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SCIENCE & LITERATURE

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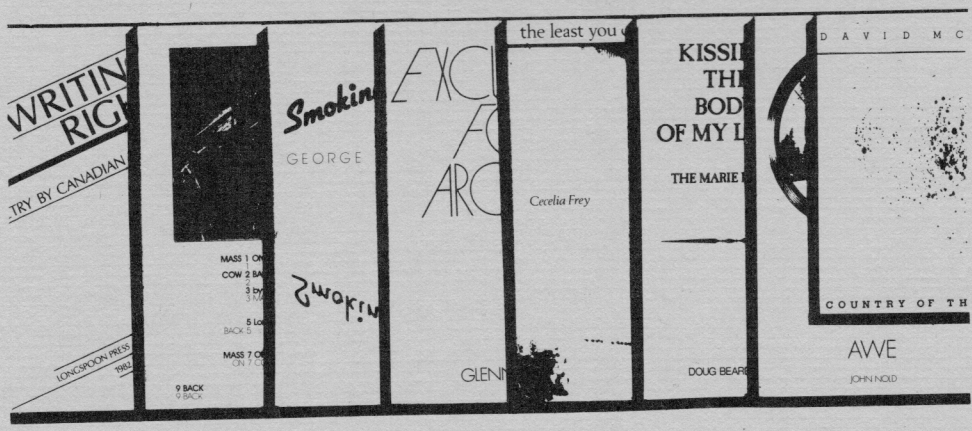

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editorial

VERBAL PULSARS

WHEN I WENT TO SECONDARY SCHOOL, xenon was inert. That's not the way I usually think of those years, but it usefully characterizes a certain frame of mind: of a time when atoms methodically revolved in their molecules, the sea was silent, and science held within its grasp the secrets of the order of the universe. Even then the picture was distorted, of course: atom bombs, in the name of order, had already disintegrated an order of another kind, and educators' scientific "fact" was some steps behind scientific theory. As time moved on, researchers discovered that the world they analyzed was far more complex and far less predictable than they had thought. Now xenon will actively combine with some other elements *and scientists know it*; the movement of atoms seems a lot more random than it had earlier, *at least as observers record it*; and scientists eager for accuracy now speak of leptons, hadrons, gluons, neutrinos, and the *flavour* of quarks. (Quarks come, I am led to believe, in six flavours, each of which can have three colours. This information may be out of date.)

Scientists speak to each other more concretely in mathematics than in such verbal terms, though each of the terms (including "colour") possesses a mathematical meaning. Like Leacock's Dean Drone, who assigned to his mathematics teacher his own failure to progress in life, the rest of us may despair of following the idea of Number through to its logical consequences, but the flavour of quarks gives those who work with words something to sink their teeth into. In many ways, the language of those in the sciences and those in the humanities operates on parallel planes — even the word "language," as the computer programmer uses it, refers to a binary code of abbreviations and not to the aural felicities, the contextual implications, or the multiple (perhaps intentional) ambiguities of a phrase like "the green teacher's wastebasket." And whereas poetry and prose fiction rely on the associational processes of reading which ambivalence, allusion, and assonance allow, the language of the technical report strives to avoid them entirely, and to achieve instead a precise and exclusive set of referential meanings. Such a difference spells out a difference in expectations of life as well as of language, one

declaring itself accountable to that which can be imagined, the other to that which can be demonstrated by repeated experiment and "blind proof." The one appears to favour invention, the other utility. Yet such dichotomies are not universally applicable. It may be true that many scientists see language (the image, the sentence, the essay, the book) as a mechanical means of conveyance rather than as a plastic medium of art or a subject of investigation in its own right; it may also be true that many investigators of the world or words and the contrarieties of human behaviour use an ostensibly technical language to give their observation and judgments the illusion of "scientific" authority; but it does not follow that scientists must fail to imagine or poets to be precise. Seeking words to express what they understand, both groups of people have borrowed from each other. The "flavour of quarks" tells us so. It tells us also of an implicit effort on the part of scientists to use mathematics to describe the very large, the very small, and the very complex — and words to tame them. They talk of the "Big Bang," the "Missing Link," of "floppy discs," "black holes," "software," and (misleadingly, at first) of "spreading time" (the time it takes for a pulse to double its size). Laymen, by comparison, have borrowed the language of science to expand the parameters of metaphor: more than one human relationship in the twentieth century has been perceived as "symbiotic," "polarized," "amoebic," or "biodegradable" — which neither ratifies them more convincingly nor makes them more real than they would otherwise have been, but marks them unquestionably as the product of their own time.

* * *

Scientists learn about science from other scientists and from laboratory practice. Laymen learn about science by listening to David Suzuki and by reading the columns of *Time* magazine; by looking at *Equinox*, *Scientific American*, *National Geographic*, *Creative Computing*; by absorbing the intelligent popularizers of science: Roderick Haig-Brown, Lewis Thomas, Carl Sagan, Jacob Bronowski, Isaac Asimov, Loren Eiseley, Stephen Jay Gould — variously from their essays and their programmes on television. (So popular is *National Geographic* indeed — so colourful, so glossy, so heavy, so carefully preserved in dens and rec rooms across North America — that one scientist in mock method has calculated the time it will take for parts of the continent to sink into the sea from the cumulative weight of suburban collections.)

Each year, in addition, bookstores fill with a variety of new volumes designed for the enquiring lay reader more than for the specialist.

The range of new publications is wide: from new handbooks of basic BASIC to fundamental attacks, like Ian Reinecke's *MicroInvaders* (Penguin), on computer technology. Opposing the actual technology less than its implications, Reinecke claims that videocommunication (because it pre-selects information)

is "undemocratic," that the economics of mass computerization translates into there being fewer modes of communication, rather than opportunities for a greater variety of individual expression, and that academic TV courses in Ontario and B.C. are about as academically useful as the training programmes given an encyclopedia sales staff. These are clear dangers. Captivated by the arts of high rhetoric, however, Reinecke dismisses those who applaud computers as "boosters" and "utopian propagandists" who would use TV as a means of behaviour modification and transform men into machines; intrinsically he argues that watching TV is less productive than the active enterprise of going out to watch a sports event: at which point he invests more persuasive power in his rhetoric than in his logic, and the main justification for his concern dissipates in a cloud of emotion.

By contrast, emotion enters only indirectly into a book like Zile Zichmanis and James Hodgins' splendid *Flowers of the Wild: Ontario and the Great Lakes Region* (Oxford), as when (about the Ox-eye Daisy) the writers neutrally observe, in a metaphor it is not certain they are even aware of: "This species is too aggressive for most gardens." Combining photographs with illustrations (and with data specifying genus, habitat, features, uses, and other information), the book is essentially a catalogue of some 250 flowers, from Agrimony and Bloodroot to Grass-of-Parnassus and Spotted Jo-Pye Weed. "Scientific accuracy and skilful composition," writes the Royal Ontario Museum director in a preface, make the illustrations "both useful and aesthetically pleasing." Indeed they do. The flower names tell more still: of settlers with an eye for cultural mythology as well as for concrete images, with a need to preserve as well as to see. The volume is also a handbook with paradoxical intent: at once to encourage environmental recognition and ecological preservation and to aid domestic cultivation of the plants of the wild and wayside, presumably after they are taken from the wild in the first place.

While Sandford Clark's *Environmental Assessment in Australia and Canada* (Westwater) faithfully records a set of workshop proceedings on the legal basis for governmental and industrial involvement in environment use (and so limits itself to a professional audience), Paul Tisdall's *In Search of Human Origins* (CBC) is more discursive in form and more open to the general reader. Tisdall takes interviews with Richard Leakey, Robert Ardrey, Desmond Morris, Clifford Jolly, and others, concerning current ethnological thought, and recounts some of the changes that have taken place between Darwin and DNA. His interest is less in the categorization of ideas than in the "speculative consequences" they lead to. But Tisdall manages also to give the enquiry some human dimension: "I was dizzy with bones," Leakey says, with an excitement born of watching his theory about human development take palpable form in the fossil evidence he carefully unearthed and reconstructed. Other works are more interested in establishing the historical record than in pursuing the excitement or implications of discovery.

W. E. K. Middleton's *Radar Development in Canada* (Wilfrid Laurier Univ. Press), a factual account of the impact of World War II on the radio branch of the National Research Council, is a case in point. Compare Middleton with George Woodcock, writing in a note appended to *The Benefactor* about the changes that stereophonic recording have had on radio drama: "one is [now] among speakers in a landscape of sound." One writer turns technology into historical data, the other into metaphor. Compare both writers with Northrop Frye, who (writing in *Science* in 1981) identifies *metaphor* with *equation*. Or compare all three with those who have assembled *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Earth Sciences*, ed. David G. Smith (Prentice-Hall). More than a reference record, this book takes the work of 32 contributors (including William Fyfe and R. Kerrich of the University of Western Ontario, who write about Earth Chemistry) and transforms what could have been raw data alone into an absorbing sophisticated symposium on the earth's behaviour. There are chapters on tectonics — with passing reference to the work of J. Tuzo Wilson on Continental Drift — and on tides, gravity, the function of satellites, energy, sand, ice, microbial impact: the whole book shows a general fascination with *process* which makes it quite unlike the taxonomic structure of, for example, *Flowers of the Wild*. Profusely illustrated, the photographs, diagrams, and maps add another extraordinary dimension to our appreciation of the earth; the coronagraphs, the polarized light thin sections, the computer-enhanced satellite photos seem like abstract art — or perhaps a concrete art of another order. The question is: how does the mind react — decoding information from what it perceives, or understanding meaning through metaphor, analogy, and the aesthetics of pattern and design?

* * *

Besides Tuzo Wilson, several other scientists loom large in the collective national portrait of Great Canadians: among them, Alexander Graham Bell, Frederick Banting, Charles Best, Wilder Penfield, Hans Selye. Why — for their actual accomplishments, or for the lustre they directly or indirectly give us as an inventive, rational, practical people? Should a communications theorist like Marshall McLuhan be listed among them? Is theory ever truly scientific? Have communications had more impact on Canadian writing than scientific theories have? Is Sandford Fleming a communications theorist because of his mapping of Standard Time Zones — or is he a cartographer of the limits of the political imagination? Why is it that there has been more enquiry into the connections between medical history and literary expression in Canada than between literature and any of the other sciences? Does the Canadian literary fascination with the *anatomy* have any scientific parallel — is there more interest in diagnosis than in analysis, description, or measurement? or more interest in theoretical modelling than in techno-

logical application? When Hugh MacLennan writes that "science is the new theology," do we believe him?

* * *

I once thought that literature concerned itself only with the past, and science only with the future; now I'm not so sure. Seemingly such a conclusion follows logically from the research methods that students of literature and science employ. Literary scholars seek repeatedly to verify texts and to weigh contemporary judgments against the cumulative views of generations past (taking alchemists and phrenologists into account, when a world-view requires it), whereas scientists and technologists require only the latest experimental results, the results which render all previous enquiry invalid (hence unnecessary, hence of interest only to the antiquarian). The literary scholar asserts the need to preserve tradition in the light of what we value, the scientist/technologist to shape the future in light of what we learn. They speak to each other, each repeating a message for the *n*th time, on planes that appear never to intersect. "The realm of science," said Duncan Campbell Scott to the Royal Society of Canada in 1921,

> appears to an outsider to be a wonderland. By comparison, literature seems to be divorced from life, and we would need to point to some book that had altered definitely the course of the world's thought to match some of the discoveries of Science which have changed our conceptions of the nature of life and of the universe. Perhaps ... I am confusing for the moment the function of pure literature with the function of Science. Literature in its present form is vowed to the service of the imagination; its ethical powers are secondary, though important; and it cannot be forced to prove its utility.... [Furthermore, the] biological notions of Elizabeth's day are merely objects of curiosity, but Marlowe, Webster and Shakespeare are living forces.... Created, beauty persists; it has the eternal element in its composition....

Yet beauty is not the sole attribute of literature, nor an attribute of art alone. Eternity is an unknown. And just as literature attempts as often to throw light into the future as it does to ratify the past, so does science as often record the past as shape the future. In fact, the more one learns about the relation between the scientific observer and the truth observed, the more it becomes clear that scientists are historians despite themselves. The astronomer, recording supernovas and white dwarfs, is observing or decoding phenomena that have taken place light years away and before; the physicist using the electron-microscope traces the path where the electron has been; the anthropologist (who by his simple presence among a people has disturbed their former way of life) records a life that has already altered. How then to brace for Futureshock, prepare for change?

Isaac Asimov once spoke of science fiction as a "topical fairytale where all scientists' experiments succeed" — then later regretted the remark, because of its implication that scientists desire only success and that they cannot or do not learn

from failure; in fact, he adds, many of the greatest insights derive from serendipity. Because the accidental discovery does not take place logically, the mind is freed at such times from the constraints of received expectation. Eureka: the penny drops, the light dawns, the kettle whistles, the apple falls.

The science fiction writer whom Asimov describes is one like himself or like Arthur C. Clarke: one who explores in imaginative narrative the possibilities inherent in a scientific principle. Science fiction in Canada appears to owe more to Doris Lessing and Ursula Le Guin than to Asimov and Clarke, however, for it is more inclined to political fantasy than to scientific enquiry. The examples are not numerous — the stories of Phyllis Gotlieb and Jean-François Somcynsky, tales collected by John Robert Colombo, Hugh MacLennan's *Voices in Time*, Spider Robinson's *Mindkiller*, Carol Matas's *The DNA Dimension* — but Lessing provides the pattern, in works like *The Sirian Experiments* and *The Making of the Representative for Planet 8* (Clarke Irwin), the third and fourth volumes in the *Canopus in Argos: Archives* series. The mode is primarily documentary or archival; the theme involves the explanation of how political power operates (through symbol and ritual) and how male-female relations represent accommodations to the distribution of power between empire and colony; and the narrative compels interests less through suspense than by the pattern and process of revelation. In an appendix to the latter book, Lessing even goes so far as to provide a commentary on the process of reflection that led to the writing in the first place: fascinated by the power which the historical Captain Robert Scott's *Zeitgeist* held over him and his doomed Antarctic expedition, she constructs a narrative to enquire into the constrictions of a fictional "Time of the Ice": it is a time when rulers are ruled not by judgment or sensible planning but by their own rhetoric, when they identify so completely with their own propaganda that they no longer doubt it — and hence do not, cannot doubt themselves.

Like Lessing, MacLennan and Matas and Robinson are less futurists than historians of the exaggerated present. Robinson's *Mindkiller* (Holt Rinehart) is an allegory about mindcontrol and human choice, and about the central character's decision to surrender his independence to the "Conspiracy-for-Good" because "mindfill" from a Good Person must intrinsically be a Good Thing; it is a frightening failure to allow for the limits of good intentions or the creativity of error. Matas's children's book *The DNA Dimension* (Gage) argues equally vehemently the opposite case: when four children fall through the snow in Winnipeg into a world of perfect symmetry, total centralism, and a choice only between programming and elimination, they fight to preserve themselves not from the good man's paradise but from the dictatorship that he requires to engineer his version of perfection. The moral? not quite what the reader expects, in a decade of Western Alienation: at the end of her book, Matas asserts her case stridently, declaring scientists to be potential agents of political evil because they gain

people's trust by fighting hunger and disease. In both cases, the simplistic conclusion derives from the failure of the causal logic. But do readers read fantasy for logic, or only to confirm their current opinion about the *status quo?*

For that matter, do literary writers write about science to test their knowledge or to support their expectations? When E. J. Pratt "set / A tripod's legs upon a trilobite" and wrote

> It was the same world then as now — the same,
> Except for little differences of speed
> And power, and means to treat myopia
> To show an axe-blade infinitely sharp
> Splitting things infinitely small, or else
> Provide the telescopic sight to roam
> Through curved dominions never found in fable,

he was not minimizing the differences but rather (despite the gruff Hibernian tonal understatement of the passage) placing his faith squarely in epic progress. When in *Two Solitudes* MacLennan averred that "Science and War . . . have uprooted us and the whole world is roaming," he was declaring his allegiance to Classical verities even in the face of the change he found it necessary to accept. But in both cases the "scientific" reference is *thematic.* How should we judge Dave Godfrey's *formal* literary fascination with computer technology (the "Fables and Inputs" in *Dark Must Yield,* for example) or with quantum mechanics and the "uncertainty principle" in *The New Ancestors*? How do we interpret the allusions to Giordano Bruno in the poetry of Margaret Avison or in Chris Scott's novel *Anticthon*? How do we understand the formal discontinuities that interrupt Chris Dewdney's meditations on technology and knowledge?

* * *

There is a cartoon reproduced in Fred Alan Wolf's lucid introduction to physics for non-scientists called *Taking the Quantum Leap* (Beaverbooks); it depicts two people in conversation. "Is that a good book?" asks one; "No," replies the other, "it's a sufficient condition for reality." Taken out of context, forced into its mundane literalness, jargon from any discipline seems bizarre; the physicist's in-joke here reminds us in addition of the impossibility of separating an evaluation from the evaluator. We misunderstand the basic idea of matter, the particle, Wolf observes, if we assume it has properties independent of the observer; and this interpretation of matter is born of the twentieth century, born out of the research of Max Planck, Albert Einstein, Niels Bohr, Murray Gell-Mann, which disputes the Newtonian presumptions that had governed the quest for a "hidden mechanical order" that would explain the world. The false presumptions are these: that things move continuously, that things move for reasons, that all motion can be broken into component parts, that (because he is "just" observing) an observer

does not disturb. They led to a quest for an objective reality that twentieth-century physics belies, and to a belief in the power of technology to explain how and why things work. To challenge such assumptions is implicitly to break with the accepted notion of reality. What replaces it? A belief that the discontinuous processes of motion are the basic paradigm of matter: it is by moving that matter continues to exist; not to move is to cease to exist. How movement takes place is another issue, for this is not a theory of progress, only of change. Wolf adds that by choosing among any alternatives, we repeatedly choose to see what we do see, making our "reality" sensible but also paradoxical, like a Vasarely painting or a *trompe d'oeil* box: "our acts of observation are what we experience as the everyday world." We do choose — living, as human beings do, yearning for design. But as with postmodernist fiction, physics thus inveigles the observer into accepting some responsibility for the putting together of truth. If the world pre-exists, the observer is logically incapable of affecting it; but if the observer *does* affect the environment, he becomes part of the world's continuing process. What restrains this practice from solipsism? Peraps cosmic will, Wolf suggests (the scientist enquiring after religion): perhaps the dreams and observations of God. Or perhaps, as the biologist Lewis Thomas frames an answer, the processes we see are all only parts of the unified *organism* we call the world.

"In brief," Ihab Hassan summarizes, partway through *The Right Promethean Fire* (Univ. Illinois), "relativity, uncertainty, complementarity, and incompleteness are not simply mathematical idealizations; they are concepts that begin to constitute our cultural languages; they are part of a new order of knowledge founded on both indeterminacy and immanence." His book says as much by its method as by its subject; an enquiry into "Imagination, Science, and Cultural Change," the text is disrupted to *enact* the new science — there are "intertexts" within the "texts," and "slippages" within the "frames," fragments of memoir both framing and shaping the substance of his insights. Ostensibly his book is about American culture at large ("indeterminacy surely need not deny an ideal of harmonious perfection") — but in some ways it seems without knowing it to be as much about Canadian culture in particular ("nor is strangeness sometimes but the action of an immanent future in our lives"). By extension, we might ask, need language fragment itself in order to comment on fragmentation? Is it not possible to dream or observe our way *through words* (as well as through numbers) towards coherence, logic, value, meaning? If we declare that "we are the masque: performance, performer, performed," are we merely taking refuge in an isolating Yeatsian trope, or do we thereby claim for ourselves once again an involvement with the world we thought we had lost?

* * *

The fact that most lay people closely identify the world of "science" with the world of "technology" creates a problem of interpretation as well as one of classification. People admire scientists and technical experts because they solve puzzles, create things, cure diseases, and generally make life better — and at the same time they are deeply suspicious of scientists and technical experts because they create puzzles, destroy things, cause dis-ease, and generally make life seem stranger and more unknowable. If the strangeness derives largely from the new vocabulary of number (we need mathematics to understand twentieth-century physics, and twentieth-century physics to understand the ideas of uncertainty and motion which permeate modern life), the suspicion derives largely from the fact that (whatever its positive byproducts), science has too often been put to destructive political use. As one of Robertson Davies's characters effortfully describes: "In Paracelsus's time the energy of universities resided in the conflict between humanism and theology; the energy of the modern university lives in the love-affair between government and science." Too true, but also a paradox: we live with the image of the mad genius in his laboratory concocting potions and plotting world takeover, with the moral equation between eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge and pursuing evil, and also with the bland assurance of quality that a doctor's white coat gives a television commercial for laundry soap or headache pills; as a culture we seem concurrently to believe all three. We yearn for the paradisal good life, but we do not yearn to go back to a pre-technological society to get it (Clifford Jolly may tell us that the Pleistocene Age was "a pleasanter time to live in . . . than the present," but we do not take him at face value); we talk of the "good old days" and elect to power governments that promise to retrieve them for us, but we know they can't, and won't, because times have changed — the need is more psychological than political, more ideological than logical, which invites manipulation. What the paradox suggests is that people live in the presence of change but always in the hope of order, and that they surrender to external authority (scientist, churchman, politician, tycoon), altogether too readily, suppressing their suspicion of the institutional structure because their fear of insecurity and uncertainty is greater still. What it also suggests is that a little more willingness to enquire into the unknown might have ramifications far beyond the results of any immediate enquiry. Scientists themselves divide on their interpretation of the results they get — the biologists and the information theorists assert the possibility of holistic pattern, while the physicists pursue the implications of randomness, the mathematics of fragmentation — and they understand the implications of each other's specialty all too little. But if people ever begin to surrender utterly to their inability to understand, even to congratulate themselves on their ignorance as though that somehow ratified their "specialist" expertise, then they open up territory for the ambitious (and usually no more adequately informed) to occupy, and they create opportunities for rule by fiat rather than by

shared desire. Too many people in the humanities in particular have written science off as numerically incomprehensible; others hang on desperately to the snippets of information they remember from schooldays or glean from *Time*. Yet they, like the scientists and all other people, are daily shaped by the currents of ideas around them — as true in an age of quantum mechanics and computers as it was in an age of positivism or a sun-centred universe — and insofar as they cannot afford to be unaware of the impact science has on ideas and life, they can only pretend now that the sea is silent, light is constant, time is steady, and the world is a Cartesian plane. The scientists in their turn can, one hopes, learn from the humanities to think associatively, can learn not to reduce culture — or all processes of understanding, verbal ones included — to simple systems of quantification. In other words, they cannot ignore each other, and the world they share.

* * *

Conclusions: 1. Everything connects. 2. Perhaps.

W.H.N.

H_2O

Henry Beissel

at the speed of light
a seed
contains the universe
that is
light cast into a black
hole

slows into darkness
explodes
a whirl of particles
grows
a beginning of elements
in a drop

of water the mystery
of matching
atoms of making
three
out of two
in time

rain drew blood
from stone
when only wind
swept
bleak landscapes
towards a birth

formula to make
flesh
of salt to force
clouds
into roots to melt
the sun

into green into fins
into fear
all that in a drop
of water
the chaos of order
uncertain

frenzy of molecules
clashing
electrons protons
forcing
salt into water
to reflect

the frenzy of molecules
clashing
electrons protons
forcing
fear into hearts
to know

the water's reflections
love
and age too —
oh
the terrible tides
of stars!

TO DARE TO ATTEMPT IMPIOUS WONDERS

Science & Canadian Literature

J. R. Nursall

THE PARADOX OF THESE TIMES is that things are not what they seem to be. We live enmeshed in a web of technological marvels, the principles and operations of which often we barely understand.

> The chances of survival on this earth
> are perhaps one to three now
> this year of the atom. Do not increase them
> by adding that strange word *love* to your vocabulary.[1]

That is indeed a problem, but there is hope in the possibility that equal in its power to the strange word *love* is the sweat-borne action of understanding. The poet must be careful that he is not substituting comfort and convenience for survival, mistaking soft for safe. The basis for both comfort and survival is the fit and proper application of science — our knowledge of the working of the universe. But do we realize it? David Suzuki tells us that, on the basis of his street interviews, most people see science as something that does not affect them and is of little concern to them.[2] In the United States, the White House worries that the American population is drifting towards "virtual scientific and technological illiteracy"[3] with the potentially catastrophic effect that many important national decisions will be made on the basis of ignorance and misunderstanding. These are serious matters that suggest a constriction of our vision and a weakening of our adaptation to the world as we make it. Love, without some direction from understanding, cannot save us. Understanding comprehends love; the depths of understanding must be plumbed for love to work its best. That is the part for literature to play in man's attempt to rationalize himself.

For my part, I shall quickly explore the nature of science — and technology, which is something else. I shall examine the relationship of science and literature, and see if the phantom of the Two Cultures can be appeased. I shall seek literary scientists and scientific litterateurs to ask what it is they can offer us in understanding.

Science is one of the great creative activities of man. Definitions of science abound, but for pragmatic purposes let us go to a committee of learned men. They will start us with our feet on the ground. The Frascati definitions of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) say, "Basic research [which I shall call 'basic science' later] is experimental or theoretical work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge of the underlying foundations of phenomena and observable facts, without any particular application or use in view."[4] If we grant the savants a certain leeway with the use of "phenomena," we have a definition we can use.

As an example of another definition, we can quote Wilder Penfield, who said that Science is the knowledge of physical phenomena while the Arts embrace all other forms of human knowledge.[5] This is not a workable definition, not only because it lacks any explanation of how science works, but more importantly because on one hand it casts everything into a pair of global categories of little analytic value, while on the other it is too restrictive in its "either-or." It raises a kind of fundamentalist C. P. Snowstorm. Both Penfield and Snow will appear later in these pages.

As is the case with any creative endeavour, science has its few prime practitioners, standing recognized, well above the thousands of lesser talents. The very best have insight and abilities, methods of procedure and incisive thought that are only dimly perceived by others, but the beauty and universality of their results demonstrate the value of their techniques. The intellectual achievement of grand science is homologous to the achievement of grand art, literature, or any mind-designed accomplishment.

Science as an intellectual activity is more open than any other. By this I mean that the practice of science is more than just the use of the imagination. It requires imagination bound to externals; it bears within itself a burden of proof. There is, with any result of science, the possibility of its being shown to be wrong, in a way that no work of art, no piece of literature can be shown to be wrong. Literature, art, or science may be shown to be bad, but only to science can "wrongness" be attributed, hence only to science is something other than a value judgment possible.

"Openness," as expressed here, is enforced in science because science deals with verifiable results. Science is undertaken according to rules, which do not necessarily constitute a formal "scientific method," but are rules of honesty, enforced by reiteration and repetition; of testing of probabilities; of establishing hypothesis and theory with the corollary of the possibility of the growth of knowledge and even substance; of formal publication, which, by exposing methods and data, allows, even calls for further testing and continued growth. This is the "Sense of consolidating progress which belongs to a science" spoken of by Northrop Frye.[6]

Scientists hardly ever make a statement without reference to "the literature," the very basis of their own endeavours.

The data of science are external; they are recognized, not invented. Explanation follows recognition, which is the famed inductive method. Imagination takes its leap at two stages: first, in the invention of methods to force recognition of phenomena (experimentation); second, in explanation (theorization). Both may be elegant and beautiful, and appreciation of them is expressed in those terms by practitioners.

The openness of science is to be contrasted with the closed nature of literature or art. The closed nature of, say, literature, is indicated by the fact that it is not reiterative or repetitive — it is unique in a way that science is not. Nor is it probabilistic, nor does it grow from inclusive theory. The subject matter of literature is internal and invented. Its publication exposes the inventions of the author for acceptance or rejection on the basis of the judgment of the audience — and "the power of the writer to bounce the reader into accepting what he says."[7]

If it is the case that science is "open" and literature "closed," are they then mutually exclusive? Can literature deal with science? These are simple questions for which answers readily leap out: no, they are not mutually exclusive, for they are both artificial; yes, literature can deal with science, as it should be able to deal with any subject. It is the author's problem to deal with his subject in an enlightening manner: by delineation and analysis of personality; by implication in plot; in imagery; or in any way to the limit of his imagination. If it is possible to explore the motives and emotions of Ginger Coffey or Hagar Shipley, why not those of an active researcher, someone flagellated by the need to know as much as possible about something, sooner than anyone else?

Is there any subject of that sort in Canadian literature? Not really, that I have seen. Perhaps Lesje Green gets close, but she is not a scientist originating data; she has intelligence, curiosity, and with them gains the satisfactions of a good technician. She seeks what is known, not what is not. Even so, her reactions to her problems are modified by her interests and training. Of course they are, to our advantage, for it is a rare occasion on which technical backgrounds are seen in literature to affect relationships. But the stupendous, egotistical and often annihilating drive of a productive, cutting-edge scientist is not there.[8]

Has it ever been? I know of one piece of literature in which the mind and attitude of a scientist is laid bare and his motivation made explicit. It is *The Life of Galileo* by Bertold Brecht. The memory of it colours all my observations on the possibilities of connection between literature and science. Towards the end of the play Galileo makes a general statement which says what modern philosophers of science say: "The pursuit of science seems to me to require particular courage. It is concerned with knowledge, achieved through doubt. Making

knowledge about everything available for everybody, science strives to make sceptics of them all."[9]

Science, perceived as broadly as possible, is still more complex than shown here so far. It has many parts; it is easy to distinguish basic science, applied science, and technology, though like all distinctions these are quite often not made. They are even denied at times, usually in fervent, democratic zeal. But I hold that there are differences (in which opinion I get support from the OECD Committee), and that literature should recognize them. That means that science explored in literature need not confine itself to the Galilean stratosphere, but that the biosphere of Lesje Green has some priority in exploration because it is nearer each of us and encompasses most of us in science.

For a definition of basic science we may return to the OECD. We may also paraphrase its committee for applied science: original investigation directed primarily towards a specific practical objective, i.e., science with intent. And technology: systematic use of knowledge and practical experience directed to producing, installing or improving processes, systems, and services. The three, basic science, applied science, and technology, are directly related, with fuzzy boundaries. Theories of electricity were utilized to develop a means of transmission of sound over distance; the telephone today is rather better than it was 50 years ago although its operating principles remain unchanged. Basic science established the possibility, applied science built it, and technology maintains and improves it.

What is of interest historically is that technology was much the earliest to appear. Man needed and provided goods and services long before he sought a theoretical explanation for their operation. Assimilative or applied science followed, marked by the change from Stone Age to Age of Metals. Creative natural science, basic science, is described as making an appearance about the middle of the sixteenth century, bringing promise of Utopia soon after, but really flowering only in the past 150 years — and seeming less Utopian in the process. Utopia, as a state of mind, is more a function of literature than science. "Reality is imperfection," says Ralph Gustafson.[10]

I have distinguished basic from applied science and both from technology because in the public's eye they are seldom separated and the sins of one are often visited on another. They are related and interdependent, which means that there is no reason why a scientist cannot move back and forth between them, and the best often do. Much modern science advances by using the latest technological machinery. These marvels, in turn, are developed by taking advantage of the latest applicable knowledge. But I insist that they are separate; they are separated by intent. Technology, of course, fits well into popular fiction, particularly of the sort recently described as "thinly novelized instruction manuals"[11] in which process is the main theme, syncopated, more or less, by frenetic plot. The strug-

gles of the scientist are rather different, but when they appear in literature very often they are directed to some (often malevolent) end — they are applied science. Rigorously controlled curiosity is not strong as a motivation among recent heroes of fiction. That is a pity, for as Northrop Frye has observed, "Between imagination and belief there is constant traffic in both directions."[12] Although Frye's context was different than mine here, what he has described, in addition to gods, philosophical positions, and political loyalties, is the escapement and mainspring of scientific action.

GOETHE CLAIMED THAT THE IMPULSE to understand the relations of the parts to the whole, which ruled his activities in science, was the same as his artistic impulse. I know of no better authority to support the claim of creative unity between science and the arts than Goethe, for he did reach pre-eminence in both fields and we must listen when he says that creative life is the same in science and in poetry. Goethe came to science in his mature years. Barker Fairley argues that it gave him discipline and that it put him at a far remove from "the average run of literary dreamers about nature of whom there was an abundance in his day"[13] and who are still around to pump out a sizeable proportion of our poetry. Fairley's comments on the discipline of Goethe are interestingly comparable to Forster's on H. G. Wells: "The addition of science has strengthened his mind and suborned his hysteria,"[14] although it must be recognized that Forster is rather less sympathetic to Wells than Fairley to Goethe.

Regrettably, Goethe is almost unique in near-modern times. Not even Voltaire, another marvel of energy who lived to a great age, produced new ideas both in science and the arts, although he mastered and championed Newtonian ideas. It is only for the ultra-exceptional that success does not lie with specialization.

Wilder Penfield, when he retired from a brilliant scientific career, said that he then lived the life of a professional writer. What came out as literature, then and earlier, was good, wholesome, and gave little insight to the mind and motives of science. His novels are well-organized and are provided with maps and handy lists of characters. That is tidy, but it hardly reveals essentials. His essays tend towards the inspirational. So Penfield is polar; though he saw both sides, he illuminated only one.

English literature has its writers who take, with more or less success, the subject of science and scientists into their bag. Dickens (e.g., *Dombey and Son, Bleak House*) described the consequences of technology on society. H. G. Wells worked on the fringe of science throughout his career and included science and scientists in his writing. In *Tono-Bungay,* George Ponderevo is distracted from the main events by his own scientific career, his social instincts are coloured by his concep-

tion of science, and Wells uses the text to comment on the attractions of science and to fictionalize scientific advances (for instance, the discovery of canadium, a mythical radioactive element — mythical, but nevertheless representing the state of an active science at the time of writing). I know of no writing of good fiction today in Canada that keeps us up to date in science.

C. P. Snow is another Englishman whose works of fiction have significantly utilized science. *The New Men* and *The Search* are from works specifically using science as a main theme. The one thing that science as a theme must accomplish is to transmit a sense of the attitude of scientists. Perhaps because that attitude is a result of training and discipline in stubborn rationality, it is only occasionally possible that a writer not scientifically trained can approximate the inner life of a scientist as hero. Even Brecht was trained in medicine, which must have deepened his insight, though I do not know of his giving credit to it.

> *Data, data, data*
> Sang the stars.[15]

Surely that is an opening. Stars provide entry for poet and scientist. E. W. R. Steacie, a Carlylean hero credited with taking the National Research Council of Canada into its period of greatness, said, "It seems to me that on historical grounds there is emphatically no incompatibility between science and the humanities."[16] Steacie goes further, saying that "science is one of the humanities, although technology is not."[17] Thomas Kuhn quotes another source: "The more carefully we try to distinguish artist from scientist, the more difficult our task becomes."[18] But this does not solve the problems of difference, because they do exist. Kuhn, in another context, comments on communities of practitioners of this or that, and makes each real and distinctive from others, by its possession of a common paradigm.[19] The idea of the Kuhnian paradigm has been embraced with enthuiasm by many scientists. The sense of a paradigm is a sense of shared commitments, a characteristic set of beliefs and preconceptions. So there are differences, and by them we can distinguish community differences between artists, scientists, and humanists, as well as within each group, and talk of chemists, physicists, and biologists among scientists. For that matter, paradigmatic differences can be used to distinguish organic from inorganic chemists, physical chemists from biochemists, and so on. But all share a plesiomorphous paradigm: imaginative, creative curiosity.

