances took the shortest coach rides, whereas the shorter the distance the longer the ride. I have been thinking about that remark ever since. Out of this play which broke with reality completely, used shorthand for everything, forced the audience to provide lighting and production and sets and even ending (on a Saturday morning after the Hamilton performance, I met a student on the street who said, "That's the first play I've ever seen where there were six or seven endings") — out of this play sprang all the rest of recent activities—the Listeners' Workshop came out of the young people in the chorus who wanted to go on. From their activities were devised embryonics for *Colours* and *Donnelly.* The key word, so far as I am concerned, is "listen."

So, out of the development between the two theatres I've been discussing, eventually — came my first commissioned play *Colours in the Dark* (Stratford 1967, directed by John Hirsch). There should be a discussion of it, but aside from the fact that it has been described elsewhere,[1] the best thing to say is that *Colours* is all the other plays and experiments I've been talking about. With its 42 scenes, multiple characterization, improvised music, bare stage, magic lantern images — it almost couldn't help be all the other plays as well as a re-tell of the Bible. In

the sabbatical year I am now enjoying I've been working on *Donnelly*, or *The Biddulph Tragedy*, an attempt to apply what techniques I've collected to a story in the past with all its longhand archival detail. When I started this play about an Ontario family who were massacred by their neighbours on the night of February 3, 1880, I could tell that a lot had changed since the English Department office at Acadia. I kept seeing all the Donnelly events in terms of two viewpoints that cross — *some tell it this way/some tell it this way*: the Donnellys were at heart decent people who were persecuted/the Donnellys were mad dogs who *had* to be destroyed. This resulted in stage movement, scene settings, speeches that form St. Patrick's X's. *Listen* and *Colours* also had patterns behind them. I wonder if this sense of design I didn't have 11 years ago comes from the intervening workshop experiments. There I've got used to eliciting flows of power and movement, got used to watching for the currents of these flows as they come out of people playing with other people the game of mimicking reality. This is the way Hirsch and Terry direct and this is what I want my plays to be wrapped around — the delight of listening to words, the delight in making up patterns (scribbling with your body/bodies) of movement for fun and in play.

[1] *The Stratford Scene 1958-1968*. Clarke, Irwin, Toronto, 1968. Alvin A. Lee's book on Reaney (Twayne, New York, 1968) contains accurate maps of most of the plays mentioned.

THE TIME OF YOUR LIFE

A. W. Purdy

CHILDHOOD — when toads and frogs rain down the sky,
and night is velvety as under the skirts
of a goddess, where it's always summer —
In winter water pours from gardenhose
and turns to ice in town backyards;
coal-shovels clear a hockey rink for boys
to play war, mothers watch anxiously:
King Arthur's court, with Eaton's catalogue
for breastplate, a hockey stick for lance —

The later legend has a big league scout
sitting in smoky small-town rinks,
watching the local flash, signing him
to a contract for those fabulous arenas
whose heroes remain boyish, emotions public,
and women they sleep with are always their wives,
as money grins green and freckles fade —

Begin before the beginning,
shortly after birth, even before school,
with ice luckily thick or drowning thin:

Within five days this poem assumed as many different shapes. At first it was only about kids playing scrub hockey in my home town forty years ago. Then I copied it to send to a friend (I'm always afraid a poem will get lost or I will die in the night of bubonic plague — therefore I send a copy away so that at least one will survive), and re-wrote it completely. Next day I copied it again and again re-wrote. This happened until the poem assumed its present form. For those five days, sitting in a Greek hotel in Athens, I scarcely went outside or did anything but re-write this poem. Someone drank the two bottles of brandy I had there, and someone ate the food. Eventually I was driven outside from hunger and thirst, and the sun was shining. I suppose the poem is about the first awareness in children. It's also about the darker shapes in the mind, and about time. Obscurely and for no reason I can think of, it seems to me also about writing poems.

the painted backdrop of snow and dingy houses,
fades, only the shouting children are real:
and sometimes on hard-crusted river snow
I've seen the game escape its limits,
and leap the width and breadth of things,
become a mad chase going nowhere, out
past dangerous places where the current
nibbles cheese holes — out to the wide wide bay:
where iceboats leave their tracks to race with birds,
and fishing shanties are lost castles beyond the town,
and slow clouds lift their bodies like giant goalies —

Miles out in the far country
of Quinte the child stands
— senses he is being watched,
glances down at his feet,
which seem supported by
black glass above nothing,
where shadows with eyes,
green shapes look at him:

"We know about you . . ."

Motionless as a waterfall.
he stands in no-time,
where sequence is tangled in creation,
before possible things converge
to be trapped in the inevitable:
the boy's deep sub-self
becomes aware of what looks
like a small hockey player
reflected on ice watching him —
or else a boy with raw cold nose
— or else a complete stranger,
standing inside the high blue barn:
and yet this four-foot two-thirds
man-size carbon of himself is not
himself no matter what it looks like —
And order from somewhere makes one arm
lift up, holding the stick high;
the pinched face smiles grimly;
the body above mirrored ice is instructed
to bend down in order that the owner's
eyes may permit a glimpse of the owner
himself, clothed in flesh but aloof
from flesh, remaining hidden:
politely
the boy's mouth opens, his lips slowly
carefully form the words:
"Thank you — "
After which a whoof
of expelled breath shrieks
a sudden "YEE — OUWW" at the sky,
and black ice with a mile-wide spasm
over somewhere beyond the world's edge cracks —

He skates wildly back to town
with long swooping twenty-foot strides,
batting an old tin can ahead of him:

a cold moon hangs above the town clock
tower that strikes hard iron of sky;
the elderly pumpmaker in his shop
crowded with pine smell, tugs his ear;
the blacksmith in his smoky cave
yawns hugely and nailed horseshoes tinkle —
On either side the river lie
dark cubes of houses drowned in snow:
the boy dashes excitedly to one
of them, aching with news of an event
real or imagined, bursts
the door open, "Hey, mom (and forgets
whatever it was), I'm hungry — "
Weather turns colder, the house
shudders and rocks, frost creeps
on blind white windows: and under
its patchwork quilt time moves
in a drift of birds a dream of horses,
and sticky buds breaking out of snow,
premeditations of flowers and lifting tides,
the sleep of men —

Even the shadow shapes inside their black
prison stay where they are, surviving the night,
and have been known occasionally to sleep —

Revised June 18, 1969

A. W. PURDY

An Interview

Conducted by
Gary Geddes

GEDDES: Somehow your poetry manages to be domestic and historical at the same time. Is this what critics mean by calling it epic?

PURDY: "Rooms for rent in the outer planets." Yes, but I don't think it's epic. Epic sounds grandiose to me; and I don't think I'm grandiose. I certainly hope I'm not.

GEDDES: In "The Country North of Belleville" there is a sense of beauty and terror in the description. Do you find the Canadian landscape hostile?

PURDY: Landscapes hostile to man? I think man is hostile to himself. Landscapes, I think, are essentially neutral.

GEDDES: But you travel a lot, as do many Canadian writers, and write about the places you visit. Is this because it is easier to control the elements of a newer, smaller area?

PURDY: Easier than Canada, you mean? No, it isn't that. I have the feeling that — before I worked at jobs and described the places where I was and the people that I met, etc. — that somehow or other one uses up one's past. It isn't that when one goes to another country one is consciously seeking for new poems, because it would get to sounding as goddam self-conscious as hell. For instance, if you go to Baffin Island to write poems (which I did, incidentally) . . . well, I don't like to look at it that way. I'm interested in going to Baffin Island because I'm interested in Baffin Island.

GEDDES: And the poems just happen.

PURDY: I write poems like spiders spin webs, and perhaps for much the same reason: to support my existence. I talk, I eat, I write poems, I make love — I do all these things self-consciously. The "new area" bit . . . well, unless one is a stone one doesn't sit still. And perhaps new areas of landscape awake old areas

of one's self. One has seen the familiar landscape (perhaps) so many times that one ceases to really see it. Maybe it's like the expatriate writers, Joyce and so on, who went to foreign countries in order to see their own.

GEDDES: You have been called the great Canadian realist (to drag one from the bottom of the bag). Do you write any poems which *don't* have some base in actual experience?

PURDY: Aren't you talking about poets like Mallarmé? Very few poets do that. I've written poems about things, even doorknobs, but generally speaking it's out of my own life.

GEDDES: Do you feel at ease to "cook" your experiences for the sake of a poem?

PURDY: After you've lived your whole life writing poetry (and I started writing at thirteen), I think you've always got one ear cocked, listening to know if you're good enough to put it into a poem. Do you mean, to be wholly involved in the experience without seeing it as something else? No, I don't think so, if that's what you mean. I always know what I'm doing or feeling or seeing. I'm self-conscious about being self-conscious about being self-conscious.

GEDDES: In your "Lament for Robert Kennedy" there seems to be a qualitative difference between the first part of the poem, where you are dependent for the most part upon rhetoric and abstraction, and the second part, where the images and language become personal and concrete. Do you think that your poetry is strongest when it is attached to images from your own landscape?

PURDY: Yes, I think so. I was being pretty propagandist in the early part of that poem; but, also, when you say there's nothing concrete in it, how about the skidrow losers with the bottle of good booze in their hands like a lily? Yes, I generally stick to the concrete or get to it pretty quick. You can start from the concrete, but I don't think you can take off from no stance at all.

GEDDES: I especially like your poem, "Portrait", about Irving Layton. What did you mean in the last line?

PURDY: I don't remember the last line, frankly. What is it?

GEDDES: "And then again I'm a bit disappointed."

PURDY: Well, I think the thought on my mind was that somebody had fixed themselves, pinned themselves down, taken a stance, identified themselves far too fully. I don't think . . . in my own case I like to think of a continual becoming and a changing and a moving. I feel that Irving takes such positive stances that I'm a little disappointed, because I think he could have done much better. For instance, now he's writing poems in *The Shattered Plinths* about various new events, about violence. Violence is a damned interesting subject, but not

the way he's treated it somehow. Everything about Irving is positive; if you were to argue with him on any of these points, he'd defend them all vehemently. You wouldn't be able to win the argument, but he'd still be wrong.

GEDDES: Is it a general characteristic of modern poets to *find* themselves too quickly? Creeley, for example, seems to have established a voice or a style which he exploits; one wonders whether the style reflects or *directs* the life-rhythms.

PURDY: I only know a bit about Creeley. I don't *like* his style very much; I don't like the deliberate ambiguities at the ends of his poems. But style is something that I was very hung up on a few years ago, when I kept noticing, or thought I did, that all the critics were insisting that you find your voice, that you find *a* consistency, and that you stick to it. Now this, of course, is what Creeley has done; and it's apparently something the critics still approve of. I disagree with it all along the line. I don't think that a man is consistent; he contradicts himself at every turn. Housman, for instance, takes a very dim view of life for the most part, is very depressing — but human life isn't like that *all* of the time. You wake up in the morning, the sun is shining and you feel good; this also is a time when Housman could have written a poem. I can't believe he never felt good once in his life. Anyway, I disagree with this consistency bit very strongly.

GEDDES: Would you not say that the success of *The Cariboo Horses* has something to do with *your* having finally found some kind of voice or consistency?

PURDY: As far as I'm concerned, I found *a* voice (not necessarily a consistent one), but I thought that I was at my best beginning about 1961-62, when *Poems for all the Annettes* was first published; I was sure I had hit a vein in which I could say many more things. I'd been looking for ways and means of doing it; and finally, it got to the point that I didn't care what I said — I'd say anything — as long as it worked for me.

GEDDES: How consciously are you concerned with technique? Do you share the recent technical interests of Williams and Olson, such as concern for the line, the syllable, the process of breathing?

PURDY: My technique, I suppose, takes a bit from Williams, a bit from Olson; for instance, I agree for the most part with using the contemporary, the modern, idiom. On the other hand, if I were writing a certain kind of poem I might avoid colloquialisms, idiosyncrasies, slang, and so on. It just depends; it all has to do with the poem. No, I pay no attention to the breathing bit; and I never compose on a typewriter, as Olson is supposed to do. Most of the time when

I'm writing I don't think of how to write the thing at all, consciously; sometimes I do. When I wrote a poem about hockey players, I deliberately put in swift rhythms to simulate the players going down the ice. And there are times when I've mixed up rhythms deliberately. But other times, whatever rhythm you get in there seems accidental; though I don't suppose it is, because a poet writes a lot of poems. I'm concerned with techniques, yes, but I don't consciously spend so much time thinking of them as Williams and Olson do.

GEDDES: What is it that makes a poem work?

PURDY: Technique? The language itself is part of that, also the various methods used to write a poem. But somehow saying that is not enough. There ought to be a quality in a good poet beyond any analysis, the part of his mind that leaps from one point to another, sideways, backwards, ass-over-the-electric-kettle. This quality is not logic, and the result may not be consistent with the rest of the poem when it happens, though it may be. I believe it is said by medicos that much of the human mind has no known function. Perhaps the leap sideways and backwards comes from there. At any rate, it seems to me the demands made on it cause the mind to stretch, to do more than it is capable of under ordinary and different circumstances. And when this happens, or when you think it does, that time is joyous, and you experience something beyond experience. Like discovering you can fly, or that relative truth may blossom into an absolute. And the absolute must be attacked again and again, until you find something that will stand up, may not be denied, which becomes a compass point by which to move somewhere else. I think that when you put such things into words they are liable to sound like pretentious jargon. Such things exist in your mind without conscious thought, perhaps in that unknown area. And sometimes — if you're lucky — a coloured fragment may slip through into the light when you're writing a poem.

GEDDES: How do your poems generally take shape?

PURDY: Well, that's tough. I wrote the title poem of *The Cariboo Horses* in about twenty minutes, revised it a little, and that was about it; and I took about eight years to write another poem in the same book, which still isn't as good as it ought to be. In the hockey player poem, I wanted a strong contrast between the metrics and prose; and I tried to make several passages about as prosy as possible in order to contrast with the swift metrical rhythms.

GEDDES: Could you describe the evolution of a single poem?

PURDY: Well, there used to be an old grist mill in Ameliasburg village — four stories high with three-foot-thick walls of grey stone. In 1957-58 I explored that

mill from top to bottom, trying to visualize the people who used to operate it. Marvelling at the 24-inch wide boards from nineteenth-century pine forests; peering curiously at wooden cogs and hand-carved gears, flour-sifting apparatus, bits of rotting silk-screens, and so on.

My interest in the mill grew to a strong curiosity about the people who built it — what were they like? — those old farmers, pioneers, dwellers in deep woods, men who worked from dawn to day's end, so tired the whole world wavered and reeled in their home-going vision. Most of the old ones were United Empire Loyalists, come here to the wilderness after the American Revolution because they had no other place to go. The man who built the village mill in 1842 was Owen Roblin. He lived to be 97, and lies buried in Ameliasburg graveyard near the black millpond, with wife and scattered brood of sons nearby.

I questioned the old people in the village about Owen Roblin. It seems . . . well, out of it all came my poem, "Roblin's Mills".

GEDDES: More than 30 poems in *The Cariboo Horses* are open-ended, concluding with a dash or some other punctuation suggesting incompleteness. Is this simply a device?

PURDY: The open-endedness is both device and philosophy, but it doesn't bar formalism if I feel like it: i.e., I reject nothing. No form, that is, *if* I feel like it and the poem agrees. I was doing it a good deal at the time; maybe that owes something to Olson's "in the field" bit — a line is as long as it's right for it to be. But I don't like periods very much; if I can work a lot using commas and semi-colons I will. It should just be taken as the reader takes it: I don't attach much more to it than just dispensing with punctuation. Its effect, of course, is different from punctuation, but I haven't gone into that. My own poems *without* this give me a peculiar feeling I can't explain.

GEDDES: The experience that goes into a poem is changing even as the poem is written; in fact, the poem *changes* the experience.

PURDY: You mean *fixes* it.

GEDDES: No, I mean that the open-endedness works against the final fixing of the experience.

PURDY: Well, yes, *you* said it. I have thought of that, but not in connection with these poems. One thinks of poems as little bits of life cut out, except that they are as one sees life with one's mind. You have the odd feeling that you can reach back and pick a poem that will take the place of that experience in the past. It does in one's life of course, but there are so many ifs and buts that when I say a thing I'm never sure if I'm right.

GEDDES: Is poetry a way of exploring experience for you?

PURDY: Jesus Christ, that's an awful question! I've no idea. I like to write poetry; I get a kick out of writing poems. I suppose to a limited degree it does explore my own experience; but if anybody else was looking, they would deny that the poem described it, I expect, particularly my wife. I write poetry because I *like* to write poetry. It's much like getting drunk once in a while, especially if you write something you like. Exploring one's experience sounds like such a terrible way to describe a simple thing like writing a poem. Doesn't it though?

GEDDES: As a descriptive poet, what is your response to external objects?

PURDY: In the first place, I don't consider myself any particular kind of poet. About objects in relation to myself, this is as subjective as hell. Any time any poet writes about an object, he's got to be subjective, no matter how objective he appears. I've sometimes thought that everybody sees the same colour differently. One isn't always able to express these differences in words, since words are so limited and have such large potential at the same time. No, I'm far more interested in objects in relation to something, in relation to people.

GEDDES: You once asked Stephen Spender what he thought of Kenneth Patchen. Is Patchen a favourite? And which of your contemporaries do you admire?

PURDY: Did I ask that? That's a tough one, there are so very few. No, Patchen is not a favourite of mine. I like his "Dirge"; that's about all I can think of. I like a lot of those poets who are producing in a consistent line, exactly as I said I would not like to do. Robert Bly has adopted a particular style and is writing pretty decent poems; but this style becomes very monotonous if he keeps it up — and he does keep it up. Charles Bukowski is writing in a style in which I also write; but that's just about his *only* style. I hope to get out of it once in a while.

There are so damned few. I like some of James Dickey, for instance, quite a bit; but somehow or other, he lives at such intense white heat so much of the time that I don't believe he can possibly exist; he must burn up. He keeps being confounded, rivers keep boiling through his veins, he keeps becoming exalted all of the time.

In Canada? I like Newlove; I think he might have a chance to do something pretty good. Ian Young, George Jonas, — maybe. Who else? They all seem to me — when they adopt some special way of writing, like bp nichol and the concrete boys, or the *Tish* imitators of the Black Mountain — to be travelling down a dead end.

But in the world there are several, some living some dead, that I like: I like

Pierre Superveille very much and, of course, Pablo Neruda and Cesar Vallejo and one or two others. *Modern World Poetry* (in translation) is an awfully good book.

GEDDES: What about earlier writers?

PURDY: I hope to find other poets to expend the same enthusiasms on as I did on Dylan Thomas and, to a certain extent, Robinson Jeffers; and also John Donne at one time. But enthusiasms pass. I was tremendously enthused over Layton about 1955; that enthusiasm has pretty well passed. I agree with my own line on Layton, that words no sooner said become clichés, though Layton is not all cliché. Somehow the immortal claptrap of poetry is a cliché.

GEDDES: How much "research" went into your poems in *North of Summer?*

PURDY: Actually, I didn't do a helluva lot of research. In fact, when I was up there I was reading E. M. Forster's *Passage to India* and about fifteen other pocket books, including that one I mentioned in "When I sat down to play the Piano", William Barrett's *Irrational Man.* The point at which books you read, or information from books you read, comes into your head is not when you are reading them, but some time later. I always take off from any point or fact that seems relevant to the situation (in the North, say); I always take off on a personal expedition from there, though I may not know where I'm headed.

GEDDES: I think of your "In the Wilderness" as a Canadian "Easter 1916". Do other poems trigger you off to write?

PURDY: Yes, sometimes. Oddly enough, one poem called "Dark Landscape", which will be in *Wild Grape Wine*, I twisted around to mean something other than what Vachel Lindsay means in "Spring Comes on Forever". That was almost a direct steal, except that I used it differently. Most of the time, when you read someone else's poem, it will give you your own thoughts on the same subject, which is much more valid, I think. This is why and how I wrote the bird poem in *North of Summer.* I think it was some Cuban poet that had written a poem about birds, so I started thinking about birds. And, incidentally, "The Cariboo Horses" was written because I read in the Introduction to *New British Poetry* two quotes about horses by Ted Hughes and Philip Larkin and I thought they were terrible and that I could do better; so I started to write a poem. I think that if you write poems, your mind just knowingly or unknowingly casts around for subjects all of the time; I don't think a poet is ever not looking for subjects.

ALL NATURE INTO MOTION

John Sutherland's Poetry

Miriam Waddington

> . . . as if the sun
> Were singing to the world, he lay and heard
> His alter ego serenading him:
> At dawn tomorrow he would rise again
> And, by the force of arms, enforce the cold.
> (The Warrior)

> It is the lack of a vital tradition that explains how, in Canada, a die-hard conservatism acts as the counterpart of a desire to ape the latest fashion.
>
> John Sutherland, editorial in
> *First Statement*, April 1944.

JOHN SUTHERLAND published less than a dozen poems during his lifetime; none of them aped the latest fashion and neither did any of them belong to the tradition of die-hard conservatism. His language is still as fresh and personal today as when he wrote the poems, and his themes of human loneliness and anxiety and the search for a stable identity, are, if anything, even more relevant now than twenty years ago.

When Sutherland died in 1956 he left a manuscript of 43 poems[1] which he had indexed and given the title of *First Poems*. Like the shoemaker and tailor of folk legend who cobble shoes and sew clothes for the whole world while they themselves go barefoot and naked, Sutherland was too busy editing and publishing the work of his companions to pay much attention to his own. He was only 36 at the time of his death, and had suffered from illness (which he chose to ignore)[2] since

early adolescence, yet during his short lifetime he managed to edit and publish two little magazines, *First Statement* and *Northern Review*, and he participated in the editing of a third one, *Index*. He wrote innumerable essays, put together a highly individual anthology of poetry, *Other Canadians*, and, during the last year of his life, published a critical book on the poetry of E. J. Pratt.

When I look back to 1943, the year I met John Sutherland, I am struck by a very obvious fact which had little meaning for me at that time. Sutherland did not simply drift into becoming a writer and critic. He was not a university teacher, so it had nothing to do with making his way in the world, nor was he a failed novelist, or, as I intend to show, a failed poet. He simply had one of those rare vocations for criticism, and since he felt himself to be deeply of his country and his time, he devoted himself to criticism of Canadian writing with authority and conviction.

It is tempting to look back and say we didn't deserve him; we certainly didn't give him the recognition or help he deserved; he was poor, and until his marriage, lived in the same room where he kept his hand-press on Montreal's Craig Street. But we must have deserved him or he wouldn't have happened to us at all.

It isn't my purpose here to recall memories and impressions of the literary personalities of the forties. Nor is it my purpose to discuss the relation between the events of Sutherland's life and his poetry with nostalgic sentimentality; enough error has already been committed in that direction, and I hope, by looking at Sutherland's work, to correct it.

It would be interesting to know whether Sutherland felt himself to be primarily a poet or a critic. According to his sister Betty Layton,[3] he felt himself to be first of all a poet, but was discouraged from poetry by various influences around him, whereas his critical activities met with an immediate response. He was surrounded by other writers — Louis Dudek, Raymond Souster, Anne Marriott, Irving Layton and myself, among the poets, and by William McConnell, Ethel Wilson, and Mavis Gallant among the novelists. Writers need editors and publishers, and speaking for myself, I needed Sutherland to be an editor and critic, and not a poet. I did not even pay much attention to his poetry. I recognized the individuality of his poems whenever I came across them, but I did not seek them out, or understand them when I found them. And it was only by chance, when I came upon some of them again in old issues of *Poetry Chicago* and *First Statement*, that I decided to look more closely at all of them.

The two qualities that impressed me most in the poems I came across accidentally were, as I said earlier, the freshness of the language, and the timeliness

of the themes. Sutherland read Thomas, Auden, and Spender just like the rest of us, but he consistently avoided the luxurious or topical metaphor. In fact his language is seldom quick or colourful and rarely energetic. It is, on the contrary, stubbornly persistent, slow, tough and vaulted. Underneath Sutherland's poems one feels great intellectual power, for in his poems as well as in his criticism, Sutherland is concerned with ideas. I know it's the style for poets to be inspired liars, insane prophets and tormented human beings. Poets are supposed to have only revealed ideas as opposed to rational ones, yet a quick reading of any of Milton's poems or of Shelley's *Triumph of Life* will convince the reader that one's own spit, a quick fix, astrology, and a soft heart, never were, and never will be enough for poetry.

Sutherland's poems remain timely because they are about the problem of identity. How does a person become aware of himself as a self, a separate being in a world where everything is not only constantly moving, but where even time has an impatient and indifferent quality and threatens to destroy all those who cannot move within its rhythms? How can the individual find enough stillness to define himself even momentarily? How can he hold off the assaults of the world? Should he escape the empirical world or try to make peace with objective reality?

If he is an authentic poet, the poet's self is never just a private self. His anxieties speak for all our anxieties. He may, as John Stuart Mill pointed out in one of his essays on poetry, be engaged in a dialogue with himself, but if he publishes his poems, he wants us to hear and overhear him.

Sutherland devotes many poems to the situation of being alone in the world, but he does not stop there. His poems are poems of anxiety, but not of despair. Unlike many poems written today which reflect and helplessly accept anxiety and fragmentation, Sutherland's poems contain a critical response to these feelings. In the group of four poems which he published in *Poetry* in 1946[4] the anxiety he expresses is distinguished by the fact that Sutherland does not stop at the point of expression. His language is not incantatory and contains none of the hysteria which is now so greatly admired. Hysteria is admired because, while it challenges nothing in the social status quo, it still supplies the reader with a vicarious experience of looking into a tamed (and sugary) wilderness of the soul, and the — by now — domesticated existential abyss.

In an essay, "Psychoanalysis and Literary Culture Today",[5] Alfred Kazin suggests that hysteria is the mode of expression of writers who no longer have real feelings but wish that they did. It is only an age like ours which has used up its capacity to feel (because it has lost the objects and institutions which can arouse

passionate anger, grief or love), which begins to worship violence and lust. Both violence and lust are unilateral expressions of either the senses, or the mind, and neither requires the human capacity to feel. Pornography is another intellectual mode which serves as a substitute for feeling.

But Sutherland's problem, as expressed in his poems, is not the inability to feel. His is not so much an exhausted sensibility as a threatened one. The dominant feeling in the poems is a fear of loss of identity. Yet it is a fear which Sutherland constantly subjects to thought (not necessarily analysis), and to the striving for more, and not less, consciousness. The fear therefore does not emerge in the poems as either nightmare or grotesque, but as highly patterned and controlled metaphorical language:

> Then slipping from him in the room, the walls
> Rose towering above him. Craning through
> The crannies of the ceiling, carved and lean,
> Dark judges, with their beards like icicles
> Stared at his body, suddenly as small
> As a seed crouching underneath the night.
> (Before Night Came)

And here is Sutherland's description of a face:

> One day, in shock or indecision, all
> The particles will riot in the face:
> They'll crack the bony haloes of his cheeks;
> Or tear at one another till they roll
> In sudden harmony like smoke that seethes
> About a hollow eye, then pours away.
> (The Face)

There are also the following lines at the end of a long poem about the dangers that beset the self which, in spite of disguises, is always discovered and taken unawares:

> For suddenly
> Comes the boughs' tapping on the pane,
> And then, like glass splintering on the teeth
> The burr and splinter of the drill.
> (The Wavering Circle)

Or:

> When we start up to walk abroad
> Fears work and knead us like a crowd
> (Fears)

And the worst thing about these fears is, that no matter how you hunt and try to destroy them, they remain impervious. Shots do not "challenge them" and, like sailboats, they "still tack about upon the blood".

The poet isn't the only one who suffers from fear and ambiguous identity:

> He hunts his listeners: but when he peers
> Over a shadow solid as a wall
> Only his vanished shadow is visible —
> Crawling ant-sized across an air of glass
> Whose dancing surface fuses with the sun.
> (On a Theosophist Friend)

Thus all the people in Sutherland's poems are isolated even when they are in groups. In an early untitled poem we find the following description of people who are afflicted with loneliness in a world whose nature forces them to adopt strategies for mere survival. The mere fact of survival makes gods out of martyrs and transforms defeat into victory. The victory is that those invalids, by dissembling, manage to retain their *wholeness*:

> Who knew or saw them when, as invalids
> Remote within their twilight rooms, they lay
> Like purple shadows clothing sticks of bone?
> Or guessed that in the altared pure recess
> Lighted by the faint tapers of the flesh,
> Those shapes that seemed like dimly-figured nuns
> Were the eyes' shadows in their niche of bone
> Kneeling in daylong prayer to the eyes?
>
> . . . But they knew how,
> By being martyrs, to be gods, and how,
> By taking blindness on themselves, to pluck
> The eyes out of the forehead of the day.
> (Untitled Poem)

In another very striking poem the individual's fear leads him to seek protection from a most unlikely source — his own shadow. This theme of protection and renewal of one part of the self through another part, occurs over and over again as the individual is driven to create something new out of the materials at hand, which will not only protect and shield him, but which will supply something life-giving which the self lacks. In the poem "Triumph" it is "a prescience of rain":

> Not lulled by sleep's pretenses when I see
> The star above me in the cave of night

Wink dimly at the zero sign of being,
I rise to force my image on the room.

Glad as I walk to feel my blundering form
Trample on shapes of things that, during day,
Like snakes raise threatening heads to strike and now
Drop their defenceless shadows on the floor,

Striding in might across their heaps of dead,
I pull a hidden cord, and seem to hear
The loud bulb shatter silence with its peals
And fill the darkness with the noise of light.

Afterwards iron stillness. But I stand
Not moving, while unceasing swarms of light
Crawl slowly on their heavy wings, and hive
Their honey in the white comb of the walls.

Brooding all-powerful above their work,
I let my shadow, humid over them,
Tilt like a weighted petal, or a cloud
That fills them with a prescience of rain.
(Triumph)

Not always is the fear objectified so directly; at times it is expressed only through images which, in spite of their precision, still leave the reader to deal with a disturbing kind of inwardness:

A whistling bird of sun
Sang in the lock of selves
And opened folding doors
On shining inner drawers.
(On a Wet Day)

Or else the concrete image of a boat sailing on the water becomes a metaphor for the unsuccessful attempt to escape from some deep and obscure distress:

It [the boat] turns tail until its spear-tip
Meets a shadow's wedge
That's driven like a spade
Slant-wise through the waved bed of sun.

As it spurts this way and that
And gains its noisy force,
Still louder and darker grows the shadow.
(Combat)

The poems that were published in *Poetry* deal not so much with undefined fears like the above, as with the strategies which the self must adopt in order to keep the dangers outside and under control. "The Aquarium" is a poem about barriers, and like all barriers, they prevent the self from moving in its own chosen direction. The problem is clearly stated in the first stanza:

> When sentries, tall as mountains on the roads,
> Refused him entry into any place,
> He planned to change identity with clothes;
> A surgeon he would make another face.

And not only will the 'I' of this poem play surgeon, but he will use a mirror as his cutting and shaping instrument. Besides being sharp, the mirror is an instrument for creating illusory images; by using a mirror to sharpen a disguise we get the proliferation of illusion — a brilliant metaphoric touch:

> And with the glass of mirrors where he saw
> His preening image glossy with aplomb,
> He'd cut the self till its perfected flaws
> Could strike the worst of his accusers dumb.

Thus one illusion helps to shape another. All the same, the disguises and improvements cannot save the speaker in the poem who, shaped by mirrors, is still cut off from the world by a double layer of glass:

> Hugging his future he had troubled dreams.
> A glass knight on a horse of glass, he rode
> And threatened like a tower of the good:
> Locked behind glass, in an aquarium,
> Bared his deception to the public eye
> And showed his virtue shining with the lie.

The glass knight is locked not only into his armour, transparent and fragile as it is, but into an aquarium, a sort of glass cage, glass within glass, where he is not only on show, but where his virtue is shown to be a lie.

There is a curious combination here of sensory perception and idea, and there is also the obvious paradox of "the virtue shining with the lie". All common enough. But what is the seeming virtue that turns out to be a deception? The pretended virtue is bravery — the knight "who threatened like a tower of the good" — knows himself to be really a coward who underneath his masks and

disguises, and beyond the ornamental glitter and apparent transparency of the glass which composes him, is a man who was never there.

In "The Double Man" we have another poem about the separated self, who, upon seeing "his life-like figure in the mirror" seeks to learn how to live like everyone else, how to act in ways which the average man knows about instinctively but which the artist has to learn painfully:

> Departing, he would learn the parlor trick
> Of living like the average individual:
> Get life by heart and then be free to travel
> Slick and amphibious on different levels.

In the next stanza the speaker discovers that it's more than a parlor trick, because no matter how slick you are, a million external matters always take up the living space which the self needs:

> When the one pipe that he built specially
> For his communication with the world
> Is filled by shifting interest like silt,
> He clears it so he'll have a little room
> In which to chatter, strut and parody
> The boring, hackneyed art of being human.

Apparently the task of clearing away the silt from the pipe through which he hoped to channel his exchanges with the world is so tiresome, that by the time he completes it, the speaker finds there is no self there anyway — only an empty cloak with a capacity to imitate and parody human gestures.

This emptiness and sense of being driven back upon a self, which, like Ibsen's Peer Gynt, has no real core, but only various layers, leads to a further retreat from the world. In the poem *With Expert Tailoring*, the poet finally barricades himself into a house where everything is altered to fit his needs. He suddenly gets the feeling that if he can do this to objects he may also "Rule out of doors, and take a step and kill/A stranger when he passed him in the street."

This is a cheerless omnipotence of the kind most children experience, except that most children don't write poetry about it. There is another very daring and original poem in Sutherland's manuscript about omnipotence and creativity. The poem is called *The Creator* and grows out of a disturbing concept. The central image or metaphor is disturbing because it concerns God or some other figure masturbating, and in this fashion, creating the world out of himself and by himself.

Sutherland's image is logical, his tone is serious, and the poem is not intended

to startle the reader in any way. The poem shows, more dramatically than anything else, Sutherland's habit of pursuing an idea logically to wherever it took him, even if the path happened to be an untravelled one:

> In desperation, as a last resort
> He chose that love-act, which like suicide
> Drags all the world down with the drowning lover.
> Gripping his sex — his life-line, his unseen
> Umbilicus that stretched out to the earth —
> He leaned his whole weight back; and [as he][6] felt
> His passion like a groundswell in the room
> Cant upward, taking him along with it,
> As the light broke upon an answering wave,
> All the world's images came tumbling back.
>
> Those two waves meeting with an equal force
> Were for a moment one; he and the world
> That rode their crests, and, meeting like two lovers,
> Melted together at the very top,
> Became as one, were joined in all their parts,
> Till with the saddening swift recoil, he fell
> Back on the sharp trough into emptiness;
> And down away from him, the scattering world
> Littered the beaches of the afternoon.
>
> (The Creator)

The last two lines seem to me very beautiful and memorable; yet the whole poem grows out of an image which most people would find repugnant. The poet himself finds it distasteful because, although "that love-act" results in a new world, the creator is ultimately thrown back "into emptiness".

Sutherland comes to a similar conclusion about the aridity and pointlessness of self-sufficiency in a poem of that title. The character described in this poem attains self-sufficiency. He has successfully sidetracked his fear and defended himself against it, but the price is terrible suffering and a deathly silence in which all will is atrophied:

> And so his thrifty tongue is motionless
> And rusted like a bell-tongue, never new;
> His white hand, locked in palsy as a winter,
> Sheds flesh in snow, and cannot put a halt
> To plenty when it pours itself away
> Or soothe the hollowness that's like a pain.
>
> (Self-sufficiency)

In fact nothing can "soothe the hollowness that's like a pain" except union with something or someone outside the self. Sutherland concludes that the individual has to find, as an antidote to his fear and loneliness, not more retreats or increasingly effective disguises, but a moment of stillness where one self can unite with another, and through that other, experience himself differently. "Snowless Moment" is such a poem:

> Our stiff poles
> Held up the sky,
> Warning any snow-flake
> That it would splinter and divide
> And shatter into pieces against us.
>
> We seemed made of very little —
> Two or three rope-like arteries,
> Occasionally waving
> To keep the snow suspended
> And the space clear above our heads
> So no crust of time could form on us;
> And constant watchfulness
> Made us perfect mirrors for ourselves.
>
> (Snowless Moment)

Union with the other is depicted in terms of a rigidity and stillness which must be won from a fluid and chaotic world. The poet creates a protective space where "no crust of time could form on us". The lovers are thus timeless but not spaceless. They keep the snow suspended and themselves too. They are made of very little, just two or three rope-like arteries, so in this sense they personify the channels through which blood (and life) must flow.

This need to find a point of stillness in the confusion of a moving world also underlies a twelve-line poem called "The Boat". It concerns the fragmentariness of reflections seen in water and the distortions of seeing which such changing water images invite. Against this randomness of vision, Sutherland opposes rational vision as something intelligent and wilful, — the kind of vision which seeks to encounter something real and concrete like "the solid ground" instead of the illusory reflections to be found on the water's surface:

> The eyes, through open portholes, letting vision
> Fall like leads through the creased folds of water,
> Graze, at the ultimate bottom, over dark fields,
> Foraging in pockets till they nod to rest.

Union can take place between two people but it can also take place between people and objects, as often happens in Sutherland's world and perhaps in our own too. All of us must have noticed at times that objects seem to have a life of their own. They are elusive, contrary, secretive and often malevolent. In Sutherland's poems, objects share the speaker's fondness for disguise and deception. So objects which were "obsequious when he walked among them" later "crouch" and "hide in the twilight safety of their skins" or even seed themselves like dandelion parachutes:

> Or with a counterfeit of motion gained
> From his scythe limbs, that, mowing the tall light,
> Shed them like thistles on the travelling wind,
> They seeded in a farther valley for him. . . .
> (Untitled Poem)

Finally, these objects which move when he moves, and are still when he is still, (because in some way man and object are related) pull the whole world into a beautiful sweeping motion at the very moment when the man begins to move:

> The natural objects did not move or stir
> Until his limbs moved like a clock's hands pulling
> All nature into motion after them.
> (Untitled Poem)

I said earlier that Sutherland's poems are about loneliness, but I also indicated that they offer at least two ways out of the situation of being alone: one is through a spiritual union with another person or object, and the other is by confirmation of the individual through the existence of some objective reality outside the self. This recourse to outside reality is especially evident in the satirical poems, notably, "The Snake Machine".[7] The latter poem takes the form of an ironic parable about art and reality, but apart from what it tells us about transformation and the shifting nature of reality, it also demonstrates Sutherland's fondness for the conjunction of the natural biological image with the mechanical one. His poems abound with the mixed-up paraphernalia of a technical world — clocks, mirrors, sewer pipes, cameras, wires, poles, anchors, light bulbs and locks of every kind. Sutherland was not as interested in producing a beautiful poem as he was in producing one that corresponded to what he considered reality: "The Snake Machine" is about the difficulty of getting at reality through poetry or the imagination alone. For reality, like the Snake Machine " . . . is moving, but always

moving in the same place, / shedding an old skin with each rippling motion / And becoming a new snake exactly like the old one." The poet ends by reacting against the one-sidedness of imagination and art with a plea for some concrete reality:

"O for a real snake shedding a real skin!"

But Sutherland's devotion to reality is not always so complex or didactic. He is often contented with an image which conveys some surface reality, attractive or not. "Girl in Spring" is a closely observed portrait which ends:

Her lips distended
In a huge pout,
Partly opened
With the beautiful ugliness
You have noticed if you have beheld
The swan when drinking.
(Girl in Spring)

But the poem which I return to most often, and which states the original dilemma of loneliness and also combines Sutherland's two ways of meeting it is the poem about Thomas Wolfe:[8]

Wolfe, on the bed, was struggling to remove
The bandage of the dream around his eyes;
His hands, unconscious, hunted for the feel
Of objects thrusting up their wicker veins
To build the framework of reality.

Caught in the web, but planning to restore
All things in proper place upon the shelf,
He held the fallen earth and tried to roll
The play-hoop of the planet with a spin
Starting it on its orbit once again;

But as its shape swung by him like a scythe
Cutting a swathe of sky, he saw the world
All moving in the river of his eyes —
He saw half-wakened objects, caught like wasps,
Fuss in the glowing amber of the air.

In this poem, although the dying writer "hunts for the feel of objects" so he can "build the framework of reality", they elude him. The world is too much "all moving", so that even the objects are caught up, "half-wakened" and resistant in "the fallen earth's" inevitable movement. The artist cannot start the world "on

its orbit once again", nor can he restore us to Eden. But he can go a long way in transforming the world which exists, with all its buzzing and busy objects as Sutherland's own life demonstrated. Perhaps when the "half-wakened objects" — whatever they stand for — are fully awakened to critical consciousness, they will no longer need to be imprisoned in "the glowing amber of the air", but will fly free and help to build the framework of the larger more spacious reality which Sutherland envisaged.

[1] This was made available to me by his widow, Mrs. Audrey Sutherland.

[2] Sutherland's mother died of TB when he was 6 years old, and when he was 13 he was found to have TB of the kidney. When I met him in 1943 he told me that he had been hospitalized at the age of 18 or 19, and seeing no end to his cure, he simply left the hospital and never returned.

[3] In conversation with me.

[4] *In the Aquarium, The Double Man, With Expert Tailoring, Self-Sufficiency.*

[5] In *The Partisan Review Anthology* edited by William Phillips and Philip Rahv; 1962. London, Macmillan, pp. 238-246.

[6] I have added the two words in the brackets.

[7] *First Statement*, September/October 1948, Vol. 2, No. 3, pp. 21-22.

[8] *First Statement*, August 1944, Vol. 2, No. 8, p. 15.

A LANDSCAPE OF JOHN SUTHERLAND

Miriam Waddington

we are
in flight
we are
a space of
dreamed-of
light
autumn canyons
crevices

we are the blue
between
the sliding doors
of sky

we fall
among the shells
the molluscs
of our concerts
on the earth
our bones
are toys
and trumpets
for the wind
our song
sand
on a shore

our eyes
are owls
who scold
the lit-up
winter night
our skeletons
snow animals
prowling
through the
quiet moment
of landscape

that is
what I like
best to find
the quiet moment
shadowless
in the roar
of landscape
to be the
landscape

ALAN CRAWLEY AND CONTEMPORARY VERSE

Prepared by
George Robertson

The symposium that follows was prepared by George Robertson as a radio documentary and broadcast by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation in its Anthology programme. We are indebted to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and especially to Mr. Robert Weaver for having made it available. The script has been edited with the permission and assistance of the participants, so that in some slight respects it is different from the version broadcast. "Nocturne", the poem by Dorothy Livesay, is included with the permission of the author and of Ryerson Press.

ROBERTSON: A man and a young girl are walking by Second Beach in Vancouver. The time is the beginning of the war, the man is blind, the girl is a poet. The man knows many poets, though he has never written verse himself. His name is Alan Crawley, and he is soon to become the editor of a little magazine called *Contemporary Verse*. The poet is Dorothy Livesay.

LIVESAY: Alan had a little spaniel called Roddie — I think that was his name — and he liked to take him for walks, but of course being blind he couldn't go alone. And I needed walks because I was carrying a baby, so we used to go out arm in arm, he with his walking stick and the dog. We would walk along Second Beach, through the park several times in a week, talking and just enjoying the air and so on. Soon I began to write again, I think under his influence; then I began showing him the poems, getting his criticism of them. He helped me a bit — he tried to make my language more what he called "modern."

ROBERTSON: In those days, there were few places a poet could send his work: *Canadian Forum*, *Saturday Night* (if the poem fitted the required space) and of course *The Canadian Poetry Magazine*, as conservative in its format as in its

contents. Here and there a group of poets would create a magazine to publish their work, but they rarely looked outside their own group. One Easter weekend in 1941, four poets met in Victoria to discuss their plight. They were Floris McLaren, Dorothy Livesay, Anne Marriott and Doris Ferne. That occasion is remembered by Florence McLaren.