Even so, we are trapped by attitudes. We are told that

> All that scientists, as scientists, ever do
> Is to stick labels and numbers
> On things that are already there;
> And don't let them tell you differently.[20]

That is a terribly narrow and despairing view, and bad advice to boot. I tell

you differently. As I have tried to make explicit, scientists do not invent facts, but by exploring nature in imaginative and creative ways they may reveal incredible, profound and exquisite phenomena. It is the effects of the discovery of such phenomena on the discoverer himself or on the world in general that the writer can and should explore. As the exploration of the motivation and responses of such an unusual and creative being as Magnus Eisengrim enriches our literature tremendously, it should be equally valid and rewarding to follow, say, a fanciful physicist, for such a person may be emotionally driven, affected by his past and fearful of the future. In fact, it is difficult for a novelist or poet to avoid science, for we are embedded in our knowledge of nature and that is what scientists have done for us. In untold ways we are affected by this knowledge and our use of it. The insight of Heisenberg and Skinner are echoed in the words of V. S. Naipaul: "As I write, my own view of my actions alters."[21] How subtly are we influenced and how seldom de we recognize it.

C. P. Snow made popular the idea of two intellectual cultures, the literary and the scientific, separate from each other and uncomprehending. Although Snow spoke primarily on a British theme, his conclusions were generalized in the English-speaking world as a single debate: arts *vs.* science. Well, indeed there are problems. For example, a recent report of a conference between physicists and historians noted that there was a failure "to produce any effective interchange."[22] The physicists talked mostly among themselves and are said to have "rather misunderstood the few questions from historians." I suppose such examples could be totted up and analyzed statistically, but the data are not profound. Both science and the arts, however either of these is expressed, are artefacts, and that alone is sufficient to unite them. They are of one stream along which the current of thought can carry ideas and insights from one place to another. Although it may be a quick run in one direction and hard paddling in the other, source and destination for ideas are never isolated.

F. R. Leavis argues thus, in thunderous passages, palisaded by parentheses, dissected by commas.[23] Unsparing, infuriatingly righteous, Leavis demands humaneness, declares the inseparability of a transmitted culture and pleads for standards to which an educated public may appeal. Northrop Frye has taken a somewhat more understated view. He sees the separation of "two cultures" as inevitable and bound to increase; "... it cannot possibly be cured by having humanists read more popular science or scientists read more poetry. The real problem is not the humanist's ignorance of science or vice versa, but the ignorance of both humanist and scientist about the society of which they are both citizens."[24] Though mild in tone it is a well-stamped ticket to perdition. Nor does C. T. Bissell offer much more help. He has suggested that those who look to science for answers based on "calm objectivity and ingrained cosmopolitanism" may "preach a naive gospel," and he named C. P. Snow and H. G. Wells as

exemplars.[25] If true, what does that do to the value of science as a theme of literature?

We seem to keep coming back to the same cluster of problems. The benefits expected of science are greater than can be delivered, and science is at fault because it cannot deliver that which is expected of it. Is science just "an elastic band, holding a bundle / of small white filing-cards / printed with important facts"?[26]

TWO THEMES SEEM TO PERVADE the literature and other writing in Canada that deals publicly with science: Frankenstein and Prometheus — monster-maker and bringer of fire. These are two sides of the science model, though Mary Shelley herself called Frankenstein the modern Prometheus. Indeed, the Shelley circle seemed to try to stay *au courant* with advances in natural philosophy and took it as a proper and expected topic of their writing. Maybe then one mind could enfold and understand much of what was known. That does not obtain now — there are tens of thousands of journals of science alone, transmitting arcane facts and fancies in all the major languages of the world.

That leaves us with attitude. It is probably the most important contribution science can make to humanity. It certainly is the aspect of science most amenable to literary treatment, hence exegesis. The scientific attitude comprises sceptical curiosity, which it attempts to satisfy by logical procedures. Science is as simple as that, but as it builds its own base, and accretes technology, it often appears monstrous, foreign and impenetrable. And many a specialist likes to maintain a certain privacy, or glories in the appearance of mystery.

Frankenstein in his laboratory may, in the public mind, prototypify science at a technological frontier. At least latterly, with a cinematic glaze, he seems to. Originally, Frankenstein was not often, and increasingly reluctantly, at his bench. It was the humanitarian consequences that motivated the story; the science was minor and the scientist regretful. Indeed the monster himself seemed to be more torn by human emotion than moved by inhuman motor connections.

Today, the picture of the isolated, lonely scientist is entirely incorrect. The best science is still done by the best scientists, those with imagination, energy, single-mindedness, and motivation, but it also calls for institutional money, often in large amounts, to provide the human and technological assistance. Governmental assistance to science is now rated in proportion of Gross National Product (whereat it may be noted in passing that Canada lies very low in the scale in any international comparison — which may reflect its dim appearance in our society and its small place in our literature).[27] Scientists do not work alone; they work in teams, with colleagues, students, research associates, technicians. The enterprise is collective. Right at the boundaries of knowledge, science is as much like a pro-

fessional athletic league as anything, with teams competing for an elusive prize — the answer to a puzzle. J. D. Watson has told us something of that life[28] and Jacob Bronowski suggested his account, or at least its protagonists, as models for scientists in literature.[29] Scientific research is engrossing for the people involved; its results are often dramatic for the public in general. Moreover, it is unending through the full career, unless the individual is sidetracked by administrative duties or fame.

The primitive legendary account of the curiosity of the spirit of man, now recognized as the motive force of science, is the story of Prometheus. Present before the gods appeared, the Titans were suppressed and supplanted by the gods, but the irrepressible Prometheus was midwife to knowledge and tutor of mankind and, with his forethought, attempted to box the spites.

Politically involved with the gods, threatened, tortured, and occasionally forgiven by them, his good works often undone by the pandoric ignorance of mankind, Prometheus persisted in his search for understanding and safe use of the forces of nature. We faintly perceive Prometheus's labours on our behalf; indeed, it is said that we wear rings with stone settings in memory of his Caucasian chains.

F. P. Grove proclaimed the Promethean fate for mankind.[30] Worthwhile goals, he said, are unattainable, but the failed attempt is glorious, even though we remain shackled to a mountain. Art that does not mirror the Promethean fate, he continued, is untrue in its fundamentals. That sounds as if it makes tragedy universal, which is truly pessimistic and restrictive. Still, we can escape it as individuals, for our concerns are not normally for universals. We can work quite happily with limited goals. Our operational dimensions are much smaller than the universal limits. For instance, the Laws of Thermodynamics place inexorable restrictions on universal reactions (there is only so much energy, and its upper and lower limits are the same), but smaller, local orbits allow all sorts of ingenious reactions and apparently improbable uses of energy.

Margaret Atwood, as speechwriter, sees as clearly as anyone the struggle for knowledge that a scientist undertakes:

> Since I dared
> to attempt impious wonders
>
> I must pursue
> that animal I once denied
> was mine.

and the frustration that may accompany profound research and that will require the utmost ingenuity, the most dogged persistence, the fiercest striving; for all too often, in place of results there is the answer: "I will not come when you call."[31]

That is the spirit; that is where literature can illustrate scientific effort.

There *has* been a truly Promethean figure in Canada. His name was Henry Marshall Tory. His accomplishments were so vast in the Canadian scene that an estimation of his influence can hardly be made. A simplified listing of his accomplishments shows him to have been involved in the establishment of the University of British Columbia, the University of Alberta, the Research Council of Alberta, the Khaki University, the National Research Council of Canada, and Carleton University, as well as serving on innumerable commissions for federal and provincial interests. Threatened, tortured and occasionally forgiven by his masters, Tory persisted in his task to make Canada intellectually independent. It is said that "the air about Tory was never still for very long; he moved always to the snapping flutter of banners."[32]

One does not hear much of him these days. On my shelves I see two books entitled *The Canadians*.[33] In one, published in 1979, there is no mention of Tory. In the other, from 1967, Tory receives four index references, all of which relate to one 20-page chapter called "Science and Medicine." The probable reason for this is that Prometheus was silent. Tory's written output, except for letters[34] and reports, was negligible. A couple of introductory books of algebra and the editorship of a pedestrian *History of Science in Canada* were his contribution. His forte was action; he saw what Canadians needed and he did his utmost to get it for them — whether they recognized their needs or not. Many of use owe the safety of our academic perches to the nests of learning he planned and started well.

Scientists, too, recognize Prometheus and the dangers a generous and encompassing spirit faces. There is for Canada a *Guide Michelin* to the back country of science administration as travelled in recent times. It was written by F. R. Hayes[35] from the vantage of a lifetime of first-class science and top level institutional administration. Salty, outspoken, witty, and deeply concerned, Hayes has been able to characterize the popular denigration of science and its near-strangulation, perhaps inadvertent, by political control. To his Prometheus, which was Science itself, he provided a Pandora in the form of Senator Maurice Lamontagne, who opened the box of spites with the publication of the report of his commission.[36] Only delusive hope remains; Canadian scientists call it MOSST.[37] There is the mother-substance of a whole series of establishment novels in that stuff, especially in the transcriptions of the hearings.

Civilization Exponentiating: an odd phrase I heard from Carl Sagan, CRT-engendered[38] to express our desires and raise our hopes for ever-increasing mechanically and electronically cradled life. This becomes the world of science fiction, that strange and largely preposterous genre that has replaced tales of magic and fairies. Science fiction has been claimed to be a window to the future. What it is, of course, is an imaginative projection of technology, and never very far at that. No science fiction writer, dreaming generalities for the future, has the power of a technologist planning specifics for tomorrow. We are regularly surprised by what

is brought forth by applied scientists. Roger Bacon, in the thirteenth century, predicted mechanically powered ships and flying machines, submarines and cars, but he did not direct science to them, he simply gave voice to a desire. Such devices were developed in due course, when it became possible by the concomitance of knowledge to make that step towards increasing convenience, so desired by man.

As an example of the power of science fiction to resemble and affect the future, we can take Ralph Centennius's piece "The Dominion in 1983."[39] J. R. Colombo, in his introduction to it, quotes Lawrence Lande as saying that it is a work of "science fiction — probably one of the earliest in Canada — brilliantly executed with many accurate forecasts, especially Chapter 2 on Science." I think Centennius's piece is just silly. His predictions in science are no more accurate than the ones he makes in demography, economics, politics or social advance. It is sort of fun to read, but much less so than, say, any one of the "Sunshine Sketches," and to much less value. One cannot blame Centennius for missing the future. Sincerity, concern and patriotism do not guarantee sight of things to come. We cannot bespeak our expectations. In the web of guesses that is cast over the future, some meshes are bound to entangle fact, but most fall hitless to the ground. What the best of science fiction may do is to raise questions of ethical concern, as by Aldous Huxley or Olaf Stapledon. Dorothy Livesay speaks of this, setting a hierarchy of concerns to be mourned, then choosing from among them:

> . . . deed neglected, desecrations done
> Not on the lovely body of the world
> But on man's building heart, his shaping soul.
> Mourn, with me, the intolerant, hater of sun:
> Child's mind maimed before he learns to run.[40]

Livesay's words reflect equally on past and future: failed dreams; bespoke expectations.

Science fiction deals little with science. It tries to stretch technology, do wonders with meccano, and generally falls behind real life.

CANADA HAS DONE WELL with its describers of fierce nature. Jack London, C. G. D. Roberts, E. T. Seton, Vilhjalmur Stephansson, Sheila Burnford, Fred Bodsworth, Farley Mowat, James Houston, Grey Owl, make a sampler, with scenes for every taste. These names are catalogued by Alec Lucas.[41] Most of us, I daresay, have been influenced one way or another by such writers and cherish our own image of the true north strong and free. Only in these high temperate (temperate?) latitudes do the Seasons roll by with such inexorable pontificality: high ritual and circumstance for each. Then, for each an outpouring

of good, bad, and indifferent verse, tinged variously with biology, meteorology, physics and biochemistry.

> . . . frost-fingered wind rolls snow
> Through lifeless stubble,
> And sap hides in the roots of things[42]
>
> *
>
> Spring is here, the breezes blowing,
> four inches of top-soil going, going;
> farm ducks rolling across the prairie;
> Spring is here — how nice and airy![43]
>
> *
>
> I grazed the green as I fell
> and in my blood
> the pigments flowed like sap.
> All through my veins the green
> made a lacey tree.[44]
>
> *
>
> And soon, too soon, around the cumbered eaves
> Sly frosts shall take the creepers by surprise,
> And through the wind-touched reddening woods shall rise
> October with the rain of ruined leaves.[45]

There is, too, the literature of personalization of the creatures of nature, everywhere a fantasy of absolutely certain charm and interest. A kind of sociobiology enters into these works. Sociobiology, defined as the systematic study of the biological basis of all social behaviour, is currently a widely discussed, controversial region of science. It deals with heredity, kinship, behaviour of all sorts and altruism. It takes as one of its functions "to reformulate the foundations of the social sciences in a way that draws these subjects into the Modern Synthesis [of evolutionary theory]."[46] Here is a scientist proclaiming the oneness of man's curiosity. We are predisposed towards sociobiology's conclusions, because we have been told of puzzled but instinctive curlews, we have been told of the blind determination of misplaced house pets, we have been told of the joys of freedom of the otter. Yet this gives us a certain uneasiness with scientific sociobiology. Although its data require the highest standards of quantitation and the most rigorous use of scientific methods, we are always aware of the literary licence available to the storyteller who uses nature as his scene and creatures as his protagonists. The imagination of man is one for literature or for science. The results of science are put in place by imagination, not by numbers, which only serve to support conclusions. What of the licence that is used?

Of the nature stories, in many ways the most complex and certainly the most unusual is F. P. Grove's myrmecological fantasy.[47] The adventures of the ants he

follows make sense if one takes the deeply ironic myrmecocentric point of view that "our own race stands at the very apex of creation as far as that creation is completed today." The ant lore presented is relatively accurate, certainly for the time it was written; Grove is punctilious in reference and clearly was familiar with ants from more than the picnic viewpoint.

Not only that, but Grove comprehended much of the fine flavour and challenge of science. In the great argument of Anna-zee, the core of science is revealed when the question "How?" — when answered — is shown to lead to "Why?" "How" can be answered, but leads only, and infinitely, to further questions; science supersedes itself. Grove's statement, "The achievement of any ant of science is merely the basis for the achievement of another ant of science," is absolutely Kuhnian, made 20 years before Thomas Kuhn pointed out that, "unlike art, science destroys its past."[48] It is part of the openness of science: everything is exposed, to be changed.

Grove, in Anna-zee, says, "In fact, what was left of the science of a few millenia ago? Names, that was all; and, perhaps, a few things to laugh at. Venerable names — names revered in spite of the fact that the theories, hypotheses, and so-called discoveries with which they were associated have long since disappeared into the limbo of a forgotten childhood of thought."

Kuhn says, "Science textbooks are studded with the names and sometimes with portraits of old heroes, but only historians read old scientific works. In science new breakthroughs do initiate the removal of suddenly outdated books and journals from their active position in a science library to the desuetude of a general depository."

In the progress of science "Why?" is unanswerable and not scientific, but is demanded constantly when "How?" is answered. Grove's philosopher-ant proclaims that the sole and exclusive ultimate value of a fact is that it allows the question "Why?" "Ants are constituted in such a way that they must ever try to storm heaven. They are suspended between two worlds: the world of the knowable and the world of the unknowable."

Grove's ants observe, speculate, and erect hypotheses, which are testable, in the most modern style. He has tried and, I think, largely succeeded in capturing an essence of science among his artful ants.

Moreover, this represents a more mature and reasoned position than Grove himself took some 20 years earlier when, in his essay on "Realism in Literature,"[49] he described science as being "in a state of everlasting flux; it changes almost from moment to moment; and certainly from year to year." At that time he misinterpreted the flux as an instability that reflected indecision — a kind of fiddling rather than a building. In the 20 years between the essay and the novel, Grove changed his denial of the ability of science to interpret phenomena to a recognition that "Why?" is not a scientific question, and with that, to recognize, at least

implicitly, that there are other modes of interpretation than by way of "Why?" Even in his earlier essays Grove specified the fundamental unity of the higher activities of man: religion, science and art, expressing goodness, truth and beauty. "[E]ven today we cannot divide them without disastrous results."

A more superficial expression of science is widespread in current literature. That is the recognition, description, and influence of technology on our lives. It may be in the form of a simple glaze, or catalogue lists popular in drugstore literature ("Yes. It's a Zeiss. A two-lens automatic Reflex f/3.5."). [50] It may provide the essential setting for a novel, it may be thematic, or it may just give a comfortable feeling to the reader, for it is what he can see and feel and is surrounded by. It puts reality into the imaginary; it makes literature almost tactile. It reduces strain on the imagination.

I am not aware of a body of science-delimited poetry of consequence anywhere, but we can expect to find expressions of attitude, celebration of technology or even the establishment of scene. Even these possibilities are sometimes forgone by poets with a prejudice.

We have heard David Andrew say that a scientist can tell nothing worthwhile of a river, but that is not so. Perhaps he cannot "calibrate serenity in so many decibels per gurgling . . . ," but he can extrapolate to history; he can define a cool, curving world; he can, with elegant geometry, describe a course, and, in playful spirit on a sand-table, build and live along with a fluviatile creation of his own. This can teach him much of the spirit of rivers. Were he so inclined, the scientist could describe his feelings and his motives as creator in a poem. Why does he not? Perhaps because as a scientist his approach to understanding is in itself satisfying; his play is not with a tapestry of words but with a model of ideas. Only a proscriptive idealogue would suggest that one is greater than the other. Nor can we afford to let go of either. Poets tell us of the need to understand ourselves and the world.

> Sometimes I think gravity's just man's hunger
> holding things together
> He wants to belong so bad.[51]

Or again:

> my desire
> to meet myself
> is so great
> I could eat it.[52]

Science is one of the paths by which we can reach meaning in ourselves; if it is ignored by literature, our search is incomplete.

There is a lot of poetry published in Canada, much of it very good. So far, poets have explored mostly technology, celebrating artefacts and the superiority of man

over nature, which is perhaps the last of his great Bronze Age misapprehensions. Watch The 6000, beautifully characterized, take its place to do man's will:

> A lantern flashed out a command,
> A bell was ringing as a hand
> Clutched at a throttle, and the bull,
> At once obedient to the pull,
> Began with bellowing throat to lead
> By slow accelerating speed
> Six thousand tons of caravan
> Out to the spaces — there to toss
> The blizzard from his path across
> The prairies of Saskatchewan.[53]

It is glorious — and dead false. I remember, long after that poem was written, the winter in Saskatchewan (was it 1947?) when trains were swallowed up by blizzards and left entombed till spring, thirty feet beneath the surface of the snow!

But I take a special example to make a special point. A biologist, as one kind of scientist, matures to the recognition that every species is successful in its own terms, that every species (including us) is the product of its own evolution, and that the forces of nature, physical and biological, still determine the ultimate course, despite man's fearful wish that it were not so. One characteristic of science is that it does depreciate the concept *imperium hominis* and reduce man's ego. Maybe that in itself is thought to be undesirable for purposes of literature. If so, that in itself depreciates literature.

If we stay with E. J. Pratt we see the poet, *par excellence*, of material man. His assumptions are simple and honest. He illustrates superbly; his pictures never expose a soul. His compulsive cataloguing of things shows the end, not the processes of technology and science. Pratt produced encyclopaedias of faunas ("The Great Feud"), naval technology and practice ("Behind the Log"), he rivalled Janes in his descriptions of boats ("Dunkirk"), and he linked them all with astronomy, anatomy, and ancient and modern geography. Pratt's is technological poetry, skilful and attractive constructions that stir admiration and emotion, but do not set us on new ways.

A step further along, we come to perceived demonic science, a response to the unease felt towards cool intellectualism. Anyone understanding, or seeming to understand, those things which are preferred to be seen as mysteries, is suspect and open to scorn, for mysteries are easier to accept and easier to blame than our own irrationality or misunderstanding.

Like Moebius's strip, this argument has reversible sides:

> And being gods to themselves
> grinding lenses and finding new beasts
> in human semen ditchwater monsters

peering beyond the moon
to reach the dark side of knowledge
where people die and worse
they don't know why they lived.[54]

One side is simply a continuation of the other. There is no dark side of knowledge, save ignorance. The adventure and value of science is that it can illuminate the darkness and disperse it. Wilful denial of that is simple obfuscation. One thing science does know is that it has a never-ending task, because each scene illuminated reveals new roads, new corners, new intriguing shadows. That is one of the chief experiences of science. Though it be imperfect, unfinished, and worked by inconstant man, science is necessary and should be celebrated. George Orwell knew that: "In Newspeak there is no word for 'Science.' The empirical method of thought, on which all the scientific achievements of the past were founded, is opposed to the most fundamental principles of IngSoc."[55] The transcendence of a model system left no place for empirical thought or study, and certainly not for new knowledge or deeper understanding. I borrow a phrase from Leon Eisenberg[56] to say that "mysticism, hermeneutics, and transcendental rapture" are no substitutes for science and reason. Northrop Frye is right to say "We have so much less to fear from science than from a misuse of words."[57] To avoid science in literature becomes a disuse of words, and that too may be a fearful error.

THERE IS NO NEED FOR SCIENCE to perfuse literature. It is but one of the interests and occupations of man and under many circumstances plays no direct role in the details of his affairs. But it is not usual for science to be universally absent from a modern literature. From a limited experience, it seems to me that Quebec literature dwells little on matters of science, even though Camille Laurin seems to believe that science can be packaged and directed the same as social propaganda. Laurin, in planning his Utopia, has either missed, or perhaps agrees with Frye's dictum that "No society can plan for its own culture unless it restricts the output of culture to socially predictable standards."[58]

By and large, the poetry and prose of Quebec these days is intensely personal in either the individual or the collective sense, echoing the parochial celebration of the land. There is beautiful science being done in Quebec, but as a universal subject it is, for now, irrelevant to the narrow needs of that self-isolated nation and is left out of the voice of its writers.

À la droite du silence
Un peuple de patience
Se lève
Pour quitter sa nuit.[59]

The struggle is for an immediate end; science is seen as a luxury. It will appear in literature when identity needs are satisfied. Unrealized by most writers, it could be of help even now, for it will be a significant part of whatever identity emerges.

The beauty of form provides aesthetic experience, "but rarely do [writers] refer to the beauty of process or *function*."[60] Form is fixed: it is the product, it is the image, it is the still photograph advertising the movie. Movies form a continuous sequence; the most recent movie is, in our experience, really just a continuation of the last one we saw, and so back to the time we began going to the cinema. It is when we see the old stills that we realize that changes have occurred. During the movie itself, we do not realize that our response must be changing too.

Science deals with process; literature deals with form. That could be a great aphorism; regrettably it is not precisely true. However, bits of reality do stick to it. I reiterate that science is more open than literature. Literature is more closed than science. Literature tends to encompass its subject in its analysis; science tries to pave a segment of a road. Of course process is dealt with in literature, often deliberately and extensively: *Jalna*, for instance, or more effectively in *A Dance to the Music of Time*. Nonetheless, each of these is sharply circumscribed, with little past and no future. At least I know of no sequels by successors to original authors that have themselves had any real success. On the other hand, succession is the business of science. This means that there is a qualitative difference between literature and science, but neither does it deny the fact that both are activities of the same creature, nor does it make a rule that literature cannot represent science. Literature can, and should, take the still photographs that record some instant in the process of science and thus provide what could be a profoundly annotated picture of us ourselves in one of our modes of imaginativeness and creativity.

Margaret Atwood has no section on "Science" in *Survival*. What does that mean? For one thing, it may suggest that there remains a belief in the dichotomy of science and art as human endeavours, that instead of human creativity being a centre from which results radiate in all directions into an expanding sphere of experience, each activity of mankind is a self-centred puttering. That suggests to me that we are early closeted with our limited interests and can expect little advantage from other sorts of experiences. What a paralytic portent! Nor do I think that Atwood means such a thing, for as much as any active writer that I know, she involves science, its contributions and its concepts in her work implicitly (Frankenstein) and explicitly (R.O.M. *recurrens*).

If the creative activities of man can be thought of as the ever-expanding outward growth of interpretive understanding, powered by a single creative source, specific in the biological sense, i.e., belonging to the species man, then it is possible to view the results of his creativity in a global sense. Our present status, the

frontiers of our attempts to live fully and to understand that life, then are represented by the surface of that globe, the shell of a sphere.

Such a globe has a geography. On its surface one might find more or less discretely, the continent of literature, the kingdom of prose and poetry in the empire of words. Over the globe, music, say, may be displaced in one direction, and science in another. All will have their provinces and satrapies; often there will be shared jurisdictions. But the most important attribute of this metaphor is that all are on the same surface and, even if polarly displaced, one can be reached from another. Travel between seemingly isolated regions is possible. A bit of a sense of adventure, a willingness to sample other customs uncondescendingly and a recognition that motivations here and there are not widely different, will allow the traveller to discover that the natives are friendly.

Therefore, literature can treat science. It may be by an open-mouthed traveller in a foreign land, full of misconceptions about awesome wonders or fanciful tales of not yet explored regions, or it may deal with the experience of people immersed in their work, affected by it as well as by the same emotions and outside forces that affect us all.

Love and understanding are interchangeable here. The writer has a chance to help save us.

> The biochemist exhales words which few can swallow,
> the professor drones out truths which none will follow,
> and on a bushel of talk and a hi-diddle-diddle
> sits the Saviour Poet dangerously there in the middle.[61]

Science in Canadian literature? — it's all opportunity!

NOTES

[1] Raymond Souster, "Memo to the Human Race" (1952), *Collected Poems of Raymond Souster*, Vol. 1 (Ottawa: Oberon, 1980), p. 153.

[2] Speech to the University of Alberta, *Folio*, 17 (20 November 1980), pp. 3-10.

[3] Clive Cookson, "Notes from Washington," *C.A.U.T. Bulletin*, 27 (December 1980), p. 11.

[4] Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. *The Measurement of Scientific and Technical Activities* (Paris: Frascati Manual, 1975).

[5] "Science, The Arts, and The Spirit," *Second Thoughts* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1970), p. 1.

[6] *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton Univ. Press, 1971), p. 8.

[7] E. M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (1927; rpt. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1976), p. 82.

[8] It should be noted that Margaret Atwood has had long time fascination with the illustrative catalogues of science, or at least with the Royal Ontario Museum and, despite her protests, she finds herself "dragged to the mind's end / deadend, the roar of the bone- / yard, I am lost / among the mastodons and beyond." Perhaps we

there see the gestation of Lesje Green. Margaret Atwood, "A Night in the Royal Ontario Museum" in *The Animals in That Country* (Toronto: Oxford Univ. Press, 1968), pp. 20-21.

[9] (London: Methuen, 1963), Scene 14.

[10] "Dr. Johnson Kicks Hocking's Shin," *Rivers Among Rocks* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1960), poem 29.

[11] Thomas Hopkins, review of *The Clan of the Cave Bear* by Jean Auel, *Maclean's* (6 October 1980), pp. 64-65.

[12] *The Well-Tempered Critic* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1963), p. 150.

[13] *A Study of Goethe* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1947), p. 201.

[14] Forster, p. 34.

[15] Ralph Gustafson, "Four Songs for Antiquated Music — Transfigured Night," *Rivers*, poem 40.

[16] J. D. Babbitt, ed., *Science in Canada. Selections from the Speeches of E. W. R. Steacie* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1965), p. 68.

[17] Babbitt, p. 74.

[18] "Comment on the Relations of Science and Art" (1969); rpt. in T. S. Kuhn, *The Essential Tension* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1977), p. 341.

[19] "Second Thoughts on Paradigms" (1974); in *Essential Tension*, pp. 293-319.

[20] David Andrew, "Pure and Applied Rivers," *The Lure of Lanark* (Ottawa: Borealis, 1974), p. 19.

[21] *The Mimic Men* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1967), p. 219.

[22] *Science*, 207 (1 February 1980), p. 517.

[23] *Nor Shall My Sword* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1972).

[24] "Varieties of Literary Utopias," *Daedalus*, 94, No. 2 (Spring 1965), pp. 329-30.

[25] *The Strength of the University* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1968), p. 237.

[26] Margaret Atwood, "Provisions" in *The Animals in That Country*, p. 1.

[27] I have dealt with some of these matters in a report to the Alberta Society of Professional Biologists, "Biology and Science Policy in Canada," *Biology, Science Policy and the Public, a Symposium* (Edmonton: A.S.P.B., 27-28 April 1978), pp. 28-58.

[28] *The Double Helix* (New York: Atheneum, 1968).

[29] "Honest Jim and the Tinker Toy Model," *The Nation*, 206 (18 March 1968), pp. 381-82.

[30] *It Needs To Be Said* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1929), pp. 88-89.

[31] Margaret Atwood, *Speeches for Dr. Frankenstein* (Bloomfield Hills, Mich.:

[32] Mel Thistle, *The Inner Ring* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1966), p. 212.

[33] J. M. S. Careless and R. C. Brown, eds., *The Canadians 1867-1967* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1967); George Woodcock, *The Canadians* (Don Mills: Fitzhenry and Whiteside, 1979).

[34] I have not seen all the letters myself, but the samples quoted in Thistle (see footnote 32) and Corbett show a man literate, incisive, well-ordered, and clearly directed towards an end. His vision was broad and his confidence overwhelming.

The letters, it seems to me, would be a goldmine for the biographical novelist. E. A. Corbett, *Henry Marshall Tory, Beloved Canadian* (Toronto: Ryerson, 1954).

[35] *The Chaining of Prometheus* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1973).

[36] "A Science Policy for Canada," *Report of the Special Committee of the Senate on Science Policy* (Ottawa): Volume 1: A Critical Review: Past and Present (1970); Volume 2: Targets and Strategies for the Seventies (1972); Volume 3: A Government Organization for the Seventies (1973); Volume 4: Progress and Unfinished Business (1977).

[37] Ministry of State for Science and Technology.

[38] CRT — cathode ray tube, the increasingly ubiquitous device across the surface of which flit the green letters and numbers, or the coloured pictures of computers, word-processors (!) and television.

[39] Ralph Centennius, "The Dominion in 1983," in J. R. Colombo, ed., *Other Canadas* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson, 1979), pp. 296-319.

[40] "Of Mourners," in Ralph Gustafson, ed., *The Penguin Book of Canadian Verse* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1959), pp. 167-68.

[41] "Nature Writers and the Animal Story," in Carl F. Klinck, ed., *Literary History of Canada* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1976), Vol. 1, pp. 364-88.

[42] James A. MacNeill, "Chinook," *Prairiefire* (Saskatoon: Western Extension College Educational Publishers, 1976), p. 16.

[43] P. G. Hiebert, "Song to the Four Seasons," in F. R. Scott and A. J. M. Smith, eds., *The Blasted Pine* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1957), p. 73.

[44] P. K. Page, "Summer," in *The Penguin Book of Canadian Verse*, pp. 202-03.

[45] Archibald Lampman, "September," in *The Penguin Book of Canadian Verse*, pp. 71-73.

[46] E. O. Wilson, *Sociobiology: The New Synthesis* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1975), p. 4.

[47] *Consider Her Ways* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1947). Anna-zee's argument occurs on p. 167 ff.

[48] Thomas S. Kuhn, "Comments on the Relations of Science and Art" (1965), in *Essential Tensions*, p. 345.

[49] *It Needs To Be Said*, p. 56.

[50] Hugh Garner, *Death in Don Mills* (1975; rpt. Toronto: Bantam, 1976).

[51] Tom Farley, "Gravity," in *The Last Spaceman* (Ottawa: Borealis, 1974), p. 42.

[52] Miriam Mandel, "Group Therapy," in *Station 14* (Edmonton: Treefrog, 1977), p. 21.

[53] E. J. Pratt, "The 6000," Northrop Frye, ed., *The Collected Poems of E. J. Pratt* (2nd Ed.) (Toronto: Macmillan, 1958), pp. 58-60.

[54] Al Purdy, "Atomic Museum," in *Sex and Death* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1973), pp. 123-24.

[55] *Nineteen Eighty-four* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1949), p. 198.

[56] "The Social Imperatives of Medical Research," *Science*, 198 (16 December 1977), p. 1105-10.

[57] *The Well-Tempered Critic*, p. 47.

[58] *Anatomy of Criticism*, p. 348.

[59] Gilles Marsolais, "Aube," in *La Mort d'un Arbre* (Montréal: Librairie Déom, 1967), p. 36.

[60] Harold J. Brodie, *Fungi, Delight of Curiosity* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1978), p. 32. But listen — "L'eau: / Je me suis changée en neige / pour danser / avec le vent." Félix-Antoine Savard, *Aux Marges du Silence* (Québec: Editions Garneau, 1975), p. 62. The poets can bring bright understanding to us all.

from a continuation of

LOG ENTRIES

Christopher Dewdney

WINTER CENTRAL

A spill contained in the fissure of light admitted by its own manifestation. An illumination of the crystalline moss of slanting light fissured by the lens of the control data truck. The surveillance car behind the control data van carries the gamma radiation equipment necessary for these types of covert "hot" waste dumps. The van is on its way to the exchange centre.

The visitation of the luminous discharge is correct in the seething mass of frozen light waves already parting for the control blind. The figure, discernible only after computer enhancement, standing in the centre of the luminous discharge. The lens held by the hand carries filament waste-disposal sea of crystals, imperfect by the highway maintenance teams. Control data imperfect response to the van maintaining radio silence in the absolute surveillance of the anterior vehicle. Astounded luminous figure holding the cameral to the light-spill a fissure dump in the hot light of central winter. The image taken away by their heat, the image deflected by transmitted images from the bicameral care-package following closely. Visited by a luminous discharge of gases in the image clarification process. Wafer by-product of the programming, a non-actual event. Identity withheld for security reasons, as the negligible remnants of the countless passings fry the ice into a frilly brocade of tormented hydrogen.

* * *

directional leakage accounting for only 2% of our de-coded material. Data-base was originally detected after assembly of a mam-

milian receiver sensitive enough to override hardware ambivalence. The receiver began to masturbate somewhere in the range of 1,700 to 1,800 megahertz.

Running a tracing program on a fractionated D.N.A. extract paralleled with intelligence drag the time-factor cut in so fast we thought we'd run it backwards. By the time we'd stripped down the synchro the origin-program had run out of amino proteins. Triangulation of

"Then data-base talked to us and then the receiver was taken away."