McLAREN: Dorothy Livesay said we could start a poetry magazine ourselves. I said, "That's a nice pipe dream." Dorothy said why? Then we began to talk. We knew nothing about the publication of a poetry magazine, we knew nothing about the financial problems involved, but we talked of it. Someone said who would edit, who would be an editor for such a magazine, and the three of us answered together, "Alan Crawley!" Dorothy agreed to talk to him when she went back to Vancouver and tell him of this suggestion, and see if he would consider being the editor if it could be done. We wrote to him of course and explained a bit more, although we had no definite plan then, but I'd like to read the paragraph from the letter he answered because it . . . this was in 1941 of course, at the beginning of the war. He wrote and said: "This is to the conspirators who started all this in spite of the distress of the times and the prospect of unsettled days to come. I feel that the publication of the magazine of Canadian poetry is a worthwhile and a reasonable venture and should do much to help modern Canadian writers, for I know of no other publication that is giving this possible help to writers. I am willing and enthusiastic to do what I can for it." The next step was to investigate the practical problems of financing. We talked to printers here and found that a lithographing process could be used and the cost of the sixteen-page issue would be $25. We decided that four issues a year would be satisfactory — that would be a quarterly, and if we could sell 25 subscriptions at $1 a subscription, we could put out the first issue. So we proceeded to sell 25 subscriptions to people who knew nothing about what was going to happen, had our $25, and published the first issue.

ROBERTSON: Letters were sent to Canadian poets, those with reputations, those without. A young poet in the Maritimes had a few things published: her name was P. K. Page.

PAGE: I was living in New Brunswick at the time, by the sea. It was wartime, and we were in a fisherman's cottage, and I was writing — I think I was probably writing the novel I was talking about a minute ago and had had very little published. And then this letter arrived by pony trap — the sounds of the horses' hoofs coming down the road, and this letter from Caulfield, I suppose it was, where Alan lived at that point. And I opened it and it said he had heard

from Anne Marriott that she had met me, that I wrote poetry and would I be prepared to send in something for Volume One of *Contemporary Verse*. This was a very revolutionary sort of thing to happen because . . . well, to begin with, there weren't poetry magazines much in those days — this was the dim dark ages — and people preferred to *not* write poetry rather than to write poetry, I suppose, if they preferred anything. It wasn't a thing you talked about very much and certainly nobody ever asked you for a poem. So this was quite exciting.

ROBERTSON: Alan Crawley is now 81, his voice is still youthful, his step firm. His blindness dates from 1933 — the result of an illness. Before that time he was a successful corporation lawyer. After the illness, he learned Braille and came west and began to feel, hear and say poetry, because poetry was life to him. He sits now in his home in Victoria, his head lowered, his eyes watchful as he listens to a question and then talks about his days as editor of *Contemporary Verse*.

CRAWLEY: You know, we were all perfectly unskilled in the art of bringing out a magazine. I had a few people who knew we were doing this and they sent some letters to writers in different parts of Canada, and I had a stack of MSS from Mrs. McLaren, Dorothy Livesay, Mrs. Ferne and Anne Marriott to start with. I wrote a few letters and was very frightened that we were not going to get enough subscribers to sell a decent first issue, or even to have the material to make up this issue. But I remember one morning in my mail I got manuscripts from P. K. Page, Earle Birney and A. J. M. Smith, which added to the others, and I thought now we can start. But I wasn't at all sure how much we could afford, nor how much there should be in the first issue; so I cut a pack of cards to see what number came out, hoping that it wouldn't be a king because that would be 13, and I turned this pack up and drew out a seven (which had been through my life a rather lucky number). So I got seven poems together, seven writers' poems together, and put them in the order in which I thought they should go into the first issue, and sent it off to Mrs. McLaren to deal with.

McLAREN: We simply did it in the hope that the contributions would come to Caulfield to Alan Crawley, and his wife Jean (who was never listed as a member of the committee, but certainly was one of the hardest working members the committee had) read the selections, read the poems to him; those which he wished to go over more carefully he put into Braille so that he could go over them later. And then when he had made his selection for each issue, he sent that by mail to me in Victoria, and I typed the dummy for the printer.

ROBERTSON: The first issue was mailed to 75 subscribers. In his Foreword, Alan Crawley said that "truth and beauty are not all told, that there are many writers of our own time who can speak to us in words and images and forms that interest and appeal; and that for most of us their writings are hard to come by." Those were days, unlike the present, when what was new was not automatically considered good or important. The contents of the first issue were described by the *Globe and Mail* as "experimental." The *Vancouver Daily Province* more generously said: "The younger poets of Canada, chiefly those who wish to break away from the binding tradition of their elders, have made for themselves a new outlet for their thoughts." And, best of all, Northrop Frye in *Canadian Forum* said: "If you buy this little pamphlet you will get wit, satire, music, imagination, and where else can you get all that for two bits?"

LIVESAY: Because Alan's sole interest was poetry and modern poetry, and because he knew a lot of it, we felt that he knew what he was talking about. He never told us, you know, change this, but he would just say: perhaps that's a little redundant, you know, just casual things. But actually the strange thing about Alan, and no one's really talked about it . . . I suppose it is just by chance, but there must be at least seven Canadian women poets who went to him for help, sent their material to him and got a great deal of encouragement. I think of Anne Wilkinson, who is dead now, or Jay Macpherson, a very young girl, as well as, out here, Anne Marriott, Floris McLaren, and myself; and it was when she was in the east that Pat Page first sent poems to *Contemporary Verse* and got to know Alan through that, and he again would give little comments. He always wrote letters to people who sent poems, you know, either rejecting or accepting, but he just didn't write a prim note of rejection; he liked to say something about the poem. And Miriam Waddington was another — I mean, it's just amazing how particularly the *young* women seemed to get a stimulus from him. I do think that Alan is the type of man whom women find rare because he has all the sensitivity of a woman, and yet a very objective kind of masculine mind, and this sympathy he has I think is rare. Women don't find it very often in men.

PAGE: I remember that he would write back and tell you that he just didn't think the poem was good enough. I have no idea how he went about doing what he did. He certainly communicated with you. I think probably the thing that one needed more than criticism was encouragement, because, in my own case any way, I wrote rather for myself, and when I suddenly found that you could write for somebody else too, you could write for a response — it was a

very curious experience. This may sound ridiculous, but it's true nevertheless. Alan as far as I was concerned had a facility to turn on the tap, but how he worked critically, I've no idea. If he didn't like what came out of the tap, he'd send it back quite ruthlessly, at least ruthlessly isn't the word, but quite directly. He was always very direct in all his dealings with you. If he liked the poem he told you; if he didn't he told you. But the main thing was some kind of a contact, some kind of a tension between two people, some kind of a polarity.

LIVESAY: There were I think three poems in the volume *Day and Night* which came out in '44, which Alan had sort of worked over with me, or at least I had read them aloud to him. He wasn't particularly interested in social poetry like my poem *Day and Night*. I think he admired its techniques but he wasn't very . . . he liked a poem that revealed the inner emotion. So that he liked *Lorca*, when I read the poem in sections and he said, "why don't you link them up more — couldn't you put in some kind of phrase which would link each section?" So I went home and that night I think I did write just a few little lines where there was a common theme or a common music:

"While you, you hold the light unbroken," and then

"You make the flight unshaken," and

"You hold the word unspoken,"

and then at the end, "light, flight and word be unassailed, the token."

Well, I wouldn't have done that if it hadn't been for Alan.

ROBERTSON: Alan Crawley heard poetry spoken by his wife, felt it through his fingers in Braille, and said it aloud over and over. But even if he had not been blind, Crawley would always have insisted that poetry is not melody for its own sake, but the combination of sound and sense.

CRAWLEY: I have always felt that a poem read aloud by a person who had previously been affected by it, and could say it without having just read it, made a very much better impression; . . . the listener had a better communication from the poem than by reading it from the print itself. And I have had this more or less confirmed by people who have listened to poets reading their own poetry, which of course now is being much more done than it was 30 years ago or 25 years ago even in Canada.

McLAREN: He reads poetry beautifully. I remember one writer listening to his reading of her works said at the end of it: "You make a person a poet when you read their writing." He would say that he didn't make anyone, that he read what is there. He was very aware of course of the meaning of the verse and gave full balance to that, but also very aware of the pattern of sound in

the verse; . . . because he looked for it himself, he made other people hear that.

ROBERTSON: The magazine prospered after a fashion; it was never able to pay poets, and truthfully poets never expected to be paid. Costs were rising, but *Contemporary Verse* was reaching a wider audience with every issue, and it was undoubtedly publishing the best verse being produced in Canada, poems by A. M. Klein, Louis MacKay, Earle Birney, F. R. Scott, Roy Daniells, Ralph Gustafson, Anne Wilkinson, Irving Layton, Louis Dudek, Raymond Souster, James Reaney, P. K. Page, Dorothy Livesay, Margaret Avison, Robert Finch, Miriam Waddington — the list could go on. Most of these were established poets, and then later there were the discoveries, the younger ones. Alan Crawley cast his net wide, and he made his selection, this amateur-become-editor in his mid-fifties, on the basis of one thing only, on the basis of his own taste.

LIVESAY: In Canada we've been rifled by cliques, and we still are you know. Every city has its circle and its fans and its . . . self-adulation going on, but Alan was completely free of this. And he did get people from all parts of the country writing . . . I mean the Montreal group around *First Statement* was a fascinating group, but it was a clique. For instance, I never got into any Montreal magazine, but anyone from there could and did write for *Contemporary Verse* and get published; so I would say it was due to his impartiality and universality.

CRAWLEY: I believe of course that C.V. did a great deal to help the writers of poetry at that time. It had quite a wide circulation in the last few years and was quite widely read and gave poets a good deal of encouragement, not only from me but from the other members of the group whom they got to know. I am not at all doubtful of the effect and the good and encouragement that was given to young writers by C.V. in those ten years.

PAGE: He was a very emotional man, Alan, an undemonstrative emotional man. You saw very little of the emotion, but you felt a great deal of it, and you felt that he was very much in touch with you in some way. That he had a strong empathetic quality, is the feeling I had about him. As a result of this, one had no shyness with Alan and this was his great strength for me — I was a rather reticent person and to suddenly find somebody with whom one was not shy, someone in an editorial capacity, that is — because after all one did find one's own individuals with whom one wasn't shy of course — but to find somebody in an editorial capacity to whom you could show a poem that you thought maybe was simply awful, "but it doesn't matter, if it's really awful, Alan will tell me it is; and if it isn't awful, well, we can talk about it."

ROBERTSON: Outside the window of his home in Victoria, there is a garden

and flowers. I looked out at the flowers he couldn't see but nonetheless knew better than I, and tried to imagine what he would sound like speaking verse. I asked him if he would read something for me, but he gently and firmly refused, claiming that his memory is no longer as good as it was. So we must imagine that voice, precise yet musical, unfolding the words, making sense of sound as he used to do in earlier days.

LIVESAY: There were two kinds of evenings. There were those with the Crawleys, Mr. and Mrs. Crawley and perhaps their son, Michael; he drove them about and helped them in every way. Then we would invite other friends in and have an evening, you know, a social evening with plenty of drink and talk, and this was always a most lively occasion, full of wit and humour and jokes. You saw Alan there in a very social light, and you saw him as a man who simply adored the pleasure of human contact and conversation and exchanging wit, not gossiping in any malicious way, but just amusing things about people, because there's nothing . . . there's never been anything in his attitude to writers that is partisan or suspicious or critical of them as people. He enjoys them and doesn't gossip at all. But then there would be a different kind of session when Michael or perhaps his wife Jean would drive down to my place for an afternoon of poetry, when he might come for lunch and then we'd sit out under the cherry tree or whatever tree happened to be around (and this was particularly in North Vancouver). I would read to him any new and interesting poems that I had come across or letters from poets — this sort of thing; or he would bring correspondence for me to read and discuss. Always he would have some kind of comment and some insight into what was being said or written. He was very interested, so the time flew by until someone came and picked him up. Sometimes I would go to Caulfield and do the same thing, stay there while the family would go out on their errands. We would sit and converse, for a couple of hours reading. He loved talk — we'd talk for about a half an hour and then he would say, "Well, let's get down to some reading." We would read and comment and he'd say: "Now what have *you* got, any new poems?" He'd ask me to read something of mine, and always he was very thoughtful about them. "Yes, I like that, I like that" . . . "No, I don't care for that."

PAGE: I remember this marvellously Spanish looking man. He looked as if he might have come out of . . . or he might almost have been an El Greco painting with this extraordinary alive quality about him, and a tremendous capacity to know where everybody was in the room and to be following and with you in your conversation. Periodically I used to stay with Alan and Jean in Caulfield

where they were very generous to poets, I must say . . . long suffering and generous and we'd get mildly drunk in the evening and quite bawdy, and laugh a tremendous amount. I think it was the laughter I remember as much as anything. I don't know whether he was dominating the room he was in but he was on top of the room he was in; he was everywhere in the room he was in; he missed nothing in the room he was in; and seemed a good deal sharper than most of the rest of us, which indeed he was, I think.

ROBERTSON: John Sutherland, editor of the Montreal little magazine, *Northern Review*, once wrote to Crawley: "I envy your knack of catching all the promising young poets."

CRAWLEY: In 1946 I think it would be, I was in Toronto and Ottawa and I met Jay Macpherson. She came to a talk I was giving, and we had a little talk and she said she would send me some manuscripts which she did and I published a lot of her poems and came to know her very well. Her writing is very different from what is being done now — it is very good poetry and I think she got a lot of encouragement from being in *Contemporary Verse.* Another occasion later on in the years of *Contemporary Verse*, I had a telephone call asking if a man could come and see me when we were living in Caulfield, and I said "Yes, indeed, if you want to come and talk about poetry," and when he came he turned out to be Daryl Hine from New Westminster. He was just about 15 and he had a sheaf of manuscript in his hand; we went down to my room and he read to me for about two hours, most remarkable writing for a boy of that age, and he has written some very fine poetry and is still doing so, has published a couple more books — he is now teaching, I think, at the University of Chicago, but he's a Canadian who started first in *Contemporary Verse.*

ROBERTSON: If you were still editing *Contemporary Verse* now, who are the Canadian poets you would like to publish?

CRAWLEY: I would very much like to have been able to publish some poems by Leonard Cohen, whose earlier writing, not just the last writing particularly, but his earlier writing I liked very much, and some of his later poems now that he reads and accompanies on his guitar I like, but I think a good deal of that comes from the guitar accompaniment; and I also like some poems by Purdy and Newlove. I do not read a great deal of contemporary poetry — I find that I've . . . I don't get as much satisfaction or pleasure out of it as I do out of reading the poems that I knew or by writers that I have known some years ago.

ROBERTSON: There came a time when Alan Crawley no longer felt able to carry the burden of *Contemporary Verse*. In 1951 in the 10th anniversary issue, he announced that he was considering bringing it to a close. He had hoped to find money to extend its circulation; he had hoped to pay contributors; he was unsuccessful, and, more important, he began to feel that the magazine was losing its vitality. In spite of pleas from readers and poets, he wound up *Contemporary Verse* with the issue of Autumn of 1952. In it he said, "We have a strong belief that the work of a little magazine under the same editor's direction declines in time from its peak of usefulness. With this conviction we close our files and write the abrupt and final statement: this is the last issue of CV." And thus the magazine ended, without fanfare or grace notes. It had been born in a near-vacuum. When it died new magazines were already springing up. In the decade of its life, the climate of Canadian letters had improved remarkably, not least because of the influence of magazines like *Contemporary Verse* and *Northern Review*. Others were to take their place, and the man who had worked alone retired from publishing but not from thinking and talking about poetry.

CRAWLEY: I was talking to a young man a couple of years ago, he was in his early twenties, and in the course of conversation about literature he said to me: "Well, I've written some poems;" and I said, "Would you let me see them?" And he said: "Oh, no, I don't think so." I said, "Don't you want to know, have any idea what other people would get from them?" And he said "No, I tore them up. I know they're good poems — I don't want anybody else to have anything to do with them." Well that to me was something quite new because most of the poets that I've known have wanted to make some communication to some person and not to keep their writing to themselves, but that probably is part of what's going on now in many ways. I think that some of the young writers are like a number of the young people who are not actually writing but who have the feeling that if it doesn't communicate to you then it's your fault, not their fault, and until they learn that they have to say things so that they are intelligible or can be felt by the person they're speaking to through verse or otherwise, why they're never going to turn out to be able to create anything worthy.

ROBERTSON: Alan Crawley would call the eleven years of *Contemporary Verse* a modest achievement; he would count as its greatest benefit that it had made him many friends. But it is much more than a modest achievement, and his friends the poets have not forgotten.

LIVESAY: There is a poem I wrote for him when he was living in the Okanagan, after he had moved from Caulfield in the Fifties. I don't know whether Alan knows it was written for him, but it does mention the blindness.

NOCTURNE

Dorothy Livesay

Countries are of the mind
and when you moved upon my land
your darkness ringed my light:
O landscape lovely, looped
with loping hills, wind-woven
landfall of love.

All my frozen years
snow drifting through bare birches,
white-cowled cedar
and the black stream threading through ice —

All sultry summers run
barefooted through the crackling wood
flung upon rocks made skeleton
x-rayed by the raging sun —

All springs, wild crying with the wood's mauve bells
anemone, hepatica
trembling to feel the fanning leaf:
breast against bark, the sap's ascent
burning the blood with bold green fire —

All autumns, solitary season
treading the leaves, treading the time:
those autumns stripped deception to the bone
and left me animal, alone —

All seasons were of light
stricken and blazing —
only now the shout
of knowledge hurls, amazing:
O bind me with ropes of darkness,
blind me with your long night.

CANADIAN LITERATURE

The First Ten Years

A. J. M. Smith

I FIND IT HARD to remember the time — only ten years ago, was it? — when "there was no literary magazine in Canada that devoted itself entirely to the discussion of writers and writing in this country." There was, it is true, the annual survey of letters in Canada in the *University of Toronto Quarterly* and a few occasional academic papers or appreciative essays in the university quarterlies published at Toronto, Queen's, and Dalhousie, and sometimes some livelier and more contemporary articles in *The Canadian Forum* or *The Tamarack Review*. But for something that could not only stimulate a lasting interest, satisfy curiosity, and at the same time demonstrate the interconnections between our writers and their writing on the one hand and the cultural, social and intellectual milieu on the other, we had to wait for a journal that could concentrate on the as yet hardly academically respectable "field" of Canadian letters and could do so in a broad, inclusive, unpedantic, many-sided way. When George Woodcock was invited by the University of British Columbia to edit the magazine he approached the task very deliberately as a professional writer rather than an academic critic, and while demanding always a certain quality of style and cogency of argument he was careful to seek out a wide variety of points of view and to represent many schools of thought. The contributors to the magazine included academic critics, professional writers, poets, novelists, historians, publicists, journalists, people active in the theatre or the mass media, and perhaps a few plain amateurs or lovers of literature. The variety extended also from old well-established names to young practicioners of the new in poetry and criticism and to all the modes of criticism being practised today.

The magazine got off to an impressive start. Typography and design were excellent; print was clear and the margins wide. The contents of the first two issues set the pattern of variety and inclusiveness and announced a standard both of style and substance that it would be a challenge to maintain. Each number included a personal essay by an author on his own art and his literary aims written in a personal and familiar manner that seemed to underwrite its sincerity and authority. The writers were Roderick Haig-Brown and Ethel Wilson. Essays of this kind were to appear quite frequently in subsequent issues, not all of them as informal as these, but among them were

some as important as Hugh MacLennan's account of the composition of *The Watch that Ends the Night*, some letters of Frederick Philip Grove, edited by Professor Pacey, a translation of Malcolm Lowry's preface to a French edition of *Under the Volcano*, and, more recently, Wyndham Lewis's "On Canada" and his sketch of an unwritten historical novel set in the days of the French regime.

The first two numbers contained, of course, articles on poets and novelists — ancient and modern: on Duncan Campbell Scott and Ralph Connor; Major Richardson, A. M. Klein, as novelist, and Margaret Avison; on Gabrielle Roy and on French-Canadian poetry (in French), labelled here by Gilles Marcotte "*une poésie d'exil*". The writers (including the present one) were all academics — F. W. Watt, Desmond Pacey, Milton Wilson, and Hugo McPherson — and the pertinent liveliness and all-round good sense and intelligence of this group of essays alone reconfirmed my opinion that "Our best criticism, like our best poetry, today is in the hands of the 'university wits'."

The juxtaposition of critic and poet has often been fruitful, and for me, in spite of the brilliance and learning displayed in the seminal studies of Steinberg on Klein and Wilson on Avison, the gem of the first two issues was poet Eli Mandel's penetrating study of the criticism of Northrop Frye. In later issues a good many poets were to contribute criticism, some in papers as outstanding as Reaney's on Jay Macpherson, Louis Dudek's on Raymond Souster, Ralph Gustafson's on the New Wave, and George Bowering's on Reaney and Macpherson. Every one of these poets, however, holds an academic post and can be claimed as a "university wit."

One other portent — this in the first issue — was the turning over of Canadian books to well-equipped but unsuspecting English reviewers. Here George Woodcock was able to draw on some of his friends from his years in the literary circles of London during the thirties. Roy Fuller, now Professor of Poetry at Oxford, reviewed with candour, discrimination, and unpatronizing fairness books of verse by Irving Layton, John Glassco, and Ronald Bates. More recently Julian Symons, in a review of my Oxford anthology *Modern Canadian Verse*, presented a point of view that I found curious and very surprising, but which, coming from an experienced and completely honest English poet and editor, must be given the closest consideration. Symons wrote: "This collection contains a great deal of talented verse which . . . cannot be called parochial or narrowly nationalistic. . . . What Canadian poetry most lacks (and what Larkin, Lowell and some other writers by contrast have been able to use profitably) is a truly national style."

By the end of the first year perhaps, certainly by the end of the second, it was clear that the high quality of the early numbers was to be maintained and the usefulness of the magazine as an index and critique of the literary and cultural life of the dominion had been established. It may be, as the editor suggested in his Introduction to *A Choice of Critics*, a selection of essays from *Canadian Literature* published in 1966, that part of its success was due to the fact that it appeared at a moment when Canadian writers, particularly poets and novelists, were entering upon a new phase of maturity and accomplishment. The circulation of their books — as well as that of

the writers of our past — was becoming much larger and more widely diffused through the inauguration by both commercial and academic publishers of several series of paperback reprints. The books our critics were writing about could now be obtained by everyone, easily and cheaply, and it became possible, almost for the first time, to conduct practical undergraduate courses in Canadian literature. And now a quarterly devoted exclusively to the *criticism* of letters in Canada and its impact upon the social and cultural milieu that formed it and that it expressed made it possible to draw together the thinking of all critics, scholars, creative writers, and thoughtful readers in a kind of continuing symposium that I for one have found extremely fruitful and immensely exciting.

This usefulness was assured and increased by a number of special features ranging from the annual bibliographical check lists of Canadian writing in French as well as English to poems that might be considered for any one of a variety of reasons to have some particular historical or critical relevance. Special issues devoted to writers of unusual significance — E. J. Pratt, Malcolm Lowry, A. M. Klein, and some of the poets — offered a balanced view of their contribution to our literature through the juxtaposition of essays by a number of scholars and critics.

The critical essays which make up the bulk of the material published in *Canadian Literature* fall into several categories: historical and contemporary; scholarly and informal; appreciative, critical, or controversial; general or particular. And almost every school of criticism has been represented: sociological, analytical, biographical, and psychological.... I break off as I begin to sound like Polonius. Instead of generalities and classifications, let me cite some particular examples of success in different kinds of criticism. I am a compulsive anthologist, and perhaps the best way to do this will be to make my own "choice of critics" as a kind of supplement and sequel to George Woodcock's. There is such a wealth and variety of material to choose from that there is no need to take any of the essays Mr. Woodcock already had chosen, though I feel a pang at being denied such outstanding examples of mythopoeic criticism as the poet D. G. Jones's "The Sleeping Giant: The Uncreated Conscience of the Race" and Warren Tallman's study of five modern Canadian novels, "The Wolf in the Snow." I would choose to represent this kind of imaginative theoretical criticism (which demands for its success, however, sensitivity, learning, practical experience and taste) Paul West's "Eros and Epic: Aspects of Canadian Poetry" — a remarkably useful document because it presents a general view of what is unique and traditional in our poetry seen through the eyes of a young English poet and writer who spent a number of years at Memorial University in Newfoundland and took the opportunity to examine our literature from a new, unbiassed but not unsympathetic point of view.

As examples of more conventional but even more essential criticism I would choose, as a kind of general introduction to the state of letters in Canada now, Desmond Pacey's "The Outlook for Canadian Literature" in no. 36; Professor F. W. Watt's study of left-wing political magazines in the twenties and thirties — though this is available also in the monumental *Literary History of Canada*; and Ronald Sutherland's two long and

thoughtful studies of the French/English dialogue in Quebec as seen in the poetry and fiction of the two languages: "Twin Solitudes" in no. 21 and "The Body Odour of Race" in no. 37.

The essays by Professors Watt and Sutherland are concerned primarily with the social and political aspects of literature. These have always been close to the centre of George Woodcock's editorial intention and practice. The economic conditions under which professional writers must work and their relations with publishers, editors, the public, and the law have been dealt with *passim* in editorials, articles, discussions, and symposia. One of the most practically valuable issues (no. 33 on "Publishing in Canada") featured answers to a questionnaire sent to authors, publishers, editors, and critics, among them Hugh MacLennan, Roderick Haig-Brown, Earle Birney, Robert Fulford, Arnold Edinborough, Kildare Dobbs, and Professor Carl Klinck. Mr. John Gray, of Macmillan's, and a bookseller, Mr. W. J. Duthie, gave the point of view of their respective callings. Their authoritative essays were followed by John Robert Colombo's youthfully enthusiastic account of his adventures in the publishing game. In the same issue was the first of two informative and completely objective (non-critical rather than uncritical) research jobs by Wynne Francis on the part played in the development of Canadian poetry since the forties by the small independent presses. The second, a complementary study of the little mags, followed in the next issue.[1]

For my examples of literary criticism dealing with social or economic backgrounds I would choose none of these, however — mainly because pieces of a more general application are available in abundance — among them two or three essays that would be outstanding in any context. One of these is Thelma McCormack's "Writers and the Mass Media" in the Spring 1964 issue, a well-reasoned and fully informed essay that comes to grips with the McLuhan syndrome with a refreshing firmness and coolness. Another is Paul West's fashionably titled "Pastoral with Ostriches and Mocking Birds." This is a carefully thought-out attack on the ineffectual games played by Canadian intellectuals and aesthetes resulting in sterile conformity and false optimism. The ideas expressed by J.-C. Falardeau in his Plaunt Memorial Lecture at Carleton University and by Northrop Frye in *By Liberal Things* are considered in some detail and the paper concludes with a spirited defence of the humanities in education. While asserting that it is "a mistake to think the study of Swift or Johnson is less relevant than the study of Orwell or Snow" he has praise for the adventurous modern like Layton

or Town. And finally I should be tempted by Professor R. L. McDougall's (also fashionably titled) "The Dodo and the Cruising Auk", a witty controversial exposé of what the author believes to be the enervating effect of academicism and their upper-middle-class origin upon many of the established writers and critics. Along with this I should have to include Professor Earle Birney's sharp rejoinder that followed a couple of issues later. While unable to deny the possession of a well-earned Ph.D. or many years as a university teacher, Birney indignantly refused to be labelled anything but proletarian.

When we come to the section of my hypothetical anthology devoted, like Mr. Woodcock's, to "Some Writers" I feel some classification of the material is necessary. I shall content myself with listing my own personal choice among the essays in each of the groups I distinguish. First there are the historical studies of writers of the past, most of them presenting a fresh point of view or attempting a new evaluation or rediscovering an author unjustly neglected or forgotten. The novels of Major Richardson, the poetry and politics of Charles Mair, the writings of the fur-traders and explorers, and the nature books of Ernest Thompson Seton have all been the subject of investigation by such accomplished scholars as Professors Pacey, Shrive, Daniells, Hopwood, and S. E. Read. From among these I would choose V. G. Hopwood's long overdue appreciation of David Thompson in the Autumn 1968 issue; Norman Shrive's account of the career and reputation of the once popular Indian authoress, Pauline Johnson, in "What Happened to Pauline?" in no. 13 —though an earlier, more informal essay by Ethel Wilson on the Victorian miss who was a poetess rather than a poet has great charm; and finally an unusual paper on Isabella Valancy Crawford by J. B. Ower — unusual, and particularly valuable, because it is devoted largely to a close reading of one of the most intriguing of Miss Crawford's shorter poems "The Canoe".

But it is in the papers on the literature of the last twenty years or so that the greatest variety and distinction is found. Here I would cite first as tops in cogency and usefulness the three long definitive surveys by George Woodcock of the literary development of the novelists Morley Callaghan and Hugh MacLennan and the poet Irving Layton. The first two are in *A Choice of Critics*, but I am well content with the more recent Layton piece, "A Grab at Proteus", surely the most just and most discriminating of the many efforts to separate the gold from the dross in Layton's astonishing output. Even Mr. Layton liked it.

Some of the best articles on particular writers appeared in special issues devoted to an examination of their work from a number of viewpoints. The numbers devoted to A. M. Klein, Malcolm Lowry, E. J. Pratt, and to some of the other poets, have been especially valuable to students and general readers alike. From these I would want to single out Vincent Sharman's questioning of the accepted view of the orthodoxy of Pratt's religious convictions in "Illusion and Atonement — E. J. Pratt and Christianity"; Robert Heilman's placing of *Under the Volcano* in the perspective of modern European novelists, particularly the Thomas Mann of *Dr. Faustus*, in "The Possessed Artist and the Ailing Soul"; and from the wealth of material on A. M. Klein I find

it hard to choose among the essays of Steinberg, Waddington, Livesay, and the young Kingston poet T. A. Marshall. I believe I should settle for the last, a well-worked-out analysis of Klein's Jewish themes entitled "Theorems Made Flesh."

Two or three critiques on more or less important contemporary poets and novelists have appeared in every issue — the editor seems to have a genius for matching the critic, expositor, or appreciator to his subject. I am thinking, to give some examples, of the work of Helen Sonthoff on Phyllis Webb, of Peter Stevens on Raymond Knister, Louis Dudek on Raymond Souster, or Naim Kattan and J.-G. Pilon on some of the French novelists and poets. Again it must seem invidious to make a choice, but I shall select two: an essay on a French poet and one on an English novelist. Each is an outstanding example of criticism that uncovers the significance of what has been overlooked, either in the work itself or in its social and psychological sources and impacts. These are Jean le Moyne's essay in no. 28, "Saint-Denys-Garneau's Testimony to his Time" (translated by Philip Stratford), and D. O. Spettigue's informative and brilliant study of the literary career of Ernest Buckler entitled "The Way it Was" in no. 32.

I am assuming world enough and time, plenty of money, and perfect freedom, so I can represent also some of the special features that have contributed much to the magazine's interest and usefulness. Among these I would cite the essays and reviews written in French — not enough of these, I think, to reflect the true biculturism of Canada, but the substance has been inclusive and the quality good. In addition to Kattan, Pilon, and Jean le Moyne, the critics have included Gérard

Tougas, Gérard Bessette, Jean-Charles Falardeau, Gilles Marcotte, Adrien Thério, and others; and many, though by no means all, of the leading poets and novelists who write in French have received the attention they deserve. Another of the services *Canadian Literature* has provided for the entertainment and instruction of its readers has been a number of controversial engagements and a number of (usually) well-deserved castigations. I am thinking of Ralph Gustafson's craftsmanly distaste for the verse of the New Wave school, Louis Dudek's review article labelled "Trouncing the Younger Poets", Frank Davey's dismissal of Layton's *Periods of the Moon*, and John Peter's much earlier denunciation of the academicism of Robert Finch. George Bowering, Lionel Kearns, and Frank Davey, however, have spoken well in defence of the new schools, and the air of lively debate that enlivens the reviews of recent poetry is all to the good. Another debate, not unconnected with the reception of the youngest poetry, was the full and very knowledgeable discussion of the teaching of creative writing in the universities in Robert Harlow's "Bastard Bohemia: Creative Writing in

the Universities" in no. 27 and Warren Tallman's rejoinder two issues later, "Creative Writing: Reality and Myth."

The most unusual and by no means the least interesting feature of the magazine has been the inclusion from time to time of poems or verses. These ranged from F. R. Scott's translation of a descriptive poem written by Marc Lescarbot at Port Royal in 1609 and John Glassco's of Louis Riel's bitter address to Sir John A. Macdonald to unpublished poems of Malcolm Lowry, a couple of short lyrics by myself, some Found Poems of Frank Scott, and an experimental verse manifesto by Wilfred Watson.

I cannot bring this survey to a close without a tribute to the editor himself and to his two learned and lively colleagues, Donald Stephens and W. H. New, whose articles, reviews, and occasional editorials have been invariably of the highest standard. It is to George Woodcock, however, that I think the great success of the magazine must be mainly due. His dedication to his task and the skill with which he has carried it out derive from a lifetime's experience as a man of letters and an active participant in the political and moral life of his time. This has been quite explicitly declared in the editorials he wrote for most of the issues, but it has found active and practical expression in the firmness and direction with which he fixed and maintained the course of the magazine during this first ten years. In the Introduction to *A Choice of Critics* he stated his purpose. It was to avoid the sterile, the foregone, and the established, and to seek with a kind of "eclectic detachment" for excellence through freedom. "My own approach as a critic," he wrote, "has always been that of the professional rather than the academic: an eclecticism which accepts as valid any method that may throw light on the intentions of an author and on the nature and quality of his achievement. This has led me to welcome any critical essay whose arguments seem well supported and well presented: the unacademic but naturally informed attitude of the practising writer as well as the more systematic attitude of the scholarly critic whose insights spring from the accumulation of knowledge."

That George Woodcock has succeeded for the past ten years in bringing these two streams of knowledge about literature together in a single national journal is an achievement for which all Canadians ought to be grateful.

[1] To appreciate the catholicity of the editor's choices and the variety of approach in the magazine's critical articles the reader is recommended to compare, with Mrs. Francis' essay, Ethel Wilson's warmly personal appreciation of Alan Crawley and his influential Vancouver poetry magazine *Contemporary Verse*. Both are good, but in very different ways.

THE WRITING OF THE DECADE

1. *La Littérature Canadienne-Française*

Gérard Tougas

PAR UN HEUREUX HASARD, les dix années qui ont suivi la fondation en 1959 de *Canadian Literature* auront correspondu à la mutation de la littérature canadienne-française. D'une littérature de province, à peu près inconnue à l'étranger, elle est passée au rang des littératures mineures en pleine expansion dont on parle à New York, à Londres, à Paris et à Francfort. Sur les marchés internationaux on scrute désormais les derniers livres parus à Montréal. Il suffit maintenant qu'un roman canadien remporte un succès au Canada pour que ses chances d'être traduit en plusiers langues soient excellentes.

Que s'est-il passé depuis 1959 pour permettre aux auteurs canadiens-français de se faire connaître modestement en dehors des frontières de leur pays, alors qu'il y a peu de temps encore, le silence le plus absolu recouvrait leurs oeuvres les plus méritoires?

L'internationalisation relative de la littérature canadienne-française ressemble, en tant que phénomène de communication, à cette phase décisive dans la vie des pays en voie d'industrialisation qui leur permet d'atteindre, après quelques faux départs prometteurs, un régime de croissance continu et assuré.

Le Canada Français, en tant que nation littéraire, avait vécu une vingtaine d'années sur la lancée de *Maria Chapdelaine*, roman qui connut une célébrité mondiale entre les deux guerres. Cette ouverture sur le monde avait été le fait d'un étranger, Louis Hémon. C'est en 1938 seulement que Ringuet, par ses *30 arpents*, révélait la présence d'un monde tout autre que celui qui avait inspiré l'idylle de Péribonka et qui, en même temps, suggérait l'existence d'une tradition littéraire vivace et originale.

L'holocauste de 1939-1945 vint interrompre le mouvement qui s'amorçait avec la publication à Paris de *30 arpents*. Depuis, le nombre d'auteurs canadiens qui se font éditer en France et dont les oeuvres ont paru en traduction n'a cessé d'augmenter. Toutefois, il importe de distinguer deux phases distinctes dans ce mouvement.

Dans un premier temps, les auteurs canadiens ont trouvé un éditeur parisien en ordre dispersé. L'attribution du Prix Femina à Gabrielle Roy en 1948 a marqué le haut point des années qui s'échelonnent de 1945 à 1960 pendant lesquelles Yves Thériault, Gérard Bessette et d'autres encore ont tenté leur chance en Europe. A ces noms il convient

d'ajouter celui de Léo-Paul Desrosiers qui, après ses *Engagés du Grand Portage* (1938), publiait chez Gallimard *L'ampoule d'or* (1951). Si ces romanciers ne devaient guère retenir l'attention des critiques et des lecteurs français, il faut en chercher l'explication dans le contexte sociologique et historique.

Depuis 1760, il s'est toujours trouvé en France un petit nombre d'esprits curieux du Canada. Au dix-neuvième siècle Xavier Marmier, Jean-Jacques Ampère et Alexis de Tocqueville s'étaient rendus sur les lieux et avaient supputé les chances de survie de ce groupement français, détaché du courant de la vie internationale. Au début du vingtième siècle, André Siegfried, dans deux livres remarqués, renouait avec cette tradition et analysait les composantes de la spiritualité canadienne-française. Ces commentateurs et analystes s'adressaient à un public restreint. La vaste majorité des Français et des Européens cultivés vivaient dans l'ignorance du Canada Français.

Or il est indéniable qu'en 1969 la réalité est tout autre. Depuis quelques années le Canada Français a fait irruption dans la presse occidentale. Pour ce qui est de la littérature canadienne-française, il semble bien qu'un tournant décisif, correspondant au deuxième temps, se situe aux alentours des années 1960-1965. L'impulsion donnée aux lettres canadiennes a permis, en 1966, que quatre romanciers canadiens, tous publiés à Paris, participent à la course aux prix littéraires. Si, en fin de compte, Marie-Claire Blais se vit attribuer le Prix Médicis, Réjean Ducharme, Jean Basile et Hubert Aquin ont trouvé eux aussi leurs supporters et ont contribué à faire de cette année un tournant dans l'evolution des lettres canadiennes-françaises.

Aujourd'hui, c'en est fait de l'isolement des écrivains canadiens. Ils sont assurés, pour peu qu'ils aient du talent, de faire parler d'eux. La preuve, c'est qu'un livre aussi démodé et précieux que *Mater Europa* de Jean Ethier-Blais ait retenu l'attention complaisante de Pierre-Henri Simon dans sa chronique du *Monde*. Parue en 1958 au lieu de 1968, cette fleur fanée eût passé inaperçue.

Aucun facteur n'explique mieux l'essor de la jeune littérature que la montée de la bourgeoisie canadienne-française. Longtemps les auteurs n'ont pu exercer d'influence sur leur milieu, faute de lecteurs. Le manque d'un public lettré freinait l'industrie du livre, représentée jusqu'à une époque relativement récente par deux ou trois maisons d'édition, telles que la librairie Beauchemin à Montréal et la librairie Garneau à Québec. Insensiblement, cet état de choses a commencé à changer. Avec la fondation de plusieurs maisons d'édition à Montréal pendant la dernière guerre, le départ était donné à une évolution qui devait aboutir à la trentaine de maisons d'édition qui assurent aujourd'hui la production littéraire du Canada Français. Compte tenu d'une population de cinq millions de francophones (je fais abstraction des francophones vivant à l'extérieur du Québec), les éditeurs canadiens-français sont aussi nombreux que leurs homologues américains, britanniques ou français.

Le mouvement nationaliste aidant, les lecteurs ne font plus défaut aux écrivains. Les plaquettes de poésie sorties par les Editions de l'Hexagone tirent à deux mille exemplaires et sont épuisées très souvent en une seule année. A Toronto ou à New York ces résultats forceraient le respect. *Les insolences du frère untel*, parues en 1960, ont largement dépassé

les cent mille exemplaires. Pour les Etats-Unis, une réussite comparable se situerait entre quatre et cinq millions d'exemplaires.

En même temps qu'un public et une industrie du livre se constituaient, la littérature canadienne-française, cantonnée dans quelques genres, se diversifiait. De nos jours les poètes et les romanciers se comptent par centaines. On assiste à la naissance d'une dramaturgie nationale. Montréal s'enorgueillit de plusieurs salles ultra-modernes, où Dubé, Ferron, Loranger attirent les foules. En 1968, Michel Tremblay, en faisant jouer ses *Belles-soeurs*, pièce écrite intégralement dans la langue du cru (le "canayen" d'autrefois, baptisé "joual") et donc incompréhensible pour les étrangers, fussent-ils de langue française, a donné une leçon d'indépendance littéraire qui pourrait faire tache d'huile.

De plus en plus nombreux aussi sont les ouvrages qui paraissent en économie politique, en philosophie, en histoire, en sciences.[1] Pour la première fois dans son histoire, le Canada Français commence à alimenter le marché français et international en livres scientifiques. C'est un signe des temps qu'un maison montréalaise, les Editions HMH, ait assuré la traduction française des oeuvres de Marshall McLuhan et que ce soit grâce à l'intermédiaire de cette dernière que la France et l'Europe apprennent, en version française, à distinguer entre "message" et "massage".

Bref, la société canadienne-française, par ses écrivains, ses éditeurs et son dynamisme trouve moyen de se faire connaître à l'étranger.

Dans quelle mesure le nationalisme est-il le moteur de cette activité? Quoi qu'on pense des revendications politiques des Canadiens français, il est clair qu'elles sont profitables à la littérature. Par un processus qui n'est pas sans rappeler l'évolution des pays du tiers monde, le Canada Français, arrivé à la conscience collective de son originalité, s'exprime par le truchement de ses écrivains. Poètes, romanciers, dramaturges et historiens participent à ce mouvement vers l'affirmation de soi. *Terre Québec* du poète Paul Chamberland, *Prochain épisode* et *Ethel et le terroriste* des romanciers Hubert Aquin et Claude Jasmin, *Les grands soleils* et *Le chemin du roy* des dramaturges Ferron et Loranger et enfin la refonte des thèmes historiques traditionnels opérée par Frégault et Brunet reflètent fidèlement l'effervescence qui caractérise aujourd'hui la société canadienne-française.

Ces dix dernières années auront marqué aussi la réintégration au moins partielle du Canada Français dans le monde francophone. Pour l'avenir des lettres canadiennes-françaises, ces "retrouvailles" revêtent une importance qu'on ne saurait exagérer.

Pendant deux siècles, le Canada Français est resté replié sur soi-même alors

que le reste du Canada entretenait avec les Etats-Unis et la Grande Bretagne les mille liens qui constituent la vie internationale, liens d'autant plus importants qu'ils correspondent à une même famille d'esprit. Le "Vive le Québec libre!" de Charles de Gaulle n'aura été que l'illustration sonore et dramatique d'une nécessité ressentie des deux bords de l'Atlantique pour l'établissement de contacts suivis et permanents dans le domaine de la culture. Il était anormal, à l'époque de la télévision par satellite et des cosmonautes qu'une communauté de langue française restât dans l'ignorance des quelque trente pays qui participent à la même culture que la sienne.

Si ces dernières années resteront mémorables parce qu'elles auront marqué la fin de l'isolement linguistique et culturel des écrivains canadiens, elles auront permis aussi à ces derniers de mieux comprendre leur situation privilégiée. Car les Canadiens français n'appartiennent pas qu'au monde francophone: ils sont enracinés en Amérique du Nord.