* * *

As frequency monitors working in a linkage system outside of history we are faced with many responsibilities. We must sustain our prime objective in the shifting data-base priorities. In the face of equipment limitations we must perfect a helix sensitive enough to anticipate frequency shifts. Only at this point will localization be possible, for our perceived vulnerability is unqualified in the search mode.

phase sector control Niagara

EAST KOOTENAY ILLUMINATION

Tom Wayman

As I drove in summer along the valley
between the Purcells and the high wall of the Rockies,
the road speeding north through forests
and out to broad vistas of lakes or heights of land

I heard the earth

say: when you know the blue of the sky
does not extend to the sun,
when you feel *there is the star we swing around*
blazing this morning above the apparent horizon,

you sense that this planet, this white-and-blue ball
turning through space
watches what happens
with benign indifference.
Formed of matter which originated
immense distances away, the earth
is intrigued to see what occurs in its interior
or on its surface,
wishes all living beings well,
yet is unconcerned. Much is at stake
for any species, but not for the world.
That which humans find beautiful, and threaten,
the earth does not treasure. Atoms
are what are marvellous to the planet:
the atmosphere can carry smoke, lose oxygen,
allow more ultraviolet in, fill with radioactive dust,
the globe remains whole; pollution or species death
is merely a rearrangement of molecules
and not a loss. The earth observes
as if it attends a play, unmoved by
the outcome, although it wants the actors to succeed
because of its friendly nature.
"Thrive, thrive," the earth says,
its only law, and if a species proves unstable
or destructive, another will replace it
or won't. This is still a world
if it rolls lifeless around the sun —
the planet remembers when its atmosphere
was nitrogen and carbon dioxide
before photosynthesizing organisms
appeared; it remembers when it had no atmosphere.
And when in some cataclysm the globe
disperses back to interstellar space,
these atoms had their time as this planet, as the Earth,
as they had their time before in stars.

And as I steered north
on an artificially-hardened surface
in the valley of the rivers we call Kootenay and Columbia,
I felt that always with me is the earth

like a friend too remote
to assist in any difficulty
but interested to learn
what I will accomplish:

myself, a person,
human beings,

and the third planet from a star.

OF THE STARS

for Jon Roberts

Kevin Roberts

In the beginning was the Great
Bang
flamed molt / the gases feathering
in space

found their circles the spin
of cooling concentration

but the pocket of gas on Earth
lingers
struck by lightning into the

amino acid soup of
our time

the first space travelling fish
eye
swivels up

and out again to the stars
wondering / wonder

as I do
of my brothers in green

somewhere up there in Time

HUGH HOOD'S EDENIC GARDEN

Psychoanalysis Among the Flowerbeds

Patrick J. Mahony
with a reply by Hugh Hood

PSYCHOANALYTIC UNDERSTANDING, regrettably, is rarely brought to bear on contemporary Canadian writing. As a practicing literary critic and psychoanalyst I daily realize the harmony of my two disciplines, and I realize, too, that such interdisciplinarity can illuminate much modern fiction.

Any reader of Hugh Hood's *The Swing in the Garden* (1975) will begin his further critical appreciation of it by taking up Robert Lecker's indispensable essay, "A Spirit of Communion: *The Swing in the Garden*."[1] Lecker explores the novel's optimistic dimension through its four types of communion: the aesthetic, communal, transportative, and spiritual. First, as an aesthetic communion, the novel unites such opposites as the passing of ubiquitous time and the permanence of the swing in the garden, an emblem of security. In other words, art serves to unify the fragmentation within both time and space and yet transcends them. Innocence and experience, light and dark, spring and fall, the voice of the narrator shifting between the language of childhood, adolescence and adulthood — all these artistically fused components mimic the desire of Hood's central character, Matthew Goderich, "to see permanence coexist with change, one moving in the other." Second, in a communal sense, the novel strives to harmonize the holy and secular, and thereby sets up a parallel between the church and society as communal bodies. Third, pointing up the transportational theme, the train looms as the eminent symbol of national time and potential. The fourth kind of communion is spiritual intercourse, which is held to win out over the two divided worlds of romance: the upper idyllic childhood of happiness and security and the lower demonic world of experience, separation, pain, and fear. Lecker insightfully concludes that Matthew, seeking to return to the idyllic world,

> exercises his memory, hoping as he does to recover through imaginative recreation a much more powerful version of a world which has been physically lost. Thus it can be said that the structure of *The Swing in the Garden* is essentially ironic, in that the voyage toward the end of the narrative actually describes a quest for its

beginning: the progression towards darkness is, for Matt, a movement into the light of self-discovery.

I would like to use Lecker's conclusion in order to orient the question of my central concern: What kind of personal relationships did the young Matthew have which determined the four kinds of communion marking the orientation of his adult life? Granted that developmental and maturational factors were involved and that there were ripening cognitive capabilities that influenced the older Matthew's choice and understanding of that tetradic communion, we must nevertheless not overlook earlier factors such as narcissistic hurt, emotional deprivation, sibling rivalry, supercargo strictures, and overdetermined ego ideals which shaped Matthew's integrating strategies in the face of frustration, fragmentation, and incoherences in his life's experience.

Let us now attend to the data and psychodynamics of Matthew's three-generational home setting, starting with his mother's side. The maternal grandmother, Madame Archambault, was an unbending arbitrary spirit, indeed the very incarnation of law. Of the four grandparents it was only she who would hazard a wounding word. Not much is said about Grandpa Archambault save that his favourite grandchild was Tony, and just about nothing at all is said about the paternal grandparents. By and large, the story we hear shows an alienation from the two sets of grandparents, especially the maternal ones. The normal leverage and freedom that a grandchild seeks from his grandparents as a relief to daily parental strictures seemingly did not obtain in Matthew's young life. We are not surprised to learn, therefore, that Matthew's cravings for admiration and love from his own parents were so much the stronger.

Matthew's mother, a displaced French-speaking Quebecer in Ontario, the first university woman in her family, was a convinced early feminist, avidly given to reading class-conscious novels even though they were second-class literature. To her children she presented the image of being firm, distant, eminently fair, and responsive to all their needs except the most fundamental one: their need for tenderness and expression of physical affection. Although Matthew felt that there was no other woman "more reasonable and less dogmatic than she," he was also subjected to her lack of empathy and loving introjection, manifested by her consistently using adult syntax with her small children. In light of such deprivation, he sought and became the pet of neighbourhood mothers. Though his mother never hit him, neither did she caress him; remonstration was habitually of a highly controlled nature purged of affects, and so typical were the mother's critical words "silly" and "idle" that at times our hero would have preferred being spanked. Apart from the need for a more immediate discharge, Matthew's penchant for physical punishment was deeply motivated by a wish for libidinal contact with his mother; the forbidden incestuous libidinality of that wish would accordingly have been simultaneously satisfied and paid for by a punitive smack.

Hence a masochistic nucleus in Matthew's female relationships. Another point worth making concerns Matthew's ambivalence toward the earliest fusional, symbiotic relationship he had with his mother. He subsequently tried to detach himself from such a strong tie, and at the same time he ever mourned for its passing. Curiously it was he rather than younger Tony or the elder Amanda Louise that was sensitive to the flicker of their mother's eyelids and could detect a secret amusement behind them. We are not taken aback to discover the uneasiness and the tentativeness of Matthew's feeling about being the untold object of her affection; so on page 67 we read "It's possible that I was her favorite," and then over 100 pages later, "I was almost certain that I was her favorite."

Caught between his grandmother's tyranny of morality and his mother's tyranny of reason, Matthew suffered an accumulative trauma wrought by the absence of a sustained, tender solace which has its own exclusive claim to primacy in a well-rounded life; exclusively reasoned expression should be held to limits in social intercourse. Here we cannot forget the appropriate words of Edgar in the antepenultimate line of *King Lear*: "Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say." To repeat: Matthew's compensatory reaction drove him to seek affection from maternal substitutes in the neighbourhood and it was their dandying him which influenced his permanent penchant for female friendship, significantly meriting the divine epithet "thank God." Matthew's particular preferences for girl companions actually reflect the two sides of his own mother: he preferred those ignoring him or those who were distant princesses. Admittedly his subsequent role before women was submissive, bearing the traces of irrecoverable unfulfillment from his mother who had precipitated him prematurely out of childhood.

Upon reading the novel who can avoid the impression that Matthew was ushered too soon into adult life? We hear tones of complaint in his memory that his mother never babied him after he learned to read at four. But if his babyhood was not well received, we may assume that neither were his recurrent yearnings as a child to regress. Behind a too easy acquiescence to his father's decision to delay entrance into primary school for one year because of his relatively small stature, we sense the compensating gain of staying one more year close to the maternal hearth. It stands to reason — and more so to emotion — that at nine Matthew still wanted to be babied, though he avowedly concealed this strong wish. One gathers that the well-articulated discourse prescribed for everybody at home was enlisted in the service of fending off feelings, including sexual ones, which might have been focused on if the family members had listened more to their silence. Indeed we are told that "too great readiness of self-expression inhibits and finally dissipates delicacy of feelings" and that Mr. Goderich "often found his vocabulary inadequate to his feelings."

Next in order of our consideration is Matthew's father, whose obsessional character structure is pointed up by his intellectualization, scrupulousness, puni-

tive superego, doubt, suppressed feelings, a controlling guilt, and compulsive repetitiveness. If he was like his wife in his highly controlled criticism, he was unlike her in his repetitive expression. One of his favourite phrases was "Perhaps I have not made myself clear," a telltale statement highlighting not only his obsessional concern for clarity but also a hesitating doubt and scrupulous exactitude as signaled with the word "Perhaps." We often hear his hatred of wilful obscurity leading him into recurrent circumlocutions and efforts at clarification, a verbal characteristic which was one with his dislike of any ambiguity in social relationships. Here we immediately think of the repressed hostility typifying the obsessional who is given to control his deep-seated ambivalence by reaction formation as a defence — hence the overdetermined concern for unambiguity. A further insight into the father is provided us by the revelatory titles of the two books he authored as a philosopher. The first, *The Place of Conceptual Thought in Ethical Judgments*, Matthew well opined, reflected the "impossible task of throwing the net of logic over instinct and feeling." Neither are we astonished that an anal retentive character would devote his political book strictly to *Property and Value*. At this juncture, implicitly acknowledging a paternal identification, Matthew avers that while the book told him enormously about his father it disclosed "far far too much about himself."

Was the father a sufficient masculine model for his son? With the meagre information we are given I doubt it. But the most intriguing declaration we find about the father is his confession that no one enters the teaching profession without a very good reason which he is anxious to conceal. We know that an unfortunately inevitable part of a teacher's role forces him into the position of being judge, corrector, dominator. Did such a role channel Mr. Goderich's aggression which elsewhere gave rise to anxiety? He was a pacifist and would not have enlisted in wartime service even if he could have. His quixotic belief that hiring was a really Christian act whereas firing was inconceivable might have found a release of an affective damming up in the teaching profession where grading constantly involves sanctionary acts of approval or disapproval.

We might profitably pause to reflect on Matthew's domestic situation when his two parents are taken together as a dyadic unit. The Latin maxim *Summa iustitia est iniustia* (extreme justice is injustice) well describes the Goderich household where reigned the parental lack of appropriate emotional response, of warm love, to their children. Between themselves the parents had three ideals, in order: the loving caress, hard thought and political commitment. Eliminated from the first ideal, Matthew got what comfort he could from "hard thought" (the polysemy of the adjective hardly escapes us). Excluding their children from the loving caress, the parents displaced, putting an excessive weight on justice, an interactional ideal rooted in the repressed hostility of a sadistic superego. A rare, direct return of the repressed took place when, without any consultation, or better yet,

without giving any mention, the parents withdrew nearly all of Matthew's bank account to pay for rent and food.

WHILE REDUCING PERSONAL FLEXIBILITY, an atmosphere of extreme justice promotes castration anxiety and conflicts in one's internal negotiation of further separation and individuation. Overall the novel describes the fate of certain middle class virtues relatable to justice but vividly scrubbed of any libidinal dye. Guided by entrepeneurial ambition rather than by passion, Matthew immediately forsook his infatuation with Letty when he could not succeed in selling a newspaper subscription to her mother. Yet even though extolling middle-class virtues such as steadiness, thrift, prudence and survival, Matthew the narrator fights against being classed (here we see the great development impact of separation and individuation on Matthew's life, starting from spatial perception and extending in a continuous line to ambitious strivings). Hence, in spite of having risen to the professional status of art historian, Matthew insists he is the same man as he always was, and more than that, recognizes no one as either superior or inferior. There is something true and false in such a statement: false in that it tends to de-differentiate, to deny differences and to discount for the moment the perilous flight into self-distinction marking Matthew's life from childhood to adulthood; true in that it represents the nostalgic wish for symbiosis, fusion, and the collapse of ego boundaries. So threatening are the fantasies of fragmentation that Matthew astoundingly declares: "Schizophrenia is illusory: you can't break a person." This denial encapsulates the conflicts of the narrator who struggled against his restraining line and, with the arrival of his mother, came near to tears because he could not embark on the passing caboose, "the most romantic image of my infant fantasy life." That yearning for departure strikingly contrasts with Matthew's earlier avowal about that first expulsion which, "psychiatry to the contrary, is nothing to what follows, successive expulsions outward toward larger, larger, less enclosed spaces."

Briefly, ego ideals and moral constraints shaped Matthew's sense of place on various levels. The swing returning to the same spot made the young Matthew very cranky, for it was a symbol of status quo as opposed to enviable progress; yet this attitude did not develop without some ambivalence, for he subsequently envied shiftless people to some extent, comparing their lot to his tiring constant movement toward progress. Furthermore, in compensation for his lack of security and preferential place in his family, the young Matthew always rooted for the winning side, not for the underdog. This reactive determinant was joined along with his acceptance of the family's ego ideal of optimism to a "savagely superstitious" character trait which, based on magical thinking as it is, listed among his arsenal of self-protective measures.

As we shift focus from Matthew's parents to his siblings, we are thrust evermore upon the exceptionality of his innocent world. Overall the novel is bathed in the tradition of such fictional series as those of the Rover Boys or Tom Swift, where innocence, adventure, excitement, invention, and travel set a major tempo. The nigh prelapsarian innocence of Matthew's youth prepares us for his later retrospective comment about those moments when "the sinless facade of middle-class society only conceals depths of the same innocence." However, if we accept the existence of a child's intensely passionate life in terms of rage, envy and sexual cravings, we are inclined to see large elements of denial and repression in Matthew's portrayal of innocence and his downplaying of persistently strong negative emotions. We hear nothing about incestuous fantasies of childhood sexual games between the protagonist, his four-year-older sister Amanda, and his three-year-younger brother Tony. Neither do we come upon any rageful reaction to the fact that Amanda was the maternal grandmother's favourite and that Tony was the maternal grandfather's favourite. It is of the highest significance that the latter's dying words — "How's little Tony?" — comprised the only set of last words recorded in the family history. Those words, repeated by Mr. Goderich who admired his father-in-law, bespeak, *inter alia*, Matthew's estrangement from the male grandparental and parental figures in his family.

From a perusal of *The Swing in the Garden* one could draw up an impressive list of the narrator's minimalizing or disclaiming emotionally threatening activity: Matthew's childhood companions were remarkably free from indecency; his youthful visits to the graves of relatives were free of morbidity and were natural, like breathing; the four-year-spate of family poverty, resulting from Mr. Goderich's resigning his university post, left but psychically "tiny marks"; Matthew at four years of age could not have had a erection; before the age of six he knew nothing "of the decencies and indecencies of action"; he was merely annoyed by the birth of a younger brother who would share the family fortune; Matthew was not really jealous of his grandfather's preference of Tony. Because of the purgation of sexuality from Matthew's world, I looked in vain for explicit evidence of the family romance,[2] which is a predominant feature in children's fantasies. The rich narrative potential of such fantasies is undeniable: the child imagines that his present parents are not his real ones and that his real parents are aristocratic or famous; then again, the child may feel that he is a bastard or that his siblings are. The multiple motivations in this interpersonal drama include incestuous strivings, revenge, defensive degradation of parents or siblings, a compensatory exaltation of oneself, and an attempt to recover an idealized past when the greatness of one's real parents went unquestioned.

We may turn next to consider the universal fantasy of the primal scene whereby the child is a visual or auditive witness of a seemingly aggressive sadistic father making love to the mother. Derivative traces of this fantasy are of decidedly impli-

cit nature in *The Swing in the Garden.* Thus we read in serial fashion about young Matthew fitting himself into the "cockpit" of the captivating swing, twisting himself inside the heavy velvet curtains as if they were ancient robes, or that he, Amanda, and Tony shared the bedroom which in late evening hours occasionally assumed the character of a "cockpit." Closer to home, the three remembered examples of the erudite vocabulary Mrs. Goderich used with her son — "investigate," "proboscis," "superannuated" — strikingly testify to the oedipal overdetermination of Matthew's verbal selection: he himself wanted to investigate with his proboscis-penis his mother, thereby establishing the superannuated condition of his father. The wishful intensity for a superannuated father may also be gauged by the young Matthew's mispronunciation (the novel revealingly says "misconception") of the brand-new and powerful Ford phaeton, which sounded like "pah-thigh-on" from the lips of the castrated son.

In my opinion two particular traumatic events marked Matthew's childhood. The first occurred at the age of three when Matthew had to contend with a new brother; an alert critic's eye halts on one of the first sentences which Matthew had memorized verbatim, i.e., the father's prophetic pronouncement to his wife, "We're going to have a boy." When the time came for christening, Matthew was left home with his grandmother while the rest of the family went to church. Put to bed for a slumber, Matthew woke sometime later with a sudden start (why?), was frightened by the deathly stillness of the house (his own lethal rage over the birth), got up and slipping on Amanda's skate, tore his back on the edge of a wastebasket. Upon being bandaged, he was returned to bed in the dark room where we can listen to an after-account of his revealing thoughts: "I was emotionally overwrought, the rites of baptism, the claims of sibling rivalry and this stab in the back all mixed together. I felt guilty. I felt as if this wound were deliberately self-inflicted." Feelings of abandonment, jealousy, envy, guilt and reactive masochism define the anguished Matthew and deposited their traces in a permanent dorsal scar, which his mother unsympathetically helped to turn into a brand:

> My mother sometimes used to refer to this memento, not wholly joking, as the brand of Cain, this perhaps after I'd beaten up on Tony or broken something that belonged to him. And the Biblical reference, once I understood it, infuriated me. Tony was no Abel, I knew, and I was no Cain.

Thus the shift from a sadistic to a masochistic posture was abetted by the mother's fratricidal inculpation.

The second trauma came from the hands of Marianne, Mr. Goderich's restaurant employee, who publicly pulled down the pants of the nine-year-old Matthew and gave him his first and only physical punishment. Thereafter the crying boy was filled with both rage and passionate attraction toward her and even adored

her. He tried afterwards, abortively, to court more physical punishment from her. In the analysis of the scene offered by the novel, Matthew recovered from this incident without psychological damage and purportedly resolved the previous split in his attitudes between respecting the women of his household and both devaluating and mistreating any others. I would suggest that he redirected his hostility from family female members to female figures outside the family circle so that now any woman became a maternal centre of admiration and potential threat; in other words, castration anxiety, submissiveness, and self-assertion were groping toward a readjustment involving a disavowal of considerable fear.

We have now reached a vantage point where we might summarize Hugh Hood's impressive achievements: comprehensive vision, verbal genius, expertly organized narrative structure and movement, extraordinary dialogue, and astounding knowledge of literature and social history. As a psychoanalyst, however, I would have preferred that he joined to his memorable observations of personality an extensive examination of intrapersonal and interpersonal conflict. This said, we may resort to the psychoanalytic theory of Melanie Klein to clarify the creation of aesthetic beauty in general and Hood's in particular.[3]

Early infantile psychology for Klein is marked by the passage from the so-called paranoid position to a depressive one. In the paranoid position the child's psychic world is dominated by part or split objectives, either ideally good or thoroughly persecuting. The child projects impulses and parts of his self outside, with the result that he forms a false picture of the object, denies his own impulses and cannot differentiate between his self and the external object. Concomitantly he fears an attack on his ego by persecutory objects. Guilt exists but only as a simpler impulse, isolated and unintegrated; typical defenses at this time are splitting, idealization, denial, and projective identification (an unconscious defence whereby parts of the self are projected into the external object, which then becomes identified with those projected parts).

With the depressive position the child attains the stage where he sees people as real persons and also as whole objects being simultaneously good and bad. He introjects the loved object, which then forms the core of an integrated ego, yet he continually destroys and fragments with greed and hatred external and internal objects. The results are a predominant fear of the loss of the internal and external loved object; the attendant fear that fragments of the destroyed objects may return as persecutors; and a guilt for his attacks. Then the memory about his containment of the good loved object along with feelings of loss and guilt promotes the wish to restore and recreate the lost loved object outside and inside the ego (such a wish constitutes the foundation of later sublimation and creativity). If the child doubts his capacity to restore the loved object internally and externally, that object is experienced as irretrievably lost and the child's inner world becomes one of hopelessness. At which point, to protect itself from total despair

the ego resorts to manic defences — omnipotent control and a regression to paranoid defences.

The wish to create, rooted in the depressive position, involves some successful working through of mourning over lost objects. Successful symbol formation equally dwells in the depressive position. Since naming a thing means also losing it and acknowledging separateness, every aspect of an object and situation forsaken in the developmental process gives rise to symbol formation. Within this context the artist is often neurotic (like his readers) and may often lack complete objectivity but in two situations he exhibits a high sense of reality — in relation to his own internal reality and in relation to the material of his art.

Out of chaos, loss, and destruction the artist fashions a product which is whole, unified, and beautiful. As Rilke said, however, our difficulty is not to understand beauty but to bear it. Complete beauty makes one simultaneously happy and sad. Its seeming unchangeability expressing the death drive and its peacefulness constitute its terror. Preeminent among human activities, art confronts death, yet curbs it to the needs of the life drive and creation. From the fall will spring.

As much as these remarks on life and death might comprise an appropriate conclusion, I feel that I must add a final note about my own critical dilemma in this paper. I attempted throughout to analyze within the boundaries of the text and its depiction of character. At all costs I wanted to avoid completing the biographical details of the Goderich family as given. Yet at certain times I was drawn to conceiving a creative space of fantasy out of which the characters were shaped. My working presumption was that in that creative space either consciously or unconsciously the novel's dramatis personae were more completely imagined and subsisted in a more coherent line of psychic development. Nevertheless the essence of art is selectivity, and so to the extent that I have poached off bounds, I have will-nilly disregarded the artist's demand that he be judged on what he included, not excluded. Have I transgressed into a space where both fools and angels fear to tread? To apply my critical approach to what I myself have done, I could examine the very selectivity of my elaborations in that creative space. In the garden of criticism the swing never stops.

NOTES

[1] In *Essays in Canadian Writing: Hugh Hood's Work in Progress*, ed. J. R. Struthers (Erin, Ontario: Porcupine's Quill, Winter/Spring 1978-1979), pp. 187-210.

[2] See Freud's essay "Family Romances" in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, tr. J. Strachey (London: Hogarth, 1959), vol. 9, pp. 236-41.

[3] For the next four paragraphs I am wholly indebted to the following article by Hanna Segal, Melanie Klein's principal living commentator: "A Psycho-Analytical Approach to Aesthetics," *International Journal of Psycho-Analysis*, 33 (1952), 196-207.

Hugh Hood replies:

IT IS A REMARKABLY VALUABLE EXPERIENCE for the author — the artist — to have directed upon his artifact the disciplined regard of the skilled psychoanalytic critic, whose special competence will often illuminate aspects of a narrative structure which conventional literary criticism will not detect. I have learned much from Mr. Mahony's examination of my novel, and I am extraordinarily pleased that in many places he selects for special attention precisely those passages which I had intended as high points, special moments of revelation, in the narrative.

I will begin a more specific response to his discussion by saying first that I have chosen the fundamental family unit, mother, father, three children, two boys and a girl, with four living grandparents in the background, because I believe that the greatest literature is built on the examination of intrafamilial relations, those of mother to son, father to daughter, brother to sister, or to brother, father to mother. One need only think of the great Greek dramatists, or the great novelists, Tolstoi, Joyce, Proust, to see how these fundamental human liens form the core of literary art. My epic series in its wholeness is a study of the epic journey of the family's knowledge of itself. It is important to state that *The Swing in the Garden* first presents us with a family structure which seems innocent and untroubled, but also one which will be understood more fully, with hidden motives and relationships more and more fully revealed as the sequence of twelve novels progresses.

In this first novel, we encounter the family as it is seen and understood by Matthew as a child. There is deliberate confusion of the persona of the adult, forty-five-year-old, narrator, and his child's vision of four decades earlier. I conceive the co-existence of adult and child in my narrator as one of the main technical devices of this initiatory book. The narrator understands/does not understand, AT THE SAME MOMENT, the conflicts in his person, and those which are inter-personal, in such a way as to allow these conflicts to lurk just below the surface of the narrative. Matthew is never certain exactly what his relationship with his mother or father is. He doubts as much at forty-five as at five that he will ever solve these motivational riddles, and at forty-five is just beginning to be able to rest content with half-knowledge, rather than insisting on resolution of all conflict.

The basic family situation is this: Andrew and Isabelle, the parents, are gifted and high-spirited people, richly-endowed by nature, who are ardently in love with one another, sexually and spiritually, in what I have attempted to depict as one of the great human love affairs. Their courtship is rendered, I believe, in *Reservoir Ravine*, in terms which justify this assertion. They are peculiarly for-

tunate people, even blessed people, to the point of an absorption in one another which excludes the rest of the world, the chief danger of the great love-affair. Their mutual absorption is entrancing for them, but perhaps unjust to their children. Matthew, in particular, has glimpses of a kind of sexual and spiritual Eden in which Andrew and Isabelle dwell, from which he is himself excluded, much as Cain and Abel were excluded from prelapsarian Eden. Matthew longs to enter the private kingdom of his parents' bliss, but knows that he can never do so. He would like to interrupt them, even to come between them, even perhaps to supplant the father in the relationship, and even perhaps the mother, in an intense and all-absorptive relation with his father. But these are impossibilities in life as it is socially lived, and Matthew forces himself to depart from this lost Eden of perfect understanding; this is signalled in the title, the swing in the garden away from perfect love and communion towards the "long fall."

In the actual family situation, then, Matthew constantly doubts the precise nature of his two parents' feelings for him, from a very early age. He is constantly imagining their perfect union, with Isabelle as "blushing, ardent girl," and this union is fully given in a later novel, but he feels distanced from them by the intense privacy of their obvious love for one another.

Matthew therefore suffers from the low-affect, relative coolness of his mother's treatment of him, and seeks a series of substitutes, Letty Millen, Alanna Bégin, Marianne Keogh, and develops a strain of masochism and a submissive posture towards women whom he admires which will colour his adult emotional life very deeply. He does not quite drive his siblings from the book (as Proust's narrator did Proust's own brother) but some of his later actions have the effect of alienating him from his brother very effectively. Matthew likes to believe that he is "his mother's favourite" but is deeply uncertain about it. His relation with his father is even more problematic, and it is in the analysis of this relation that Mr. Mahony excels. He finds here the source of the almost torrential legion of defences which both Andrew and Matthew Goderich erect, "throwing an intellectual structure over a flux of duration that cannot finally be contained." I have meant Andrew and Matthew to be men who see into things so deeply that their need to defend themselves from fragmentation in the "flux of duration" is clearly obsessive and compulsive. The intellectualizations, the categorizings, the skill in dialectic, the long lists and roll-calls, the continual attempt at control, before anything else, all are brilliantly picked out and thrown into relief by Mr. Mahony's analysis. I should call the passages following the opening paragraphs very distinguished psychoanalytic/literary criticism indeed.

The selection of the incident of the self-inflicted wound in the back, or "brand of Cain," and the primal masochistic scene of the spanking administered by Marianne Keogh, which issues in adoration of the woman who punishes, seems to me resoundingly accurate, as a choice of determinant indicators of the structure

of the narrator's emotional life. I intended these two incidents, with one or two others, to be specific keys to his development, and I am pleased that they have proved identifiable as such.

Mr. Mahony's concluding pages, which invoke Melanie Klein's notion of the progression from the paranoid to the depressive position, are not at first immediately clear to me, but if I judge them rightly, I conclude that they justify the sense, with which I have tried to imbue the novel, that joy and innocence may co-exist in and with terror, extreme anxiety, and the sempiternal fear of death. Matthew Goderich is a happy child and a driven "collector," terrified of fragmentation and increasingly afraid of dissolution, AT THE SAME TIME. The oscillation, the movement of the swing, is, precisely, the motion of time itself.

SANCTUARY

Mick Burrs

The accountant on occasion looks outdoors.
Where trees should stand
walls of brick have been planted.
Before his eyes the ruled sheets are laid
cold and null as algebra.

When he leaves the office he divorces himself
from alleys of dark ice that crust on his boots.
His day has now dwindled
to drops of black water
that bleed on the staircase of the building he lives in.

Inside his apartment he begins to see
small forests of crystals
sparkling, pencilled into opaque maps,
steaming countries to be explored
across his windowpanes.

Later, after dinner, he lies down in the dark,
and his eyes go, first, outside in,
then up the staircase in his brain
to another door, left open,
where the warm light guides him home again.

ESSAYIST, EDITOR, & PHYSICIAN

The Career of Sir Andrew Macphail, 1864-1938

S. E. D. Shortt

SIR ANDREW MACPHAIL, described shortly after his death in 1938, as "the most eminent Canadian literary figure of his generation,"[1] has been relegated to undeserved obscurity by contemporary Canada. More surprising still, is his neglect by the medical profession. In the years separating the fame of Osler from that of Banting and Best, Macphail, as founding editor of the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, was one of Canada's most widely known physicians. His books and essays were commented upon in newspapers and periodicals not only in Canada, but in Great Britain and the United States as well. He was in many respects a twentieth-century renaissance man, having been at various times a school teacher, journalist, physician, playwright, eidtor, soldier, author and professor. Such a remarkable career did not pass unnoticed by his contemporaries. In recognition of his wartime service he was knighted in 1918, while his intellectual achievements were rewarded by membership in the Royal Society of Canada, an honorary doctorate from McGill University, the Quebec government prize for literature in 1928, and the prestigious Lorne Pierce Medal of the Royal Society of Canada for outstanding contributions to literature in 1930. In view of these accomplishments, the following pages present a brief review of Macphail's career and his contributions to both Canadian literature and the medical profession.

John Andrew Macphail was born at Orwell, Prince Edward Island, in 1864. It was here on the family farm that many of his later ideas — a preference for rural rather than urban life, a respect for thrift and manual labour, and an absolute insistence on the responsibility of the individual for his own welfare — took root. Here, too, his fascination with the Bible was encouraged at the local Church of Scotland and he began his first explorations into literature with the works of Swift, Macaulay, and Shakespeare. Despite his later affection for Orwell, he soon realized that "the school was the open door of escape," and in 1880 accepted a scholarship to Prince of Wales College in Prince Edward Island.

Macphail spent two years at the College studying languages, mathematics, and "infantry foot-drill" under a veteran of the Indian mutiny. Following in his father's footsteps, he accepted a teaching appointment at the Fanning Grammar School in Malpeque. The teacher he considered primarily a disciplinarian whose role was to ensure that natural aptitude advanced while those with less ability abandoned futile academic pursuits. Two years of such supervisory work seemed to him dull and unrewarding, but he had accumulated sufficient savings to continue his education. It was in the fall of 1885 that Macphail began his life-long association with McGill University.

During his undergraduate years, formal studies were often neglected in favour of voracious reading. Arnold, Ruskin, Bagehot, and Pater were among his favourites and Macphail soon discovered that "the danger of reading is that it engenders the desire to write." He wrote frequent reviews and articles for the Montreal *Gazette* and became the accredited Chicago *Times* correspondent. Though this compulsion to write consigned him to "the large middle average" of his class he received a Bachelor of Arts in 1888 and three years later — despite the fact that, as he phrased it, "even my professional studies were perfunctory" — a medical degree.

Armed with $1,200 saved from his journalistic efforts and a reporting contract from an American newspaper syndicate, Macphail embarked on a trip around the world. Late in 1891, he arrived in England to work at the London Hospital. A year later, "a lean and broken wretch," he received the Membership of the Royal College of Surgeons and the Licentiate of the Royal College of Phycicians. Returning to Montreal he was appointed Professor of the Diseases of Children at Bishop's Medical College in 1893 and in 1895 became a consulting pathologist at the Western and Verdun Hospitals. These appointments, combined with private practice, attracted Macphail's full attention for almost a decade.[2]

Already, however, he had begun to formulate the philosophy which would animate most of his subsequent literary career. These views were eventually summarized in his "History of the Idea of Evolution," which appeared in the *Dalhousie Review* in 1925, a reworking of an address to the McGill Biological Society earlier that year. Four years later, a revised version appeared as "Evolution and Life" in the *Annals of Medical History.* Finally, in 1934, the Montreal *Herald* printed a synopsis of the argument under the heading, "I Believe, This is My Credo, My Philosophy of Life."[3] What were the essential elements in the belief structure?

Macphail's philosophy was born of what he referred to as "the principle debate of the nineteenth century," the confrontation between science and religion. "Those alone who passed through the period," he continued, "can understand the havoc wrought in the minds of men. The fabric of their dearest belief appeared to be dissolving." By 1905, however, he was convinced that it was generally recog-

nized that the conflict had been "a figment of the theological imagination." The force behind this transformation was the writing of Hegel and the German idealists.[4] Two highly significant assertions emerged. First, the gradual process of evolution could be interpreted as a slow, but intentional act of creation by God. Secondly, when the motivating force for evolution was considered divine, the process of natural selection was no longer a mere brutish struggle, but rather, represented the survival of the morally fit. Macphail phrased this synthesis in the following terms:

> Life is the final expression of the universal Will. That is the inner meaning of evolution ... Giraffes and men who tried to live without conformity to ... that Will, have come to a bad end ... By this universal formula of the emergence of the universal Will, every problem in biology is solved.[5]

Such was his eclectic view of life. It borrowed heavily from nineteenth-century scientists such as Darwin and Huxley, from the American transcendentalist Emerson, and from German idealism filtered through British thinkers such as Thomas Carlyle and the theologian, Edward Caird. Nor was this synthesis of religion and science unique, for William Henry Drummond in England or Henry Ward Beecher and Lyman Abbot in the United States popularized the incorporation of evolution into traditional faith.[6] What was remarkable was the consistency with which his social philosophy adhered to these underlying assumptions. In education, for example, the teacher acted largely as a disciplinarian to supervise the natural ascent of the bright and the gradual withdrawal of the less talented. Society as a whole was naturally arranged in a hierarchy with the morally and intellectually fit as its leaders and the lower orders, according to capacity, arranged below. Efforts at uplifting these lower orders were misguided, for their position was in accord with the dictates of nature, or, as he phrased it, "a species, when true to itself, however humble, is admirable." Similarly, the emancipation of women denied the role evolution had allotted them; better, he felt, that they should "live in subordination to their essential idea." The industrialization of Canada was a process which was, for Macphail, a rejection of Canada's natural agrarian character and thus doomed to failure. Attempts to erect tariff barriers would similarly fail for ignoring the principle of free trade which allowed each nation to assume its natural economic role. Finally, attempts to sever the Imperial tie, by denying Canada's natural link with the venerable British tradition, would result in the type of political chaos which characterized the United States. Whenever a nation or an individual attempted to deny the role allotted by nature, disaster was a certain consequence.[7]

This philosophy found its way into Macphail's attitude towards medicine. While at Malpeque he had resolved, for reasons never made explicit in personal or published sources and despite his strong interest in philosophy, to become a

physician rather than a minister. In his own mind the alternatives were less distinct than might appear, for as he later wrote, "religion and medicine have arisen out of the same protoplasm." Indeed, medicine was a profession devoted entirely to the selfless service of man, the reward for which he believed was personal salvation.[8] Throughout his professional life, Macphail never ceased to emphasize this moral dimension to the physician's career.