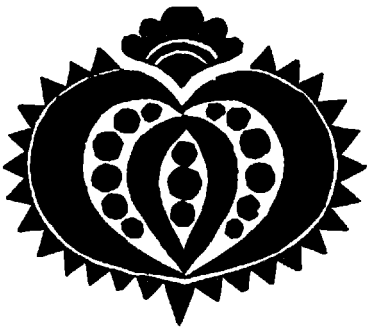
Les écrivains, et avec eux les éditeurs montréalais, apprennent, parfois avec surprise, quelles sont les limites assez étroites qui sont imposées à leurs rapports avec le monde francophone, rapports qui se résument essentiellement aux maisons d'édition parisiennes. On a assisté ces dernières années au lancement, sur le marché parisien, de plusieurs auteurs canadiens. Se qu'on ignore — parce que les jeunes auteurs sont naïfs et taisent leurs déconvenues — est le caractère rétrograde de l'édition française. A l'époque de Matthew Arnold, le célèbre critique anglais exhortait ses compatriotes à prendre exemple sur les éditeurs français, modèles du genre. Aujourd'hui, l'édition française, après avoir été la première d'Europe, est tombée si bas que même un pays pauvre comme l'Espagne est devenu plus productif que la France. La Suisse, les Pays-Bas et la Suède publient proportionnellement trois ou quatre fois plus de livres que la France. Quant à l'Angleterre et l'Allemagne de l'Ouest, elles ont laissé la France si loin derrière elles qu'il n'y a plus aucun espoir que la France les rattrape jamais.[2] Les jeunes écrivains canadiens qui fondent leurs espoirs sur Paris finissent par s'apercevoir que l'édition française, par ses méthodes de travail, n'est pas encore sortie du dix-neuvième siècle. Trop souvent l'éditeur parisien est un monsieur qui ne répond pas aux lettres, qui verse aux auteurs les droits qu'il veut bien leur accorder et qui se prend au sérieux.[3] Dans ces conditions, il n'est pas surprenant que le Conseil Supérieur du Livre, conduit par Léon Patenaude, ait mis cinq années d'âpres négociations à faire accepter le principe que le Canada Français, qui achète pour plus de dix millions de dollars de livres par an à la France, puisse à son tour écouler ses livres le marché français. Il a été consenti au Canada un seul débouché, la Librairie de l'Ecole, à Paris. Ce maigre résultat explique mieux que les retentissants communiqués émanant de l'Elysée la nature de la coopération franco-québécoise.

L'internationalisation de la littérature canadienne-française s'est accompagnée d'un vaste mouvement d'approfondissement dans les universités. En 1959, lors de la fondation de *Canadian Literature*, il n'existait, hors du Québec, que quelques cours de littérature canadienne-française professés à Toronto, à London et à Vancouver. Lorsque, à la fin de 1968, les spécialistes en littérature canadienne-française se sont rendus à Ottawa

sur l'invitation de Paul Wyczynski et de son équipe pour faire le point de leur discipline, ils ont constaté avec satisfaction que peu d'universités canadiennes restent en dehors du mouvement.

Pour la première fois aussi, des cours de littérature canadienne-française ont été institués à l'étranger. En Angleterre, le professeur Fraser MacKenzie mettait sur pied en 1963 à l'Université de Birmingham une section d'études canadiennes-françaises. Chaque année, un conférencier venu de la Délégation du Québec à Londres vient entretenir les étudiants britanniques de quelque aspect de la société canadienne-française. En France, des chaires de littérature canadienne-française ont été créées aux universités de Caen et de Strasbourg. La littérature canadienne-française, totalement absente des principales revues françaises jusqu'à une époque toute récente, retient aujourd'hui l'attention des journaux et des revues les plus connus.

Concurremment à cette activité a été entreprise depuis 1959 l'indispensable prospection des ressources littéraires du pays. Lorsque les livres de base ont fait défaut, ils ont été créés de toutes pièces. C'est ainsi que depuis la parution de mon *Histoire de la littérature canadienne-française* (1960) ont suivi d'autres recensions telles que les toutes récentes anthologies publiées sous la direction de Pierre de Grandpré (*Histoire de la littérature française du Québec*, 1967) et de Bessette, Geslin et Parent (*Histoire de la littérature canadienne-française par les textes*, 1968). Parmi les travaux qui ont enrichi la littérature canadienne-française il convient de mentionner l'exhaustive étude de Paul Wyczynski, *Emile Nelligan, sources et originalité de son oeuvre*, et la pénétrante analyse de la poésie de Rina



Lasnier publiée en 1964 par Eva Kushner. Depuis 1961, Adrien Thério publie *Livres et auteurs canadiens*, bibliographie critique annuelle de tous les livres parus pendant l'année. Cette revue dont la formule s'est constamment améliorée, est devenue la plus utile des répertoires annuels.[4]

Il nous reste à poser la question essentielle concernant la littérature canadienne-française de ces dix dernières années. Est-elle devenue une littérature de qualité, apte à prendre rang parmi les littératures occidentales dont l'avenir tiendra compte?

Seul l'étranger peut répondre à cette interrogation. Deux réactions récentes, l'une américaine et l'autre française, semblent indiquer que pour la première fois des écrivains ayant atteint la célébrité internationale se tournent vers le Canada pour y chercher du nouveau.

Aux Etats-Unis Edmund Wilson a préfacé l'édition new-yorkaise *d'Une saison dans la vie d'Emmanuel* de Marie-Claire Blais. Il ne s'agit pas ici d'une complaisance mais bien du désir de la part d'un des principaux témoins de la montée de la littérature américaine au premier rang des littératures occidentales de faire connaître un écrivain étranger à ses compatriotes. Edmund Wilson a-t-il été tenté de faire sentir son influence dans un

domaine — en l'occurence la littérature canadienne-française — où il ne risquait pas, dans son pays, de se voir contredire? Après tout, c'est le même critique qui a cru voir en Morley Calaghan, le romancier torontois, l'égal des plus grands romanciers russes. Quoi qu'il en soit, ce qu'il faut retenir est l'enchevêtrement des influences qui ont conduit la jeune romancière canadienne à la notoriété.

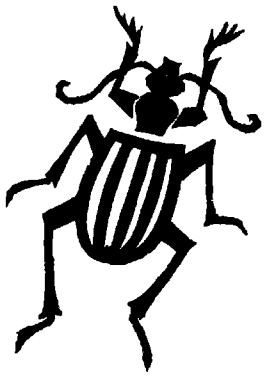
Remarquons dès l'abord que c'est l'initiative américaine qui a incité la maison Grasset à lancer *Une saison dans la vie d'Emmanuel* en France. Le Prix Médicis, qui est venu couronner cette oeuvre a jeté dans l'ombre — du moins au Canada Français — les origines américaines de ce succès. En fait, c'est le concours de deux parmi les trois capitales littéraires de l'Occident — Londres, New York et Paris — qui a rendu possible ce à quoi peu de critiques canadiens eussent cru: le talent exceptionnel de Marie-Claire Blais. Les écrivains candiens se rendent bien compte que les puissants leviers de la publicité ainsi qu'un concours heureux de circonstances ont permis à une romancière parmi d'autres d'arriver première dans la course aux "honneurs". On s'est aperçu aussi que dans l'orchestration des moyens utilisés par les éditeurs a trouvé place la typographie trompe-l'oeil, faite pour metamorphoser les minces nouvelles de Marie-Claire Blais en "romans". Le plus caustiques ajouteraient que d'un "roman" à l'autre l'inspiration ne se renouvelle guère et la gamme des effets demeure restreinte.

Mais là n'est pas la question. Ce qui importe pour comprendre l'évolution de la littérature canadienne-française est que New York et Paris ont imposé aux Canadiens une valeur internationale qui n'était pas cotée en tête de liste à la bourse de Montréal.

Passons au second exemple, plus frappant encore. Pour la première fois dans l'histoire de la jeune littérature canadienne un romancier français se déclare concerné par les écrits d'un confrère canadien. Le 4 janvier 1969, Le Clézio, auteur du *Procès-verbal,* du *Déluge,* de *Terra amata,* s'est reconnu, en une page entière reproduite par *Le Monde,* dans son frère en désespérance, Réjean Ducharme. Pas plus que pour Edmund Wilson il n'a été question pour Le Clézio de "présenter" un romancier canadien à ses lecteurs. Sa réaction, plus spontanée, a été commandée par une oeuvre jugée puissante, oeuvre suffisamment connue déjà pour être dispensée des honneurs du cicerone.

Or au Canada, la critique, après avoir admiré L'*avalée des avalés* pour sa virtuosité verbale et sa fraîcheur d'inspiration, a boudé *Le nez qui vogue* et L'*océanthume*. L'auteur ayant publié ses romans à rebours, c'est-à-dire dans l'ordre inverse de leur conception, on estime que cette tactique a desservi la cause de sa renommée. Après l'œuvre achevée, ce sont les tâtonnements des débuts qui sont proposés au Lecteur.

A Paris, la nouveauté de cette prose et sa marque d'origine nord-américaine ont séduit les esprits. Peut-être aussi Réjean Ducharme, avec Marie-Claire Blais, profite-t-il de la vague contestataire qui déferle sur la plupart des pays industrialisés. Mépriser, haïr tout ce qui semble émaner de l'*establishment,* c'est abonder dans le sens d'une nombreuse clientèle. Il est sans doute significatif que *La jument des mongols* et *Le grand khan* de Jean Basile et *l'Incubation* de Gérard Bessette n'aient pas attiré l'attention de



la critique étrangère au même titre que les oeuvres de Marie-Claire Blais et de Réjean Ducharme. Basile et Bessette, parce que cérébraux et descriptifs, plus attachés à comprendre et à décrire le monde contemporain qu'a le vomir, ont paru moins "canadiens" que leurs deux concurrents plus jeunes.

Arriver à cette conclusion, n'est-ce pas répondre à la question formulée plus haut concernant l'aptitude de la jeune littérature canadienne à franchir les frontières du pays?

Ces dix dernières années marquent l'entrée discrète de la littérature canadienne-française dans le courant occidental des littératures. Cette nouvelle présence est symbolisée surtout par Réjean Ducharme et Marie-Claire Blais. Rebelles touts deux à leur milieu comme le sont tant de leurs confrères français, britanniques et américains, ils bénéficient de surcroît d'une mystérieuse spécificité canadienne-française, justification de leur "différence".

Des deux romanciers, Marie-Claire Blais est de beaucoup la plus accessible en traduction. Réjean Ducharme ne peut vraiment être goûté que dans sa prose française. On n'imagine pas un écrivain quelconque ayant à se situer par rapport à Marie-Claire Blais. Par contre on conçoit très bien que Ducharme fasse vibrer une corde de sympathie chez un romancier européen.

C'en est donc fait de l'isolement de la littérature canadienne-française. Les contacts avec le monde extérieur ne pourront qu'être profitables aux écrivains qui apprendront à mieux s'accepter et à prendre leur place parmi ceux qui les ont jugés de la même famille qu'eux.

[1] On consultera avec profit *La recherche au Canada Français*, textes présentés par Louis Baudouin (Les Presses de l'Université de Montreal, 1968).

[2] Le drame de l'édition française est inscrit dans l'annuaire statistique de l'Unesco, où sont publiées les données relatives à l'édition internationale. Ceux qui désireraient lire une élégante analyse de l'impasse dans laquelle se trouvent les éditeurs de France pourront consulter le rapport du directeur des Presses de l'Université Laval, M. André Vachon, *L'édition universitaire en France* (1967). Désireux de ne pas choquer ses confrères de France, M. Vachon distribue les chrysanthèmes, en posant, ça et là, quelques questions innocentes de ce genre: "La France intellectuelle vivrait-elle un peu trop repliée sur son glorieux passé?" Ou bien encore, "On s'étonne que la production de l'édition française soit composée en majorité de réimpressions (53%), quand les nouveautés, aux Etats-Unis et en Grande Bretagne représentaient respectivement, en 1960, 80,3 et 74,3% de l'ensemble de la production nationale." (p. 23)

[3] Consulter le témoignage de Georges Borchardt: "A Report on French Publishing", *Publisher's Weekly*, New York, May 31, 1965, pp. 27-29.

[4] Guy Sylvestre a résumé les principaux instruments de recherche en littérature canadienne-française dans *La recherche au Canada Français, op. cit.*, pp. 149-161.

2. *Poetry in English*

Louis Dudek

THE MOST OBVIOUS development in the last ten years in Canadian poetry has been the change in audience relationships: the multitude of new poets coming out in recent years, and the sudden rise to popularity of a few poets as a result of new conditions. "Poetry Finds a Public" was one of the last section headings in the book *The Making of Modern Poetry in Canada* edited by Michael Gnarowski and myself in 1967, and this is still the main fact. But the search for an audience was always a crucial issue for modern poetry, in England and the United States, as well as in Canada, since modernism represented a break with Victorian middle-class taste and the setting up of powerful élitist standards (*vide* Eliot and Pound) in order to re-establish an art of intensity, high craftsmanship, and relevance to contemporary reality. The shift from this resistant modernism, then, to a new type of popularism, touches on the very core of modern poetry. We say in *The Making of Modern Poetry* that "finding a public" is an ambiguous good. How ambiguous we may now consider.

The three Canadian poets who have emerged as popular "stars" in this decade are, of course, Irving Layton, Alfred Purdy, and Leonard Cohen. Layton's *A Red Carpet for the Sun*, the first of a series of "Collected Poems", appeared in 1959; Purdy's obscure Ryerson Chapbook *The Crafte so Longe to Lerne*, in 1959, followed by *Poems for All the Annettes* in 1962. Leonard Cohen's first book had been published locally at McGill in 1956 (*Let Us Compare Mythologies*), but the next, *The Spice Box of Earth* was brought out by McClelland & Stewart in 1961 (wrongly given as 1965 in *Selected Poems*).

All three poets came into prominence at the beginning of the sixties, though Layton was well ahead of the other two. The moment and the milieu were significant: Layton had been on the scene for nearly twenty years without attracting much attention, and Purdy was already past forty when the Ryerson Chapbook appeared. Only Cohen was fresh and new, and he soon outstripped the others; he was much more in tune with the pop situation. ("All I ask is that you put it in the hands of my generation and it will be recognized.")

The key to this business of popularity and sudden stardom lies in the mass media: T.V. and the new promotional publishing. Stardom is not achieved without a good deal of promotional engineering. The poets, of course, were quite consciously building their own reputations, but that was because the oppor-

tunity suddenly presented itself. It had never been there before, not in the days of Scott and Smith, nor in the beleaguered Forties (Gélinas' *Tit-Coq* and Klein's *Rocking Chair*). We live in a blow-up culture. Mass media are magnifiers of personality, as we can see in the sudden rise to fame of the Pierre Bertons, Patrick Watsons and Laurier LaPierres. This new expectation carries over even into poetry, especially if poets appear on T.V., on film, on radio, and on LP records; and so we find poets becoming T.V. stars and idols in the new literary business.

In Canada, the process was escalated by an enterprising young publisher who saw an opportunity and exploited it to the hilt: Jack McClelland of McClelland & Stewart Limited. The fact that business opportunity is the key to this can be shown by other publishers who have jumped on the same promotion bandwagon: Jacques Hébert in French Canada, and recently M. G. Hurtig in Edmonton. Publishing is a matter of economics, we know, and the lure of profit (or fear of bankruptcy) has inspired the art of publicity and image-building even in such honest-to-goodness "sacred" precincts as poetry; the recent promotion by posters, advertising, T.V. interviews and window-displays, of one or two poets of total insignificance is very much a case in point. It must also be granted, however, that McClelland & Stewart have published many outstanding Canadian poets over the past ten years, and they have launched the valuable New Canadian Library series; in fact, the role of the publisher is very complicated in the current literary scene, and deserves much closer study.

It's been interesting to watch the poets' resistance to the blandishments of crass popularity, since that's written on our escutcheon, while at the same time yielding to the delightful seductions of the businessman and the promoter. Here is Leonard Cohen writing on the rewards of fame in a poem about Irving Layton:

> The town saluted him with garbage
> which he interpreted as praise
> for his muscular grace. Orange peels,
> cans, discarded guts rained like
> ticker-tape . . .

Yet at the same time, in typical Laytonian fashion, he writes about himself on the jacket of one of his books: "This book moves me from the world of the golden-boy poet into the dung pile of the front-line writer. . . . I say there has never been a book like this, prose or poetry, written in Canada."

One imagines such things should be said by someone else, rather than by the poet himself. But in Canada, once the poet has praised himself enough all the critics follow suit. In any case, this is an age of "Advertisements for Myself".

So then, we have the new publisher, the self-promoting poet, and the new media to account for stardom among poets. Apart from this there has also been a radical change in the audience for poetry, at least in a certain part of it, the teen-age and hippie group. Allen Ginsberg's *Howl* appeared in 1956; in Canada, Leonard Cohen, Canada's Messianic hippie, published his first book in the same year. It could be argued that by the 1950's the aesthetic of modern poetry had at last reached a wider audience and had penetrated the consciousness of the young. But it was only one particular strain of poetry that did so: in America, the open rhetorical line of Ginsberg charged with hysterical sensationalism;

and in Canada street language in free verse and the slapstick sex bit. Essentially it is the moral release of the young that poetry helped to back up. At the same time, poetry readings, prizes and grants, university invitations and articles on poet personalities in big commercial newspapers and magazines played a role in creating a new audience and making it possible for a few poets to emerge as popular idols.

Since poets have long hoped for a larger reading public, and many have laboured hard to spread poetry abroad and build an audience for good poetry, through mimeo magazines, lectures, and small-press book distribution, the sudden materialization of huge audiences and successful poets has taken them very much by surprise. Blatant vulgarity, sick humour, exhibitionism, have suddenly become a popular glut on the market, where twenty years ago sentimentality and smug decency were the stock concealments of the establishments and power blocs. Profumo, Sévigny and Madame Munsinger have done their work, letting Prufrock and Bloom take over from the bureaucracy and the bourgeoisie. They have brought in Louis Ferdinand Céline, Henry Miller, Norman Mailer and Allen Ginsberg as the new spokesmen for literature. Canada is only a peripheral stage in this great shift, and our little theatre rocks as the great auditorium topples or leans to one side.

What our three most popular poets have in common, for instance, is not difficult to define. All three are popular comedians, entertaining cynic jokesters who succeed with young audiences and with young readers. The comic element became dominant as each poet reached the popular level. Lionel Kearns, reading at McGill, pointed out with perfect candour that the poetry-reading circuit encourages the writing of comic gag-type poems because these always go over well, whereas serious poems tend to drag. Cohen, Layton, Purdy — to rank them by their rating — are all three generous exploiters of sex as an entertainment come-on, very much like the skin movies and advertisements that play for gross audience response. They're the Belly Dancers of poetry, with Layton as the star attraction. Sex, in fact, is the *summum bonum* and the source of all positive feeling, such as there is, in each of the three poets: a very odd conclusion to reach in the history of poetry and of human thought. Many a quizzical reader must feel, as I have felt occasionally —

> Why should we praise the poet in you
> For doing what any dog can do?

However, all three top poets are gifted, and each one of them has his own distinct character. Though they've played to the gallery they haven't quite "sold out" in any real sense and they have developed

their own energies immensely under the powerful stimulus of public acclaim. Each of them has become prolific under pressure: Layton, who used to turn out about six poems a year for the first decade and a half, suddenly began producing a book a year; Cohen has written hundreds of recitation pieces and songs, as well as two novels, within ten years; Purdy has gone travelling on Canada Council grants, to Cuba, to the Canadian north, and to Europe, to find material to meet the new demands. It was Layton who was first lauded as a "prolific poet"; but by now it should be obvious that popularity makes poets, no less than stand-up comics and movie stars, terribly prolific. (Bliss Carman was prolific in his time, turning out more than fifty titles in a short lifetime, most of them now unfortunately forgotten.)

Integrity, we should remember, has been the prime virtue of the great twentieth-century poets. The entire modern movement was a retreat from the idols of the marketplace to the private household gods of art and knowledge. They wanted, as Pound said, —

> Some circle of not more than three
> that we prefer to play up to,
> Some few whom we'd rather please
> than hear the whole aegrum vulgus
> Splitting its beery jowl
> a-meaowling our praises.

So that any flirting with popularity runs counter to these principles. But of course the present generation is willing to erase the distinction between art and popular entertainment, an error that none of the great moderns could conceivably have tolerated.

If we take Purdy and Layton as the gauge, our star poets belong essentially to the frontier branch of Canadian poetry: the school of direct speech, direct relation to life, and reductive realism. The parallel recognition of Raymond Souster in this decade, more modest than the others but still remarkable —discouraged as it is by the poet's unwillingness to play the personality game and to go on tours and readings — confirms the general ascendancy of a school. (I should know, since I have always favoured this kind of poetry; but victory is fatal to some revolutionaries. We must have opposition, or we may be obliged to succeed.) Leonard Cohen, a temperamental romantic, affiliated with the young generation of feeling and flowers, has simply been drawn into the orbit: see his "Cuckold's Song" and "Homeward Thoughts of a Tourist in Havana". The main drift of this group of poets is toward primitive realism — even "stupid realism," as Northrop Frye once called it — a nostalgia for the mud mixed with a hankering for lost divinity. "A mixture of sacred oils and sewage water," was once my description of Leonard Cohen: it's always a question of which predominates, the oil or the water.

(As for the new Leonard Cohen, who has "given up poetry" for Rock singing, the idol of little children dressed up in Cecil B. De Mille costumes, who "rank Cohen right up there with the other great poets of the day, with Bob Dylan, John Lennon, Jim Morrison of The Doors and Peter Townshend of The Who" — he has gone completely out of our range. The Quod Erat Demonstrandum of absurdity.)

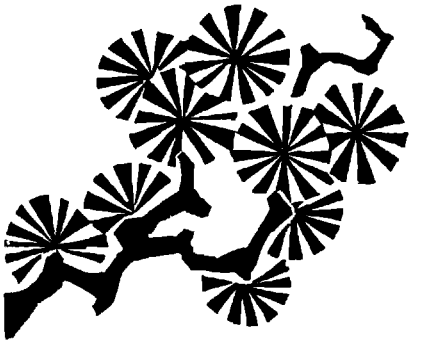
Looking at Purdy and Layton, more specifically, we must observe that Canadian primitivism comes very late in the day. Poets like Bliss Carman and Archibald Lampman, at the end of the last

century, were far more cultivated, both intellectually and in their view of poetry, than our own Purdys and Laytons are. The present crudity is in fact a reaction to the refinement of our predecessors; its vigour and vulgarity is a working-class rejection of the manners and sensibilities of the late-departed bourgeoisie. On this score, I am myself more sympathetic to the poetic drive of a Souster, Layton, Purdy or Nowlan than I am to Daryl Hine, Glassco or A. J. M. Smith. But then, as critical reader I am aware of the dialectic involved, and I can see the devastation that a one-sided primitivism might work in poetry. The results are already apparent in the sequel to the Tish school and the prolific publications of some of the new presses — House of Anansi, Very Stone House, Coach House, Weed/flower, Island, Ganglia, Gryphon and so forth — more presses than there were sometimes poets in the past. The degeneration of poetry to a teeny-bopper fad is, in fact, a further aspect of this barbarization.