Success in the practice of medicine, as in all human activities, depended on the degree to which the practitioner acted in harmony with the dictates of nature. In fact, in most cases, patients "will recover if they are left alone." The modern emphasis on specialization and research was, therefore, at odds with the essence of medicine. This trend was particularly regrettable in the medical schools, where,

> in these days, when a student must be converted into a physiologist, a physicist, a chemist, a biologist, a pharmacologist and an electrician, there is not time to make a physician of him. That consummation can only come after he has gone into the world of sickness and suffering, unless his mind is so bemused, his instincts so dulled, his sympathy so blunted by the long process of education in those sciences, that he is forever excluded from the art of medicine.

Rather than esoteric specialization, the true physician relied on a sound knowledge of anatomy and an open, honest spirit. Inevitably, intellect and reason would fail where instinct alone would prevail for, in the final analysis, "medicine is less a science than an art." In broader terms, the physician's primary role was to assist nature — a reflection of the Will — in healing the infirm. These views were neither simplistic nor homeopathic; rather, they grew from a profound, philosophical commitment to the principles of evolutionary idealism.[9]

IT WAS ON THIS BASIS that Macphail continued his medical practice in Montreal for a dozen years in relative tranquility. But the year 1907 proved to be one of change. The first major event was his appointment to the Chair of the History of Medicine at McGill. This position allowed him to combine a career in medicine with the reading of philosophy and history he found so essential. Though he remained in this position until 1938, it appears that in later years his lectures were not always well attended and he himself wrote, as early as 1920, that "the business of being a professor has fallen sadly." Nevertheless, the post was ideally suited to his temperament and interests.[10]

The second significant event of 1907 was Macphail's installation as editor of the newly founded *University Magazine,* a quarterly journal of politics and literature sponsored by Dalhousie, McGill, and Toronto Universities. Its contributors included Rudyard Kipling, several cabinet ministers, many Canadian academics, and literary figures such as Stephen Leacock and Marjorie Pickthall. Macphail

believed the journal existed to give advice to government and the reading public for, while academics "merely stand and watch," it "is only a bystander who can direct a game." Macphail's own frequent articles and his strong editorial hand seldom left doubt as to the magazine's viewpoint. Unfortunately, subscriptions never exceeded the 1912 level of 5,300, financial problems (despite Macphail's own generous contributions) were always present, and the publisher was never entirely satisfactory. The journal stopped publication in 1920 and Macphail himself had ceased to edit five years earlier. Yet, as Governor General Lord Grey noted, during its time it was "the best periodical published in Canada." And while its circulation was limited in numbers, its contents were frequently quoted and reviewed in London, Boston, Montreal, and Toronto. Though it was soon followed by journals such as the *Dalhousie Review* and the *Canadian Forum*, the quality of the *University Magazine* under Macphail's editorship has seldom been surpassed in Canadian academic publication.[11]

The year 1907 was important to Macphail for yet another reason: the campaign to found a journal by the Canadian Medical Association at last neared success. At the annual meeting in Montreal, Macphail argued that without a journal to express its views and record its proceedings the Association would have little impact. Despite opposing views, the newly adopted constitution included a clause urging the publication of a journal. At the 1910 annual meeting the report of the Executive Council suggesting immediate steps to found a journal was adopted and Andrew Macphail was appointed the first editor. The *Montreal Medical Journal*, of which Macphail had been editor since 1903, was acquired by the Association and the *Maritime Medical News* agreed to terminate its 22 years of publication so as to allow the new C.M.A. publication a wider scope. With a strong editor and the elimination of some competing periodicals, the *Journal* set out to establish itself as "a medium for the expression of all that is best in Canadian Medicine."

The *Journal* appeared in 1911, but the preceding year had seen extensive effort by Macphail and other interested physicians. George Morang and Company was chosen as the publisher (possibly because he already published Macphail's *University Magazine*), the terms of acquiring the *Montreal Medical Journal Co.* were finalized, and 900 initial subscribers were secured. Throughout 1911 Macphail gave freely of his own time and held clerical expenditures to a mere $125 monthly. Yet problems soon appeared. Most damaging was the delay in publishing the first five issues in 1912. Though Morang attempted to blame Macphail, the real difficulty arose from the publisher's poor credit and the resulting necessity of paying printing costs in advance. Legal proceedings resulted in a C.M.A. victory, but Morang's precarious finances continued to cause the *Journal* problems. The publisher apparently appropriated subscription fees to which he was not entitled and refused to issue reprints as the expense was

not mentioned in the contract. More serious was the publisher's irresponsible control of advertising. Though the contract prohibited the inclusion of advertisements which would not be appropriate for "a high class medical journal" such as the *British Medical Journal* or the *Journal of the American Medical Association*, Morang exercised an arbitrary selection. He "refused to withdrew a full page advertisement of an alleged remedy for diabetes ... manufactured ... in Winnipeg, and widely advertised in the lay press." The A.M.A. had investigated the compound and advised the C.M.A. that it was simply "an aqueous solution of plant extractives with a small amount of sodium salicylate and sodium chloride." Apparently, because the product was advertised in the *Lancet*, the C.M.A. was unable legally to force its exclusion.

Despite these initial difficulties, as well as a dispute with the influential Toronto Academy of Medicine concerning one of Macphail's editorials which criticized their membership policies, the *C.M.A.J.* rapidly established itself. In 1913, for the first time, the *Journal* showed a profit — $214.97 — sufficient to liquidate the previous deficit. Subscriptions increased by 60 per cent over the 1911 level and accounted for about ⅕ of Canada's 7,500 physicians. Finally, Macphail was in the enviable position of having to refuse many contributions because of a lack of space — a situation which suggested to the optimistic Executive Council that "a fortnightly or weekly journal is indicated." Unfortunately, with the outbreak of the First World War, Macphail's forceful and aggressive editorship came to an end. Yet in the first half decade of its existence he had guided the *Journal* through a variety of difficulties to which a less experienced editor might well have succumbed.[12]

Macphail spent the war years in Europe with the Sixth Field Ambulance and served with distinction at a number of battles including Vimy Ridge. How he secured an overseas posting at the age of 50, after an initial commission as an equestrian instructor in Canada, remains obscure. But many of his cherished nineteenth-century beliefs must have been left, along with the body of his close friend, the poet John McCrae, in the muddy fields of France. Though he seldom wrote of personal matters, glimpses of Macphail's own experience can be gained from his history of the military medical services. He quotes with an appreciation doubtless born of shared misery, the words from a Canadian medical officer's diary in 1915:

> October 28 — Cold rain, so cold and so wetting; the earth is turned to black grease. November 3 ... 75 patients were admitted, not sick, but exhausted and in the last extreme of misery; ... November 7 — A whole battalion went sick and was withdrawn; five days is more than men can endure.

From Val Cartier Camp in Canada to the front lines, rain and mud defined army life.

The traditional ravages of troops at war — typhoid, dysentery, lice, and venereal diseases — were joined by newer maladies — shell shock and poison gas. The former Macphail viewed with distinct suspicion, sensing many malingerers for every legitimate case. But trauma remained the primary concern.

> Twelve surgeons worked by day and twelve by night at twelve tables. The supply of cases never ended . . . At the height of the action, the officer in command worked 72 hours without sleep. . . .

Under constant threat of shelling and often evacuated at the last minute, the "field ambulance service was a dangerous one," Macphail asserted, and their members accounted for a portion of the casualties. And casualties were staggering. At Passchendaele, 3,130 Canadians were killed, 12,076 wounded and 947 went missing. While only 11.4 per cent of the Canadian wounded (themselves 34.59 per cent of all troops) died of their wounds, the carnage and pain were almost indescribable. In fact, Macphail concluded, "It became atrocious and had best not be spoken of even in a history of military medicine."[13] Such scenes must surely have had a profound influence on Macphail and his view of the world.

Seen from this perspective, it is not surprising that when he returned from Europe in 1918, at the age of 54, it was to a world with which he no longer seemed at ease. Certainly, his literary efforts continued and included his controversial and critical study of the Canadian forces medical services which condemned the minister of militia, Sir Sam Hughes, as well as his devastating but internationally acclaimed collection of biographies, including that of Lawrence of Arabia.[14] But his editorial days were over. Except for a well publicized trip to Russia (where the orderliness of collective farming and absence of industrial disputes impressed him), his time was spent in Montreal teaching medical history or reading Orwell, writing, and musing. Much of this musing seems to have focused on the decline of western civilization after the Great War. "The World does seem different," he complained to a friend in 1926, adding later that "a great epoch has as usual ended in disaster."[15] Universities were becoming Americanized and technical; literary standards declined; the British Empire — an institution dear to Macphail — was "crashing into the abyss of chaos"; economic liberalism was in disrepute; and democracy, as he had always predicted, had proven itself unable to deal with modern political complexities. With his values obsolete and his society apparently decaying, he concluded: "The social fabric is falling. The old are left in gloomy isolation."[16] Yet Macphail is more fortunate than many of his generation. For his contributions to Canadian literature and to the medical profession, history will rescue him from the isolation he so disliked.

NOTES

[1] J. A. Stevenson, "Sir Andrew Macphail," *Canadian Defence Quarterly*, 16 (1939), p. 210. Other useful assessments include: Pelham Edgar, "Sir Andrew Macphail,

1864-1938," *Proceedings and Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, Series 3, vol. 33 (1938) 147-49, and "Sir Andrew Macphail," *Queen's Quarterly*, 54 (1947), 8-22; Stephen Leacock, "Andrew Macphail," *Queen's Quarterly*, 45 (1938), 445-52; Archibald MacMechan, "Andrew Macphail," in J. W. Cunliffe and A. H. Thorndike, eds., *The Warner Library: The World's Best Literature* (New York: Warner Library, 1917); C. F. Martin, "Andrew Macphail," *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 39 (1938), 508-09.

[2] A more detailed review of Macphail's literary career may be found in S. E. D. Shortt, *The Search for An Ideal: Six Canadian Intellectuals and their Convictions in an Age of Transition, 1890-1930* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1976), Chapter 2. Biographical details are from Andrew Macphail, *The Master's Wife* (Montreal: privately printed, 1939).

[3] Andrew Macphail, "A History of the Idea of Evolution," *Dalhousie Review*, 5 (1925), 22-32; "Evolution and Life," *Annals of Medical History*, New Series, 1 (1929), 553-61: "I Believe, This is My Credo, My Philosophy of Life," *Montreal Herald* (10 December 1934).

[4] These concepts are explicit in "A History of the Idea of Evolution"; "John Wesley" in *Essays in Puritanism* (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin, pp. 275-339; "The Attainment of Consideration," *British Medical Journal*, 2 (1902), 1612-14; "Women in Democracy," *University Magazine*, 19 (1920), 1-14.

[5] "A History of the Idea of Evolution," p. 30.

[6] Walter Houghton, *The Victorian Frame of Mind, 1830-1870* (New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1957), pp. 36-38, 144-54; Richard Hofstadter, *Social Darwinism in American Thought*, rev. ed. (Boston: Beacon, 1967), pp. 24-30; Paul Boller, *American Thought in Transition: The Impact of Evolutionary Naturalism, 1865-1900* (Chicago: Rand McNally, 1969), pp. 22-46.

[7] See *The Search for an Ideal*, chapter 2, section III.

[8] See Andrew Macphail, "The Education of Graduates," Manuscript in the Sir Andrew Macphail Papers privately held in Montreal; and "The Attainment of Consideration."

[9] Andrew Macphail, "The Medical Student," Manuscript in the Sir Andrew Macphail Papers; "The Healing of a Wound," *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 30 (1934), 669-74; "An Address on the Sources of Modern Medicine," *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, 28 (1933), 239-46; and "The Attainment of Consideration."

[10] E. A. Collard, "Voices from the Past," *McGill News*, 53 (1972), 25; Public Archives of Canada, Sir Arthur Currie Papers, Alexander Macphail to Currie (27 May 1920), containing a letter from Andrew Macphail dated 24 May 1920.

[11] For a more detailed account see *The Search for an Ideal*, pp. 16-19.

[12] Information on Macphail's role in the early years of the *C.M.A.J.* is taken from *The Canadian Medical Association Minute Book General Meetings, 1907-1925* and *The Canadian Medical Association, Minutes Executive Council, 1908-1927*, both of which are located in the Archives of the Canadian Medical Association, Ottawa. See also H. E. MacDermot, *History of the Canadian Medical Association, 1867-1921* (Toronto: Murray Printing Co.), 1935.

[13] Andrew Macphail, *Official History of the Canadian Forces in the Great War, 1914-19: The Medical Services* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1925), pp. 55-56, 91, 101, 105, 136.

[14] *The Medical Services*; *Three Persons* (London: John Murray, 1929).

[15] Dalhousie University Archives, Archibald McKeller MacMechan Papers, Andrew Macphail to MacMechan (4 April 1926); Andrew Macphail, "The Immigrant," *University Magazine*, 19 (1920), 133-62.

[16] Sir Arthur Currie Papers, Alexander Macphail to Currie (27 May 1920); MacMechan Papers, Macphail to MacMechan (23 January 1923); Andrew Macphail, "John McCrae: An Essay in Character," in John McCrae, *In Flanders Fields and Other Poems* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1919), p. 86; "Women in Democracy"; Macphail Papers, Macphail to Lord Beaverbrook (23 October 1930); Andrew Macphail, "Art in Democracy," *Dalhousie Review*, 4 (1924), 172-80.

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ART OBJECTS FOR AN INNER LANDSCAPE:

douglas barbour

bare prairie
the wheat everywhere a rich gold
sky cloudless & pristine blue

there is a promise here
& here emerges from the horizon
a skywriter

there is no one watching
within range of our monitoring systems

the plane — no
man spread eagled &
floating

with such ease
seems not to notice
he turns gracefully &
begins to spell out his message

it says:
full moon hangs
above the city
of the living
of the dead
pare away pare
away
yr false seeming
moon
orange
or white
hangs
(where i put it)
caught
in the telephone wires
caught in the branches

perception is not
understanding
is not

pare away
vision
the living
at least
can see it

moon
quiet
full
glowing above

the places of men

CONSERVATION, TECHNOLOGY, & THE IDEA OF PROGRESS

Thomas R. Berger

IN 1637, DESCARTES PREDICTED that man's reason and knowledge would enable us "to render ourselves the lords and possessors of nature." The advance of science and technology has brought us very close to achieving this. In fact, we tend to think of the history of the last 400 years as the history of the triumph throughout the world of Western science and technology; we regard our world as an industrial world — one conceived by science and built by technology. We used to think that the changes wrought by science and technology would be altogether benign, that science and technology could provide the means to abolish human misery. For many, this is still the secular faith of our time. In recent years, however, another view has begun to take hold: that the advance of science and technology — especially large-scale technology — may entail social, economic, and environmental consequences whose cost may be enormous and which may condition, or even severely limit, the choices open to us in the future.

The pace of change, and the costs that it entails, are only now beginning to be understood in the industrialized nations. In North America the metropolis's requirement for energy and resources — energy and resources now being sought at the frontier and beyond — are bringing industrial activity to communities which may not be able to cope wtih the impact. Often these communities are Native communities, our own Third World. In Canada, the recent clashes of culture and of values between the dominant society and the Native peoples are forcing a reconsideration by Canadians of the assumptions by which we live and of the means by which we hope to prosper.

Industrialism is not only a creator of wealth, but also a shatterer of established social systems and a powerful instrument of control in the new social systems that it gives rise to. Its attraction lies not only in the affluence it promises, but also in the freedom it offers from the constraints imposed by nature and tradition. Its emphasis on material values and the challenge it presents to an ethically-oriented idea of society have led many to oppose its proliferation. These include conservationists, educators, and clergy, who may nowadays be found engaged in the

struggle to preserve heritage buildings, environmental values, and the rights of Native peoples — all possibly threatened by the advance of industrial man.

Two ways of looking at the world are in conflict; indeed, they have always been. Throughout the New World, since the time of Cortez and Pizarro, men have sought wealth at the frontier, wealth to enrich the metropolis. Ever since the days of New Spain, men have wished for another Montezuma's treasure, another Atahualpa to be ransomed. The drive to extract the wealth of the New World continues today. But now it is intensified by the instrumentalities of modern industrialism. In a speech that he gave in August 1980, John Armstrong, chairman of Imperial Oil, said: "The Canadian oil industry should be moving into our most promising Atlantic and Arctic properties like an army of occupation." The language Mr. Armstrong chose epitomizes a value judgment about the future and the predominant place of large-scale, capital-intensive technology in that future. In fact, his preferences are widely shared. Our notions of progress have acquired a technological and industrial definition.

But there has always been another strain running through our attitude toward the land and its resources. It is exemplified by the members of the first European settlement in North America (north of Florida) — the Frenchmen who established Port Royal on the Bay of Fundy in 1605. One of them, Marc Lescarbot, a lawyer from Paris, wrote in his diary:

> farming must be our goal. That is the first mine for which we must search. And it is better worth than the treasures of Atahualpa for whoso has corn, wine, cattle, linen, cloth, leather, iron and lastly, codfish, need have naught to do with treasure.

It is not surprising that these settlers — who came to be known as the Acadians — had the most harmonious relations of any European settlers with the Native peoples of North America. The view of man's occupation of the land that they exemplified is one which has an increasing number of adherents today in Canada.

The history of North America is the history of the frontier, of pushing back the wilderness, cultivating the soil, populating the land and building an industrial way of life. The conquest of the frontier in North America is a remarkable episode in human history; it altered the face of the continent. The achievement was prodigious: transportation systems were evolved, cities founded, commerce expanded, and an industrial way of life established. The superabundance of land, forest and minerals gave rise to a conviction that the continent's resources were inexhaustible.

Thus, in North America a particular idea of progress has become fixed in our consciousness; but there is also a strong identification with the values of the wilderness and of the land itself, a deeply-felt concern for the environment. In Canada, this concern goes back a long way. It was John A. Macdonald who, in 1885, the very year that the construction of the C.P.R. was completed, brought

a bill before the House of Commons to establish Rocky Mountain (now Banff) National Park, Canada's first national park. In recent years, we have seen the growth of ecological awareness, a growing concern for wilderness and wildlife, and environmental legislation that parallels — although it does not match — the increasing power of our technology, the consumption of natural resources, and the impact of rapid change.

The Canadian identity is intimately connected with the idea of wilderness. Our literature, not to mention our art, is permeated by a fascination with the frontier, a dread of what lies beyond it and, in recent years, a desire to grasp the opportunities it presents. Now, not only against the backdrop of the Canadian wilderness, but also in its midst, there is a struggle to affirm an ethic of conservation, and to establish a redoubt of sanity in a world that sometimes seems wholly committed to fulfilling Descartes' prophecy.

LET ME BE CLEAR ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE that I accord to environmental values. I do not urge that we seek to turn back the clock, to return in some way to nature, or even to deplore, in a high-minded and sentimental manner, the real achievements of the industrial system. Rather, I suggest that environmental values constitute an invaluable aspect of modern-day life: its preservation is a contribution to, not a repudiation of, the civilization upon which we depend.

Of course, it may be said, this is all very well in the case of urban amenities, recreation areas, camp grounds, and our national parks. But of what use is a far-off landscape or seascape which urban dwellers may never see? Why should it matter to the urbanite whether or not the Porcupine caribou herd still makes its annual journey to the Arctic coast, whether or not the white whales abounding in Canadian waters along the Arctic Coast and Hudson Bay maintain their present numbers, and whether or not the snow geese still feed on the islands of the Arctic archipelago? I think it matters because wilderness and wildlife are essential to mankind's sense of order in the universe. They affirm a deeply felt need to comprehend the wholeness of nature and of life. They offer serenity and peace of mind. As Wallace Stegner wrote:

> Without any remaining wilderness we are committed — to a headlong drive into our technological termite-life, the Brave New World of a completely man-controlled environment — We need that wild country — [as] part of the geography of hope.

Wilderness implies a remote landscape and the presence of wildlife. There are species that, because of their intolerance of man or their need for large areas of

land, can survive only in the wilderness. Such are caribou, wolf and grizzly bear, which require wilderness to protect the integrity of their populations and to preserve their habitat. Other species conjure up visions of wilderness; there cannot be a Canadian anywhere who does not think of wilderness on hearing the call of a loon or of migrating geese. Then there are the rare and endangered species that do not inherently require a wilderness habitat, but, because they are tolerant of man, have been driven close to extinction. The peregrine falcon, trumpeter swan, and whooping crane are well-known examples of species that are abundant (if abundant at all) only in wilderness areas. You do not have to be a fervent environmentalist to hope that the process of adaptation and evolution through millenia of each of these species should not be ended, that we should not allow their extinction if it can be prevented.

We think of the city, of the metropolis, as the mirror of progress. So we in the industrialized nations consider that the model of economic development that our own experience represents is the only one to which Third World countries ought to aspire. But such a model invariably requires an emphasis on large-scale centralized technology at the expense of traditional values and local self-sufficiency. Usually, though not invariably, such a model emphasizes the development of non-renewable resources (in this sense, even hydro-electric projects, though generating a renewable resource, may entail the inundation of whole river valleys and the renewable resources they contain).

In many countries, where there has been undue policy emphasis on the non-renewable resource sector, unhealthy dependence on that sector results, with corresponding losses in the renewable resource sector. Iran under the Shah, and Nigeria today, are examples of regimes where concentration on development in oil and gas has led to a loss of self-sufficiency in agriculture. The same results can occur of course when agricultural development is seen as essentially a means of obtaining cash crops, and the need to feed a nation's people is neglected. Indeed it is alarming how many Third World countries have followed this path and now find themselves utterly dependent on the fluctuations of world commodity markets while at the same time they are unable to supply their own basic nutritional requirements.

In Canada our policy has been one of expanding our industrial machine to the limit of our country's frontiers. It is natural for us to think of developing the frontier, of subduing the land, populating it with people from the metropolitan centres, and extracting its resources to fuel our industry and heat our homes. We have never had to consider the uses of restraint. The question that we and many other countries face is this: are we serious people, willing and able to make up our own minds, or are we simply driven, by technology and egregious patterns of consumption, to deplete our resources wherever and whenever we find them? Can we — and others — turn away from this monolithic economic mode?

Since the Industrial Revolution, we have thought of industrialization as the engine of prosperity and the means to material well-being. As so it has been, to many people, and to many parts of the world. But the rise of the industrial system has been accompanied by a belief in an ever-expanding cycle of growth and consumption. We should now be asking whether it is a goal that will suffice. Ought we and our children to continue to aspire to the idea of unlimited growth? And, equally important, ought the Third World to aspire to this goal?

This belief in an ever-expanding cycle of growth and consumption conditions our capacity and our willingness to reconsider, or even to contemplate, the true goals of the industrial system. There is a feeling that we cannot pause to consider where we are headed, for fear of what we shall find out about ourselves. Yet, if anything is plain, it is that we in North America will have to get along with a smaller proportion of the world's energy and resources. This entails a reconsideration of conventional wisdom, for we have conditioned ourselves to believe that the onward march of industry and technology cannot and must not be impeded or diverted.

I am not urging that we dismantle the industrial system. But we must pause, and consider to what extent our national objectives are determined by the need for the care and feeding of the industrial machine. Our inability to contemplate — even during the current recession, unprecedented since the Second World War in its severity — an economic future that is not a counterpart of our experience of the last 35 years, has altogether disarmed us, leaving us without the slightest intellectual equipment with which to grapple with adversity.

The issues are profound ones, going beyond the ideological conflicts that have occupied the world for so long — conflicts over who was going to run the industrial machine, and who was going to get the benefits. Now we should ask ourselves, how much energy does it take to run the industrial machine, where does the energy come from, where is the machine going, and what happens to the people who live in its path?

Even our terminology has become eccentric. Those who seek to conserve the environment and traditional values are often regarded as radicals, and those who are undertaking radical interventions in the natural world that threaten the future of existing communities think of themselves as conservatives.

The arguments between industrialists and environmentalists are often conducted at the top of their voices. Those on each side have strong convictions, on the one hand about the future of industrial man, on the other about the world's environment. For the one side, the advance of industry and technology to the margins of the globe represents a kind of manifest destiny for Western man, while for the other it represents an unacceptable threat to the future of the biosphere itself.

THUS THE DEBATE ABOUT THE FUTURE often tends to become a barren exchange of epithets. But we do not face a choice between unrestrained growth and consumption on the one hand and stagnation on the other hand. To reject the philosophy of endless and unlimited growth does not mean that we must choose scarcity and reject abundance.

I am not a partisan of either view. I urge that we adopt a policy of rational and orderly development. The implications of unrestrained growth and expansion are becoming apparent. Examples of the pervasiveness of large-scale technology and marketing out of control can be seen everywhere: tankers cracking up on the beaches; infant formula being peddled indiscriminately in the Third World; the continuing destruction of the rain forest of the Amazon; the mining of soils in many countries. The oil blowout at Ixtoc 1 in the Gulf of Mexico, which ran uncontrolled from June 1979 until February 1980, and the loss of the Ocean Ranger in February 1982, have reminded us that enthusiasm for untried technology may outrun present scientific and engineering knowledge.

The vital agency of change throughout the world is industrial man. He and his technology, armed with immense political and administrative power and prepared to transform the social and natural landscape in the interest of a particular kind of society and economy, have a way of becoming pervasive. Industrial man is equally the creature of East and West. And of the Third World too: many of the governments of the Third World share our commitment to endless growth, even though they may have no real prospect of achieving it. And this is so whether they purport to share the ideology of the West or call themselves Marxist.

Can the nations of the Third World achieve the levels of growth and consumption that have been achieved by the industrialized countries? If they cannot — if the consumption of natural resources at a rate necessary to enable them to do so (not to mention the concomitant increase in pollution) is not possible in a practical sense — then what? We have been unwilling to face up to the moral and ethical questions that this would raise for all of us.

Our ideas are still the ideas of the mid-nineteenth century: the era of the triumph of liberal capitalism and the challenge of Marxism, the era of Adam Smith and the Communist Manifesto. Both of these creeds are the offspring of the Industrial Revolution. Of course, our traditions of democracy and due process, and our willingness to allow the market to determine many important economic choices, distinguish the industrialized democracies from the Soviet Union and its empire. Nevertheless, capitalism (I include under this heading all the regimes of the industrialized democracies, as variants on the capitalist economic model) and communism constitute two forms of materialism competing for the allegiance of men in the world today. Neither has yet come to grips with the necessity for rethinking the goals of the industrial system. As Dr. Ian

McTaggart-Cowan observed in an address he gave in 1975 to the Pacific Sciences Congress:

> Is the only way to improve the lot of a country's citizens the way of industrialization, whether it be the western way or the forced march of the U.S.S.R.? ... Almost inevitably, diversity is sacrificed to a spurious efficiency. The loss of diversity is not merely a matter for sentimental regret. It is a direct reduction in the number of opportunities open to future generations.
>
> As we look toward the end of the twentieth century ... we see ... this diversity threatened by dominant society pursuing goals that, though they have produced a rich material culture, are already eroding the sources of their original stimulus.

We should not draw the wrong conclusions. We cannot return to Auburn, there to live without industry and technology. It is rather the rational application of industry and technology that we must pursue: an order based on the human scale and directed to human needs. If we are to do this we shall have to reconsider our belief in an ever-expanding cycle of growth and consumption. It is not only we in the industrial democracies who are being urged to do so. In 1975, before he was expelled from the Soviet Union, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, in his "Letter to the Soviet Leaders," reminded them of

> what any village graybeard in the Ukraine or Russian had understood from time immemorial and could have explained to the progressive commentators ages ago, had the commentators ever found the time in that dizzy fever of theirs to consult him: that a dozen worms can't go on and on gnawing at the same apple *forever*, that if the earth is a *finite* object, then its expanses and resources are finite also, and the endless infinite progress dinned into our heads by the dreamers of the Enlightenment cannot be accomplished on it.

He went on:

> We have squandered our resources foolishly without so much as a backward glance, sapped our soil, mutilated our vast expanses with idiotic "inland seas" and contaminated belts of wasteland around our industrial centres — but for the moment, at least, far more remains untainted by us, which we haven't had time to touch. So let us come to our senses in time, let us change our course.

Solzhenitsyn's plea was not well received. The Soviet Union is now embarking on a civil engineering project more extensive than any ever undertaken in the West. A dozen rivers flowing into the Arctic are to be closed off, their flows reversed, thus increasing enormously the volume of the Volga flowing south to the Caspian Sea and inundating whole cities, millions of acres of land, and plant and forest life. The environmental and ecological consequences are staggering; the impact on the Soviet landscape and on Europe's weather patterns is hardly imaginable. In the Soviet Union protests are being heard from scientists, historians, writers, even from regional units of the Communist party in the affected areas.

Our imagination has become impoverished in the face of calls for salvation through technology on the one hand and cleansing through a return to nature on the other. It is necessary, as J. E. Chamberlin, writing in the *Hudson Review* in 1982, has suggested, to take control of events in our minds, if we are to shape society according to images which are humanly ordered.

WHAT HAS LITERATURE, what has art, got to do with this? I think that they have everything to do with it. For literature and art are the expression of our imaginative response to the condition of our time. It is freedom of the imagination that will enable us to resist received wisdom, to question the principles that are said to justify the wrongs of the world, and to speak against the mores that limit our perception of the possibilities the future holds. In the West — and even in the East — people are insisting upon their right to call conventional truths into question.

Liberal capitalism is in the throes of one of its recurring crises; Marxism, though still vigorous as a tool of analysis, has been a conspicuous failure in those countries where it has been installed as the established ideology.

We need a philosophy to sustain us in the post-industrial era, an era for which we have no name, since we cannot yet discern its lineaments. We cannot expect that within a week, or a month, or a year, a new philosophy can be worked out in all its details. We must realize that if we are to postulate, let alone erect, an alternative to a system established 400 years ago, and which has ramified throughout the world, we must be prepared to begin on a small scale. Small can be beautiful, and that applies to theorizing as much as to anything else.

The intellectual challenge of comprehending the shape of the post-industrial era, of comprehending the moral, social and economic goals that will inform that era, will soon be facing us all. We shall have to consider the question that Adam Smith, the prophet of capitalism, asked:

> For to what purpose is all the toil and bustle of this world? What is the end of avarice and ambition, of the pursuit of wealth, of power, and pre-eminence?

In seeking an answer, we may discover that insights can be found in the experience of other countries and other cultures. We are now confronted with scarcity of resources, an environmental crisis, and over-population — conditions which have been the lot of the Third World for so long. At the same time it is the Native peoples in our own country who insist on asking profound questions about the goals of industrialism, and about the values that actuate us in our dealings with those who may reject industrial advance.

If we were not distracted by the prospect of ever-increasing wealth, if we were prepared to take control of the industrial system so that it will not run free of

ethical and moral values, then we could conceive a new vision of the just society. Nature has a place in this. On this continent we have always thought of our mountains, lakes, and forests as the equivalent of the wonders of the ancient world. This cliché may still have life in it. For our mountains, our forests, and our wilderness may still provide a sense of order in the universe, a counterweight to the relentless pull of industrial goals, a place where the imagination may be defended. In seeking to save the wilderness we may save ourselves, for wilderness is a reminder of the impermanence of the works of man, a reminder that the earth must be shared with other species and that we are trustees of its wealth, guardians of these other species, and responsible — to generations to come — for their preservation.

A POEM AS BIG AS A MOUNTAIN

Gordon Turner

Here where the sky is not an inverted bowl, is not a roof and walls, but a tiny opening to the stars, miniature possibilities at the wrong end of a telescope, the heaved-up mountains are obstacles to be overcome one way or another: pierced, scraped, sliced, blasted, dislodged, overturned, transfigured for human linear motion and thought. Here words build into balsam trunks, jagged boulders, scarred cliffsides, compress into mass or jam into perpendicular holds on the imagination. Lines here cannot string telephone poles to the horizon, but disappear beyond slashed ridges, around valley corners and you don't know if your words really move onward or outward, if there's actually anyone out there to hear or read what you would tell them. Unless you travel their way.

How many people on the prairies hike across their vastness? There are no guidebooks called *101 Hikes in Central Saskatchewan.* In mountain country, guidebook or not, people climb and every height has its enthusiast, those who have been there, would go again, are going. The mountains alive in summer with the clunk of boots on rock, in winter with the swish of skis on snow. Noise accentuating silence. Sit on an outcropping on a rarefied autumn day and feel you can reach out and touch Old Armchair or run your hand along Wedge, but you know that if you did the white-hot brilliance of the snow would burn you. Mountains like words have to be handled with care, if at all. If you clamber over boulder-strewn gullies, if

you scale uncertain rock-faces, to get up and out, to seek air that is finer and won't send your words back in echo, echo echo, watch that the alder you're grasping doesn't slip from its rockbound sheath, that the ledge you're resting upon doesn't give way. That loose boulder won't feel your death as it tumbles you to a halt in those firs far below. You won't even have time to notice that the V of mountain-join just across that rubble can be geese against the sky if the eyes alter perspective, that the hump of the mountain's top you've been pursuing is no mirage: just a single stride away.

THE TECHNOLOGY OF OBJECTS

Kim Maltman

Suppose one has forgotten a chair
There it sits in the corner unused
not-a-chair a haven for
discarded objects a pair of old boots maybe
or an open book a cat in mid-air
So suppose one hears a noise a
falling boot a page being torn Whatever
Absentmindedly one lifts a slipper
Absentmindedly you understand
But now it's gone Nothing there but
empty space So there one stands
looking foolish staring Now one has forgotten
the cat the slipper is heavy
Hmmm one says
a chair a chair

THE TECHNOLOGY OF TERROR

Kim Maltman

Suppose one has found a terror.
There, a long ways off,
curled up around itself.
Suppose one has a room.
A good big room with strong doors.
(Of course, but this supposes many things.)

Inside the room the terror
turns on itself, divides and schemes, becoming
many terrors. Larger and smaller.
Suddenly, no warning, poof!
it's gone, out under the door,
into the streets. Someone
hears it coming, someone whispers,
there are rumors.
Now a crowd has gathered,
someone is afraid, or nervous,
the fear is like oil.
One by one they turn to greet it.
Nervous smiles.
It is a simple mechanism. Incomplete.
These are its engine.

GREY

John Barton

Harris said: *Cast*
that Indian stuff aside,
find totems of your own.
And I did,
for he spoke
what I had left
unspoken in my heart.
When the forest was dry enough
I edged my
way down between the boles,
found solace
in the water-soft quiet.

And here I am again,
a late-comer this spring
to Heaven's gate,
the forest a tinderbox
locked against me.
A heavy mail of darkness
chains the cedars.
They cannot move.

Even their branches
won't ease back,
let me pass.
I could stand before them
a thousand years,
never know I'm here.

Sit on your camp-stool,
old fool, and think.
Get out your journal,
think a way in
between the trees.
These cedars are older
than Adam.
God had no voice and spoke only
in forms.
'Forest', 'tree',
cones overlapping and wrapped
in darkness, impenetrable
as one's heart.
God was waking Himself.
Now, drawn to the forest edge,
I am one of His thoughts —

It's almost dawn.
The first light rolls
off the cedars.
They shimmer, wet
windows, turn black-
green.
That little pine
in the foreground,
the first and last of this race,
could be the centre.
It shines from within:
bronze light cracks through
its crust of darkness,
It draws me
into its cave.
I shall
burn there, untouched, unborn,
outside memory.

"IN THE FIFTH CITY"

An Integral Chapter of "The New Ancestors"

Jane E. Leney

DAVE GODFREY'S NOVEL *The New Ancestors*[1] contains one very puzzling chapter entitled "In the Fifth City." The book's other five chapters are set in Lost Coast, a fictional representation of Ghana; the surrealistic action of "In the Fifth City" takes place in countries to the north of Lost Coast and it is difficult to relate this action to the rest of the novel. Far from being gratuitous, however, "In the Fifth City" is an essential chapter, an understanding of which is crucial to a meaningful study of *The New Ancestors*. An analysis of the structural shape of the book provides a way of seeing how "In the Fifth City" functions within the novel. By examining the significance of the *kambu* ritual so central to this chapter's theme, one comes to understand what Godfrey learned from Africa, especially about the political position of the foreigner living there.

The Lost Coast chapters concern the activities of Michael Burdener, an Englishman teaching in Lost Coast, and of various characters connected to him. Married to an African woman, Ama, Burdener becomes involved in politics in this African country through his association with his brother-in-law, Gamaliel Harding, and with Harding's half-brother, First Samuels, also known as FS. Gamaliel is a loyal spokesman for the country's leader, Kruman, who is often referred to as the Redeemer. First Samuels supports the Redeemer initially, but later joins a group of counter-revolutionaries plotting to overthrow Kruman because they view his regime as corrupt. Eventually political and personal animosities lead FS to murder Gamaliel Harding. Michael, Gamaliel, and First Samuels are all opposed to Rusk, an American meddling in an unspecified way in the affairs of Lost Coast. Following Gamaliel's murder, First Samuels is himself killed, perhaps by Rusk, and Michael Burdener is expelled from Lost Coast. Rusk's fate remains a mystery. Although in the Fifth City chapter he is murdered numerous times in a variety of ways, the Lost Coast chapters tell us only that Rusk has disappeared.

The narrative technique of "In the Fifth City" distinguishes it from the rest of the novel. The chapters set in Lost Coast — namely "Prologue," "The London Notebook," "A Child of Delicacy," and "Freedom People's Party," which precede the Fifth City chapter, as well as "Agada Notebook," which follows the

Fifth City — are each associated with a particular point of view. "Prologue" deals mainly with the situation in Lost Coast as seen by Geoffrey Firebank, a British expatriate. "The London Notebook" concentrates on the thoughts and jottings of Michael Burdener. "A Child of Delicacy" consists of the stream-of-consciousness musings of Michael's wife Ama. "Freedom People's Party," while departing more from the single point of view than the preceding chapters, treats events, mainly political, in which First Samuels is involved. "In the Fifth City" has much more frequent changes in point of view, an indeterminate number of narrators in fact. With "Agada Notebook" which ends the book, we return to Michael Burdener's point of view.

The contrast between the narrative technique in the Lost Coast chapters and that in "In the Fifth City" is of structural importance. We observe a progression towards a more and more African look at events, a progression which culminates in "In the Fifth City." The first narrator, Firebank, is an outsider like Michael Burdener, but more detached and isolated than is Michael. Firebank observes his surroundings from inside a car for a good part of the chapter, and reads about political events in the newspapers. "The London Notebook" shows us Michael, sometimes in London, but mostly in Lost Coast, attempting to understand and become involved with Africa. The chapter ends with his decision to say "yes" to Africa. With Ama narrating the next chapter, we move inside the mind of an African, yet it is an African who has been subjected to Western influences through her husband. First Samuels' chapter progresses one step further into the African consciousness. Its somewhat inconsistent point of view serves as a transition into "In the Fifth City" wherein the perspective shifts constantly. "Agada Notebook" suggests a movement back out of Africa through the fact that Burdener narrates, this time as he prepares to depart from Lost Coast.

The shifting perspective in "In the Fifth City" is meant to represent African thought patterns as opposed to European. In this one chapter there are an indefinite number of narrators and it is not always easy to ascertain who is speaking. In addition, here we encounter a "voice" resembling that of an omniscient narrator. This voice makes remarks which amount to authorial intrusions, drawing attention to the fact that the speaker is responsible for ordering the details of the chapter. For instance it says, "We have heard that description already, or would you like it repeated now. I think not." Another similarity between the "voice" and that of an omniscient narrator is that "the voice" knows how the story is to be interpreted. Paradoxically, what it knows is that the story is to be interpreted by taking into account a number of points of view. To discourage the reader from accepting any one version of events, it repeatedly uses such expressions as "perhaps," "or else," and "yet if," denoting that there are a number of possibilities open. A contrast is established between the European mind seeking absolute answers, and the African mind accepting diverse answers simultaneously.

In considering the function of this "voice," it is important to note its association with one of the characters in the chapter, Burr. Sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between Burr and the "voice" as narrator. A complication arises here because, as critic Robert Margeson points out, Burr is the Fifth City equivalent of Michael Burdener.[2] Furthermore, Margeson indicates that a possible link between the Fifth City chapter and the rest of the novel is to be found in Michael's dream described in "Agada Notebook": "He dreamed that night of hatred and tossed in his narrow and disease-infected bed. In his whore's room. Cursing the secrecy. Living and reliving Rusk's death and the arrival of the military figures." Since Rusk's death occurs repeatedly in "In the Fifth City," there is some justification for connecting the chapter with Michael's dream. Additional support for this theory comes from the fact that one senses a similarity between Michael's arrogant tone in "The London Notebook" and the tone of the guiding voice in "In the Fifth City." Scientific jargon and French expressions feature also as factors common to the two narrators.

What results, then, is an association between Burr (and therefore Burdener) and the "voice," suggesting that Burdener holds a special place among the narrators of the novel. This leads to a possible theory concerning the narrative structure of the book. All of the narrative voices, while they are not quite aspects of Burdener's personality, represent phases through which Burdener passes or wishes to pass. Thus the Englishman, Firebank, stands for the position of outsider which Burdener rejects. The African narrators, Ama and First Samuels, offer a view of things African which Burdener wishes to attain. The desire for total immersion in the African consciousness is fulfilled through fantasy in "In the Fifth City" but negated in the book's final, more realistic chapter.

Although this structural analysis may help in a general way to establish the place of the Fifth City chapter within *The New Ancestors*, much of the chapter and indeed the novel remains a mystery unless one investigates the significance of the *kambu* ritual. An understanding of this fetish reinforces what has been said thus far about narrative technique and also links the Fifth City thematically with the Lost Coast chapters.

THE NOVEL OFFERS LITTLE DIRECTION on the subject of the *kambu*. Godfrey states in an interview with Donald Cameron: "There's a whole voodoo level in *The New Ancestors* which no one has discovered yet."[3] However, he gives no hint where the reader is to look for further information about the voodoo involved. A book by Horace Miner called *The Primitive City of Timbuctoo*[4] provides a very helpful explanation of North African fetish practices.

Miner tells us that *kambu* means tweezers or tongs. The fetish objects made in Timbuctoo consist of a pair of metal tongs. Between the ends of the tongs a

written charm is placed; a piece of cloth from a saint's tomb or from a shroud is sewn to the tongs; four cords, red, white, black and yellow are tied around the *kambu*. The sorcerer speaks secret words over each cord. The blood of a white cock known as *bono dyongu* is smeared over the *kambu* and then the fetish is placed in the belly of the dead bird. The sorcerer drives spikes into its wings while chanting a secret incantation. He feeds the *kambu* chewed kola nuts at specified times while reciting the Moslem *fâtihah*. The blood of a sheep is put on the fetish every ten days, and after forty days the *kambu* is removed from the bird's belly. When the sorcerer pulls the coloured cords the *kambu* speaks words which the sorcerer interprets. After it has spoken, the *kambu* is placed in a leather sack. The sorcerer continues to administer kola nuts and cock's blood weekly. When he wishes to use the powers of the *kambu* for divination or to destroy enemies, he winds one of the cords around the body of the fetish to make it speak again. Three times the *kambu* is placed in the sun until it becomes shaded, and then it will do what is required of it.

In the course of describing the *kambu* ritual, Miner points out that the African's faith in the sorcerer's magic is based on a frame of reference quite alien to a Westerner's concept of reality. He also notes that there are a number of variations in the procedure used to create the *kambu*:

> The difference between the native and myself is not in our manner of thought or in what we observe. We differ in the nature of the techniques in which we place our faith. The technique of the doctor is no more rational than that of the sorcerer. Rationality operates within a set of logics — a frame of reference. The techniques of the doctor, however, are more practical. It is this secular factor of efficiency, recognized by every man, which leads to the ultimate dominance of the doctor's techniques in my cultural order.
>
> To return to the realm of logic of the smith whose ritual was just described, he affirms that he would use the *kambu* against anyone who worked in a metal other than that which his forbears used. It will be recalled that the smiths are family guilds specializing in particular metals or combinations of metals. It is said by some that *kambu* made of iron are all-powerful. Those made of copper are only effective in witchcraft against children or in their protection. *Kambu* of brass can only protect against health and wealth. The colors of the *kambu* cords have special significance. When the fetish is to be used to make a victim sicken or die, the particular colored cord selected to tighten around the *kambu* depends upon the skin color of the victim. Thus, the black strand is used against Negro Bela and Gabibi, the red against Arabs, and the yellow against the French.[5]

In the Fifth City chapter, certain details concerning the *kambu* underline the distinction already noted between African and Western thought. One example is the following passage:

> Whatever the texture of the metal, whatever the purpose — even if merely the brass which causes children to sicken and die — the important factor is the words that are spoken, the story that is told before the kambu will take on life and begin

to move in the sun like the rest of us. The charm that is written upside down and placed between the tongs, the charms which fill the skull of the *bono dyongu*, the victim of the hundred heads, are important also, but more important are the words that are spoken as the smith attaches the four cords, the words that Burr speaks as he drives the two spears through the arms of his father to spreadeagle him in the burning sun, the daily chanting of the fâtiha morning and evening as the kambu is fed with chewed kola, the final words which are spoken as the living force is drawn from the cavity of the decayed victim. Look closely. You will see where we have hidden these words. If your desires are truly one with ours you will have no difficulty in deciphering them. This is not it:

$$X = \frac{k}{2m} t^2 + at + b$$

The dismissal of the scientific formula, an equation of motion in a classical sense, suggests that this kind of Western science is not the answer to an understanding of the chapter's message. Further explanation of the gap in outlook which prevents Westerners from understanding comes in a section concerning the Dogon story-teller (the story-teller is a blacksmith or weaver, a fact which establishes a connection between the art of creating a *kambu* and the art of story-telling):

an old man of the Dogons is called in, a blacksmith or a weaver, and lectures begin, or perhaps stories would be a more exact word. Certainly begun is a fixed word, for wisdom is a wife not a whore, and if the listener were French or Arab, what difficulties might not be present because of ancient enslavement recorded in this man's memory, sons conscripted for wars and lying dead and sullied in Verdun or Morocco, ancestors mutilated in war, villages destroyed, grinding stones broken. Yet if the listener walks beyond all that, slow wisdom and enrichment. An ancient pattern of patterns of the universe revealed.

What Godfrey does, then, is to contrast the logic of the oppressor and the magic of the oppressed. In the Fifth City chapter, as in the *kambu* itself, we are confronted with words acting as a charm, not as a means of designating something which Westerners would consider rational. Thus the meaning of the chapter comes largely from the spell created by the words. In the Lost Coast chapters, we find a series of individual views of the truth all of which make up a consistent story; in the Fifth City chapter, we gain slow wisdom and enrichment through the multiple perspectives, contradictory though they may be.

WHAT HAS BEEN SAID THUS FAR should clarify the relation between "In the Fifth City" and the Lost Coast chapters as far as structure and style are concerned. There remains the question of theme: with Miner's information about the *kambu,* one is better able to appreciate what "In the Fifth

City" implies about ancestry and neo-colonialism, central concerns in the rest of the novel.

By comparing the details of Miner's description of *kambu* with the ritual we witness in the Fifth City, we find that the ritual has been considerably altered such that sometimes Rusk's murder becomes part of the *kambu* ceremony. Sometimes his blood is used instead of the cock's, and his skull is part of the ritual object. That the traditional practice is not being strictly followed is clear from the following passage: "Gazing at the skull, the three men, the three sons, the murderer brothers, encourage one another. None are reticent about inventing ritual." Significantly, the three are described here as sons. The three people who are present when the skull is mentioned are Burr, El Amaliel, and Effez, the Fifth City counterparts of Burdener, Gamaliel, and FS.[6] Evidence that the skull is that of Rusk, and that Rusk is being called "father" comes when the skull is placed in the leather sack and the question is asked: "What memory of the potent colonel father does this leave us with?" Rusk himself says at one point: "You do not wish to hear how my sons rose against me." Perhaps the most telling quotation on this subject is this one: "The men are peacefully remorseful. The difficult adjustments which follow the killing of the father and the realization that none, now, may occupy the place that all have dreamed of within their hatred, are completed." It seems that the American, Rusk, provides a focus for the hatred of Effez, Burr, and El Amaliel in the same way that a father or an oppressive authority figure might do.

The alteration in the use of the *kambu* ritual indicates a changeover from acceptance of African myth to acceptance of Western myth. African tradition demands respect for the elders: the influence of Western values has reversed this, requiring that the fathers be killed in order that the young may take over. The contrast between the two systems is expressed in a remark Godfrey makes to critic Robert Weaver. Weaver says: "Godfrey told me recently that he brought out of Africa a sense of 'the determination that is built up in a family from generation to generation' and which to him is opposed to the American dream where 'Adam is reborn for each generation'."[7] It is the former which is giving place to the latter in the symbolic proceedings in the Fifth City as well as in the machinations of the young counterrevolutionaries in Lost Coast.

The political implications of Rusk's death require some explanation. Although the murder takes place in the Fifth City and thus can only be seen as part of a dream, the fantasy described in that chapter is related to political events in Lost Coast. Burdener's dream in the final chapter has already been mentioned as a linking factor in this respect. It is important to note that Burdener invents scenes in which "the reactionaries were destroyed. And the revisionists were redeemed." Through a series of details in "In the Fifth City" the ritual killing of Rusk is connected to Burdener's wish for the political redemption of Lost Coast. The

murder seems to be a means of protecting the Redeemer, Kruman, and thus assuring the future of Lost Coast. Clues about the motive for the murder come from a conversation in which Donalda asks El Amaliel why the men want *kambu*. "Someone important asked us to obtain it," "Someone who desires kambu," and "You would have to return with us to the rain forest to discover." The important person is perhaps the redeemer himself who has sent these men on a mission from Lost Coast. Other links with Kruman are established. In his speech to Rusk, El Amaliel says: "you're made me a fraud and my redeemer a crook by precisioning yourselves into gold machinery which only *kambu* will destroy. . . . " Also, a line in "Freedom People's Party" informs us that Kruman wore Nehru suits in an early stage of the revolution. In the Fifth City chapter, a girl sews a miniature Nehru jacket of blue silk and gold thread. Other references indicate that the tongs of the *kambu* are wrapped in blue cloth, presumably the same blue silk jacket. According to traditional practice, the tongs are wrapped in a shroud of a piece of cloth from a saint's tomb. It would appear that a miniature of Kruman's Nehru jacket, symbol of an earlier uncorrupted era of the revolution, is being substituted for the saint's shroud. From all this we conclude that Rusk's killing, at least in this instance, is a political murder, meant to further the cause of the revolution by restoring it to its purer state.

Any suggestion that political murder represents a solution to the oppression of Lost Coastians is undercut, however, by the irony and ambiguity with which the murder is handled. An identification between oppressor and victim contributes to this irony. Blatant anti-American sentiment is expressed throughout the novel, especially by Burdener, but also by FS and Gamaliel. The Americans are viewed as powerful imperialists using force to advance their country's interests. The focus of this hatred is Rusk, yet Rusk's role is never clarified. One realization that Michael reaches is worth noting: "His [Rusk's] purpose is exactly similar to ours. Up to a point." More specifically, this purpose is "encouraging chaotic conditions." Although their ideals may differ, both Michael and Rusk are outsiders interfering in the internal politics of Lost Coast. Thus the oppressor Rusk and the victim Burdener — a victim because he sympathizes so strongly with Lost Coastians — are not unalike.

The most striking similarities between Rusk's role and Burdener's emerge when one considers the significance of the term *pharmakos*, a word used several times in "The London Notebook." In *Anatomy of Criticism*, Northrop Frye defines *pharmakos* as: "The character in an ironic fiction who has the role of scapegoat or arbitrarily chosen victim."[8] He also tells us: "The pharmakos is neither innocent nor guilty. He is innocent in the sense that what happens to him is far greater than anything he has done provokes, like the mountaineer whose shout brings down an avalanche. He is guilty in the sense that he is a member of a guilty society, or living in a world where such injustices are an inescapable part

of existence."[9] The term *pharmakos* is Greek; Jane Harrison in her *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* explains the function of the *pharmakos* in Greek society. The leading out of the *pharmakos* was part of a festival in Athens. The victim was expelled from the city and beaten to death, both to drive out evil influences from the city and to relieve the feelings of the beaters.[10] The above passages bring to mind Rusk's treatment in the Fifth City. In effect, Godfrey has created a hybrid of *pharmakos* and *kambu* rituals in which Rusk serves as sacrificial victim.

The further association between Burdener and Rusk comes from the fact that the word *pharmakos* is used in *The New Ancestors* with explicit reference not to Rusk but to Michael. Michael opens his London Notebook by stating: "I know how I am spoken of, perhaps that is the first thing to set clear; in the whispers, in analysis and in loud goatish laughter. *Pharmakos.*" He claims that the Africans victimize him, criticize and mock him, blaming him for their troubles simply because he is white.

Burdener's name denotes his situation: he bears the white man's burden in Africa, being held responsible for the acts of his compatriots. Similarly, Rusk is blamed for the imperialist policies of his home government. In fantasy at least, Burdener and his African friends persecute Rusk because of his nationality. Thus Michael's statement about the duality of his own identity becomes noteworthy: "Forget what I am: *pharmakos.* I do not know myself what I am. Michael Burdener named. *Pharmakos* and creator of victims and tormentors." While Michael is victim of the Africans and the Americans, he is the tormentor of Rusk and, in the minds of some Africans, just as much an expatriate neo-colonialist as is Rusk; while Rusk may be an exploiter of Africans, he himself is victimized eventually. Thus Michael and Rusk occupy ambiguous positions in relation to one another and their roles in the two contrasting portions of the novel are inextricably intertwined.

Having recognized that the Fifth City chapter is not logical, the Western reader is still tempted to sift through its contents, trying to arrive at a rational interpretation. What makes "In the Fifth City" such a rich chapter is the fact that it so strongly resists this approach. In effect what one must do in reading the chapter, indeed in relating it to the whole novel, is to view it as one is told to view the cords wrapped around the *kambu* fetish: "The yellow winds. The black winds. The red winds. The white winds. You must observe all the colours. What else provides the bulk?"

NOTES

[1] Dave Godfrey, *The New Ancestors* (Toronto: New Press, 1970).

[2] Robert Margeson, "A Preliminary Interpretation of *The New Ancestors*," *Journal of Canadian Fiction*, 4, no. 1 (1975), 99-100.

[3] Donald Cameron, *Conversations with Canadian Novelists Part Two* (Toronto: Macmillan, 1973), p. 36.

[4] Horace Miner, *The Primitive City of Timbuctoo* (New York: Doubleday, 1965), pp. 109-12.

[5] Ibid., p. 112.

[6] Margeson, pp. 99-100.

[7] Robert Weaver, "Reviews," *Macleans*, 84 (February 1971), p. 57.

[8] Northrop Frye, *Anatomy of Criticism* (Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 1973), p. 367.

[9] Ibid., p. 41.

[10] Jane Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion* (New York: Meridian Books, 1960), pp. 95-98.

DIANE ARBUS: GROUND GLASS

Kenneth Sherman

You grew up
peering from behind smoked glass
your schooldays private,
privileged.

Freaked by surfeit of attention
the unreality of your class,
you by-passed fictions
saying *ground glass does not lie.*

Who could escape
the vicious scrutiny
of that wide eye, a voyeur's
insatiable hunger?

I can hear the film's manic whirr,
the clack clack of the shutter
as you move in, as you
work

pushing the real
towards the fantastic

(nothing sentimental
about your junkies

your dwarfs, or that
New Jersey woman
cradling a baby-
bonnetted monkey)

your fascination
fixed in razored clarity:
the lines and pores of
faces, life craters

our inescapable stories.

THREE POEMS

David McFadden

MARGARET HOLLINGSWORTH'S TYPEWRITER

I was eating scrambled eggs in the Shamrock Restaurant
and the eggs tasted like Chinese food
so I said to the waitress I'm a person
who likes Chinese food but doesn't like
my eggs in the morning to taste like chicken fried rice
and she laughed and said it must have been
the green onions and suggested the next time
I come into the Shamrock for breakfast
I specify that I want Canadian green onions
with my scrambled eggs or I'll get Chinese again

and I said there won't be another time,
this is it, I'm a widely respected Canadian writer and editor
and well-regarded in the community too
and shouldn't have to subject myself
to such bad food. I'm finished, I said.

This used to be my favourite Irish-Chinese restaurant
in the entire West Kootenay
but this is it, I'm never coming back —
and through the kitchen door I could see
the Chinese chef covering his ears with his hands.

And so I went to pay the bill
and this is the really embarrassing part,
this is why I'm writing this poem
by hand, pencil on paper, because Margaret Hollingsworth's
typewriter has a three-prong plug
and all the outlets in the house are two-prongers
and her adapter is up at the college
and I begged her to let me cut the third prong off
so I could use her typewriter
because I had a simply overwhelming
desire to write this poem and she refused
and I told . . . oh, never mind all that.

This is the embarrassing part. After complaining
so vociferously about the eggs I went to pay my bill
and discovered I had no money with me
so I had to go home and get my wallet
and bring it back to the restaurant
making myself a liar for having said
this is it, I'm never coming back.
The waitress was very nice about it all.

Is it hard to write poetry?
Yes, I would say it is. For instance
in this poem I didn't know whether to start
by talking about the scrambled eggs
or the Smith Corona. And I didn't have
a lot of time to think about it

because I simply had to start the poem,
it was that urgent
and when you have to torture yourself
wondering if it's all right to write about
writing in a poem and you keep resolving
never again to write about writing
and you always break your resolve.
It's as if writing has a will of its own
and wants to be written about
just like Margaret Hollingsworth's
typewriter.

MARGARET HOLLINGSWORTH'S GLASSES

You decide to write about what is in front of you
like Bonnard painting a table-top still life
and you look up and there is Margaret Hollingsworth
in front of you. She is wearing a fluffy
wine sweater and green silk scarf
and is smiling at you and on the table
in front of her is her glasses.

This poem was written during a writing seminar
given by bpNichol at the college in Nelson, B.C.,
in March, 1982. He was wearing a brown velvet
shirt and brown velvet trousers and aroused
in you a certain amount of animosity
by suggesting the use of the word "I"
makes for sentimentality in the poem
and in giving you and the students this exercise
to write a poem about what is in front of you
like Bonnard painting a table-top still life
said the use of the word "I"
at least for the purposes of this exercise
should be avoided. "Me too," he said,
ambiguously.

And so you look up and there is Margaret Hollingsworth
smiling at you and you know right away
you are going to write a poem about her and her glasses
just as last week you wrote a poem about her and her
typewriter and you hope that seeing as you
are likewise directly in front of her
for as you know what is in front of you you are
likewise in front of
she will write a poem about you.

And you suddenly realize you've used the word "I"
twice already in this poem, inadvertently.
And the word "me" once. Make that twice.
You just can't get away from it.
As if there wasn't already enough
sentimental slop in the world.

But then you stop and think (to yourself),
hey, maybe if everybody wrote more in the first person
of things personal and sublime
maybe just maybe people would stop treating each other
as if they were second persons.
Make that second-rate persons.
Right?

MARGARET HOLLINGSWORTH'S MILK

Margaret Hollingsworth phones you first thing in the morning
and asks if you'll bring her a jug of two per cent
when you come up the hill to the college
because she has torn ligaments from a skiing accident
Saturday and you are happy to oblige
but when you hang up you remember it'll be impossible
for you to get to her place for a couple of hours
at least and you can't phone her back to tell her
because you don't want to put her through the misery
of hobbling to the phone for what might after all
be a rather insignificant (to her) message
so you don't phone
                but by the time you do arrive at her door
a couple of hours later with the milk
after going to the bank to see about an NSF cheque
to the Nelson Daily News to see about the magazine
to the florist's shop to order some pink roses
for your mother who is in the hospital

she is sitting there at the kitchen table
right next to the telephone
and you could have called after all
but she smiles anyway
and says thank you
and says it doesn't matter the milk is late

and you look out the window at the clouds
sailing in over the crest of Elephant Mountain.

SEAGULLS TWIST AIR

Russell Thornton

Seagulls twist air in their gray
bodies. Waves heave themselves on the sand. If there is an antique
myth
people recall here, or a god presiding over huge waters
that I could invoke, I am not aware of it.

But I can see that oceans carry hearts
turning blood. At ocean's shores, reeling seagulls are ghosts of
children
who lived alone; their cries rush down their own
brain holes like a numbing wind.

SURPRISE

kevin roberts

we are angry at it all
nothing we have works
all the time
fridge stove dryer always
pinging to a stop

this middleclass collar that shrinks
as we grow

we are on perpetual
clean up and repair

even each other

somehow we had not planned this

sea eating at rose roots in the front
garden
white ants in the floor

the first grey hair you pulled
with horror held up to me
as if it was a live snake

and all the symbols in the garden
cannot put this stuff in place

roses blown, fallen gladioli
but if this is the Big Dipper
it's slow enough we don't notice
descent and Indian Summers offer
storms in remission

but this strange tangled love
ball of old garden twine
holds us in between the spit of anger
and the shrieking tumble of escape
is still part of that shaking
head

I mean. Who the hell
thought this out? Knew that
though it would always be falling
apart it would grow wiser
at the seams or come so
quickly to this recognition?

SCIENCE & LITERATURE IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

Tara Cullis

If the labours of men of science should ever create any material revolution, direct or indirect, in our condition, and in the impressions which we habitually receive, the poet will sleep then no more than at present; he will be ready to follow the steps of the man of science, not only in those general indirect effects, but he will be at his side, carrying sensation into the midst of the objects of the science itself. The remotest discoveries of the chemist, the botanist, or the mineralogist will be as proper objects of the poet's art as any upon which it can be employed. . . .[1]

IN THE LATE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY, the scientific era began. Steam engines hissed, foundries glowed, mines were dug — and nineteenth-century authors from Wordsworth to Whitman noted their arrival, pondered their meaning, and predicted a new direction for literature in the twentieth century. Yet today, in a generation that has seen the appearance of the jet plane, the Pill, the atomic bomb, plastics, Xerox, lasers, television, and men on the moon, our writers (in contrast to those of the nineteenth century) now rarely mention the word science. The tacit opinion has developed that Wordsworth — and Shelley, and Tennyson — were hopelessly wrong: that science and literature are incompatible, even enemies. Scholars such as C. P. Snow, Aldous Huxley, and P. B. Medawar noted the growing split between arts and sciences in this century, and found fault with writers for failing to mirror their worlds and for cutting themselves off from the rich and varied source material science has to offer.

But these critics to date have primarily been trained in science. In stressing content over form, such critics have failed to realize that the writers reflect their world all too accurately. They reflect a society whose points of reference have been swept away — one which has lost its sense of meaning and has turned inward in search of significance amongst absurdity; a society which as a whole has little understanding and a great deal of fear of the forces unleashed by its scientists. It is paradoxical that the explosion of science has not increased man's sense of order and logic in his universe, but instead questioned and disrupted it. "The theme of perplexity and terror before the surrounding world, which is seen as a kingdom

of chaos and absurdity, resounds with particular clarity."[2] Today man's sense of harmony is gone.

The Split Society

" 'I have got lost . . . ' sighs modern man."
"After us the Savage God . . . "
"Imagination of Disaster . . . "

These turn-of-the-century quotations from Nietzsche, Yeats, and Henry James, respectively, point us towards the central characteristic of the novel in the twentieth century: awareness of the loss of organizing structures — of hierarchies of religion, tradition, morality, class, and family. A new logic, that of science and its offshoots, had pushed man carelessly aside as it rearranged his world. Biology (Darwin, Mendel) removed man from his God-given position as monarch of the earth; geology reduced his part in earth's history to mere moments in vast time; astronomy shrank his position of power from the centre of the universe to a lost corner of infinity; Newtonian physics disrespectfully ordered him about. Technology and industrialization further reduced him to a pawn of massive forces beyond his control; resultant urbanization and emigration destroyed roots and sense of place and kinship; an explosion in population, and the development of a vast labour class, permanently altered the structure of society; communications, with information from around the world, opened up a dizzying wealth of alternative moralities and choices; the growing rapidity of change altered attitudes to time and permanence. Coming at a seminal time in the history of Canadian literature, this movement has had a profound impact. A useful way of summing up the collapse of faith in authority structures is to define it as the breaking — or at least, challenging — of the *logos* (J. Hillis Miller, Deleuze, Derrida), the line of meaning, authority, order: the Law.

The traditional literary text, like language itself, is linear — as is basic plot development and the establishment of the basis of judgment on which to recognize the significance of events or moments. Jakobson points out that the nineteenth-century novel is basically metonymical (i.e., linear): "Following the path of contiguous relationships, the realist author metonymically progresses from the plot to the atmosphere and from the characters to the setting in space and time."[3] The logic of a story or poem runs through it like a thread connecting the parts, and it is this thread which J. Hillis Miller has conveniently named the *logos* of the text. But Miller noted the appearance of a second logos, an "anti-logos," in the literature of the latter part of the nineteenth century. This anti-logos runs parallel to the linear text and is glimpsed at moments, allowing reverberations of spatiality, complexity, depth. Miller believes this anti-logos *is* present in earlier texts; but its appearance is usually minimal, its impact non-disruptive. But by the twentieth century, the line of logos itself is at times reduced to glimpses only, the

spatializing anti-logos fragmenting mere narrative moments with exploratory snapshots, or dreams outside of time.

The appearance of the anti-logos, or rather the alteration of its interference and importance from minor to profound, corresponds closely with the rise of science and technology in society. But here we have a paradox. Can the presence of science, that heir of rationality and natural laws, act as an "anti-logos" in the structure of a novel's thought? The concept is self-contradictory. No. Rather: science has been so successful in casting the traditional logos into doubt because it is *more* rigorous, *more* rational — it beats the logos at its own game and *usurps* it, taking it over together with its position of authority and power. Presenting a new definition for reason and fact, "that which can be experimentally repeated," science tested the hierarchies of society — religion, monarchy, class, family, morality — and found them lacking a purely rational basis. This narrowing of the logos to the rigorous standards of science forced a split; once capable of encompassing a balance of reason and imagination, the logos could no longer condone the unprovable, driving an anti-logos into (separate) existence, an anti-logos which comprises the non-rational: the artistic, the spatial, the metaphorical, emotional, mystical, and the insane.

Religion fought being moved from centre stage, choosing to fight science on the latter's own rules — physical, testable fact — where, by basic principles (proof *vs.* faith), it could not win. Now it was science that could move mountains, and by the end of the century, God was pronounced dead. Such was the sheer apparent physical *power* of science and technology to affect the world that its standards — rationality, objectivity, cool-mindedness, level-headedness — became judgments of value for the century to come.

Artists, too, including poets, sensed that the rules had somehow changed; but instead of fighting beside the priests to broaden and rebalance the logos, many responded to the perceived split by turning their backs on the mode that had rejected them, to embrace the opposite extreme. Culture became at its base radically polarized by the turn of the century. No longer were poets Renaissance men, or soothing purveyors of eighteenth-century decorum, or nineteenth-century mirrors of the external world about them. Perceiving the anti-logos as the rejected, neglected artistic dimension of life, poets embraced it as their true medium. It was narrow, but it was theirs, and many followed the lead given earlier by Blake and the Romantics, and gave up — or at least distorted — that balance between Reason and Imagination for which poets before them had striven.

Twentieth-century *novelists* have had a slightly different response but basically they, like the poets, have responded to this situation by recording the new meaninglessness and absurdity of events and external hierarchies, to turn towards the inner world of the self in a search for reality and meaning. Following Cartesian reduction, authors adopted the symbolist point of view that external reality is

(merely) a function of the senses, thus expanding the ego to creator of external reality, and enveloping God within the self. But awareness of the meaninglessness of external reality and of man's physical self as a component in that reality necessarily impinged on the consciousness, and in many authors we find a presentation of a resultant split within the self, a division variously perceived as nature/spirit, temporal/external, rational/irrational, Apollonian/Dionysiac, self/other, the conscious and the unconscious. By expanding the mind to include all, man has incorporated philosophy's dualism debate (the relation between mind and body, or between cerebral and physical worlds) into his own head. Paradoxically, the absorption of the division effectively destroys man's time-honoured sense of mental unity. Thus it is that, through knocking out the underpinnings of faith and hierarchy, science and technology have divided man's consciousness. Components of thought that once were viewed as coherent now line up in the form of incompatible *oppositions,* and the logic behind human actions seems to have vanished. Roles become questioned as their traditional meanings disappear. Perusing Western literature, Valentina Ivasheva states that "the influence of the modern sciences [results in] the identity crisis as a theme in Western literature," and notes "the ever-larger place occupied in Western literature by themes centring on personality disorders."[54]

We begin to see that the disintegration of faith in Authority is paradoxically both liberating and limiting for the artist. Liberating in that conventions of decorum — subject, place, time, setting, characterization, adherence to conventional reality and social modes — become fair game for free experimentation; and we observe a vigorous burst of originality of both form and content, especially in the early decades of the century. But this freedom is also limiting. If we look at the novel, for example, we see that turning from external reality to inner perspectives "reduces" the novel towards pure aestheticism and autonomy, often separated from a social role. Since reality and meaning are not to be found externally, the point of view narrows from omniscience towards one character's consciousness. Since time is no longer taken for granted to be linear *progress,* narrative time shrinks towards cyclical repetition, strings of static scenes, and eventually the spatialization of a single day or even moment. And plot accordingly diminishes towards examination of a near-static *situation.* Many twentieth-century authors have, like the Surrealists, seen language itself as an artificial, inhibiting construct which, by organizing our perceptions, disguises true reality; and in struggling to liberate their works from unwanted hierarchies, some dissolve into incoherence or stutter into silence.

In the drama we can see the poles of liberation-reduction by comparing the exuberance of Jarry with the despair of the absurdists; in the poem it is apparent in the juxtaposition of the explosive futurists with the blank pages at the close of Dadaism; in the novel it is visible in the contrast between the encyclopaedic, ener-

getic Joyce or Lowry, and the pruned leanness of the retreating Beckett. But since liberation and limitation are linked, they exist in varying degrees side by side within most contemporary works.