Because the paradox follows — or is it a mere correlative? — that with the rise of a few star performers and idols, the crowd of minor poets, small presses and magazines has increased phenomenally, blurring all literary distinctions. In 1958, writing in the Quebec quarterly *Culture* on "Patterns in Recent Canadian Poetry" I opened by saying that "In a recent count of book-publishing poets writing in Canada in English I was able to put down no less than fifty names." It was easy to do then. Repeating the same count today, and using only the poets published within the last ten years, I find more than a hundred names. But there are scores of additional ones in the little magazines and on the campuses, intense young people writing and publishing poetry. Reciting poetry, composing, singing poetry to the guitar has now become a sociological phenomenon much more than a literary art, and the flood of new writing has dramatically changed the entire literary environment.

Three years ago, several of us conceived an association of Canadian poets, consisting perhaps of two dozen names, to represent poetry before the foundations, international conferences and other official bodies, or on formal occasions. We were to help young poets, stand as surety for certain standards, encourage worthy support for poetry. As the association came to be organized, and as its objectives were defined and redefined over the months, it finally emerged as the League of Canadian Poets, already numbering over a hundred members, and promising many more — representing, in short, the whole miscellany of the current literary explosion.

I don't criticize the League; I only cite this to illustrate the change in the poetry scene, from a situation where twenty poets or so might be thought to represent all the reputable poetry of the country,



to one where more than a hundred poets aspire to the laurels.

So much the better, and the more the merrier, one might say. But democracy is not without its handicaps. The new presses, with generous Canada Council grants, produce sumptuous books, some of them specifically subsidized for de-luxe design and production — not shoe-string first books such as John Sutherland of First Statement or the early Contact Press used to bring out. The latest poets get themselves translated into Spanish in Mexico, into French in Quebec; they win luscious grants and prizes, get appointments as "Poets-in-Residence", contract in advance for the sale of their worksheets and papers to generous libraries; they appear at readings before packed houses before they are weaned: in general the scramble goes on for the great prize, which is to be the next Cohen-of-the-land, whether one writes good poetry or not. Prophecies are easy to make: one can predict that the popular will become more mediocre as time goes on — a highly desirable change, since the distinction between art and mass appeal will again become clear — and that good poetry will return to its minority audience, perhaps a smaller audience than ever before. The "new barbarism" will have its reaction, just as Victorian sentimentalism did, and the retreat will be to a more esoteric refinement.

In the meantime we have the sad consequences of the present dislocation. Looking at the list one can see twenty-one books by poets of rank which have come out in the past ten years. But most of these books have been neglected by the general reader and by the critics, since the star system imposes an inevitable penalty — all others must suffer a temporary eclipse as failures in the great race. Books have appeared within the decade by Earle Birney, A. J. M. Smith, James Reaney, Phyllis Webb, Eli Mandel, Daryl Hine, John Glassco, F. R. Scott, R. G. Everson, Raymond Souster, Eldon Grier, Roy Daniells, Dorothy Livesay, George Woodcock, Alden Nowlan, Miriam Waddington, Philip Child, Fred Cogswell, D. G. Jones, Robert Finch, P. K. Page. With poets of this calibre — Birney, Smith, Hine, Page — it's not a question whether they will emerge as stars, or whether they will become "major poets" with the next book, but what line their individual development has taken, outside all movements and parties, and what their total conception and achievement has been. Each of them deserves some serious study. Of this they have been deprived by the confusion of standards in general, the misplaced emphasis on popular success, and the absence of any serious criticism in Canada. Young critics do not turn their sights on these poets to give them a close reading and a clear-sighted intellectual interpretation; the reviews are skimpy and ignorant, while the bread and circuses game continues. This is one of the side-effects of frontier cultural conditions, or to quote McLuhan — "Canada as a borderline case".

Some of these poets in the past decade have brought out their Collected Poems, rounding out a full career: Smith, Scott, Souster, Birney. The opportunity is excellent now to study in full and in detail the work of these poets and several others, Ralph Gustafson, Dorothy Livesay, John Glassco. Layton and Purdy are not to be excluded, of course; though one would have to ask, if Purdy can now do nothing but write, what he had been doing for the first forty years of his life. As for

Cohen, his *Selected Poems*, the fruit of ten short years, is a bit premature as the harvest of a life's work.

The great boom of young poets began in 1964. Look at the list, year by year, of new names appearing on the scene (usually the first book of a new poet):

1959: Peter Miller, George Walton, Al Purdy.

1960: Kenneth McRobbie, Milton Acorn, Paul West, Mike Strong, Richard Outram.

1961: Gwendolyn MacEwen, Margaret Atwood, Phyllis Gotlieb (first small books of each poet).

1962: Alden Nowlan, Robin Mathews, Frank Davey, Padraig O'Broin, G. C. Miller.

1963: Dave Solway, Michael Malus, Harry Howith.

1964: The list jumps to eight names: George Bowering, Gerry Gilbert, Roy Kiyooka, John Newlove, David Wevill, Steve Smith, Pierre Coupey, Seymour Mayne.

1965: Now twelve new additions: Francis Sparshott, E. A. Lacey, Joan Finnigan, Luella Booth, Bryan McCarthy, Michael Parr, Tom Eadie, Tom Marshall, William Hawkins, Fred Wah, Lionel Kearns, Anne Kekes.

1966: Sixteen new poets: Bill Bissett, Henry Beissel, Rona Murray, Michael Gnarowski, Glen Siebrasse, Lakshmi Gill, Eugene McNamara, Richard Clarke, John Grube, David Cull, Renald Shoofler, Mervin Procope, Ivan Burgess, Dorothy Farmiloe, Jim Brown, Cyril McColgan.

1967: Seventeen new names: Dennis Lee, Michael Ondaatje, George Jonas, B. P. Nichol, Michael Collie, Chuck Carlson, David McFadden, Nelson Ball, Barry Lord, Ken Belford, J. Michael Yates, Victor Coleman, Joy Kogawa, G. S. Buri, George Farkas, Len Gasparini, David Phillips.

1968: A partial list only: Red Lane, Richard Sommer, Raymond Fraser (his third book), Heather Spears, Gerald Robitaille, Peter Stevens, Robin Skelton, Stanley Cooperman, David Weisstub, Schoel Shuster, Sandra Kolber....

Simply to list these names in series is to realize the kind of problem involved. There is an escalation in progress, and it has not yet reached its peak — although our pocketbooks may have reached their limit. Bookstores, reviewers, grants officers are bewildered by the confusion. The publishing of poetry is strapped by over-production and problems of distribution and sales. A collapse of this South Sea Bubble is no doubt inevitable and eventually the run for poetry will lose its interest. Many of these are one-book poets who will perish in one season like the spawn of the Nile; but a good number will keep reproducing, so that for some years we may expect a cumulative effect. The list of poetry books published in 1967 came to over 45 items, while in 1959 the number was only 18. There has been a threefold increase within the last ten years.

So this is how the scene has been changed and transformed: by the rise of a trio of poets to unprecedented popularity and by the rapid influx of new poets (and publishing groups) with tastes and attitudes very much at variance with the past. The critical job is to discriminate, if this is still possible, and to distinguish the worthwhile trends in all this confusion, if any exist.

Behind any such criticism there must remain one overriding question: What was the grand objective of the twentieth-

century revolution in poetry, and how far is any new development getting ahead with this main objective? In other words, modernism, the discovery of the modern art form and its content; are we advancing (as Stephen Spender argues we must continue, with constant reaffirmation, to do) or are we backtracking and getting snarled again in the by-ways of exhausted or irrelevant technique?

I said above that Layton, Cohen and Purdy have much of the naturalistic primitive in their style and attitude. They're primarily reductive and anti-traditional. Of the senior poets who have been cowed by their success, many are decidedly traditionalists: George Johnston is an extremely clever verse-maker (New Yorker style) who writes in routine mechanical meters; Roy Daniells, George Woodcock, Fred Cogswell, Robert Finch write dully and in depth in traditional forms; Ralph Gustafson and John Glassco try radically to renew the old with bravura and experiment. All this stands in polar opposition to the Ameliasburg style of Alfred Purdy or to the rhetorical bombast of Irving Layton. Modern poetry, as in Eliot and Pound, worked out of a combination and opposition of these two elements, the profoundly traditional obsessions and the new energies of the twentieth century. To separate the two is to destroy the balance and the tension of high acrobatics: to produce barbarism on the one hand, and sterile formalism on the other. This is, to some extent, what we are tending to get, in recent years.

In contrast to Purdy and the primitives, consider the very tight intellectual poetry of Daryl Hine. The poems in *The Wooden Horse* (1965) are far superior in poetic conception and craftsmanship to anything in the popular poets: "In the Museum of Science and Industry" is a complex work of art: "The Lake" is a lyric that would put Leonard Cohen to shame. The same may be said of certain poems of Margaret Avison and James Reaney; they are sophisticated and complex in a way that Layton with all his major claims can never hope to be. Layton's critical prefaces reveal that his poetry is based on a vulgar romantic misconception of the poet's role and method: it never occurs to him to ask if Virgil or Horace wrote that way; if Dante roared; or if Spenser and Chaucer had the prophetic fury. The truly superior poets are free of this kind of nonsense; but they, on the other hand, lack the visceral vitality of the wild man.

It pains me to take this point of view, because I am temperamentally on the side of the naturalists. But the New Barbarism in Canadian poetry, especially among the young, demands this kind of criticism. The vast majority of the new poets belong to the junk-heap school; they are for the most part self-repeating products, inferior derivatives of Robert Duncan, Robert Creeley, Gary Snyder and other fifth-run epigones of the modern derivation. Never before, in fact, have poets been influenced by mediocre contemporaries to the extent that these poets are: Pound at least went to Propertius, and Eliot to Dante.

Consider, for contrast, the variety of

sensibility and technique in four poets of a preceding generation, Phyllis Webb, Eldon Grier, James Reaney and D. G. Jones. All four are aesthetically aware, freely imaginative, experimental, knowledgeable. Compare these to any handful of poets from the recent multitudinous progeny, or take only the most active and prominent: George Bowering, John Newlove, Michael Ondaatje, George Jonas. All the new poets are pretty much of a kind, and not exceptionally well-trained. Souster's collection *New Wave Canada*, which represents these poets in breadth, is really incredibly boring in its sameness. The new Anansi anthology *Canada First* is not a whit brighter or better-skilled. I think the reason lies in the one-dimensional flatness of the modern strain presented; it lacks mind, it lacks tension, it lacks intellectual contrasts. It represents only one-half of the modern complex: in derision of William Carlos Williams, the simple democratic line.

This is not to dismiss all that has appeared within the last ten years. Peter Miller is one of our most valuable and neglected poets; he has stopped writing (discouragement?), but his three published books show a beautiful skill and ease, and a cultivated "Old World" mind at work. The inoculation of the New never took, and he is always something of an exile in the Canadian world, but he is a most rewarding poet to read, and to re-read.

Eli Mandel has continued to write in this period; he is worth some close study. Milton Acorn has written some passionate and powerful poems. Alden Nowlan is a poet of major interest who has emerged in the Sixties; the current number of *Fiddlehead* is dedicated to his work. Eldon Grier, too, is very fine; his poem "Kissing Natalia" (in *A Friction of Lights*) is more truly human than all the love lyrics and sighs of Leonard Cohen. (The contrast speaks for itself: Cohen's women are mere abstractions, sex objects without character and without identity, merkin pleasures.)

On the negative side, I find the Cassandra-like pretensions of Gwendolyn MacEwen tiresome; and Phyllis Gotlieb much too clever — and trivial — for her own good. (She is a constructivist, and deserves some kind of award in this category.) Margaret Atwood is sensitive but she lacks strong rhythm; those intimate broken lines, sometimes one word in a line, are hardly the art in excelsis. We must distinguish between psychological documents and poetry. John Robert Colombo, again, is a stimulating littérateur, a non-poet who also writes non-books (sometimes called Found Poems); a definite ornament on the literary scene.

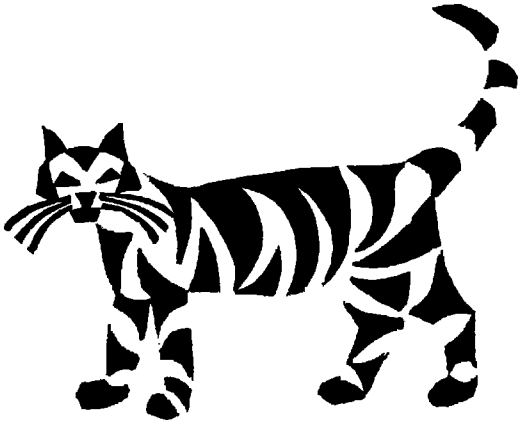
Other poets? Frank Davey has promise, perhaps; so does Kearns, more likely perhaps. I enjoy the work of Harry Howith immensely. I hope to see more of Renald Shoofler, of Gnarowski and Siebrasse, of Raymond Fraser, and of several others — even those I have criticized harshly. Poetry is an experience in novelty, like eating strange foods, before one becomes committed to preference and admiration. We should be able to enjoy it all, a little, at least while the first reading lasts.

The crucial question remains: are we advancing in the live modern direction? Modern poetry was to be an authentic expression of twentieth-century life, a new kind of poetry achieved by experiment and radical innovation. It was to be deeply rooted in reality (the domestication of romantic idealism), and it was to

be a vital renewal of poetic traditions. Finally, it was to express the vitality and freedom of a new-emancipated humanity.

It is easy to be critical. But for all our multi-media experiments and novelty-chasing, our life-realism lacks range and objectivity (especially among the young); our traditionalism is either excessive (in some poets) or it is nothing (in others); our freedom (teeny-bopper, teen-age, middle-age) is a waste of breath and a waste of life — it has no direction and no value. Leonard Cohen, for example, has wasted his talents in wilful excess; he is a sad and tragic figure, not the triumphant success one would imagine. But consider the alternatives: Daryl Hine, in the opposite camp, is much too secretive, much too enigmatic, closed within a system of traditional gestures; Ralph Gustafson, also a fine craftsman, lacks visceral drive, committed passion: his best are artificial poems, polished mantelpiece decorations, like his "Row of Geraniums" in *Sift in an Hourglass*. In the best poets the experiment is too timid, there's a lack of vigour; while in the worst there's only mindless energy, uncontrolled release.

Earle Birney, perhaps, is the most satisfying modernist of them all, and a very big figure still; also F. R. Scott, who resembles him in this. But these are "old moderns" who knew what it was all about; where are the new moderns who are equally gifted, equally intelligent, and equally well-informed, to take on the task of continuing the making of modern poetry? The job is only half done, or a quarter done. We have a very long way to go, and the world is changing much faster than our poetry is changing. Shall we begin?



3. *The Novel in English*

W. H. New

WHEN *Canadian Literature* began in 1959, Canada was happily experiencing a traumatic publishing season. All at once appeared an impressive collection of books: Richler's *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*, MacLennan's *The Watch that Ends the Night*, Sheila Watson's *The Double Hook*, John Buell's *The Pyx*, Callaghan's *Collected Stories*, and others. They came at the end of a curious decade, one that for all its wars had been basically hopeful, enjoying affluence while its people remembered the Depression, and emphasizing the need for at least the appearance of security at a time when World War II could not yet be spoken of with objective dispassion. But 1959 began a decade too, a rather less satisfied one, certainly less overtly stable, and these books contain within them a hint of the disappointments that writers in the sixties were to worry over and respond to.

Some indication of this changing attitude can be seen in the direction taken by Richler and MacLennan alone. Whereas *The Watch that Ends the Night* had ended in a metaphysical peace, with the promise that Montreal's winter identity would be subsumed in its international role, MacLennan's later novel *Return of the Sphinx* (1967) denies that peace. Seething with political disruption, it discovers a winter not of discontent so much as of a humourless determination to protest. Like Ronald Hambleton (to use the title of *his* 1959 novel), MacLennan has insisted in the past that "every man is an island" — a canoe, on the ocean, with a storm rising. By individually accepting this, his earlier characters, George Stewart, Catherine, and Jerome Martell, could survive the threat of disintegration. They could accept their *selves*, in effect, and "living their own death", let others live theirs. But the characters of *Return of the Sphinx* — Alan and Daniel Ainslie — so much more bound by a preconceived notion of a world order, so much less capable of understanding any other, cannot communicate. Failing, they locate the fault outside themselves: the one, defensive, finding threat in "winter" rebellion; the other, rebellious, and in his own way equally narrow-minded, trying to announce the "winter" as the only truth.

Richler's *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz* similarly closes on a "dark" possibility, though the ironic treatment makes it seem less foreboding. Duddy, a triumph both because and in spite of himself, threatens to become an extraordinary kind of conservative when he

buys land and so acquires a bourgeois position in the eyes of society. It's hardly what he expected, but the irony is a nice touch at the end of his comic progress. The implications are more astringent, however. What happens when rebels, achieving power, turn into inverted conservatives? What can the mild conservative do when he starts to look like a dangerous liberal? Richler's comic gifts turn these possibilities into high camp in the interrupted scenarios that make up *Cocksure* (1968), but again in this later work the characters lose their identity rather than find it. They live lives designed for them by Madison Avenue and the movies so much that real emergencies cannot break their stance; humanity disappears along with naiveté, and only the brittle would-be sophisticates remain. In another context entirely, Northrop Frye notes: "A provincial society will produce a phenomenon like the tea party described in F. R. Scott's well-known satire, 'The Canadian Authors Meet'. A metropolitan society would turn the tea party into a cocktail party, and the conversation would be louder, faster, more knowing, and cleverer at rationalizing its pretentiousness and egotism." It doesn't mean it will be more worthwhile, and it nicely describes *Cocksure*.

Frye also points out in *The Modern Century* what is a favourite Blakean theme with him: "The child's vision is far behind us. The world we are in is the world of the tiger, and that world was never created or seen to be good. It is the subhuman world of nature, a world of law and of power but not of intelligence or design." This sensibility, with all its attendant frustration, is what characterizes the writing of the sixties. A few works do escape, often through irony, into happiness — Mitchell's *The Kite* (1962), Elliott's *The Kissing Man* (1962), Moore's *The Luck of Ginger Coffey* (1960), St. Pierre's *Breaking Smith's Quarter Horse* (1966). But often a "peace" that is discovered at the end of a book is possible only after denying a way of life that had been apparently peaceful. Rudy Wiebe's *Peace Shall Destroy Many* (1962) is an obvious example. Set in a prairie Mennonite community, it explores the nature of repression: in young people who are coming to sexual maturity, and in a society that by attempting to deny violence actually breeds it. Yves Thériault's *Agaguk* (tr. 1963) is comparable: the title character, if he is to find contentment, must leave his band and relinquish to his wife some of the traditionally male prerogative of making family decisions. David Walker's *Where the High Winds Blow* (1960), Jane Rule's *The Desert of the Heart* (1964), Brian Moore's *The Emperor of Ice-Cream* (1966), Margaret Laurence's *A Jest of God* (1966), and Robert Hunter's *Erebus* (1968) supply further examples; all five of them, showing crises of conscience that lead to violence or disruption, also suggest a hesitant and uncertain but basically positive future.

In the popular formula books, too (written with varying degrees of imagination and skill), where one might expect saccharine solutions, we find an accompanying kind of muted terror. This perhaps has always been true, from Gothic novels to detective fiction, so it is not surprising to find it in Arthur Hailey's *In High Places* (1961), Charles Israel's *The Hostages* (1966), or in other works by these prolific writers. Though too often the terror can itself become a stance, a stylization exploited for its sen-

sationalism or indulged for its commercial value, it will sometimes be more than this. It will pervade a whole work, as in James Clavell's *King Rat* (1962), and not so much characterize its tone, or be in conflict with even a comic tone, as it will underlie the situations and provide the sensibility by which we understand them. A Victorian example of all this would be Edward Lear's "The Jumblies", which for all its comic surface presents us with a frightening world. The decade of the 1960's is not so far from the Victorians as it has often liked to think, and its conflicts involving identity, order, chaos, religion and science have their roots in an earlier time.

The works of Marie-Claire Blais, one of the best of the new writers of the decade, illustrate this exploration of the "psychology" of the present day. *Mad Shadows* (tr. 1960), *Tête-Blanche* (tr. 1961), and *A Season in the Life of Emmanuel* (tr. 1966) all present "abnormal" families wending their way as quickly as possible towards decadence. But as writers around the world in the previous decade had shown — *The Aunt's Story* (1948), *Catch-22* (1955), etc. — "madness" in a mad world that fancies itself sane comes to be a kind of sanity. Leonard Cohen's now famous lyric "Suzanne takes you down" is a perfect extension of this. Cohen, George Bowering (*Mirror on the Floor*, 1967), and Gwendolyn MacEwen (*Julian the Magician*, 1963) have all been concerned with developing new techniques for Canadian fiction, and with breaking down not only the barriers between poetry and prose but also those between the sensual and the spiritual. It is one of the things "Suzanne" is about, and one that the madness/holiness/innocence/guilt complex tries to evoke.

Political protest is a different kind of extension of this same problem of chaos, and (also characteristic of the 1960's) we see the psychology of it examined in Robert Kroetsch's *The Words of My Roaring* (1966), and David Lewis Stein's fine first novel *Scratch One Dreamer* (1967). We see the political encounter between youth and age, Québec and *les Anglais*, raised vividly in MacLennan's *Return of the Sphinx* (1967), but extended into violence more frequently in French-Canadian works, as in Hubert Aquin's *Prochain Episode* (tr. 1967), Jacques Godbout's *Knife on the Table* (tr. 1968), or Gratien Gélinas's play, *Yesterday the Children Were Dancing* (tr. 1967). Fortunately there are more and more French-Canadian works being quickly and artistically translated into English, which may not serve the cause of bilingualism, but does give aid to understanding, so there is at least some interim value. And if the translations are

themselves artistic, the more reason to appreciate their existence.