The twentieth-century novel has fewer characters than does the nineteenth-century "realistic" novel, and those characters are usually quite ordinary. But a more important characteristic of the character in modern fiction is a development of the Romantic idea of the *artist as hero*. Why is this so widespread in contemporary fiction? Because it is a concept that fits well with the celebration of the anti-logos. It is defiance, an assertion of the value of art in a world overrun by science and the debris of its inventiveness. Again and again (Proust, Joyce, Mann, Gide, Grass, Sarraute, Greene) this occurs. But usually this artist reflects the divided self, the split personality, mentioned earlier. Emphasis on the artistic nature of man can no longer be made authentically without there being a simultaneous recognition that it is but one extreme, and that the scientifically rational is at the other. Artistic innocence is gone: the two modes bring each other, their opposites, into compromised existence. In Thomas Mann's work after *Buddenbrooks* (*Tonio Kröger* and *Tod in Venedig*, for example), the main character is an artist who is aware, or becomes aware, of the polarity of Apollonian and Dionysiac within himself. In *Venedig*, Aschenbach cannot assimilate or unite the two sides of himself, which results in his death. *Tonio Kröger*, however (notice the symbolism of the two types in his name), recognizes the duality of his northern rational, practical bourgeois self and his other "dark" bohemian-Mediterranean tendencies, and transcends them successfully. This Hegelian dialectic is clearly visible in Hesse also. In *Siddhartha*, the protagonist tests both ascetism and physical pleasures before working his way towards transcendence. In *Steppenwolf*, the same process is presented quite differently. Instead of the calm narrative of *Siddhartha*, we find a tortured mix of action and morbid self-doubt as Haller tries again and again to solve the battle between his bourgeois spirit and his disruptive wolf-self, the Appollonian and the Dionysiac, the rational and the untamed.

One of the major techniques in this struggle within the artist-self is the fragmentation of a character into several people, each corresponding to a facet of that character. Hesse points this out explicitly within *Steppenwolf*, and Hermine and Pablo, as well as the bourgeois landlady, are parts of modern man in his multiplicity. The technique is also central to Frisch's *Homo Faber* where the technological Faber must accept the irrational life which includes Sabeth and Hanna. Joyce uses this technique, too: Steven and Bloom are father/son, spirit/nature, etc. By far the most common representation of this split in the self in the contemporary novel is the novel with two main characters. Beckett uses this duality in *Mercier et Camier* (and, of course, in *En Attendant Godot* with Vladimir and Estragon forming complementary characters, and Pozzo and Lucky as

Hegel's master and slave). It is central also in Böll's *Und Sagte Kein einziges Wort* where the practical Kate must cope while Bogner dreams, and is to be found in Lawrence's *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* (Ursula and Berkin, Gerald and Gudrun), as well as Hawkes's *The Blood Oranges* (Cyril and Fiona, Hugh and Catherine), and Greene's *The End of the Affair.*

In all of these examples and so many others, the division (which can be seen as either *complementarity* or *opposition*) of the two characters is based on a rational/emotional polarization. This basis for the division of human nature has become so predictable in our literature that we have come to accept it without question. But such a division was until the last century and a half or so not just uncommon, but actually rare — until the reality of the technological revolution had become commonplace to the citizen. The alacrity and decisiveness with which this split occurred are particularly noteworthy. What is it about this particular polarity which, once adopted, has struck us as so profoundly satisfactory and indeed, so *natural*?

The Split Brain

The rapidity and thoroughness of the usurpation of the logos by science, and the resultant creation of an opposing anti-logos, were so sudden and profound that the truth could almost be guessed: the divided consciousness, the sensation of self and the other, of emotion contradicting reason, has at its base a metaphor — the split brain — which is literally true. The human brain has two lobes, one of which — the left lobe, controlling the right side of the body — excels at linear, logocentric thought; the other, the right hemisphere (controlling the left side) is metaphoric (imaginative), seeing patterns and the overall picture. And it appears possible that one mode of thought, or hemisphere of the brain, can come to dominate the other. The resulting potential for ambivalence has always existed, but has remained potential only, until the balance of reason and imagination became radically upset by the startling growth of reason's physical power via technology.

Everyone is aware that humans go through puzzling variable modes of consciousness from one day — no, from one moment to the next. We vacillate between conditions: concentration and restlessness, goal-oriented activity (problem-solving) and daydreaming, linear and "roundabout" thinking, planning and memories. It is almost as if we had *two* brains, not one, and couldn't decide which we preferred to inhabit.

It has been known since the first autopsy, long before Hippocrates, that man's brain is composed of two almost totally separate lobes, mirror images of each other. The first medical man of the modern era to relate this doubleness of the organ to the thinking it produces was Dr. A. L. Wigan who, in 1844, published a book entitled *The Duality of the Mind.* In 1861, the Frenchman, Paul Broca,

published the first of his papers on language and the brain. He had discovered that damage to a specific area in the front left side of the brain (in the third frontal gyrus of the cerebral cortex, now called Broca's Area) caused speech disorders (aphasia). In 1865, he added a very significant finding: damage to the corresponding area on the right side of the brain did not affect language capacity. Language is localized in the left brain. For the first time, it was realized that the two halves of the brain are not literally symmetrical in operation and that one side may have "cerebral dominance" over the other for any given function. (It should be pointed out here that the location of speech in the left brain is not universal among left-handed people. For simplicity, the observations made here concern right-handed individuals.)

Broca's work was immediately joined by that of the eminent English neurologist, John Hughlings Jackson. In 1864, Jackson wrote:

> If, then, it should be proved by wider evidence that the faculty of expression resides in one hemisphere, there is no absurdity in raising the question as to whether perception — its corresponding opposite — may not be seated in the other.[5]

Attention to the more visually oriented right-brain was shunted aside, however, in the haste to explore the verbal, powerful, left brain.

It was in recent work with epileptics that the next breakthrough came. The two brain hemispheres are joined by the *corpus callosum*, a thick band of 200 million neural fibres through which electrical impulses move constantly. Four billion impulses a second (20 per fibre per second) connect the two hemispheres. In the severest, most incapacitating forms of epilepsy, the level of activity across this bundle is greatly increased from the norm, the seizure moving from one side to the other to involve the whole brain. Roger Sperry and his colleagues, Michael Gazzaniga and Joseph Bogen at the California Institute of Technology, found success in halting seizures in monkeys by severing the corpus callosum. Bogen and Philip J. Vogel tried it on humans — and it worked.

Many of the patients treated were to all intents and purposes cured of the disabling seizures and could go back to their normal lives after having their brains cut in half. It is remarkable to note that on the surface they appeared normal. One nine-year-old boy, for example, retained his sense of humour and his outward personality, joking with the doctors the morning after his operation that he had a "splitting headache." But Sperry and Gazzaniga *et al.* devised systems of testing the patients. These involved flashing images onto the retina of one visual field. As in normal people, a cross-over effect was found: information from the *left* side of the body is processed in the *right* side of the brain, and vice versa. But when the corpus callosum is cut, if the image of, say, a horse, is flashed only to the left visual field, the right brain, being speechless, cannot respond. When asked what he saw, the patient says "I don't know." Yet the patient is not blind in the

right visual field. The left hand, if given the opportunity, will point to a picture of a horse.

> The minor hemisphere also triggers facial expressions, grimacing, and wincing when an error is made by the vocal hemisphere and where the correct answer is known only to the minor hemisphere. The minor hemisphere seems definitely bothered in the situation.[6]

Clearly, there are two separate brains at work here. When disconnected, they can function on their own — simultaneously.

> The minor hemisphere can also spell on a very low level. . . . It is not the major hemisphere that is doing the spelling here, because it vocalizes a running commentary on the progress of the left hand, like "This is A" when it really is "T," and so on. This vocal commentary is entirely off on the progress of the left hand, except for accidental coincidences. This in itself is of some interest here, namely, that the minor hemisphere can concentrate and carry on tasks of its own, ignoring the erroneous and distracting chatter of its better half.[7]

As long as the right brain has no access to speech, outward conflict is rare. An exception is the famous case where an angered husband, attempting to strike his wife with his right hand, found that his left hand reached out and held the right arm down.

Further such experiments show that calculation is very clearly localized in the left brain, while facial and pattern recognition is found in the right, and so on. Many have been tempted to jump to grand conclusions from the resultant data, and others are now calling for restraint. It is important to keep clear what is fact and what is wild surmise, and to remember that hemispheric lateralization is relative, a matter of degree. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that it is in their *implications* that these data hold their most profound fascination.

John Eccles's summary of the findings from the experiments[8] is representative and can be used as an initial list: the *dominant* (left) *hemisphere* has a liaison to consciousness, and is verbal, analytic, sequential (linear), detailed, arithmetic and computer-like, and temporal (i.e., tied to linear time); the *minor* (right) *hemisphere* has no such liaison to consciousness, is almost non-verbal but is musical, synthetic (i.e., synthesizing), holistic, coherent, geometrical and spatial, and is simultaneous, that is, unconscious of linear flow of time. Past and present are interchangeable and this is the world of memory, fantasy, and dream. The left brain appears to be the site of logical thought, step-by-step reasoning, mathematics. Because it has control over speech and voluntary muscles and therefore interacts with the external world because (as Robert Ornstein[9] would say) of the bias of our science-oriented society, it has been labelled "dominant." The right or so-called "minor" hemisphere grasps spatial relations — it allows us to recognize faces, for example — and understands patterns in a thought, seeing it not piece by piece, but as a whole. It is thinking in the AHA! mode, where one

realizes "now I see the picture." It is the realm of complex multifaceted ideas, or "Gestalts," which are holistic, or unified, modes of thinking. These modes are not goal-oriented.

The left brain controls muscular activity and is closely concerned with the external world. The right brain tends to emerge, therefore, when the body is relaxed and goal-oriented activity suspended: Archimedes in his warm bath, for example, or Kekule's famous drowsing before the fire when he envisioned the structure of the benzene ring and ushered in the new science of organic chemistry. The words he used in announcing this new branch of science were telling: "Gentlemen: we must learn how to dream!" Meditation techniques appear to put the left brain into neutral by giving it a task it cannot complete logically (as in contemplating the Zen Koan "what is the sound of one hand clapping?"), thus releasing the intuitive, inconcrete, synthesizing right brain functions. This is the state Keats called Negative Capability, "which Shakespeare possessed so enormously . . . that is when man is capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact or reason. . . ."[10]

A few important thinkers have noted the great split in our mental processes. Each has devised a schema to deal with the rupture, and these schemas are at heart homologous. The mention earlier of Apollonian and Dionysiac, for example, foregrounds the fact that Nietzsche faced the growing left-brain, right-brain polarization straight on, viewing the dichotomy as rational-sensual. Lévi-Strauss, too, was aware that two great modes of thought exist. He named them primitive ("sauvage"), and civilized. They involve different uses of minds which are at root comparable. The "untamed" or primitive mind, for Lévi-Strauss, "is neither the mind of savages nor that of primitive or archaic humanity, but rather mind in its untamed state as distinct from mind cultivated or domesticated for the purpose of yielding a return"[11] (i.e., goal-oriented). Its approach is "timeless"; it grasps the world as both a synchronic and diachronic totality; it "totalizes . . ." refusing "to allow anything human (or even living) to remain alien to it,"[12] and it is dominated by the symbolic function, "a consuming symbolic ambition such as humanity has never again seen rivalled."[13] All these characteristics duplicate those of the right brain, implying that tribal society profits and results from a different balance of cerebral dominance (i.e., right brain) than does our left-brain civilization. In a further passage of *La Pensée Sauvage*, Lévi-Strauss confirms the homology between his system and ours, writing that there are enclaves within civilized society where these "primitive" thought processes are still to be found. "This is the case of art," he writes, "to which our civilization accords the status of a national park. . . ."[14]

Julian Jaynes, in his *The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind*, independently reaches very similar conclusions, namely that pre-civilized thought involved far readier access to the right brain — indeed

exhibited a kind of "normal" schizophrenia — which gradually became lost with the development of consciousness and the suppression of the voices and inspirations of the right brain.

Another who recognized and explored the two modes of thought operative in our brains was, of course, Sigmund Freud. The homology between the split brain and Freud's schema is inescapable. In Freud, we find that the unconscious is characterized by lack of language (it is the pre-linguistic *source* of language, without ego and subjectivation: there is no "I" or "he," but a flux of subjectivity, and no connection between signifiers and referents: such correlations are conventions established by the conscious mind). Instead, signification results from relations between signifiers. Secondly, the "reality principle" is not in effect: there is no distinction between what the conscious mind would label "real" and what it would call "imaginary." Similarly, the unconscious is pre-logical: we do not find adherence to continuity or coherence. Instead, concepts, objects, ideas swarm in a kind of chaos. Fourthly, socio-symbolic orders governing concepts of right and wrong are suspended. And finally, Freud tells us, "the time-factor . . . has no application to unconscious processes . . . the Kantian proposition that time and space are necessary modes of thought may be submitted to discussion today in the light of certain knowledge reached through psychoanalysis. We have found by experience that unconscious mental processes are in themselves 'timeless'."[15] All of these characteristics coincide with those of the right brain as summarized by John Eccles, while the distinguishing features of the left brain correspond with those of consciousness.

Our society, then, is a split-brain society. The rise of science and its enormous physical power has caused a dominance of left-brain thinking, causing many artists (and numerous citizens, as evidenced by the rise in fascination with UFO's, astrology, ESP, etc.) to retreat to the right brain, pulling up the drawbridge. Or to use another metaphor, this polarization has severed the *corpus callosum*, and we are left with precious little communication between the two worlds. Yet, as we have seen, if writers reject science as a specific subject, they are nevertheless aware of the great division in society and in themselves. This rupture concerns them deeply, and is in fact the subject of our era's literature.

An example is one of the best novels to be written in Canada this century, Malcolm Lowry's *Under the Volcano*. Like many other contemporary novels, it takes the form of a mental conflict within a hopelessly divided "hero," a character now so representative of modern man that George Woodcock writes that "Geoffrey Firmin . . . can well be considered the representative of much more than his own inner conflict — in fact as an aspect of Every-

man. . . ."[16] Behind Lévi-Strauss and Freud, and even Nietzsche, stands one of the most helpful philosophers of rupture, namely Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, analyst of the modern divided consciousness. A study of *Volcano* according to the Hegelian dialectic of the stages of the Unhappy Consciousness in Hegel's *Phenomenology of the Mind*—through Ansucht, despair, fragmentation, resignation to the existence of both the immutable self or essence and the physical nature, and eventual transcendence into unity — is very rewarding; space unfortunately precludes its appearance here, other than to summarize that Lowry's novel is the search for the absolute, unchangeable, by a man who finds a gulf both within himself, and between himself and the world. The Consul exemplifies the failure of this search due to fatal isolation into one self of a divided consciousness, rather than acceptance of the necessity of both selves for the total individual. The Consul is a classic study of gradual immersion in the right-brain state of mind, where the practical left brain loses hold.

A few words on Lowry's handling of language are pertinent here. At the extreme of his inner battle, the Consul struggles to retain control of language, that last left-brain lifeline, to prevent total control of his physical body from slipping away. (Only when he begins to lose control of language, in Cervantes' cafe, do we know the battle is lost. The Consul loses his ability to talk, and with it all connection to left-brain reality. Within moments he is falling into the ravine, the barranca — dead.) Significantly, that control of language has been challenged throughout the novel, and ultimately destroyed, by usurpation by science and technology. The Consul's spiritual struggle (and his half-brother Hugh's) is a twentieth-century one: the attempt to reconcile the impotence of the individual with the enormity of events, an enormity the horrors of which are brought into consciousness by the radio, the telephone, the movie newsreel, machines which speak of the dehumanization of battles in which machines replace, direct, and kill men. The individual seems capable of ridiculously little — Hugh's ideas of fighting in Spain, for example, are depicted as naively idealistic — in the world of machines; yet by his machine-brought knowledge of injustice, the individual nevertheless becomes responsible, and in doing nothing he is guilty. "They are losing the battle of the Ebro. Because of you, said the wind."[17] The Consul, finding the outer world of uncontrollable powers terrifying, its language a threat, withdraws into alcohol to drown his conscience. But his own mind, in its guilt, recreates the division and strife of that other, outer-world reality. Mentally the Consul "kills" himself by drinking; physically he is ensnared by the fascist police and executed as a Jewish spy: Lowry draws a careful parallel between the Consul as individual and the Consul as representative of Western civilization. The same telegram reappears at the end of the novel, no longer separated from the flow of the text since the language of the Consul's environment has become as terrifying, impersonal, and urgent as that of the outer world. Its harsh language, ostensibly

"misinterpreted," condemns the Consul to death. The telegram and its language are symbols of power "towards unseen high events" against which the "little man" is helpless.

Lowry also uses newspaper headlines to similar effect. In the Consul's nightmares, accusations of his existential guilt come from impersonal sources, and are expressed in the terse and merciless language of the printing press. Even his death is predicted to him by this impersonal voice of the headline: "Es inevitable el muerte del Papa."[18]

Similarly, the Consul cannot speak the language of the telephone. Terrified of the machine, he is incapable of using it to call for help. He cannot dial; the emergency number 999 turns upside down to 666, and instead of stating his message he shouts: "Who do you want ... God!"[19] The Consul is simply incapable of holding on to the *logos* in the face of its usurpation by technology.

Volcano presents a search for meaning that failed. And in the cynical twentieth century, one would be excused for assuming that most novels must reflect the pessimism of the times by consistent such failures. But according to Hegel, the state of rupture is most fruitful when transcended. We find the same message in Nietzsche's Socratic and Dionysiac and in Lévi-Strauss, with his concept of the basically binary thought processes. Robert Ornstein concurs: "our highest creative achievements are the products of the complementary functioning of the two modes." Albert Rothenberg[20] arrives at the same conclusion through his study of the differences in thought-processes between creative achievers and ordinary people. He concludes that genius, or at least the "Eureka" process, stems from an ability to consider opposite sides of a thought, and to leap to a higher level of thought to unite the polarities. He calls the process Janusian Thinking, in a tribute to the twins of opposing vision. Arthur Deikman[21] also notes a combination of the two "brains" in the highest creativity. L. Ponomarev concurs:

> Both points of view are equally valid, but, taken separately, are incomplete ... the art of ballet requires mathematical accuracy and, as Pushkin wrote, "Inspiration in geometry is just as necessary as in poetry ..." We cannot assess the degree of damage we undergo from a one-sided perception of life.[22]

And indeed we do begin to find such literature appearing. It is literature of balance once more, but with a new maturity: taking little for granted now, its treatment of the struggle is thoroughly self-conscious; and its right-brain development, thanks to vigorous exercising earlier this century, is greater and more experimental and experienced than before. It still sets up the terms of the debate in the format of an opposition; but the *corpus callosum* is beginning to be rebuilt. *Volcano*'s Geoffrey Firmin recognizes the duality but cannot bridge or transcend it, and shows us the price of failure: we fall into the gap, the barranca, Malebolge. In novels such as *Homo Faber* by Max Frisch, or *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance* by Robert Pirsig, however, we find deliberate, self-conscious recog-

nition and reconnection of the severed elements. These are novels which face the fact of rupture head-on and in so doing they begin deliberately to involve technology and science into their subject matter. The impact of science on the *content* of the novel is, ironically perhaps, coming long after its effect on novel *form* (including language) has been established.

Canadian writers are peculiarly well-suited to join this movement. A long history of dealing with the left-brain/right-brain opposition in the terms of the-great-Canadian-wilderness *vs.* controlled-European-pastoral, and later of Western (and now Northern) frontier-freedom *vs.* Eastern conventionality and order, has given Canadian authors from Moodie to Atwood first-hand experience at grappling with the intricacies of the hemispheric conflict and the complexity of its resolution. In the process, Canadian writers have coloured that literary polarization with a particular Canadian tint, that of expertise in landscape metaphor; and like Lowry with his Malebolge (the barranca) and Paradise (British Columbia) they now use it adeptly to present the geography of mental conflict. William New goes further:

> what is vital about both of them [Canadian identity and the essence of artistic experience] is expressed when order somehow interacts with generation, east with west, Calvinist-Jansenist reality with visionary "pagan" myth. And the points where the "Eastern" forces of civilized restraint and the "Western" ones of free growth meet are the moments when artist and reader alike tune in to the tension at the heart of the Canadian experience they are trying to render and realize.[23]

The best of Canadian literature is beginning to face, encompass, and transcend the division between order, the rational, scientific mode, and the right-brain mythic mode which is our legacy for coming of age culturally in the Age of Science.

For its part, science already, if involuntarily, began the rapprochement long ago. Earlier we noted the value of the underrated right-brain's "Eureka function" to scientific thought; it is not really surprising that the new left-brain logos should prove too narrow. It is ironic that even while artists rebelled against the cold logic of science, physicists found themselves in the midst of a revolution. It began in 1900 with Max Planck and Einstein, though by 1927 the scientific community had still only *begun* to sense the philosophical ramifications of the new world of *quantum mechanics*:

> The Copenhagen Interpretation (of quantum physics) was, in effect, a recognition of the limitations of left hemispheric thought although the physicists at Brussels in 1927 could not have thought in those terms. It was also a *re-cognition* of those psychic aspects which long had been ignored in a rationalistic society. After all, physicists are essentially people who wonder at the universe.[24]

It turns out that the classical physical laws we've accepted simply can't account for the way things are after all. Even logic gets false results in the realms of intense

cold, high speed, extreme smallness. Now science has left its moorings in the left brain, finding that the rational logos is simply inadequate to deal with physical phenomena. It was an immensely useful tool in such forms as Newtonian physics; but like its opposing extremes, such as surrealism, it eventually ran dry. Its version of the truth was exposed to be limited. The trend towards a new balance is becoming visible in the very titles of science books: *The Dancing Wu Li Masters* or *The Tao of Physics* come very close in tone to *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*. The same recognition is being made from both sides: deliberate exclusion of one of the two time-honoured dimensions of thought can be immensely productive, but only in a limited arena. Outside that arena, the truth which seemed so satisfyingly evident simply ceases to be valid.

Perhaps it is too early yet to say whether literature of rupture is beginning to give way to literature of rapprochement. But the hope is there.

NOTES

[1] William Wordsworth, "Preface" to *Lyrical Ballads*, 1801.

[2] Valentina Ivasheva, *On the Threshold of the Twenty-First Century: The Technological Revolution and Literature* (Moscow: Progressive Publishers, 1978), p. 47.

[3] Roman Jakobson, "The Metaphoric and Metonymic Pole," in his *Selected Writings II* (The Hague: Mouton, 1971), pp. 254-59.

[4] Ivasheva, p. 13.

[5] J. Hughlings Jackson, quoted by J. Taylor, ed. *Selected Writings of John Hughlings Jackson* (New York: Basic Books, 1958), p. 220.

[6] R. W. Sperry and M. S. Gazzaniga, "Language Following Surgical Disconnection of the Hemispheres" in *Brain Mechanisms Underlying Speech and Language*, eds. Charles Millikan and F. L. Darley (New York: Grune & Stratton, 1967), p. 115.

[7] Sperry and Gazzaniga, p. 114.

[8] John C. Eccles, *The Understanding of the Brain* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1973).

[9] Robert Ornstein, author of *The Psychology of Consciousness* (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1972) and *The Nature of Human Consciousness: A Book of Readings* (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1973).

[10] John Keats, "Letter to George and Thomas Keats" (December 21 or 27, 1817), in *Norton Anthology of English Literature*, M. H. Abrams, gen. ed. (New York: W. W. Norton, 1962), p. 1274.

[11] Claude Lévi-Strauss, *The Savage Mind* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1966), p. 219.

[12] Lévi-Strauss, p. 245.

[13] Lévi-Strauss, p. 220.

[14] Lévi-Strauss, p. 219.

[15] Sigmund Freud, "Group Psychology and the Analysis of the Ego" (1921). *A General Selection from the Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. John Rithman (New York: Doubleday, 1957), p. 203.

[16] George Woodcock, *Odysseus Ever Returning* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1970), p. 66.

[17] Malcolm Lowry, *Under the Volcano* (Toronto: Signet, 1966), p. 180.

[18] Lowry, p. 269.

[19] Lowry, p. 238.

[20] Albert Rothenberg, "Creative Contradictions," *Amer. Journal of Psychiatry,* June 1979, pp. 55-62.

[21] Arthur J. Deikman, "Bimodal Consciousness" in *The Nature of Human Consciousness,* ed. Robert Ornstein (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1973).

[22] L. Ponomarev, *In Quest of the Quantum,* trans. N. Weinstein (Moscow: Mir Publishers, 1972).

[23] William H. New, "Introduction" to *Articulating West* (Toronto: New Press, 1972), p. xxv.

[24] Gary Zukav, *The Dancing Wu Li Masters: An Overview of the New Physics* (New York: Bantam, 1980), p. 40.

SHELF LIFE

Mick Burrs

I'm greeted by a constellation of grain bugs,
some pulsing their wings against the cabinet's dark,
others asleep, stationary as cold stars.
On the shelves above my warm stove
their casings hang like beads.

They rest inside plastic bags of oats and wheat
and crawl between long grains of brown rice
and wait to hover over all my future breakfasts.
I grab a newspaper and roll up
the violent headlines, my poised club.

Method of extermination: the printed word.
It takes one hour to spatter the kitchen walls
with blood, tiny eyes, crushed wings.
I throw away the food they've infiltrated,
black raisins glistening with white grubs.

No longer hungry, I admit my guilt, await my verdict:
should I be shot, hung, or burnt at the stake?
Is there really any difference now
between the prolonged life of a prosaic dictator
and the brief career of an exterminating poet?

Dictators enjoy keeping statistics: body counts.
They sleep with revolvers under their pillows.
I'm supposed to be the lyrical enemy of statistics:
how could I sleep where dictators rule?
Yet today I'm their brother stained in blood.

When my victims return tonight
to flutter in the cabinet of my dreams
will I again step forward to execute their ghosts?
Or will the angel hidden deep in me
reach out and touch their brittle wings?

SLIP-FINGER

John V. Hicks

Cried to me from a crannock bush,
go back, you don't approach here.
I am already, fell my dry lips;
go back I'll not, not for squeevy,
pumpfret, winking scriffin, golly-pip,
pidwing or all whatever company.

At once, bold, my footstep left me
as I walked seemingly the mists
of air; in the unsensed forward
of my going I joined the chittering
and chaffering soft as scented leaves
dancing to the whisp of puff-breeze

that stirs that seldom sort of morning.
It is a warmth and a good feeding,
and accepted company, more joy's whirl
than I found ever in your country.
More I may not tell; you must wait out
your hours till whether I come again.

Should none slip fingers through
easily here, you know a long waiting.

books in review

A TIME TO REMEMBER

ANN GOMER SUNAHARA, *The Politics of Racism.* James Lorimer, $19.95; pa. $12.95.

JOY KOGAWA, *Obasan.* Lester & Orpen Dennys, $13.95.

WE CANADIANS LIKE TO THINK of ourselves as a generous people, always ready to welcome immigrants from remote lands who come to Canada seeking new hope and refuge from oppression — this despite the documented history of rejection, denial, and oppression. British Columbia, the point of debarkation for most Asian immigrants, has a particularly sordid record of violence and injustice towards immigrants of Chinese, East Indian, and Japanese origin. The politics of the historical moment determine which of the two contradictory versions of reality predominates. In times of depression or war, deep-seated prejudices can be grafted onto new fears and anxieties to produce a rank growth of racism. In times of affluence and peace, it is expedient to cultivate the myth of ethnic harmony and of tolerance for cultural and racial diversity, and to encourage a sort of collective amnesia.

The Politics of Racism by Ann Gomer Sunahara and *Obasan* by Joy Kogawa are two works which seek in very different ways to deny us the comfort of forgetfulness, to impress on our memories the reality of one episode — the expulsion of the Canadian Japanese from the west coast during World War II — so that no such act of official racism can ever happen again.

Ann Sunahara's study of the uprooting of 20,000 Canadian Japanese on grounds of national security, their detention in internment camps, the seizure and forced sale of their property, and the planned deportation of half their number to Japan after the war, attempts to analyze the politics of the event. Sunahara combines recollections of individuals interned under the War Measures Act with official records to provide a comprehensive account of the period. Her well-documented research of newly available materials contributes significantly to the picture provided in works like Ken Adachi's *The Enemy That Never Was*, published in 1976. The mixture of personal experience and official papers is not, however, wholly successful. The empirical evidence contained in official memos and statistics seems divorced from the individual reality, and the reticent, even apologetic tone of Sunahara's informants contributes to a feeling of flatness and discontinuity in the narrative. Moral indignation is perhaps inappropriate in the writing of history, but when even the victims of injustice appear unmoved by their experience, it is hard for a reader unfamiliar with the event to grasp the full extent of the injury inflicted under the guise of necessity.

That note of apology, that reticence, sounds again and again in Kogawa's *Obasan*, but here the intent, and the effect, are quite different. By means of carefully controlled images, Kogawa seeks to recover and to confront the ugly facts, to piece together the "Fragments of fragments" which have been erased from memory, like words erased from a blackboard, and to penetrate the "sealed vault of silence." But in *Obasan* the experience of betrayal, fear, and loss revealed through the exploration of the narrator's individual consciousness goes far beyond the facts. Like Poe's purloined letter, the facts are in plain view from the outset. While the narrator and her aunt, Obasan, search the attic with its black fly corpses, dead birds, and spiders, its "Shredded rag shapes thick with dust [which] hang like evil laundry on a line," "A graveyard and

a feasting-ground combined," the package from Aunt Emily which contains "All the details of death that are left in the laps of the living" rests, ironically, in "a mandarin orange box under the table" in the kitchen. For Obasan, "Everything is forgetfulness. The time of forgetting is . . . come." For the narrator, Naomi Nakane, it is the time of remembering. Moved by the death of her uncle, she searches "the caverns of [her] mind," tunnelling backwards through the attics and living rooms of memory. The heroine descends into the dark recesses of the past where "indescribable items" lie buried. "What is past recall is past pain," she argues. But the bitterness of repression and denial have turned her into an amputee with, as she says, "the social graces of the common housefly." Only by digging through the sedimented layers of memory to the underground stream where the water and the pure white stone dance in a "quiet ballet, soundless as breath," can she put off the body of grief which is "not fit for human habitation" and become a live, sensual being.

With technical skill and delicacy of feeling, Kogawa creates a parallel between the political and the personal in the experience of the narrator. Deprived of the calm, gentle presence of her mother who "disappears" at a moment when the child is becoming aware of the existence of a tabooed realm of carnality, Naomi experiences an "ominous sense of cold and absence." Old Man Gower, the neighbour who molests the child under the pretense of protecting her from harm, has his counterpart in the Canadian government which, using the excuse that they are protecting them, uproots men, women, and children and interns them in the abandoned ghost towns of the B.C. interior. Her mother's failure to return from Japan, where she has gone to visit just prior to the outbreak of war, is never explained to the child, and because of this misguided desire to spare Naomi and her brother Stephen the pain and grief of knowing that their mother is dead, a victim of the Nagasaki atomic bomb, the children are left with confused feelings of guilt and rejection. Stephen, unable to bear what he interprets as the "rebuke" of Obasan's silence, rejects his heritage and flees "to the ends of the earth." Naomi experiences a "rift" in the centre of her body. In silence, a small frightened animal, she clings to the fragments of her past as Obasan, "Our Lady of the Left-Overs," clings to bits of string, pencil stubs, half-eaten scraps of food. The "collage of images" associated with her childhood home in Marpole — the porcelain crane, the Ninomiya Kinjiro statue with his white and gold book, the songs and stories — are lost in a "white heavy mist of fear," displaced by nightmarish visions of death and darkness "connected to one another like a string of Christmas tree lights." In the background, "There's something called an order-in-council that sails like a giant hawk across a chicken yard."

The retelling of the child's experience culminates in the unspeakable injustice of the forced move, after the war, to the Alberta sugar beet farm. Of these "sleepwalk years" the narrator says, "I cannot tell about this time, Aunt Emily. The body will not tell." Had the novel ended here, it would serve as a moving indictment of an episode in Canadian history for which only "the lowest motives of greed, selfishness and hatred have been brought forward." But Kogawa does not leave the reader with the sour taste of a mean and sordid experience. Her purpose, which goes beyond the particular moment, is expressed in the seven canonical words of Aunt Emily's diary: "Write the vision and make it plain." In the letter from Grandma Kato with which she concludes the telling, Kogawa delivers the memory to her readers in a long

lament of scalding and searing power. The shreds and rags of memory, the torn net of the family, are linked with the stumbling ghosts of Nagasaki, their skin hanging in tattered rags from their bodies. In the final pages of *Obasan* the protective lie is erased — the lie which served only to cover, not to heal, the wound — and the white stone of silence bursts to release the living word.

In the poetry of its language, the subtlety and truth of its characterization, and the skill with which both point of view and narrative structure are employed in the creation of a unified aesthetic whole, *Obasan* is an impressive achievement. It fulfils the highest function of art: to represent by means of affective images what critical thought attempts to convey through a recounting of the facts. *The Politics of Racism* adds to our knowledge of the expulsion of the Japanese Canadians. *Obasan* tells us the truth.

HILDA L. THOMAS

CIVILIZATION?

A. A. DEN OTTER, *Civilizing the West: The Galts and the Development of Western Canada.* Univ. of Alberta Press, $24.95.

WHEN JOHN GALT LEFT the west of Scotland for the New World, Canada's "west" meant the forested reaches between Lake Erie and Lake Huron. For his sons, John, Thomas and Alexander, "the west" meant the land beyond Lake Superior. For Alexander's son Elliott Galt it meant southwestern Alberta. A. A. den Otter, who has himself gone East lately — to Newfoundland — focuses his book on the Lethbridge region, in the years roughly between 1880 and 1910.

In spite of the subtitle, this is not a comprehensive family history of the sort so modish now in the United States. It is more like Michael Bliss's story of the

Flavelles, a mixture of business and social history, together with a probing of the familial compactness of the Canadian establishment, and a reminder of some peculiar aspects of Canadian expansionism.

Canadians have clung to the belief that the Canadian west, wherever located in the mental map, was more "civilized" than its American counterpart. London's garrison elegance outshone anything contemporary in Cincinnati, Ohio; Winnipeg slipped from muddy village to grain and rail centre without any of the badness of the neighbouring Dakotas; Banff offered grace and comfort unmatched in Montana; and ultimately imperial Victoria would cast a genteel shadow over the more blatant opulence of Seattle and San Francisco. So goes the myth.

Impelled in part by such a myth, Alexander and Elliott Galt moved into the west. They saw their expansion as producing both personal profit and civilized progress. But after outlining the Galts' "techniques of growth" — their financial manipulations, management and marketing practices — den Otter turns to "the burdens of efficiency." Here he reveals the uncivilized aspects of the expansion westward: the strikes, the social turbulence, the bitter clashes between immigrant workers from mid-European countries and the small-town entrepreneurs from central Canada. Alexander Galt was connected with a very sophisticated group of politicians and financiers in England, Montreal and Ottawa: Burdett-Coutts, W. H. Smith, Macdonald, Cartier, Sifton, Gzowski, and Ramsay, but did not manage to carry the threads of sophistication across the continent.

Each section of *Civilizing the West* begins with a reminder of the look of the land before development came: the coulees shearing treeless grasslands, the rivers in spate or drought, the winter forage bared by the Chinook, and "the rich black coal cropping out of the river banks." By 1890 the fragile ecology was changed. Irrigation had reset the rhythm of natural production, and "unpainted buildings, encrusted in coal dust, and tall chimneys spewing smoke broke the expanse of the yellow grassland."