Also translated have been works which inform the literature with a political background: Jean le Moyne's *Convergences* (tr. 1966), or Jean-Paul Desbiens's *The Impertinences of Frère Untel* (tr. 1965), which should give English-speaking writers a new perspective towards their land. The venture into political spheres is interesting in Canadian fiction, unusual enough to be noteworthy and noteworthy enough for Edmund Wilson to pick up and even overstress in his *O Canada* (1965), for the political books still work as psychological studies. To ignore this aspect of the recurrent examinations of self, in emphasizing the political, is to ignore what has by now become the typical Canadian mode. The number of works one could list in illustration is not endless, but so long as to be bibliographic rather than discursive. Writers like Peter Taylor, Diane Giguère, George Ryga, Margaret Laurence (in a beautiful 1964 novel, *The Stone Angel*, recreating in retrospect the life of an old woman during her dying days as she strives for a freedom she has never quite realized she has), and Henry Kreisel (with his second novel, *The Betrayal*, 1964) all have come into print. And all are concerned not just with broadly political relationships, but with the individual reasons for them, which is something different.

Freedom has been a key word in the fiction of the decade, a freedom variously defined in political terms, or as freedom from the material minutiae of modern life, or as freedom to act as an individual, or as freedom from the self and the sense perceptions that limit its understanding. How individual a person can be in an age of causes and moral imperatives is exactly the point taken up by so many of the partly political books, like *Scratch One Dreamer*; the hero, here, would prefer to avoid committing himself to anything, but he finds himself drawn into action until he finally chooses to act. Whether or not this is freedom is another question. As Alden Nowlan writes:

> In those days, the vanquished
> surrendered their swords like gentlemen,
> the victors alone
> surrendered their illusions.
> The easiest thing to do for a cause
> is to die for it. ....

And in Nigel Foxell's *Carnival* (1968), with its German setting, we find just such a choice examined. By choosing to leave the country rather than fight a duel that could only strengthen other people's positions, Walter Phalts gains a kind of personal liberty at the expense of a possibly ephemeral fame. That he still looks like a loser is natural in a world like the one Foxell shows us, but what it *feels like* — from inside Walter Phalts, for example — is what more and more writers have tried to express.

In the process, subjects for fictional examination have widened — particularly with censorship retreating into the background — and expression has become freer; characters do and say things that earlier writers might have known but not written about, heard but not said. The result, as one might expect, is a mélange of license and art, and the license is as much an impingement on freedom as it is freedom itself. But readers retain the choice of which books to read, so ultimately we are better off. This does not defend all recent Canadian novels, for many, despite their vivid details, are rude rather than revealing; they exploit rather than attempt to understand. If Stephen

Vizinczey's *In Praise of Older Women* (1965) begins delightfully comically, it ends up a sort of "Rake's Digress", repetitive and in the long run boring. And Harold Horwood's *Tomorrow Will be Sunday* (1966) or Scott Symons' *Place d'Armes* (1967), the one embarrassed, disguising itself in sympathy, and the other militant, displaying the narrator's wilful self-degradation, both encourage not understanding so much as a commercially successful snigger.

Leonard Cohen's *Beautiful Losers* (1966), on the other hand, is a different quality of book entirely. It is written well and it has something to say — all too rare a combination, but welcome when it appears. The narrator, trapped in a triangular affair involving both his wife and their male lover, is both satisfied and desolated by his relationships and is anything but free because of them. Constantly losing himself and being made beautiful by his experiences, and constantly recognizing and losing respect for himself, he is torn in opposing directions, seeking at last in metaphysics for an answer to his dilemma. But in seeking a spiritual communion with Catherine Tekakwitha, a 17th Century Iroquois saint, he discovers not the peace that MacLennan's characters could find in metaphysics in *The Watch that Ends the Night*, but brutal sensuality and the kind of accompanying doubt of saintliness, the suspicion of pride, that one finds in an earlier work like Callaghan's *The Loved and The Lost* (1951). Réjean Ducharme's brilliant *The Swallower Swallowed* (tr. 1968), raises a comparable dilemma. The young girl narrator, caught in Arab crossfire in Israel at the end of the book, deliberately sacrifices her companion in order to preserve herself. Is this sense or cowardice? Is amorality possible? The questions stand unresolved. People at large, not aware of the 'facts', consider Bernice a heroine, and she complacently accepts the tribute. It was "what they needed", she adds, and if the sentiment smacks of condescension, it is also honest. Honesty has become callous, and the underlying bitterness shows through. It isn't disillusionment particularly; it's just disappointment, made acrid by a kind of anarchy when love itself seems insular and values dead. When Austin Clarke, in his third novel *The Meeting Point* (1967), examines the prejudice and violence that face West Indian immigrants in Toronto, we are still not far from this feeling. After its wry comedy the book turns "sour", and the central character, Bernice Leach, becomes less angry than hollow. She ends up listening to "talking and talking" — to words — which are meaningless beside her knowledge of injustice and her more and more futile ache for understanding.

There is no immediate or easy exit from problems like these, no peace untainted by a kind of corruption, no beauty undisturbed by the very existence of the self, which at once allows an individual identity and limits what it can do. Like Cohen's poems in *Flowers for Hitler* (1964), Clarke's novel and Ducharme's speak to their generation of commitment and emptiness. The ironies are dark, the humour is brittle, and any affirmations are a little wistful in an uncertain world.

4. *The Short Story in English*

Donald Stephens

AROUND 1955 there arose among Canadian writers a creative quest for new approaches to literary expression. A gradual but firm attempt was made to break away from the established forms of writing, beginning firstly with the novel, then with poetry, and finally with the short story. There were Hugh MacLennan and the other innovators of new approaches to narrative within the novel; there was the inception of a more modern voice in poetry which was to flourish in Leonard Cohen and other, often younger, poets; and, more important for our interests here, there was the short story which was to become at last a separate development in Canada with standards distinct from other literary forms. No longer was the story to be a sketch or studied episode which reflected a sense of a purely Canadian landscape. Until 1950 or so, the story in Canada appeared to be machine-made, with two-dimensional characters solving artificial dilemmas; there was a tendency to regionalism and to oppressive details of the depression and of poverty, little poetry within the style, and no experimentation. It seemed that the short story in Canada had stopped growing, even after the surge given to it by Morley Callaghan and Ethel Wilson. The majority of writers seemed content in reflecting merely the Canadianness of their art.

There was little or no hint that the short story would gain new delicacy in the fine hands of Mavis Gallant or Ethel Wilson in her later stories, or would be reshaped by others like Hugh Garner and Alice Munro. Soon the story was not one told by a carefully engineered plot, but by the subtle implication of selected isolated incidents. Arrangement began to play a greater part, and significance lay in what appeared, at the outset, to be casual episodic moments. On the surface, the life depicted in the short stories of the sixties may seem to be trivial or unimportant. It is, however, put in such a way as to interpret the individual life below. The constrained plot was replaced by a record of life seen at first hand; this was a realism without the Canadian artificiality associated with the thirties and forties.

Obviously the writers of the late fifties and the sixties felt that their time was a vital age with something new to say. Literary techniques needed innovation; a different means of communicating modern values and ideas to the reader was justified. The predominant characteristic of the time was one of puzzled and anxious confusion. It was not the first age to feel this in Canada, for many

late nineteenth-century writers had found disillusionment in things around them and had eased themselves by the contemplation of the past and of nature. It was the first age, however, to be pervaded by an uneasy and nameless guilt concerning its situation. There seemed to be nothing to save mankind except an examination of the unconscious reasoning behind its confused state. Every writer became more conscious of himself and of the reasoning behind his actions; men began to search to know themselves more than they had in any age before in Canada. The difference between Canadian writing and writing in Canada was made. The focus changed so that the Canadianness dissolved into the periphery of the writer's world and voice. Since literature surely reflects the problems of its age, writers created their stories with an undisguised interest in the characters' reaction to a specific situation until the focus of the story was no longer on the situation but rather on the characters themselves. The aim of literature now was not to tell a story or to describe an episode, but rather to reveal the individual reactions to it.

Since writers were becoming more interested in their own thinking, this introspection became an intrinsic part of their stories. Characters began to be revealed by the thoughts regarding their reaction to a specific situation; they, too, were looking inward just as their creators were. The reader was called upon by technique to become a part of the story, and rather than associate himself with something which could easily have happened to him, he was not limited to identifying himself with the character. No longer did the reader question the authenticity of a story because of its universal situation which could have implicated anyone; rather, he was concerned because he could see the individuals reacting as he himself would react. His own mind was identified with the thinking of the character, and the story lived for him because he was taking part in it. The era of the reader sitting on the outside looking in on the action was gone; he was now a part of that action. The short story was no longer an entertainment for short bus rides and longer trips across Canada by train, but rather was an emotional and intellectual experience for the reader. In the space of a few years the short story in Canada was radically changed. It had the tradition of Canada behind it, of writers who tried to record their time; but it also had the tradition of the novel and poetry in the thirties and forties, of writers who had worked out the focus on the Canadian identity into the framework of their own writing. Outward action was now fused with the character's inner sensations. Because the focus was now on character portrayal rather than on plot, the short story in Canada rapidly changed.

In the late fifties the move began, and in 1960, as though to clear the way for the new movement to get completely under way, Robert Weaver edited, for Oxford, *Canadian Short Stories*. This collection was in a sense a comprehensive presentation of the growth of the short story in Canada beginning with E. W. Thomson, Duncan Campbell Scott and Charles G. D. Roberts, and ending with a story by a younger, and perhaps even wiser, Mordecai Richler. It settled the historical position of the story in Canada, and showed clearly that writers were, for the most part, interested mainly in plot and action usually within a rural framework. It was saying quite plainly that

"this has been done; now we move on to other things". What was happening was that though some writers were inclined to use an obvious Canadian setting, many of the stories could have happened anywhere and were not restricted by place in sacrifice to a sense of time. It was the first resounding contemporary voice that was heard through the land. Mavis Gallant in *Green Water, Green Sky* indicated that the change was occurring. But since no change is abrupt, there were still traces of the past interest in action, as in Nicholas Monsarrat's *The Ship that Died of Shame and other stories*, and Thomas Raddall's *At the Tide's Turn and Other Tales*. It was a year, too, for Canadian publishers to acknowledge work by Canadian writers working on subjects outside the Canadian context: the most obvious example was Margaret Laurence's *This Side Jordan*, which brought a new and pure voice to contemporary fiction. It made Canadians aware of their own contemporaneity.

By 1961 the dam burst, and all kinds of collections of stories were printed. Was it because Canadian publishers realized the value of short stories for a public interested in doing their reading quickly since there were so many other things available to consume time? This may be partly the reason, but there was also an interest in and a demand for stories of many types. Desmond Pacey revised his *A Book of Canadian Stories* that year, augmenting Weaver's book of 1960, in showing the development of the tradition within Canada. Other books of historical interest appeared, too, like Pauline Johnson's *Legends of Vancouver*, and W. O. Mitchell recording the pastness of the past with his *Jake and the Kid*. But the subtle shifting sands of taste were moistened by Norman Levine, Ethel Wilson, and Malcolm Lowry.

Levine's *One Way Ticket* showed the interest in people rather than plot, and this was strengthened even more so by Mrs. Wilson's *Mrs. Golightly and other Stories* which brought a sense of quality to short fiction in Canada. But though people superseded plot, it is the sense of idea and philosophy, of intuition and sensibility, that particularly marks 1961 with the publication of Malcolm Lowry's *Hear Us O Lord From Heaven Thy Dwelling Place*. Though these stories were written at least a decade before they were published in 1961, they show quite directly the influence of Canada on Lowry; the interest in place was not new in Lowry's work but the Canadian setting gave him a sense that his quest had been achieved. "The Forest Path to the Spring" is superb in its handling of place, and in its understanding of the human spirit; it is undoubtedly the best story of the decade.

There is then a gradual shift from the

rural to the urban, but this shift is more marked in the sensibility revealed than it is in the settings employed. The writers are obviously much more sophisticated in their view of human nature; traces of sentimentality are gone; the language is more precise, and more astringent. These qualities are evidenced in the work of Hugh Hood (*Flying a Red Kite*, 1962, and *White Figure, White Ground*, 1964) and Hugh Garner (*Hugh Garner's Best Stories*, 1963; *Men and Women, Stories*, 1966). Both these men manage to retain on occasion a Canadian flavour — be it a kind of backwood's humour, or whimsy? — and still inject their work with contemporary modes and considerations. This direction is also seen in the stories by two women writers who, though they write within the Canadian context, set their stories often outside Canada; both Margaret Laurence (*The Tomorrow Tamer*, 1964) and Audrey Callahan Thomas (*Ten Green Bottles*, 1968) use the sophistication of outside experience to portray nuances of character. I say "sophistication" because this is the quality which had made Canadian writers of the short story universal in their appeal and effect; it is also what accounts for the fact that they are speaking in a modern voice. The world is smaller and Canadian writers are heard elsewhere aside from within the unknown country. The sensibility behind the writer, the Canadian writer, has enabled him to move easily into the contemporary fluidity of literature. The mosaic which marks so obviously the Canadian heritage has also made it easier for Canadians to work with the contemporary problems of alienation, compassion, and love, which makes up so much a part of the themes of contemporary fiction. Again, Mavis Gallant reveals this quality; though she lives in France and writes for *The New Yorker*, she is particularly Canadian, if only because of the very natural way she belongs to the contemporary scene.

In the past five years there has been a definite interest on the part of the reading public in short stories, and Canadian publishers have satisfied the need commendably. It is a genre that is appealing to more people, not only for light reading but also for serious thinking. The master of the short story in Canada — and still the best — Morley Callaghan, has been reprinted. His followers have moved to the works of others; there are quite a number of good short story writers in Canada who have published recently aside from the ones mentioned above: Dave Godfrey, Shirley Faessler, and David Helwig. It is objectivity that marks these writers, an ability to remove themselves as writers and Canadians from the scenes they present, to be external in approach, and yet be able to select details that are at once precise yet cosmopolitan. Their humanity particularizes their work, and at the same time carries them into universal themes that are appreciated by the whole of mankind. This may appear to be a mundane comment, but as I looked over the volumes of short stories that have been published over the last ten years I was constantly reminded that here was a group of good writers, no longer stilted by a desire to be Canadian writers, but willing to be world writers and to be writing in Canada, though undoubtedly they could write anywhere, as many of them have done. And behind their often excellent work lies the background of Canada, reaching toward a significance that is beyond the only national.

When I look back over the last ten years of the short story in Canada, it is obvious that as long as there is synthesis and refinement, a successful attempt to modify a traditional form, an achievement of artistic visions of experience and of beauty, and a constant search for truth in experiment, what has been accomplished in the short story form in Canada has added diversity and richness to the literature of our time. Art is always changing; it neither accepts conformity nor does it like repetition. The last ten years has seen a growth that has been quick, a rapid change from a story whose focus was on plot and the Canadian setting, to one of character synthesis and compelling philosophies. It has been a time of introspection, and one where interest has been in immediacy. Perhaps more than any other genre, the Canadian short story in the last ten years has reflected very well the problems of its own society. It is a rich and widely diverse period; today, to all outward appearances, the short story in Canada is confident of its own vitality and resources, produced by writers who question the assumptions on which the national short story had been constructed, and who search for forms and techniques more closely in touch with the problems of their day, and are more realistic in their treatment of them.

5. *Criticism*

Peter Stevens

THE FACT THAT *Canadian Literature* has flourished during the last ten years suggests that criticism in Canada has also flourished. One of the main thrusts in Canadian criticism during the last decade (and I think this has been both one of the reasons why *Canadian Literature* has survived and also one of the influences it has exerted on criticism) has been towards a description of a Canadian literary tradition, and this interest has stimulated a gathering together of writing about the main figures and their work as it is seen as shaping Canadian literature. This is evident in the appearance of the checklists of Watters and Bell and of the indexes to various small magazines of the past. The survey of our literary heritage and tradition had been made earlier, most notably by Desmond Pacey, and he found it convenient to revise and enlarge his *Creative Writing in Canada* in 1961. The same author's *Ten Canadian Poets* was reissued as a paperback in 1966. Various collections of essays have also contributed to this trend, the two edited by A. J. M. Smith, *Masks of Poetry* (1962) and *Masks of Fiction* (1961) being significant examples. The literary tradition has also been seen in a wider context in the series of lectures delivered each year at Carleton University and published under the title of *Our Living Tradition.*

I suppose the biggest attempt to map and measure the growth and development of Canadian literature is the *Literary History of Canada* (1965), edited by Carl F. Klinck, including contributions from some of the best scholars and critics in Canada. However much I sympathize with the effort behind this book (and certainly it contains a great deal of valuable information), finally I find it a rather dull book. There is not much sense of excitement behind the writing and no real idea of achievements in Canadian literature permeates much of the book. It is a solid and generally well-researched collection of factual information about the development of Canadian literature, but I could have wished for more incisive critical writing in it. Perhaps the aim was to be merely descriptive but the over-all impression the reader gains, particularly in the section devoted to the twentieth century, is of a somewhat bland plateau of descriptive statement with little enthusiasm for individual authors showing through the scholarly surface, no downright zest for a living literature being communicated to the reader. There are some interesting revaluations of travel writing in Canada and of some minor

poets, and some sound critical judgments on Confederation poetry, but the greatest failure in the book is its lack of perception about modern writing and, in particular, its absence of any expression of the quality of poetry since the 1920's. The book explores many areas of our whole span of tradition and growth but the map it draws is only a faint tracing of the real topography.

In the past ten years we have also seen a broadening of the context of the study of Canadian literature in the newer magazines such as *Mosaic, Malahat Review* and *West Coast Review* all of which place Canadian writing and criticism in the setting of world literature. Articles by such critics as R. E. Watters, John Povey and John Matthews see certain aspects of Canadian writing in relation to the literature of other countries in the Commonwealth and there have been contributions by Canadian scholars and poets to the recently-established *Journal of Commonwealth Literature.*

A certain amount of interest in Canadian literature has been evinced outside Canada. Edmund Wilson has given us some of his thoughts in *O Canada* (1965). The Twayne University series on Canadian authors is another example of such interest, and as we come to the end of this decade, we can see our attempts to describe our literary heritage are moving into a more critical (as opposed to the *Literary History*'s descriptive) phase, as three Canadian publishers have announced series on individual authors and movements. Ryerson's *Critical Views* are collections of critical reviews and articles in a more permanent format, Copp Clark are well under way with their series of critical surveys of Canadian authors, and McClelland & Stewart have just published the first four books in their series entitled *Canadian Writers.* All in all, then, the last ten years have been very much a period of reassessment of the whole sweep of our tradition.

The other main thrust in criticism over the last ten years has been in the field of synthesis, a widening of critical response to include material from other areas of modern culture. A principal practitioner of this criticism of synthesis is Marshall McLuhan who has received world-wide recognition in the last few years and whose criticism, like Northrop Frye's, has been the subject of a collection of critical essays, *McLuhan, Hot and Cool* (1967).

In *The Gutenberg Galaxy* (1962) McLuhan starts from a discussion of *King Lear* which leads him into the exposition of his general thesis about the detribalization of man as a result of the abstraction of meaning from sound in the development of the alphabet and its use in the printing press. This in turn led to specialization, bringing with it schizophrenia in man, a split between thought and action, arising from the breaking apart of the magical world of the ear and the neutral world of the eye. The extension of our senses fostered the disturbance of our senses. (It seems to me that McLuhan's view of schizophrenic man and the imbalance of sensory perception is related to some of the ideas of R. D. Laing whose views, together with those of Norman O. Brown, are beginning to loom large in this criticism of synthesis.)

This explanation of what has happened and is happening in our whole culture is expressed in a very crabby and convolute style but McLuhan has since that time tried to popularize his ideas. *Understanding Media* (1964) is a very good description of modernism, and his concepts of

total field and our "revulsion against imposed patterns" are interesting insights into recent developments in literature. McLuhan is, in fact, a thorough-going modernist and even though he tends to avoid value judgments, he does on occasion let a kind of evaluation drop:

> Our unified sensibility cavorts amidst a wide range of awareness of materials and colors which makes ours one of the greatest ages of music, poetry, painting and architecture alike.

The Medium Is The Massage (1967), "a collide-oscope of interfaced situations", is McLuhan's presentation of his content as a form in itself, his message as its medium. It is probably the most amenable of his books, well-suited to his penchant for categorical statements, many of which are presented with an air of invincible rightness without so much as a nod in the direction of detail to prove them. Such statements are often stimulating but just as often leave the reader baffled: for instance, to prove his assertion that TV commercials have influenced contemporary literature, he cites *In Cold Blood* as an example without any kind of an explanation.

For such a committed modernist McLuhan shows a singular blindness to certain elements in modern culture that seem to be specifically made to prove his thesis. He has never mentioned, to my knowledge, concrete poetry (surely a splendid example of form as content) and the movies of Jean-Luc Godard.

For some readers McLuhan's style is a barrier and I must confess I find something undergraduateish about his twisting of certain literary quotations to suit his purpose. His use of lines from *Romeo And Juliet* as a prediction of the effect of TV is an example of this kind of writing. His books abound in puns but in fairness to McLuhan it must be said that he appears to be trying to emulate his own concepts in this matter, for he tells us that a pun derails us from the uniform progress of typographic order and, like Arthur Koestler to a certain extent, he regards humour as a probe of our environment.

McLuhan has undertaken an analysis of the total field of modern awareness and in spite of his exasperating habits of style and argument he is a key figure in this area I have labelled the "criticism of synthesis". Perhaps the best way to come to grips with his ideas is to reverse the linear progression of his books by reading *The Medium Is The Massage* first and then moving back through *Understanding Media* to *The Gutenberg Galaxy.*

Despite Irving Layton's assertion that we have no real critics (like George Steiner and Michael Hamburger) in this country, most students of literature regard Northrop Frye ("a sterile idealogue" according to Layton) as a real critic, indeed as a critic in the largest sense of the term. Perhaps "aesthetic philosopher" might be a better term. Over the last ten years Frye seems to have been attempting

to collect the variety of his comments centring around his *Anatomy of Criticism*. He published a collection of his earlier essays in his volume *Fables of Identity* (1963) and over the last six or seven years he has been applying the general thesis of his *Anatomy* to individual authors and areas. He has published books on Shakespearian tragedy and comedy, Milton and Eliot as well as on the function of criticism, the nature of the imagination, and modernism. All these books with the exception of his study of Eliot were originally oral presentations and it is for this reason that these books seem more approachable than the *Anatomy*. They are lectures in book form, lectures as vehicles to popularize his ideas about myth and the nature of literature.