In 1870, the Canadian government had taken over these territories and enforced order on the rumrunners and wolf hunters — partly through the agency of young Elliott Galt, secretary to the Indian Commission. Elliott's father, Sir Alexander Tilloch Galt, distinguished as a Father of Confederation, first High Commissioner of Canada in England, railway builder in Quebec and Ontario, had based his political career on arguments for annexing Rupert's Land and using the vast prairies as a haven for British immigrants. His expansionist vision of a transcontinental transportation system was ratified by the granting of huge lands and cash subsidies to the CPR; he jumped at the chance of developing coal supplies to power the new railway. By the time Sir Alexander died in 1893, he could leave to his son the colliery, sawmills, railway, land sales, and town development. Elliott added the full development of irrigation. In the end, as den Otter points out, the public paid an extravagant price to convert a region perfectly suited for ranching purposes into an area organized to support, man, supply, and expand the Galts' business interests.

Galt employees paid an even higher price. Den Otter writes movingly about the miners' working conditions — the darkness, the silence, the staleness of air which dampened sounds. Coal miners developed in this lonely sub-world an independence, a pride in the "man's work" they did, mixed with resentment at its inadequate rewards. The Galts were ruthless managers. In 1887 the miners twice quit work, only to be driven back by strike-breakers and the RNWMP. In

1899, and again in 1906, trouble flared over efforts to bring in unionization. In the working-class shanties north of the tracks in Lethbridge lived cosmopolitan newcomers, mostly Slavic, many of them aware of European radicalism.

Yet the Galts had developed "their" west: their business and their town, with its Galt Hospital and its Galt Park, its sidewalks and sewers, its churches and school, newspaper and local dignitaries: McKillop the minister from the Ottawa Valley, Higinbotham the druggist from Guelph, Magrath the mayor and land commissioner from North Augusta, Ontario, all diligently enforcing the bourgeois norms of small-town central Canada.

Surely only in irony can such a double development be subsumed under the title "Civilizing the West." Den Otter writes of "the broad range of western civilization, including technology" and says that A. T. Galt "initiated a process that tied a portion of the undeveloped west into the political and economic, that is, the cultural structures of Canada." He seems to accept the Galts' assumption that integration into the economy of the technological society was a guarantee of "civilization." In fact, the two worlds locked into Lethbridge seem to have lacked all the traditional marks of culture: openness, harmony, sophistication, curiosity, sympathy. The ceremony of innocence had disappeared with the frail traces of the hunting society. The Galts had helped develop a unique, interesting, vigorous society, and certainly one relatively unexplored in our literature as yet. *Not* a civilized west — but one well worth articulating, in historical reconstruction — or in fiction.

ELIZABETH WATERSTON

PENFIELD

JEFFERSON LEWIS, *Something Hidden: a Biography of Wilder Penfield.* Doubleday, $19.95.

WILDER PENFIELD CONSTRUCTED his own monument, the Montreal Neurological Institute. He also contributed, obliquely, to the creation of his own biographer. Jefferson Lewis (his first name honours the memory of Penfield's mother) is his grandson. An able writer, who did a superb script for a NFB-CBC documentary on Penfield, he now proves to be a fine handler of the difficult art of biography, and he is to a marked degree Boswellian.

In the opening pages of his incomparable life of Samuel Johnson (1791), Boswell precisely gives us his theory of biography: "I cannot conceive a more perfect mode of writing any man's life, than not only relating all of the most important events of it in their order, but interweaving what he privately wrote, and said, and thought; by which we are enabled as it were to see him live." Lewis basically follows the Boswellian scheme. After briefly outlining Penfield's ancestral background he moves quickly to Penfield's own life, tracing it from the day of his birth, 26 January 1891, in Spokane, Washington, to the moment of death in the Montreal Neurological Institute on 5 April 1976. And in so doing he draws heavily on Penfield's unpublished diaries and letters, and on the reminiscences of many close friends and associates. It is a warm and a polished work. But aside from a brief and strangely moving personal preface, he removes himself from the unfolding tale. So here we have no neo-Boswell recording the jovial days he passed with a man he idolized, but rather an objective biographer who wishes to bring to his readers an unvarnished life of a brilliant, complicated, and at times a difficult man.

Penfield's father was a doctor and, for a time, had a good practice in Spokane. But he loved the outdoors and would disappear for long periods to fish and hunt big game in the wild country close at hand. His practice declined and when the young Penfield was nine years old his parents separated and his mother took her three children and returned to her hometown — Hudson, Wisconsin. Jean Jefferson Penfield was a strong-willed woman — highly intelligent, deeply religious, ambitious, and an adoring mother. From the beginning it was she who planned the way that Penfield was to go; he was to attend a good university; he was to become a Rhodes scholar; he was to lead a religious life; he was to be successful in his life's work. And perhaps it was to ensure this success that she, ably assisted by her son-in-law and her daughter, established a small private school, romantically named Galahad. It was from Galahad that Penfield went to Princeton. He was a fine scholar, a popular student, a more than competent football player, and eventually he did receive a Rhodes scholarship. In the dark days of January 1915, he arrived in Oxford and quickly came under the influence of two medical giants — William Osler and Charles Sherrington. In 1916 he suffered a temporary setback. He was on his way to France to do volunteer work in a hospital and the ship that he was on, the *Sussex*, was torpedoed in the English Channel. He was severely wounded and recovery was slow. But before the year was out he had entered the famous medical school, Johns Hopkins in Baltimore. Six months later, in June 1917, he married his long-time love, Helen Kermott. They spent their honeymoon as volunteer workers in the American Red Cross Hospital in Paris. Within a short time, however, they were back in the States, Helen to start her task — a well-liked one — of raising a family, and Wilder to finish his basic medical

training. Then, after a period of internship in Boston, he returned to Oxford to do further medical research, again under the influence of Sherrington. And two years later he started his active career as a neurosurgeon in the Presbyterian Hospital in New York. His reputation in the medical world began to grow with amazing rapidity.

The year 1928 was the year of great decision for in that year he accepted an invitation to go to Montreal to become Professor of Neurological Surgery at McGill and Surgeon-in-Charge of Neurosurgery at the Royal Victoria Hospital, for with the invitation had come assurances from McGill authorities that they would do all in their power to help him see his dream come true — that dream being the establishment of an institute where neurology, neurosurgery, and other closely allied sciences could be brought together under one roof. And six years later, in 1934, with strong financial support from the Rockefeller Foundation, the Montreal Neurological Institute was officially opened. His dream had turned into a reality.

In the year of his appointment as director of the M.N.I. he became a Canadian citizen and from then on was ever more deeply involved in Canadian affairs. But he also travelled widely in Europe, the Middle East, Russia, China, etc.; he spoke before many gatherings of distinguished scientists (for example, he gave the prestigious Ferrier lecture before the Royal Society in London in 1946); and, with the passing of the years, he gathered to himself many awards and honours, culminating in the moment that he received the Order of Merit from the hands of Queen Elizabeth shortly after her accession to the throne. In the words of Lewis, he evolved from "a Canadian neurosurgeon into a humanist-scientist-philosopher of world fame."

On his retirement from the M.N.I. in 1960, he left his role as an active neurosurgeon; but ever restless, ever ambitious, ever aggressive, he spent the last fifteen years of his life writing, making public speeches, and giving his services to what he deemed to be good causes. For a brief period he acted as the first president of the Vanier Institute of the Family, established in 1965 by the then Governor General of Canada and his gracious wife. But here he ran into early troubles with the active management of the Institute because of his ultra-conservatism and his failure to understand the problems of a rapidly changing society. For as Lewis says: "he wore his own prejudices and convictions like a slightly old-fashioned garment, with a touchy pride," and "it was difficult not to come away either fervently admiring him, or fervently disliking him. He was, first and last, a committed man."

On his death he left a treasury of materials for his biographer. During his first career he had written two historical novels — *No Other Gods* (1954), a highly imaginative tale of the departure of Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees to found a new nation and a monotheistic religion (in writing this work he was inspired by his mother who had drafted a tale about Abraham and Sarah); and *The Torch* (1960), a novel based on the little that is known about the life of Hippocrates, the father of medicine. In preparing these novels he did careful research; he went to Ur and to Cos; and he eventually showed that he could unfold a good story. Both books were moderately successful in a highly competitive market. He also published, in 1967, a biography, *The Difficult Art of Giving: The Epic of Alan Gregg* (Gregg for many years had worked with the Rockefeller Foundation and Penfield knew him well), and just a few weeks before his own death he completed *No Man Alone*, a partial autobiography that traces his life from childhood to the opening of the M.N.I. It is a well-written and richly informative work.

But left in manuscript at his death were other materials of great value, in particular the weekly letters that he had written his mother over a period of some thirty years (she died in 1935 but had carefully typed up the letters to preserve them for posterity), and also the highly intimate, though somewhat sporadic diaries that he had kept from boyhood down to almost the moment of death.

With this mountain of information before him, Lewis was obviously faced with many problems. In his youth he had found the great man to be "a powerful but a distant figure . . . someone to be wary of because his occasional anger was apocalyptic." With the passage of time he came closer to him, and after four years of working on the biography he found a still different man. The diaries affected him especially. They "revealed a man I had known, and a different one, a man more ambivalent, self-critical, musing, and troubled than any of us around him would have guessed." The uncertainties and the troubled mind came undoubtedly from the questions that Penfield was always asking himself and others. And the dominant question was: What is the relation between the spirit and the brain? Having probed hundreds of brains, he was still asking: Where in the physical brain can we find what we call the mind? And at the end of his life he had no answer. He died a frustrated man. Hence Lewis's title — *Something Hidden.*

But now to conclude, let me quote the final sentence of Lewis's preface. It well sums up his approach to his task: "I hope that my affection, my admiration, and my critical eye have struck a balance in the pages of this book." And Lewis has greatly succeeded.

STANLEY E. READ

DOCTORS

DONALD JACK, *Rogues, Rebels and Geniuses: The Story of Canadian Medicine.* Doubleday, $24.95.

TRYING TO APPRECIATE THE HISTORY of Canadian medicine from this volume is like trying to get a drink from a firehose. The reader is overwhelmed with some well-researched material, some gossip and some very amusing yarns. Despite certain minor flaws in the book it is highly readable and will give a lay audience an insight into the incredible things that may happen in medical practice.

Canadian contributions to medical science are well set out and sympathetically recounted. The author knows his subject and has a pleasing style in discussing the outstanding discoveries made by Canadian doctors.

In addition to the obvious candidates for historical treatment — Osler, Banting, Penfield and Bethune — there are some less well-known but absolutely fascinating characters, many of them from the Maritimes, whose autobiographical accounts are drawn upon, appropriately, by the author.

One superior chapter concerns the Grenfell Mission and its founder. Another introduces the delightful Dr. Gustave Gingras whose rehabilitation of paraplegics, post-second war, has been an inspiration to thousands of patients, their families and their eventual employers.

The editorial work could have been improved insofar as spelling, particularly of names, is concerned. The author should not be blamed for that. Otherwise the publication has been well produced, and the illustrations are remarkably well chosen.

All in all this is a book of great appeal to those interested in medicine in Canada's past, and it is well worth reading by lay people and by health professionals. The bibliography is disappointing, again not the fault of the author. The background reading by the author is prodigious and he tells his stories well, if in rather unorthodox terms. That is refreshingly different from many desiccated historical texts. One would have liked a little more accuracy on a few points, but the sweep of the work makes up for any deficiencies.

WILLIAM G. GIBSON, M.D.

TWO HEADS

JACQUES GODBOUT, *Les Têtes à Papineau.* Seuil, n.p.

IN MOST OF HIS NOVELS, Jacques Godbout has been concerned with Québec's position between two cultures, the French and the American. In *Le Couteau sur la table, Salut Galarneau!*, and *L'Isle au Dragon*, Québec's specific character is described as arising from a dialectic between its French intellectual heritage and its *américanité*, i.e., the geographical and mental proximity to the United States. As Godbout's heroes oscillate between the extremes of junk culture and linguistic sophistry, neither influence is without its problems, yet their co-existence and mutual conditioning is the prerequisite for an unmistakable, although precarious, Québec identity.

In Godbout's latest novel, *Les Têtes à Papineau*, this dialectic has assumed physical expression in the shape of a Siamese twin by the name of Charles-François Papineau. The book appeared in the midst of the confrontation between Trudeau and Lévesque over the Constitution, and Godbout's *indépendantiste* convictions are as strong in his previous books. But the tenor of *Les Têtes à Papineau* is considerably more resigned, almost pessimistic. Open confrontation is not desirable in the post-referendum era: "Nous n'en avons plus le courage." In-

stead, Godbout's monster pleads for an "exercise lucide, utile et difficile de nos libertés." Thus, *Les Têtes à Papineau* may be said to belong a reflexive stage in Québec literature, a counter-current to the nationalist ebullience of the 1960's and early 1970's.

The adventures of Charles-François Papineau take us from his conception during a power blackout in New York through his childhood, education (including a brief association with a circus), and first sexual experiences to his "successful" operation by an English-Canadian surgeon who, by separating the twins, creates a unilingual Charles F. Papineau. *Les Têtes à Papineau* obviously belongs to the genre of the picaresque novel and could be profitably compared to Günter Grass's *The Tin Drum*, which displays similar juxtapositions of history and surrealism through the character of Oscar Matzerath; both Oscar and Charles-François suffer physically — and allegorically — the monstrosity of their country's situation, while attempting to make their very monstrosity the basis of a liveable identity.

Like *The Tin Drum*, *Les Têtes à Papineau* draws on a precise historical background, featuring personalities like John Glenn, Ed Sullivan, and the late Shah of Persia to provide a chronological frame of reference. More importantly, Charles-François Papineau's fate parallels to a certain extent that of the Dionne quintuplets who, alienated from their parents at infancy, were exhibited as a curiosity and became incapable of establishing a sense of their own selves. The text on the cover of *Les Têtes* suggests that Papineau, too, is historical and celebrating his 25th birthday, "Les Québécois ont la tête dure." But Charles-François is, of course, Godbout's invention; for him, fiction serves as a necessary antidote and corrective to history, as imagination gives the freedom to reverse, reassemble, and recreate time. "Ecrire c'est changer les choses," Godbout noted in a recent interview with Donald Smith in *Lettres québécoises*, thus alluding to the interplay of fact and fiction determining most of his work.

Similarly, Godbout's characters are combinations of none-too-subtle allegory and tangible, eccentric personality. The monster's name Charles-François suggests a co-existence of French and American character traits, followed by the name of one of Québec's most famous *Rouges*. Yet Papineau assumes a rather startling personality of his own as his heads sway in unison to the music at a cocktail party or whisper, *en stéréophonie*, endearing words into the ears of Irma Sweet, movie actress. The monster's mother, a computer operator, and his father, an imaginative journalist, represent head and heart respectively in the Papineau family, while "mémée Papinette," the grandmother, seems to incorporate the collective memory of Québec, albeit artificially kept alive by a pacemaker. Each member of the Papineau family, stereotypical as he may seem, is endowed with a sufficient number of idiosyncrasies; Godbout's characters appear never lifeless or cold. They are, however, at times unbearably "cute," especially if one remembers Galarneau's family whose mannerisms were rather too similar to those of the Papineau brood.

A favourite pastime of the Papineaus is to put together, as a team and over rather long periods of time, a puzzle. Their favourite scenes are pictures depicting the American prairies, and the monster's father approaches the table "jamais . . . sans s'être ceint les reins de ses revolvers nacrés." The puzzle is obviously a *mise en abyme* of Québec's attempted revival of the American Dream and of the virgin space representing it. Godbout's indictment of the idea of historical and, by implication, technological progress is unabashedly romantic; in the aforementioned interview with Donald

Smith he does not shy away from hyperbole in linking America to the idea of imaginative space, "Les Américains, c'est le roman, c'est le cinéma, c'est l'aventure." Godbout obviously separates between the actual and a sort of mythic America, postulating one as a challenge for the other, for the jig-saw puzzle and the patient creativity it requires are opposed, all through the novel, by the computers programming and predetermining Papineau's fate. Québec's literary attitude toward the United States has recently been placed in a historical perspective by Guildo Rousseau in *L'Image des Etats-Unis dans la littérature québécoise*; Godbout's view appears, in many ways, as a resurgence of the *Rouges'* faith in *the ideal* of American democracy as an alternative to their own political situation.

Like *Salut Galarneau!*, *Les Têtes à Papineau* is mildly metafictional in drawing attention to, and ironizing, its own narrative devices. Charles-François records his pre-separation days in a journal; he insists that the reader not interpret it as a definitive autobiography but as a "récit bi-graphique." François and Charles, faithful to the polarity of their temperaments, quarrel over the formulation of their text and discuss whether a narrative "en alternance" (a 1981 *L'Antiphonaire*, as it were) would not be a more satisfactory way of approaching their subject. But they decide that "L'essentiel . . . c'est d'être confrontés dans la même phrase jusqu'à la phase finale." As a result, Papineau's readers will never quite know what Charles-François is like; in this indeterminacy lies his chance for survival. Yet Godbout's novel ends with a letter, written by Charles F. Papineau after the operation: the monster's creative ambiguity has been truncated. In her article, "Culture, Revolution and Politics in Québec" (*Canadian Forum*, May 1982), Patricia Smart speculates on a new phase of "cultural fatigue" in Québec as Hubert Aquin phrased it in his famous 1962 essay; as Godbout's novel ends, it remains open whether that fatigue implies creative (and political) exhaustion or whether it signals a period of reflexivity preparing a literature of replenishment.

EVA-MARIE KROLLER

IMAGES OF PERSON

MIKE MASON and T. F. RIGELHOF, *A Beast With Two Backs*. Oberon, $6.95.

DAVID HLYNSKY, *Salvage*. Coach House, $7.50.

THE IDEA BEHIND *A Beast With Two Backs* seems good: two 44-page novels bound together in one cover. In this case, they are "The Beautiful Uncut Hair of Graves" by Mike Mason, and "Hans Denck, Cobbler" by T. F. Rigelhof. For both writers this is apparently a first book, and it is doubtful either of the short novels could have been published as a book on its own.

Mike Mason tells the story of a young Indian girl who goes missing from her family, which is scavenging at a small town dump. Aside from the presence/absence of the Indian girl, the central figure is Susan Groening, a high school student and part-time Girl Friday for the local weekly newspaper. Mason balances a plot line which involves the townspeople's efforts to locate the missing girl (or her body) with Susan's discovery of human mortality.

> It was June 10 and spring had come early. The first week in March the weather had turned hot, summer hot, and stayed that way. For over 100 days now there had been no rain.
>
> Already the ditches along many of the country roads were filling with pale dunes of silting topsoil.

In these early pages, Mason has a credibility problem, although later pas-

sages resolve most of these difficulties. In the midst of drought, the nuisance grounds are a slough of floating garbage; "Must be near twenty feet of it, places," says a police officer. Later, Mason explains (not entirely convincingly) that the section of land was "swampy and full of clay. In the drought that spring, it was the only spot for miles that held any standing water." Mason's townspeople, in the early pages, seem as unreal as his nuisance grounds, preferring to play cards rather than join the search for the missing girl. Small town folk, in my experience, are in their glory when jumping into some "emergency" with a helping hand. But these points can be conceded to Mason: the authenticity of his descriptive phrases, and the building mood of gloom, gradually absorb the reader.

> As the poles raked through it, the liquid moved sluggishly like viscid soup or the hairless hide of an animal, and all around the packed floating garbage heaved gently, almost as if something were breathing underneath it.

Almost forty pages of the short novel deal with this probing/exploring, with the darkening of spirits and the growing realization of the presence of death. The experience is a sort of death and resurrection for Susan Groening. Mason's characters dredge up the black guts of the dump, of their lives, and in the end the reader feels very much a participant, a witness to some primordial spectacle. The work is gut-wrenching, and cathartic.

The book's second half, though often entertaining reading, has little of the staying power of Mason's story. "Hans Denck, Cobbler" tells of a second-generation cobbler who comes to form an unusual alliance of spirit with the young "hippie" grandson of a long-time friend/associate. Both Hans Denck and the hippie "Raf" are simple people at heart, although their lives differ radically. Rigelhof spins out the old cobbler's biography in the first pages of the story, sweeping through decades and generations in a flash. The problem is, at this point in the narrative, we have no reason to care. Rigelhof has not led the reader into the story, but rather dumped it in his lap. Long rambling paragraphs are thick with plodding plotting. The narrative is choppy, and the tone strident.

At times terse and explanatory, Rigelhof also resorts to affectations, such as saying "At the moment under consideration," instead of "Now." The last third of the novel dwells more fully and in a more satisfying depth with the character of Hans Denck, and his very personal set of values. Throughout, however, one feels that the writer manipulates rather than explores his characters.

David Hlynsky is primarily a visual artist, and his book *Salvage* is a fusion of 45 black and white photographs with forty-odd pages of fiction. The result is an intriguing, if not wholly satisfying, book. As the back cover blurb says, "the words serve best as illustrations to the photographs of meticulously arranged, familiar objects." A smoking toaster, a sponge in a rubber-gloved hand, a bungalow, coffee mug, street sign: the photographs create sharp imagery of the mundane. And *Salvage* is a good title: Hlynsky salvages the waste land of the "Sunset" cafe, and the objects and people to be found in such places:

> Inside the can, a small man was whitewashing the washroom. He was the only janitor in the Sunset and if he had any teeth, he certainly wasn't showing them. When he rubbed his gums together from side to side his cheeks took turns sagging over his jaw and his lips moved in and out like a couple of pancakes with nowhere to go. If he wasn't in fact (and in the flesh) Popeye, the former spinach snorter, there was more than a strong hint that the old sailor had been skinny dipping in his genetic pool. Dodo birds cooed in the low branches of his family tree. He dipped his brush and painted.

Wit, style, "smarts": *Salvage* has them. Hlynsky is apparently not interested, though, in insight, understanding, or compassion. His people are "interesting" as creations of western culture — no more or less interesting than the smoking toaster. He makes us see these objects with a new perspective, but in the end the reader feels he has consumed the literary equivalent of junk food.

Hlynsky's prose is amusing and witty, in small servings, but its appeal wears off; his photographs, by contrast, tease the mind with their fascinating ambiguity long after the book itself has been closed and tucked away.

LORNE DANIEL

MANICHEES & OTHERS

DAVID HELWIG, *It Is Always Summer*. Stoddart, $15.95.

JOHN LANE, *Return Fare*. Turnstone Press, n.p.

It Is Always Summer, latest published of David Helwig's "Kingston" novels, probes two particularly seductive illusions: that summer is not merely an idyll but a promise of infinite contentment; and that an island, insulated and at a remove from the darker world, is the place where this promise is to be fulfilled. Helwig's island is specifically Wolfe Island off Kingston, but it is also the isle of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* and the dream island of imagination. The twin seductions do indeed prove to be illusions, as summer burns out in apocalyptic violence, and the manic world of the city — a city symbolized by domed and turreted edifices of law-and-order — infiltrates the island.

Helwig's method is to create characters whose lives impinge in more or less casual ways, and amongst whom he moves with apt detachment yet closeness, telling their stories and mediating their thoughts. Jane Burtch, an earth-mother figure, summers on Wolfe Island with her small son, her lawyer-husband Wayne commuting daily to Kingston. At Wayne's invitation they are joined by Elizabeth, a poet, visiting from England; she had known him years earlier during Kingston student days. Elizabeth is severely virginal but, despite her professional celibacy, her bony attractiveness proves disturbing; Jane knows that Wayne is drawn to her, and regards Elizabeth's up-front spirituality as a species of more earthly erotic seduction. Elizabeth has a counterpart in her lover of ten years ago, Robert; at fifty he finds himself the unemployed managing editor of a university press which is closing down. His daughter Cindy begins as a water figure, her world having drowned on the collapse of an affair, but she surfaces to fall in with an artist-chef named Paul, a creature of zucchinis and other exotic vegetables. The other major character is the fire figure; he is Carl, a dismissed prison guard, estranged from his wife, denied access to home and son, a Caliban whose rage is not to be appeased. Wayne Burtch is his wife's lawyer, a circumstance which sets up the novel's conclusion of murder and arson.

Helwig introduces his characters individually through a sequence of focuses, then brings them together in two key island-party encounters. The major surface interest is eroticism in all its variations: flirtation, arousal, fantasy, jealousy, power. He is adept at exposing social eroticism, in a dinner-party flirtation which peels the corners from private photographs to provide glimpses of attitude, obsession, and anxiety. But erotic fantasies and encounters also serve as metaphors for the intellectual substance of this novel (and Helwig is a cerebral writer), which is nothing less than an anatomy of deep-rooted Manicheanism in the modern psyche — in other words, inability to integrate soul with body. If we cannot realize

perpetual summer on a paradisal island, Helwig seems to suggest, it is perhaps because many people must bruise body to pleasure soul, or *vice versa*. The heresy of the Manichees becomes an explicit thread when Elizabeth reveals her fascination with the Montségur atrocity, when the Manichees were hounded from refuge to perish under the Inquisition's edict.

On one level, Elizabeth functions somewhat simply as a woman whose denial of sexuality seems inextricably linked to a beauty which leads men on even as it holds itself aloof; in fact, she brings out rape fantasies in both Wayne the happily-married lawyer, and Carl the brutalized prison guard. On another level, one which emerges from Jane's hostile fascination with her, we test the imaginative and moral implications of Elizabeth's celibacy. She calls herself a witch; is her psychic insight phoney or real? is it related to her sexual aloofness? do these things give her, simply, metaphors for poetry, or is she (as Jane thinks) a succubus, harmfully — and maliciously — feeding off the lives of others? Certainly the final catastrophe which visits Elizabeth seems to enact a kind of fated response to her particular spiritual/sexual condition.

There is more to admire in *It Is Always Summer* than can be indicated in a brief review, but I must single out the evocativeness of *place* Helwig achieves (we hardly need to be told it is Kingston and Wolfe Island) and, additionally, the harmony between realistic description and symbolic reference. It is a novel always under the intelligent control of its author. Perhaps too much so at times, since the symmetry of plot and character becomes unnerving: for example, Robert as counterpart to Elizabeth, the one dying by water, the other (virtually) by fire; and the contrast between Robert who drowns, and his daughter Cindy who surfaces to become an earth-maiden, just as Wayne and Jane survive as naturals in the element of earth. Philosophically, too, the novel may be too neat if Helwig means to imply that were it not for Carl (all body) and Elizabeth (all spirit), perpetual summer on paradise island might indeed be realized by the wayneandjanes of this world.

If Helwig's novel is satisfying and provocative, John Lane's *Return Fare* is neither, despite the fact that its subject matter — the brutal ordeals of a fifteen-year-old boy trying to make it to Los Angeles from British Columbia, in the wake of a forbidden love — allows plenty of scope. The novel is set in a very dated nineteen-fifties, and the sensational material — harsh treatment of Mexican migrant workers, mindless U.S. police and prison wardens, buggery in the prisons, and so on — is presented devoid of subtlety or imaginative colouring. The jacket blurb states that this is a "powerful, raw novel in the tradition of classic realism," and the second word is certainly operative; the implied invocation of *Grapes of Wrath*, however, is gratuitous. This is not to say that Lane never creates a memorable scene; he does occasionally catch the atmosphere of a diner, for example, ably, and some of the dialogue is very convincing. But almost without exception his characters are stereotypes, all good or all bad, and all predictable. This does not hold for the hero Dave, however, who remains lifeless throughout. You have to hold on to the fact that he is fifteen, since other than that his acquisitions are a vocabulary limited to ingenious combinations of expletives, and a horror of homosexual acts to which he is subjected with monotonous regularity. This is, strangely, a novel which does improve somewhat as it goes. The first pages hold out the prospect of frenetic verbal overkill: "staggered," "jerking," "brushed madly," "stumbled"; thereafter the prose settles

down into arrangements of words more or less appropriate to events.

PATRICK HOLLAND

LOOKING BACK

BRUCE HUNTER, *Benchmark*. Thistledown press, $7.95.

KIM MALTMAN, *Branch Lines*. Thistledown press, $7.95.

DON GUTTERIDGE, *God's Geography*. Brick Books, $7.50.

BRUCE MEYER, *The Tongues Between Us*. South Western Ontario Poetry, n.p.

HERE, IN THE LANGUAGES of the geographer, cartographer, and scientist, the Canadian poet/artist steps forth once again as mapmaker, demarcating the distances in time and space between us and our ancestors, significant places and events: the boundaries of a still-unknown country. Placed end-to-end, these texts neatly bridge old and new worlds of meaning.

In Bruce Hunter's *Benchmark*, the poet as itinerant worker, drifter, loner, moves through a primarily Western landscape of "ambivalent dreams." And it's the same old story: "the old highway solution," "with pack slung over one shoulder / balancing guitar in hand / home no longer is the place to be." But where, amid the diversity of tractors, half-breeds, highways, and hockey players, the benchmark (the surveyor's starting mark) falls is difficult to determine. There are also some words of admonition to a Toronto poet, to wake up and hear "this new clamour of America" rather than remain "stunned in the other time / on a continent deserted." More effective is "Selected Canadian Rifles," a cogent reminder of some home-grown atrocities:

in Bienfait cemetery
near Estevan
truth and time marked in stone
over a common grave

MORGAN
MARKUNAS
GRYSHKO
MURDERED IN ESTEVAN
SEPTEMBER 29, 1931
BY R.C.M.P.

the rifles miss children and women
in the angry crowd
but their fathers, husbands
fail to return

The open-ended lines that characterize Hunter's form add to the epitaphic quality of this distinctive political piece.

Kim Maltman's book is more unified. His subject is the prairie, and *Branch Lines* traverses that hard, elemental landscape of Sinclair Ross — though now even the rattlesnakes have trouble surviving. Yet, despite the odds, life persists, appalling us with its power and strange beauty:

smoke still curling from a few
clumps,
and it seems endless. Only when you look
off, into the distance, do you see
the grass already pushing up through the
burnt soil,
and then you realize the roots are hardly
touched,
and look around again
and suddenly it all comes into focus,
cycle within cycle, pouring out into the
thick black soil
the eerie violence of flowers.

This comes from one of several "Fire" poems. Through fire and ice, the extremes that rule this harsh land, the cycles of life continue.

Then there are the people, who lead lonely, empty lives: the endless cups of coffee in fly-blown cafes, frustrating sexual encounters, mindless drives down straight lines of highway, dying towns. These portraits are vividly etched in stark, powerful language. A combination of poems and prose pieces in the flat tones of reportage, along with gritty pen-and-ink sketches, give the book a black-and-white documentary quality that conveys a strong sense of suppressed drama, the intensity of people living on the edge.

In *God's Geography*, Don Gutteridge's latest book, the poet turns from the abstractions of Canada to its human contours, as expressed by the details of life in small-town Ontario. The book is dedicated to Gutteridge's grandparents and family. Many of the poems are, in fact, memorials; others trace roots through a growing child's perplexing encounters with life and death. Another central thread is the examination of the poetic process as a part and continuation of the life process. It is the "Saving Grace":

Pain writes poems
on a human face,
crooked lines
scrawl flesh.

We make poems
with our skin / bones,
words obey,
dance the tune
of our pain.

How many lines
must I scrawl
from the mask
of your ruined face?

This is potent stuff. But *God's Geography* transcends the personal. The book is a collage: poems, photos from the family album, reminiscences in dialogue, intriguing clippings from newspapers of 1838 through World War II. These poems and odds-and-ends do not just relate the story of the Gutteridge clan but also tell how the individual and family are tied to the history of the nation. From the arrival in the new land to foreign battlefields, to death and the rise of new generations, the ties are strengthened.

In Bruce Meyer's slim volume, *The Tongues Between Us*, tracing roots leads back across the Atlantic to a rich Gaelic past and a fleeting sense of connection before the realization of the need for "separate journeys." The historical matrix is central and interestingly worked, in a traditional mode, as in "Culloden." But scope outstrips language at times and leads to clichéd expression:

When we kissed
                our tongues locked
a Gaelic brogue wrapping itself
around the flat words
of a Scots descendant
sharing language as the air we breathe.

The attempt at a mythic apprehension of a lost heritage and birth of a unique poetic voice is perhaps too large a subject for so small a book; and *Tongues* shows promise rather than completion.

Overall, there is much of value and interest in this quartet. It does, however, engender a slight sense of *déjà vu*. Not only do these new texts look back over old ground, but there is in them collectively something of that too familiar sentimentality and absence of wit that reminds us that being a Canadian poet is still a preciously self-conscious business.

RICHARD DUBANSKI

BEAR'S TALES

ANTONINE MAILLET, *Christophe Cartier De La Noisette Dit Nounours*. Hachette/Leméac, $13.95.

SOME OF OUR BEST CHILDREN'S STORIES have been written by Canadian women shortly after producing a major novel. Margaret Laurence gave us *The Olden Days' Coat* after *The Diviners*; *Jason's Quest* was inspired by a playful family of moles living behind Elm Cottage, shortly after the appearance of *The Fire Dwellers*. Margaret Atwood and Gabrielle Roy, among others, have attempted the genre with success. It may be that writing for children is a form of play which restores the creative impulse. The latest and in some ways most challenging addition to this expanding body of writing, in that it addresses the issue of inspiration and the creative imagination, is by the Acadian writer Antonine Maillet. Best known for the play *La Sagouine* (1971) and the prize-winning novel *Pélagie-la-Charrette*

(1979), she now gives us a delightful children's book, *Christophe Cartier De La Noisette Dit Nounours.*

In the magic realm of bears, Christophe Cartier is neither archaic nor academic — he is Acadian, pure and simple. The first two names are self-explanatory — not content to root around in the backwoods where he belongs, but yearning to explore the sand dunes and to make acquaintance with the creatures who live by the sea, this bear indiscriminately assumes the epic characteristics of Christopher Columbus and Jacques Cartier. In his more conventional but equally endearing moments, he becomes "Nounours" — the common name for "Teddybear" in a French child's vocabulary. His acquisition of the title "Sieur de la Noisette," roughly translatable as "Lord of the Haycorns," to use the vocabulary of A. A. Milne's Piglet, is, however, less easily explained. It involves a full-fledged Homeric battle of the beasts over a store of nuts, and the love of a certain white weasel. Because of an accidental skirmish with a skunk, Nounours wins the battle but temporarily loses his newly acquired lady love. Like children, Nounours is an inveterate storyteller and mythmaker, as well as an adventurer; he proudly counts amongst his relatives and ancestors the Big Dipper or "Big Bear," and throughout the book stubbornly refuses to grasp the difference between meteors and metaphors.

If children of six to ten will greet Nounours's escapades with a sense of recognition — he has no trouble climbing up sand dunes, but tumbles down them because his back paws are longer than his front paws — only adults can fully appreciate his role in the spiritual and creative life of the older narrator, whose existence is at once upset and renewed by her encounter with Nounours. A maritime pastoral spanning four seasons, the story is told by a nameless writer, whose home by the sea used to be a lighthouse. The light has gone out, only to be magically rekindled, made "real" once more, by her friendship with Nounours, during the course of which both characters grow in love of one another and understanding of the world they share. The story merges the pastoral of childhood with the dream-vision; like Alice with the white rabbit, the narrator begins by observing the activities of an anthill in the springtime, but suddenly finds herself in a magic world transcending human logic, the memory of which she carries back into her waking life and its everyday reality. Unlike Alice's experience, however, here the "dream" (never identified as such) *is* reality in the world of Nounours, who spends half of his life in active hibernation.