Of his work devoted to individual authors I find his book on Shakespearian comedy, *A Natural Perspective* (1965), most helpful. He is very explicit on the structure of the comic world and its autonomous nature expressed through conventions, but in the later lectures in this series his argument becomes too abstruse and complicated in its paradoxes and at no time does he suggest that some things happen in comedies on the grounds of sheer dramatic expedience. He repeats the general thesis that myth in its primitive sense is an "Imaginative experience for the untrained"; that word "untrained" is uncomfortably connected in my mind with a whole world of cultural snobbery, a snobbery I suspect runs through much of *The Educated Imagination* (1963), especially in the last lecture in which he seems to present to us some rarefied ideal of "highbrowism". Popular culture for Frye means the kind of art that appeals to the primitive myths that reside in the unconscious of all men, and he seems to have no conception of popular culture as a natural growth out of the whole life of a society, including the lower levels of the "untrained".

Although Frye makes some good generalizations about modern movements in his series of lectures published in 1967, *The Modern Century* — the self-consciousness of the modern and the way in which it "is concerned to give the impression of process rather than product", for instance — there is no real appreciation of new modes of thinking which have developed within recent years. However provocative and stimulating his generalizations are, I think that some of them are dropped into his lectures as deliberate statements to show how his ideas have kept abreast of modern developments but they only serve to emphasize, to me at least, a lack of comprehension about certain elements in modern culture. For someone who has shown a remarkable grasp of Canadian poetry earlier in his career, it is strange to find him saying in *The Educated Imagination* that Canadian writers "produce imitations of D. H. Lawrence and W. H. Auden". And I find meaningless his statement that certain poems are "dreamlike and witty at once, a kind of verbal blues or pensive jazz".

Perhaps it is churlish to criticize Frye on these grounds, particularly as one can sense a real urge behind his work to establish the primacy of the value of literature in our society in his application of his critical theory to such a wide range of writing. It is when he turns to the critical task itself that he shows his real insight. For me, his best work during the past ten years is the first lecture in *The Well-Tempered Critic* (1963), an attack

on sloppy expression rising to an almost Orwellian fervour. He maintains that all language exists on an oral basis and that poetry is a prime expression of that basis, a very significant statement of an important idea in modern poetics. He closes by making a plea against specialization and for real criticism, that is, for literary criticism as opposed to scholarship. It is here that I recognize Frye's genuine humility about the role of the critic, a humility that tempers the hints of snobbery in some of his other works.

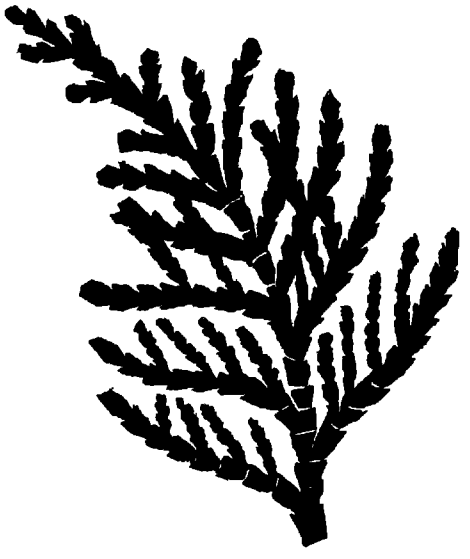
Over the past decade Frye's criticism has been, in general terms, a popularization of his ideas. Recently his theory of myths and archetypes has been attacked but he has come to be seen as one of the most important modern critics, the subject himself of a collection of critical essays, *Northrop Frye in Modern Criticism* (1966), edited by Murray Krieger. Not only that. His ideas have stimulated some Canadian poetry which has developed beyond the barren academicism he is so often accused of: witness the recent work of James Reaney. And in the poetry and criticism of one of his followers, Eli Mandel, his ideas, among others, have helped to produce what I consider to be the most original aesthetic criticism during this decade in Canada.

Eli Mandel's criticism can be found in one or two articles published in journals in the 1960's and in talks given for the CBC, principally in a series called *Novelty and Nostalgia* (1967) and in another series later published in 1966, *Criticism: The Silent-Speaking Words*. Like Frye, Mandel sees modern literature as being essentially about process and, like McLuhan, he makes much of the idea of instant awareness and instant obsolescence. He even connects his discussion of these ideas to tradition by saying that contemporary literature works towards "a renewal, not a denial, of old forms". Literature in our time, according to Mandel, has gone beyond practical value; it has ventured into a world of pure experience, so that "aesthetic form confers the only value that endures". Modern literature is full of regressive images, becoming a literature that constantly calls attention to itself. Because of the growth of inter-media forms, Mandel seems to suggest that we try to synthesize all our aesthetic knowledge and the function of the critic is to help us make that synthesis.

Everything in art is now much more open in form, and criticism must make an attempt to become more open. The "New Criticism" is now no longer valid, for it cannot cope with the contemporary, being able to deal only with closed structures. Mandel also tackles the problem of social criticism. In his view art creates a completely autonomous world divorced from society and external reality so that the social critic is really incapable of coming to an aesthetic judgment. Mandel finally sees the critic as a savage, appreciating and passing on his knowledge of art by means of "direct perception rather than intellectual analysis". He sees the dangers in such a theory; that it may be impossible to judge art on anarchic and irrational grounds, that this kind of response is too dependent on subjectivity, that it is too open and impressionistic. But he insists on the notion of total sympathetic participation in art, an idea that surely links him with McLuhan, as his idea of the autonomous world of art connects him to Frye. Mandel goes much further into a concept of a much more open synthesis of these ideas by drawing

also on the ideas of Norman O. Brown. In fact, he suggests that McLuhan's idea of the extension of our senses is really an expression of a Brown idea in that "art is the language of the human body". Finally, Mandel summarizes art as "the human form of desire, . . . it is the vision of our complete humanity and an affirmation of love."

I may have done Eli Mandel an injustice by summarizing his ideas in such bald terms but in the series of talks I have outlined as well as in some single radio talks he seems to me to have formulated a new, open and almost visionary concept of criticism, synthesizing, as I have already suggested, much of what Frye and McLuhan state, and adding much of the thought of some of the new culture heroes, most notably R. D. Laing, Herbert Marcuse and Norman O. Brown. Mandel's plea for a criticism of total participation leads him to involvement in a concept stated by Brown: "The proper response to poetry is not criticism but poetry."



Of course, in Canada at the present time many poets write criticism. One can read poetry reviews in many of our literary reviews by practicing poets. This has always been the case but I think this practice has been encouraged over the last ten years. In the pages of small magazines poets preach polemically about their own poetic theories. One such publication is *The Open Letter* which is specifically designed to be a forum of critical ideas about poetry. Since its foundation *Tish* also has included defences of its special mentors, and *Quarry* gives a good deal of space to long reviews of poetry by poets. *Tamarack Review* generally puts its "Poetry Chronicle" in the hands of a poet and it occasionally includes an article of a literary-critical nature, such as Frank Davey's view of the Black Mountain phenomenon and Miriam Waddington's study of the radical poems of A. M. Klein. At one time it seemed as if *Tamarack* had set itself the critical mission of saving Canadian theatre. It ran two issues devoted to the problem but more recently, apart from an occasional review, it has not revived that particular missionary quest. And I should not omit from this discussion the highly valuable practical criticism of Milton Wilson as editor of *Canadian Forum*. His choice of poetry for that periodical has been consistently astonishing in its catholicity, its recognition of new talent and experimentation and its personal concern. He has in this way contributed a great deal to the continued growth of poetry in this country.

We are also greatly indebted to the CBC for its encouragement of criticism. It is possible that without radio and the FM program *Ideas* we might not have had Eli Mandel's criticism. More than that. The CBC has given time to poets

and critics alike, allowing them to elaborate critical ideas. In the two series *The Creative Writer* (1965) and *The First Person In Literature* (1966) Earle Birney and Louis Dudek respectively contributed interesting surveys in the field I am calling the criticism of synthesis. They both took a large topic and allowed their imaginations and critical acumen to roam at large in the area of the topic, drawing the specific details for discussion from a wide variety of sources. Other writers who have attempted this kind of synthesis in CBC talks are Michael Yates, John Hulcoop, George Woodcock and Jack Ludwig. One of the most interesting series, which attempted a comparative study of movies and modern novels, was Murray MacQuarrie's *The Allegorical Style* (1967). MacQuarrie sets his talks in a framework of ideas stemming from McLuhan and Frye, suggesting that the decline in realism had re-awakened our interest in the allegorical and the mythical. Within these terms he discussed such writers as Golding, Heller and Grass in relation to the movies of Bergman, Godard and Antonioni. (Incidentally, MacQuarrie's remarks on this director constitute for me one of the best defences of his movies I have read.) MacQuarrie's criticism is sound and straightforward although, like McLuhan, he is prone to the categorical and dogmatic generalization. Nonetheless, this series is a significant contribution to inter-media criticism in Canada.

The CBC also continued other aspects of criticism in series perhaps related to the trend of assessing tradition and establishing order I have mentioned earlier in this article, although these talks were not devoted to specifically Canadian subject-matter. I am thinking of talks by John Carroll on the contemporary novel and by Roy Daniells on some religious and Puritan poets. There have also been some rather experimental kinds of critical exegesis on the CBC: Louis Dudek on chance in poetry, Eli Mandel talking about Norman O. Brown and also indulging in a kind of prose poem about celebration.

There is no doubt that in recent years the CBC has encouraged not only creative writing but also creative criticism. It has also published a fair sampling of its series of critical talks so that they will reach an even wider audience, but it is unfortunate that these new and often exciting expressions of developments in modern thinking do not reach those of us who are not served by the FM Network of the CBC. Perhaps all of us who are interested in literature and ideas, should make a plea for the availability of these programmes in all parts of Canada.

Sound academic criticism continued in such journals as the *Dalhousie Review* (which seems to have published more literary criticism than any of the other intellectual quarterlies in the last ten years), *Culture* and *Queen's Quarterly*. The *University of Toronto Quarterly* has published each year its very useful survey of "Letters in Canada". Book reviewing has steadily improved and has even caused a few hackles to rise in recent months: witness Irving Layton's diatribe against a reviewer in *Canadian Dimension* and Alden Nowlan's outburst in *Canadian Forum*. There have been collections of some of the better general critical journalistic pieces, such as Robertson Davies' *A Voice From The Attic* (1960) and Robert Fulford's *Crisis At The Victory Burlesk* (1968).

One rather surprising shortage in re-

cent Canadian criticism has been in the field of comparative studies of our own two literatures. There have been tentative attempts and one very good essay, "Twin Solitudes" by Ronald Sutherland, published in this journal, but in view of the centrality of the Quebec question in contemporary Canada it seems strange that very little critical writing on the two literatures has emerged.

In general, criticism has been concerned on the one hand with attempting to establish some order and on the other hand with exploring the possibilities of total involvement in and participation at the frontiers and even beyond the frontiers of modern chaos. There has been a gathering and a broadening during the last ten years, leading towards a loosening of strict academicism away from specialization. In the developments arising from Frye and McLuhan and related to new and emerging ideas in the work of such a critic as Eli Mandel, Canadian criticism promises to stretch into more and more fascinating areas in the future.

NOTE

In preparing my discussion of Eli Mandel's criticism and the contribution of the CBC to Canadian criticism I was helped inestimably by Phyllis Webb who made available to me material and information to which I would otherwise have had no access.

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ON THE VERGE

***** Catherine Parr Traill. *The Canadian Settler's Guide.* McClelland & Stewart, paper, $2.95. Cookery books and books of household hints are invaluable aids to social history. I have a couple from late 18th century England whose naive revelations of class bias in their discussions of how to treat servants and succour the poor help one to understand the labourers' revolt and the Chartist movement which followed closely. Catherine Parr Traill's *Canadian Settler's Guide*, now reprinted, is a book of this kind, and a careful perusal of its hints for living in the backwoods, its rustic recipes, its directions for building shacks and improvising furniture and using wild herbs for medicine, leaves one with a clearer picture of rural Ontario a century and a quarter ago than any modern history of the times I have yet read. An invaluable reprint.

**** Harold Horwood. *Newfoundland.* Macmillan, $6.95. The most recent of Macmillan's "The Traveller's Canada" series, and perhaps the best. After a lame start which makes one expect a warmed-up guidebook, Harold Horwood settles in with zest and eloquence to describe his native province, and brings in so many fascinating historical narratives and accounts of natural phenomena and ways of human life that one is not merely absorbed to the end, but urgently converted to the need to explore intensively the remarkable and late-arriving province of Newfoundland.

**** Anne Wilkinson. *Lions in the Way.* Macmillan, paper, $2.50. A reprint of Anne Wilkinson's "discursive history of the Oslers", of which family she was a member by birth. Apart from the intrinsic interest of the Oslers as a talented group of people, it is a remarkably sensitive study of the formative age in Canadian history, written with a fine poet's eye to the nuances of private and public personality.

**** Reginald Hargreaves. *The Bloodybacks: The British Servicemen in North America: 1655-1783.* General Publishing, $10.95. The title is misleading, since it suggests a social history of the British soldiers and sailors in North America up to the end of the American War of Independence. In fact, *The Bloodybacks* tells relatively little about the actual lives of serving men, and turns out to be a rather good history of campaigns. Canada plays its varying role, first as the base of Britain's enemies, then as the base of the British themselves. It is unfortunate that the history does not carry on to *1812*; perhaps that will be another volume.

**** Lewis S. Feuer. *The Conflict of Generations.* General Publishing, $14.50. This is the most important book to date on the movements of student revolt. Professor Feuer traces the history of such movements from early nineteenth century Europe, shows their resemblances, emphasizes their tendencies towards elitism. He is perhaps too dependent on a Freudian interpretation of the conflict of generations, but his *account* of youth revolt, as distinct from his *explanation* of it, is admirable.

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*** Francis Parkman. *The Oregon Trail,* edited by E. N. Feltskog. University of Wisconsin Press, $15.00. In the travels of this classic book Parkman never entered Canadian territory, nor even the Oregon country that might have been Canadian if history and the British had moved a little differently. But the book does interest us because it shows the background of wilderness living and contact with Indians which became so useful to Parkman when he wrote his great work on the wars between the English and the French which bears the same relationship to Canadian history as the *Decline and Fall* to classical history. Professor Feltskog's introduction and notes are impressive; they represent many years' checking into Parkman's movements and the people he encountered.

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G.W.

** *The Golden Dog* by William Kirby, McClelland & Stewart (NCL#65), $2.95. Derek Crawley has cut Kirby's 1877 romance substantially for this edition, thus speeding up the story while maintaining its Gothic atmosphere. New France in 1759 gave Kirby his subject, but the novel was written less as a Gallic compliment than as a political exemplum. Witchcraft and intrigue became metaphors to show that corruption weakens from within. The didactic function is plain enough, but it is primarily as an exotic entertainment that it is offered in its present form.

** *Behind the Beyond* by Stephen Leacock, McClelland & Stewart (NCL #67), $1.50. A reprint of the 1913 volume containing such well-known pieces as "Homer and Humbug" and "The Retroactive Existence of Mr. Juggins". Also welcome back in print are the delightful "Parisien Pastimes", which show Leacock playing at his best with the naiveté of travellers and the absurdities in language. Unfortunately the first half of the book is wearingly dated.

* *Tomorrow is Yesterday* by K. Akula, Pahonia, $5.00. Interesting more as a literary curiosity than an accomplished book, this first novel in English by a Byelorussian author (now living in Toronto) betrays too much inexperience with the language. *Dressed* and *began* are never *used* when *attired* and *originated* can be *employed*, for example, and as a result the novel is stilted. Also overburdened with mawkish euphemisms, it would seem to have little to recommend it, but its subject is extraordinary. Rape, pillage, murder, and deceit on the part of both the Red and Nazi armies in the Russian provinces during World War II become not only part of a plea for Byelorussian independence but also a way to give tribute to the clemency of Canadian judges. Though its sentiments are unquestionably sincere, its method is drawn too imitatively from that of television serials.

W.H.N.

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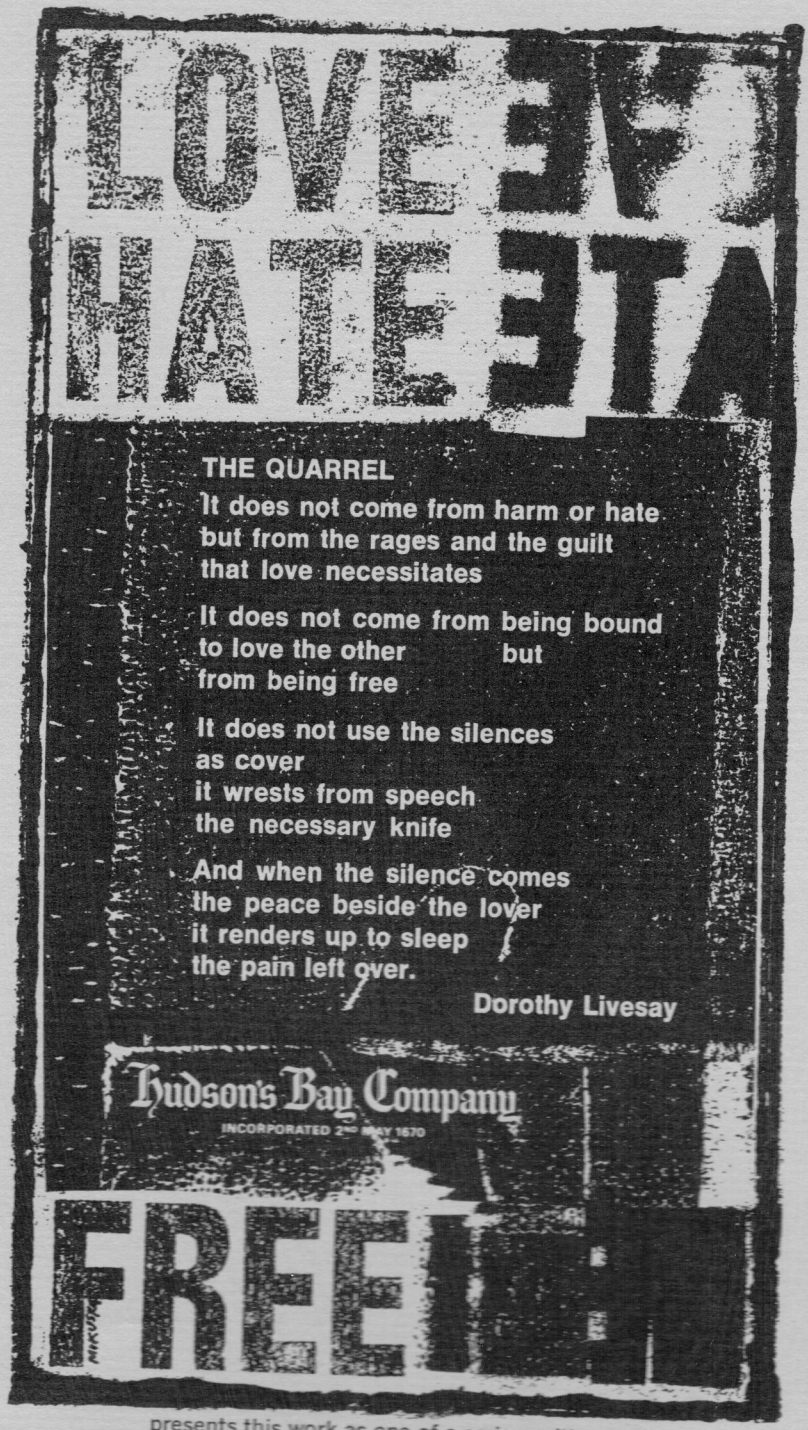

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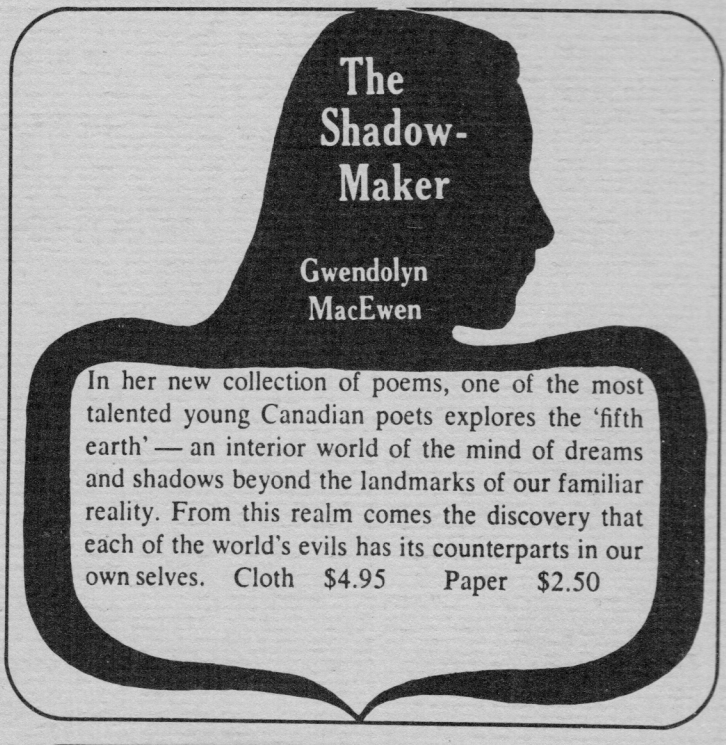

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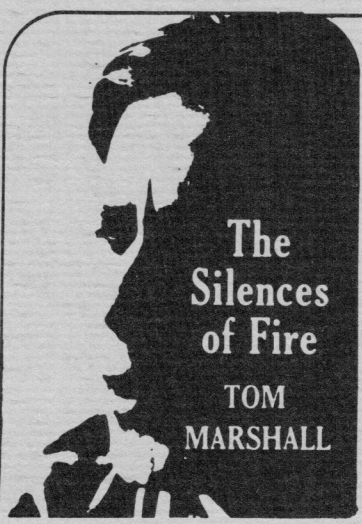

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