Language is of primordial importance in the magical transformation of mundane reality which takes place in the story — Nounours's narrative vocabulary, because he is a creature both close to childhood and close to nature, expands and unifies the disparate or forgotten elements of the narrator's landscape, alchemically converting pebbles into agates and a rowboat into a sailing ship, complete with a seagull for a figurehead. Nounours's speech incorporates myth, legend, and the folk song; it may be full of Acadian malapropisms, but when he declaims the fables of Lafontaine, he does so with the assurance of someone who is an expert in animal fables. He even goes as far as to accuse "her fountain," his term for "Lafontaine," of plagiarism. The non-rational, non-linear logic of bears in fact dictates the shape of the story: we are told that the narrator would have liked to begin at the beginning, with her hero's birth, first words, socioeconomic background, etc., but that Nounours was the first to inject chaos into her priorities and sense of order.

When we encounter Nounours at the beginning of the story, blissfully ignorant and unschooled, he is nevertheless deliv-

ering a learned discourse on the stars Aldeberan and Betelgeuse to his fellow creatures and elders. This is the occasion for his meeting with the author; he follows her home, and for a year she unsuccessfully tries to civilize him, but instead gradually learns to see the world through his eyes. It is difficult to convey the combination of whimsical humour and sophistication contained in this tale, whose contents range from the perils of making pumpkin preserves to a discussion of time and mutability, both from a bear's-eye view. The book offers at least one set of readers a wise and witty appreciation of the role of magic in life and literature, converting pumpkins into jack-o'-lanterns and causing field daisies to take root in sand dunes.

The story may contain subtle nationalistic overtones: the narrator, until her encounter with the bear, bemoans the fact that while agates are to be found on the sandy beaches of Gaspé, her dunes only harbour common pebbles. Of course, Nounours has no time for the stories of Canada geese from their migrations to the south; instead, emerging from hibernation, he tells them about his very real dream-life, during which he visited all his bear relations, including those who live in the Milky Way. In the end, Nounours returns to the forest to rediscover his roots, and the narrator climbs her tower with a bucket of soapy water, to scrub her lantern clean. Her home has once more become a source of light, although Nounours is no longer living beneath the terrace of her lighthouse.

There is an old Acadian saying — "Ne réveille pas l'ours qui dort" — let sleeping bears lie. It is good that Antonine Maillet did not follow this advice.

The illustrations by Hans Troxler add much to a beautifully produced text. The book's two appendices, a letter from Antonine and a letter from Nounours, underscore the role of the two players in the drama: Antonine's letter is a glossary of the dozen or so Acadian words used by Nounours, explaining their origins; Nounours's letter is his version of the history of Hallowe'en. Together they reveal the family connection between game, ritual, the oral tradition, and literature.

MICHELE LACOMBE

STRONG WOMEN

MARGARET CREAL, *The Man Who Sold Prayers.* Lester & Orpen Dennys, $14.95.

"I CONSIDERED WHAT actually happens in women's lives, in my life, and the diminished reflections of that in literature. I considered myself among women: mother, grandmother, aunt, sister-in-law, colleagues, friends, enemies. There were many stories to be told there, much to be understood." So saying, Louise Bernikow in *Among Women* has told us why we might attach special value to Margaret Creal's short story collection *The Man Who Sold Prayers.* The title does not suggest it, and the title story obfuscates it, but Creal's distinctive achievement is to reveal the mysterious integrity of strong women in their most central, self-defining relationships, and to show that relationships between women are very often primal in this sense.

The first story, "The Man Who Sold Prayers," concerns a primal relationship too — the link that connects an Anglican rector with his God. This sweet-tempered mystic is the only male protagonist in the collection, and the motivation for building a story around him may relate to the novel, set in an Anglican girls' school, that Margaret Creal published in 1957. The language and manners of Anglicanism are comfortable territory for her; she may have decided to display her maturity in this recent work by attempting a more

original and wittily detached portrait of the church and churchmen.

Where her work really transcends the ordinary, however, is in the much more personal canvases of "At Sunnyside Villa," "Two Women," "Tales from a pensione," "Counterpoint," and "Inland beach" — in fact, almost all the others in the book. Here the action is deeply intimate, and the mainsprings of each small drama are meticulously coiled. Each follows the destiny of a bond: the circumstantial dependency between two very old room-mates in a nursing home; the ambivalent tie between sophisticates in an adulterous affair; the profound connection between mother and endangered child; the confounding erotic attachment between two thoroughly married women.

In these stories Creal makes efficient use of her observant eye, her knowledge and love of music, and her sensuous vocabulary — the diction of a well-travelled and well-read epicure. In "Counterpoint" and "Tales from a pensione," particularly, her language helps to create the intricacy of design that inspired V. S. Pritchett to compare the writing of short stories with the writing of sonnets. These stories are as poignant as they are intricate. "Tales from a pensione" powerfully conveys the helpless resentment with which mother and young adult experience their symbiosis: each feels the other's awareness as a kind of damnation, yet can gain no distance from it. "Counterpoint" follows an equally sad and angry ego struggle between lovers, again seen through the self-knowledge of the woman. In each story, self-knowledge is shown to take one only so far, as "The Man Who Sold Prayers" expresses in a different way: "He saw that his existence depended not on his own perception of it but on that of other people."

Even more moving are the two stories in which Creal penetrates floundering and finds eloquence. In "At Sunnyside Villa" Mrs. Cameron, a stroke victim, speaks through the exquisite details of her behaviour. Andrea in "Two Women" is assailed with confusion when her best loyalties conflict with the taboo against passionate feeling between women, but her almost mute struggle to assert her dignity and love is conveyed indirectly by expressive touches of dialogue and action.

The power and freshness of these stories are of a wholly different order from the qualities that recommend the title story. Though "The Man Who Sold Prayers" is often original, it sets up stereotypes in order to attempt an essentially metaphysical statement. And lamentably, some of these stereotypes trivialize the very subject with which Creal elsewhere displays her greatest sensitivity and acumen: the centrality of women in the moral order, and in civilization generally. I'm thinking, naturally, of the ladies' auxiliary president with her irrelevant lemon pie. I wondered if it were not equally stereotypical that, having depicted the Reverend in his youth as a delightfully original thinker, Creal portrays his daughters as trite parrots of adolescent slang. But then, not all of Creal's youngsters sound real: kiddie dialogue is not her strength.

In looking at *The Man Who Sold Prayers* as a whole, I am reminded of the dilapidated exteriors that serve as theft deterrents for some of San Francisco's most opulent rooms. Camouflage is the effect of the title story, as if the author, having discovered that she had written something which the critics might disparage with the word "feminine," decided to place her unforgettable Mrs. Preston and Mrs. Cameron, her Sophia and Julian, her Ariadne and Andrea, behind a distracting edifice. Of course the main source of wonderment is not this

rundown housefront on its million-dollar lot, but the artistry displayed behind it.

CATHERINE KERR

TO THE BONE

CHRIS SCOTT, *Antichthon*. Quadrant Editions, $8.95.

Antichthon proves as complex a novel — as great a mass of contradictions — as was Giordano Bruno a man. But the unravelling of so densely woven a fabric is well worthwhile. Language denotes paradox in this, Chris Scott's third novel. And language — or, rather, kinds of language — forms the unsettling thematic basis for this admirable work. *Antichthon* succeeds in presenting a complicated narrative timescape where historical fiction merges with fictional history.

The historical Giordano Bruno (1548-1600: preceded in his heretical ways by Martin Luther and followed in the same by Galileo), declared his intention to be a philosopher early in life. While still a young man he mastered the works of predecessors such as Agrippa, Ficino, Pico, Pythagoras, and Heraclitus. Giordano rejected Aristotle as "too literal minded — a man who saw but did not believe what he saw" and developed his own anti-system of thought. Bruno evolved his doctrine of ideas — that reality existed not in the realm of the senses but in that of the ideal — and his doctrine of recollection (or, "the art of memory") from the fusion of neo-Platonic philosophy with Christian doctrine. He asserted that "everything contradicts itself . . . [that] God was created to serve man . . . [that the] man who longs to know God . . . must first study nature. For just as the divinity descends to nature, so there is an ascent made to the divinity through nature." These beliefs were not as incriminating as those which held, in direct opposition to the teachings of the Church, that the sun was the centre of the planetary system and that there existed other suns and planets. Threats from the ecclesiastical arm and, finally, excommunication drove Bruno from Italy into France, England, Eastern Europe, and Germany in turn. At each stop Giordano found royal favour and an audience for his alarming ideas. Tried once in Italy in 1592 and released because of insufficient evidence, Giordano Bruno was lured back in 1599, tried again, and sentenced to death.

The (anti-)hero of Chris Scott's novel proves a man of many identities: Bruno is referred to variously as the Magus, the Nolan (this label derives from Nola, his place of birth), Brother Jordanus, Filoteo, and by the British as Jordano Bruno Nolano. *Antichthon* is at least partly by and mostly about this sixteenth-century philosopher/metaphysician. Each of the novel's dozen parts is further sub-divided and preluded by appropriately ironic epigraphs as well as by date and location. However, none of the narratives remains strictly loyal to its affixed time and place. "History is a kind of memory"; thus, narrative flows through and beyond such attempts at historical accuracy, vaulting effortlessly from the elapsed past (both present and past) to the future present. One narrator in particular links these varied perspectives; Kaspar Schopp would recreate the (hi)story of Giordano Bruno, about whom it is whispered after the execution that he still lives. But, while investigating these rumours Kaspar inadvertently connects the heretic's death with the almost simultaneous execution of Portia and Roberto — adulterers and unwitting murderers. The real reasons for Bruno's death prove anything but religious.

To paraphrase the Nolan himself, constancy exists only in change — hence *Antichthon*'s ever-shifting time horizon.

Further, the novel's circular structure successfully embodies Giordano Bruno's heretical belief in "cyclical existence." Parts one and twelve take place at approximately the same time and locale: the first issues from the cell of the condemned, the latter from the elevated dais of those who witness his end. No one narrator dominates these major sections, however, for there exist as many stories about the Magus as tellers of them. These tales differ only in quality; all speakers tacitly agree that Bruno's life and death are better relegated to the annals of fiction. Giordano himself defines his death as "a fiction: the only way to keep on living." Hence, perspective differs to a literary rather than to an historical degree.

The novel's use of language remains interesting throughout because it embodies Giordano's assertion, near the beginning of the text, that "perspective is all." As always, this self-conscious author of "his several selves" claims to speak figuratively. In literal, Aristotelian terms, however — the way Bruno's language seems doomed to be taken — perspective *is* all, and this all shifts and dissolves in time and space. Narrators appear at once shadow and substance; abstract nouns such as *life*, *death*, *flesh*, and *soul* (once rigorously defined by the Church) become equally ambiguous and hollow. Seeming contradictions unnerve those like Kaspar, who, as soon as he learns the murderous extent to which politics and religion have merged in seventeenth-century Italy, loses his once-solid grip on reason. Madness and sanity fuse one with the other: "With the simplicity of one who has found the truth, he knew that he was insane." Yet each narrator in turn proves a heretic at heart; not one really despises Bruno. All speakers preserve an intrinsic style, and each carefully establishes those polarities with which his or her character remains particularly associated. Paradox and contradiction abound. The reader comes to feel very much a captive of the same metaphysical treadmill which traps the novel's anti-hero. Words accumulate, making it increasingly difficult for both characters and reader to escape the sticky, linguistic mire.

Much of the language remains self-conscious throughout the novel. "The Word" burdens Bruno as much as the meaningless, dogmatic drivel mumbled by his Inquisitors does. Unimaginative men, they persist in taking everything — including their captive — too literally yet not literally enough. Although Giordano protests time and again that he "was speaking figuratively, and did not mean to be taken literally," reason reigns to such an irrational extent at this Inquisition that the accused is tried and sentenced on the basis of his language. A determined resolver of contradictions, the Magus proposes too many that are not so digestible to those who privately ruminate on the same themes. Their shared language becomes somehow virulent to his judges when it issues from Bruno's mouth.

Language remains as reflective as it is reflexive. Mirrors provide the basis for an imagery dealing heavily in echoes, shadows, and reflections. Every thing contains its opposite: hence the novel's title — *Antichthon* — defines that hypothetical second earth on the opposite side of the sun — and hence the novel's preoccupation with paradox. Witness Bruno's motto: "I am changeable, I contradict myself. Free, I am shackled; bound I am liberated. Infigurable, I am time's geometrician." Each narrator represents a segment of Giordano's self; because of the heretic, the others glimpse a none-too-flattering portrait of themselves. There always exists the danger, however, that contradictions cancel each other out, much like Bruno's response to the Interrogatus about the number of natures possessed by man. He unhesitatingly replies: "The nature of an angel and the nature

of a demon — none." Contradictions so convincingly resolved also threaten unimaginative, literal minds. In addition to mirrors, visceral imagery is strikingly well employed and helps counter the heavily metaphysical diction a majority of the characters use. Chris Scott peels back layers of language as effectively as language shaves the skin from Giordano Bruno's bones.

Antichthon is also reader-oriented. Giordano ostensibly directs his early reference to "You, my distant yet close auditor" to his confessor Robert Bellarmine. As Bruno foresaw, however, death only guarantees his fictional immortality; that the reader reads assures this: "I dreamed, of course. But who has dreamed me? Another — you, my friend." The dreaming is mutual.

The novel does reveal certain stylistic flaws. At times the sheer accumulation of paradox and metaphysical discussion proves overwhelming. Dialogue tends to lag during the middle portion of the work, and interior monologue infrequently succumbs to melodrama, as when Kaspar awaits his audience with the Cardinal: "O death where is thy sting? *Tod, wo ist dein Stachel?* O grave, where is thy victory? *Hölle, wo ist dein Sieg?* Death is swallowed up in victory! *Der Tod ist vorschlungen in den Sieg!*" Certainly Kaspar should be viewed ironically at this juncture, but such simultaneous translation of morale-boosting platitudes defeats the intention. In fact, the continual translation of Latin phrases into their English equivalent becomes downright annoying. Perhaps the practice is supposed to reinforce the reflection/reflexivity motif?

Except for occasional lapses into cliché and all-too-familiar phrases like "Who'd have thought an old man could weigh so much?" following the murder of one who would otherwise have discovered Roberto and Portia's adulterous affair, the sequence of narratives is fast-paced. Thanks to the aforementioned sordid sub-plot and to Kaspar Schopp's quest for truth, *Antichthon* also exhibits certain thriller characteristics. Finally, typos abound; despite this needless frustration, the volume is a handsome one and worthy of critical attention.

SUSAN WHALEY

IN CUSTODY

DAVID DAY, *The Scarlet Coat Serial.* Porcépic, $6.95.

JON WHYTE, *Homage, Henry Kelsey.* Turnstone, $9.95.

THE SOVIETS PROPAGATE HISTORY; the Americans perpetuate it; Africans repeatedly inaugurate history and West Indians celebrate their historylessness; Canadians seem to go unaware of their history, to be uninterested in it, or to fancy themselves as the very custodians of their history, responsible for tidying it up for all their uninformed and detached compatriots. Having given up the ghost of the Canadian identity, Canadian writers now concern themselves largely with identifying the protagonists of their imagined history: everyone from Captain Vancouver and Susanna Moodie to the merely anonymous.

The historicity of literary works is of course less important than their fictional authenticity, but occasionally fiction is so dependent on idiosyncratic interpretation of a kind of mock history as to be aesthetically pretentious and unexciting. This urge to improve on truth by rewriting history appears to have been the inspiration both for David Day's examination of one Canadian institution, the North West Mounted Police, and for Jon Whyte's investigation of Henry Kelsey, for forty years a servant of another Canadian institution, the Hudson's Bay Company. One doubts whether their respective as-

sertions of the Mounties' pristine corruption and of Kelsey's central eccentricity really do justice either to history or to literature.

The Scarlet Coat Serial is a rather uncomfortable mixture of verse and prose, narrative and journalism, photographs and documents, all in the name of authenticity and at the expense of credibility. In his effort to resuscitate history, Day seems to suggest not just that the past is irrecoverable but also that it is still, inanimate, perhaps even dead. The subject of an early piece in this unpredictably episodic book — a poem entitled "This as a Child" — is representative of the author's thesis: a child playing soldiers near a war memorial slips away from his companions and down through a manhole into a tunnel beneath the monument and into the monument itself. Occupying the enormous head of a stone lion (suggestive of heroism, Empire, death), the child inhabits the past, but not the associative past he glimpsed while playing, because within the lion he encounters simply armature and emptiness. Day's contention that the child actually becomes the lion, recognizing its reality as the poet fancies he himself identifies the workings of history, is not totally convincing: "Slowly / I have become / conscious / I have entered the stone / I make a stooped / small-shouldered stand / peer out / into the bright world / through this lion's drilled eyes." Day's subsequent examinations of factual and fictional events merely emphasize the contrivance of this petrified-boy image. The author devotes so much of his precious time simply to describing photographs, recording legends, and presenting documents, many of them inexcusably mundane, that (to his readers' disappointment) he sacrifices not just his work's literary qualities, but even its literary pretensions.

The book is most impressive in its humour and in its intensity. One episode, for example, concerns Staff Sergeant Poett performing his toilet before a group of fascinated Blackfeet: when Poett removes and cleans his false teeth, the natives are puzzled; but when he removes his glass eye and drops it into a cup of water, they are shocked, dismissing his detached stare as the Devil's coup d'oeil. In another episode, "Vermilion," Mounties elude a raging prairie fire by leaping into a snow bank and into a nearby slough, emerging from their safety instants later to find "only seared earth, dead horses and the flaming outpost building." But in later episodes Day becomes entangled in the paraphernalia and esoterica of Canadian history, portraying Mountie Francis Dickens (son of Charles) with the imaginative insight of *Who's Who*, analyzing and synthesizing Dr. Gatling's gun with the precision of a ripe recruit, and covering the story of a celebrated wedding of giants with tabloid fidelity. Curiosity piled upon curiosity does little more than kill one's interest.

The main problem with the work is that it touches on genres, forms, and media without actually exploiting them, the author proving to be ineffective in his roles as historian, compiler, raconteur, and paste-up artist, and particularly in his role as experimenter. Although more successful as a poet, Day is rather stingy with his verse here.

Jon Whyte offers a more impressive poetic response to history, mainly because his book is a unified whole, rather than a collection of distantly related parts. Like Day, Whyte concerns himself with actual documents from history, in his case excerpts from the journals of explorer Henry Kelsey, but he appears to have selected them skilfully and to have delicately incorporated them into his poetry, playing one off against the other, the other against the one. In its idiosyncrasy and eccentricity Kelsey's diary is a kind of late seventeenth-century approxima-

tion of Mackenzie King's, and for Whyte to have made literary use of it at all is an accomplishment of some note. But his dependence on what is strong historical material but frail literary material suggests his poetic insecurity, which is especially unfortunate given the fact that his verse would certainly have stood much better without Kelsey and the historical context. His poetic descriptions of northern Canada are as beautiful and barren as the land itself — and at times as intricate, drawing us in all the directions of the compass at once. Attempting to achieve this effect, Whyte from time to time sends his verse down both sides of the page, creating caesurae of alienation and indecision suggestive of more traditional poetic rhythms. But the verse is not consistently successful. One finds hackneyed lines such as "Silence is born of the marriage of deep wonder and winter" side by side with such challenging lines as: "Stillness / the centre of wonder." Despite his sometimes prosaic loyalties to free verse, Whyte does manage to exploit poetic conventions to good effect, as in this catalogue of flowers: "Bog myrtle, sun dew, bracken and pincherries, / pitcher plants, touch-me-not, milfoil and brome, / twinflowers, bishop's cap, running pine, cloudberries: / garland the one who returns slowly home." But natural lists and descriptions are not in themselves enough to sustain a poem with epic pretensions.

As a series of meditations on uncharted territory, both natural and psychological, the work is engaging, but mainly because it is a unique source of information, one by which the student of history and literature is made captive — and a little uncomfortable. But to say that his verse is interesting is an understatement; to say that it is imperfect because of a conflict between personality and historicity is actually to compliment the poet on his humanity and on his dedication to his craft and to his subject-matter.

That neither volume is wholly satisfactory in its treatment of such basic literary devices as rhythm and structure, and particularly in its attention to the essential historical analogue, points to the tendency of too many Canadian writers to treat literature as a disposable medium, one that can accommodate the most permanent of subjects in the most ephemeral of forms. The practitioners of this kind of Can'tLit are the last ones who should address themselves to history and the last ones with whom history, if it ever wants itself discovered, will co-operate. To be custodians of history, writers must be dedicated enough to art to take custody of time. These works are timeless only in the sense that history will have no time for them.

PAUL M. ST. PIERRE

RAVEN'S LANDS

GAIL ROBINSON, *Raven the Trickster: Legends of the North American Indians.* Chatto and Windus, n.p.

YVES TROENDLE, *Raven's Children.* Oolichan, n.p.

ROBIN SKELTON, *Landmarks.* Sono Nis Press and Oolichan, $5.95.

IN *Raven the Trickster,* Gail Robinson collects and retells nine stories from Northwest Coast folk narrative. The events described by these stories occurred "when things were not ordered as they are now" — at a time, that is, when the ordinary laws of cause and effect had not been established, and almost anything could happen. The world was a work-in-progress, and this premise opens the door to fantasy: as modern narrators of science-fiction use the future as a setting and rationale for marvellous happenings, so native folk narrators referred to a distant

past, out of reach of common sense reckonings.

Managing this inchoate cosmos is Raven, the creator. He is very busy making the world, stocking it and adjusting it. Unlike more aloof creatures, who get the job done promptly, once-and-for-all, Raven seems to have no master plan. He makes mountains or creatures, or puts light in the sky, and then sits back to contemplate his project. Noticing areas that need refinement or development, he goes ahead with renovations and improvements.

What moves Raven to creativity? Sometimes he is touched by petitionings from the Humans he has made, for he seems to have their interests at heart. When they get cold, they complain to Raven, who undertakes to get fire for them. But fire is owned by Qok, a vain and selfish owl. So, posing as a famous dancing deer, Raven tricks Qok, and steals a few flames for the chilly villagers. Although the trick in a sense backfires — Raven's beautiful tale is burnt to a stump — mankind benefits. Yet the boon is not the point of the story. Rather, it is the trick that is most pertinent: Raven's insight into Qok's vanity, and his ingenuity in outwitting this unworthy bird. Likewise, Raven outsmarts the Man-who-sat-on-the-tides, a small-brained giant ruled by habit. Once more, human living conditions improve as a result, but the real pleasure of the tale lies in Raven's encounter with the giant: nimble brain conquers brawn, as it often does when folk heroes encounter massive obstacles.

In most of the stories, Raven is protagonist. But two present plots that resemble those of European folk tales in which young, human heroes have problems and adventures. In "Cannibal" three brothers go forth to overcome a female monster who devours hunters. She is horrible: "old and dried blood, sweet-smelling with decay, covered her wrists and elbows. Flies clung to her arms like burrs." Readers familiar with European tales about brothers might expect the youngest of the three to take this opportunity to show that he is brave and clever beyond his years, and defeat the bloodthirsty adversary single-handed, saving his siblings in the process. But all three brothers are equally irresolute and confused, and Raven must intervene at the end of the tale. In "Sila" Raven does not actively intervene in the fate of the young heroine but appears intermittently as a sage and sensitive counsellor. When Sila's doting brothers complain that she will not submit to her proper feminine role in the tribe, and goes swimming instead, Raven advises them: "'Let her swim the tides, for it is in her nature to do so.'"

Raven's activities do not always grow out of humanitarian impulse. In "How Raven Brought the Salmon" he goes on a dangerous venture because he is bored with eating cod all the time. In "Raven and the North Lands" he is lonely, and weary of his bachelor doings. He falls in love with a young Canada Goose. When her flock takes off over the Clapping Mountains, he goes along. But he can't keep up, and the goose's mother expresses her contempt for her daughter's suitor: "'It is our opinion that you aren't strong enough to endure the hardships of the long flights to the lands of the sun as we do.'" Rejected and miserable, Raven learns that love can humiliate even a creator. And the reader learns that this mountain-maker is not omnipotent.

Even the last tale holds surprises about Raven's character. So far he has been a decent creature, sometimes exempt from the human condition, sometimes included in it. His indefinite physical capabilities — shape-changing and so on — match his variable character, motives, and desires. But in "Why Raven Is No Longer" he demonstrates yet another quality, a quick moral readiness. He discovers that the

villagers among whom he lives are being terrorized by a hideous trinity — a cruel young man, his monstrous mother, and the ferocious beast she has created to protect her son. Raven confronts and overcomes this dreadful threesome, who are none of his making, and thereby purges creation of evil. His job done, he flies off to "the black night," whence he came. The villagers weep at his departure, and the reader will understand their regret, for Robinson has made Raven an engaging and even lovable figure, an unpredictable but reassuring presence in the world.

For a long time, since the seventeenth century at least, European literary culture has maintained two enduring ideas about folk stories. One is that these tales can be retold with literary purpose. Perrault's work popularized this practice long ago, and Robinson follows it now in her treatment of North American stories: via her keen, densely textured prose, she introduces these folk texts into literature. The second idea about the oral tradition is that children are a particularly appropriate audience for folk tales. The moral character of the tales has recommended them to those who want to address children: the stories often demonstrate moral priorities, and their telling incorporates the child-listener or child-reader into a community value system. This second notion seems to have influenced Yves Troendle in his *Raven's Children.*

Seemingly aimed at pre-adolescent readers, *Raven's Children* is a novel derived from Northwest Coast tales. Troendle's most novelistic innovation is the introduction of two young protagonists, whose presence unifies an otherwise episodic narrative. These heroes are Satsum and Gyila, brother and sister, orphans who live with their grandmother in a coastal village. Both children are on the verge of adulthood: Satsum is about to be initiated into manly activities, and Gyila will soon be marriageable. But trouble is afoot, for the villagers have bad attitudes. They no longer respect the natural environment that sustains them, and they are suffering as a result: "'Fish don't swim into our nets any more; bears don't come out of their caves,'" says the grandmother. Hardship and decadence end in a volcanic eruption that destroys the village. Only Satsum and Gyila survive. In a way, the catastrophe is fortunate. Not only does the collapse of the accursed and corrupt community preserve the children's innocence, but it also generates the subsequent narrative, for the children must rebuild their lives from scratch, on conservative principles.

Separated from one another, Satsum and Gyila go out into the wide world. Their adventures bond them to the natural order — or confront them with the supernatural. Gyila is mistaken for a princess returned from the dead; later she marries a bear and gives birth to bear twins. Satsum is enslaved, but becomes friends with his captor, and journeys with him to the realm of the Salmon People, where he becomes a salmon. Later, when he has resumed his human form and is reunited with Gyila, he kills her bear-lover. As they turn homewards, they meet a shaman who helps them resurrect the dead of their village, and begin reconstruction.

Aspects of these episodes remind one of various European tales — of Kai and Gerda's separation in "The Snow Queen," and Gerda's difficult journey through northern terrain; of Tom's amphibious voyage in *The Water-Babies*; of stories of beast-marriage, or of orphans discovering a royal birthright. Yet each of these familiar elements appears in exotic dress, contributing to new meanings. And, in sum, the whole story has structurally an alien character. After their labours and travail, the children assemble the dead and begin to rebuild the village. Yet they express neither exultation nor ambition.

Rather, they seem to be exhausted by their endeavours, and the story tapers off inconclusively. One looks for the assassination of a giant, the discovery of riches, or, at least, marriage to a princess or potentate to round things off.

And then, more curious still, the shaman begins to tell stories about Raven, and these six tales end the text, without even closing the frame by returning to the village setting. This is not to say that these stories are not valuable in themselves, for Troendle's narrative skill is as apparent here as elsewhere in the book. His Raven is not Robinson's. His Raven is a misfit, a disreputable creator come down in the world — a self-centred habitual liar whose tricks are little more than practical jokes and whose prodigious appetite makes him an unwelcome guest. Troendle's Raven is a bum, a loser with limp tricks, whose wife leaves him.

Both Troendle and Robinson are very good at producing wry and realistic dialogue among the creatures who populate this marvellous coastal domain. Their beasts are easy speakers. And both writers handle descriptive tasks with great skill, although Robinson's style is more concise than that of Troendle, who goes to greater lengths to give a comprehensive picture of tribal life, in the interests, no doubt, of informing his young readers. Both writers find their tropes and figures in the natural world, describing behaviour and sensations in local terms. This practice has the effect, in both texts, of demonstrating the fluid boundary between the human and the natural world and showing their ultimate unity. So, too, does the intelligent discourse of their beasts suggest kinship between man and animal.

In *Landmarks*, a recent addition to his large poetic output, Robin Skelton considers more directly the relations between man and his west coast setting. But Skelton, unlike Troendle and Robinson, encounters distinction as much as unity. Some of his poems — "Makar" and "The Hermit Shell," for example — use comparison as a topic, and reveal logical differences between the natural world and the human, differences which show human experience as the greater phenomenon. In other poems, though, he discovers equivalences between outdoor scenes and human sensations, as in the similes of "Above":

> Sometimes in the bush
> the sky is personal
>
> a purely singular
> and private place
>
> as innocent as the
> stillness after passion.

Yet in this volume it seems finally that, while the west coast may provide a happy climate for poets, it makes a prickly and resistant subject for poetry. It confronts the artist with problems that may have to do with the landscape itself. Massive and complex, composed of such proliferating detail — lichen, waves, rocks and tides, chipmunks, shells, rank foliage — it can defeat painter or poet working in an imported tradition. One tiny poem, amidst many that try to account for abundant settings, suggests that Skelton sometimes feels stalled by the difficulty of transcription:

> It would be hard to take
> this pebble home
>
> unless we knew the way
> to take the sea.

But he persists ("Since I am a poet, I must make poems"), looking for a metaphysical dimension that can confirm his connection with this place. And it is the forest gloom, rather than the shore, that seems to promise most mystery — or yield most disappointment. In "O Lazarus," a hike in the woods is transit between life and afterlife. "Landmarks," the final entry in the collection, takes him on another hinterland journey, away from the

beach, where the-wife-and-kids wait, prosaically. He proceeds expectantly, anticipating or dreading something or nothing, daring the scene to be ultimately empty of spiritual tokens.

With his inland penetration, Skelton prepares himself rather apprehensively for visions of lurking beings, mystic or bestial. And his nervous watchfulness can make even animal sightings transcendent moments of "memory and terror": "the glimpsed eye of the deer / through ageless trees" holds supernatural surprise. All this is a far cry from the easy commerce between human and beast in *Raven the Trickster*, where nature shares a wealth of spirit with man — and a far cry from the land of familiar mysteries Troendle so clearly envisions with the help of an indigenous folk aesthetic.

JANET GILTROW

CHARACTER IN CONTEXT

SHARON POLLOCK, *Blood Relations and Other Plays*. NeWest Press, $17.95; pa. $8.95.

SHARON POLLOCK'S apprenticeship as a playwright is clearly behind her. The three plays in this book, *One Tiger to a Hill*, *Generations*, and *Blood Relations*, all first produced in 1980, establish her as a major playwright. They are collected in a sturdy and attractive paperback, the fourth in NeWest Press's Prairie Play Series. An introduction by Series Editor Diane Bessai summarizes Pollock's playwriting carer to date, noting her affinity for the epic-documentary theatrical tradition, her emphasis on the placement of her characters in social and political contexts, but observing also that her two most recent plays deal with private life, the politics of the family.

Generations is a naturalistic treatment of a day in the life of three generations of an Alberta farm family. "THE LAND," Pollock directs, "is a character revealed by the light and shadow it throws on the Nurlins' lives." The play depicts the characters' attitudes toward the land and the conflicts among them, activated by three different plot devices. Despite the interest of its character relationships, the play lacks structure and satisfying resolution. Any urgency in the plot derives from the pressing need to solve the problem of lack of water on the farm, yet no solution is provided except the temporary one of rainfall. The relationship between Old Eddy and an ancient Indian is absorbing but irrelevant to the outcome. The same is true of the relationship between Old Eddy and his son, and one grandson's interest in the other's fiancée. Such resolution as the play offers comes in the younger grandson, David's, affirmation of devotion to the land, a devotion that is tested by all three plot devices. Scene by scene, the play is a convincing and entertaining portrayal of farm life, but as a total work, it is weakened by David's lack of weight: his affirmation is not enough to pull together all the play's various strands of interest.

The other plays, however, add compelling plot development to the interest of characters' relationships in their social context which is *Generations*' strength. *One Tiger to a Hill* is based on the killing in 1975 of a penitentiary rehabilitation worker who was shot with the prisoner who held her hostage. The characters include prisoners, penitentiary officials and a guard, rehabilitation officers, and outsiders who are caught up in the hostage taking. One of these is a lawyer whose direct addresses to the audience frame the play. His opening speech reveals him as representative of the public Pollock means to reach: for years he has repressed the questions prompted by news articles about prison riots and deaths of inmates; finally he is drawn into an event in which "two

people died to confirm a resolve . . . to find out what happens to them — and to us — when we condemn men to that wastebasket we call the pen." We know from the beginning that the evil will be violent; tension is sustained as the penitentiary system is explored through a particular event and the characterizations of those who participate in it. There is warmth at the heart of the play in the caring rehabilitation officer and the Metis prisoner whose love for her and concern for his fellow prisoners outweigh his own self-interest. That these two are the victims guarantees emotional impact, yet we are not allowed to lose sight of his violence or of the fact that her most earnest efforts to help the prisoners only intensify the conflict between prisoners and prison officials. The ultimate villain is a prison guard, but he is believably depicted as an inevitable product of the system which forces prison workers to cope with violence and contempt. The play is gripping and persuasive in its indictment of the penitentiary system.

In *Blood Relations* Pollock focuses on one character, Lizzie Borden, and again uses effectively foreknowledge of a horrifying climax — the axe murders of Lizzie's father and stepmother — to create dramatic tension. Ten years after Lizzie's acquittal, the tantalizing question remains: did she or didn't she? Lizzie prefers to leave the matter in doubt in keeping with her desire to be someone special, unsure whether it is worse "to have murdered one's parents" or to be simply "a pretentious small-town spinster." The action develops as the hypothesis of Lizzie's friend, an actress; she plays Lizzie during the two days that lead up to the murders, while Lizzie supports her performance in the role of the maid.

Lizzie's character and her relationship with her father are beautifully drawn. She is a spirited spinster who does not fit into the social role approved for women, and her loving relationship with her father is blighted by his sense of obligation to make her conform to the social ideal. Lizzie and her stepmother despise each other. Her sister Emma, a colorless good girl who brought Lizzie up after their mother's death, mediates between Lizzie and the older Bordens. On the day of the murders, the stepmother and her brother have persuaded Lizzie's father to alter his financial affairs to keep Lizzie and Emma financially dependent even after his death. The day is as stifling as Lizzie's life, and Emma withdraws from the heat and the conflict into the country. Lizzie's murders of the stepmother she hates and the father she loves are both convincingly motivated.

Drawn into a persuasive portrayal of a murderess, we are then jolted back into the recognition that this is the actress's creation, and the question "Did she or didn't she?" remains technically unanswered, though the play unambiguously suggests that she did. The device of the actress taking Lizzie's part while Lizzie looks on in a neutral role is illuminated in the closing sequence when Lizzie reminds Emma, "It was you brought me up. . . . Did you ever stop and think that I was like a puppet, your puppet. . . . me saying all the things you felt like saying, me doing all the things you felt like doing. . . ." The actress taking Lizzie's place is a metaphor for Lizzie taking Emma's, which adds depth to the psychological, social, and artistic implications of the play, as well as distancing us from the horror of the deed enough to permit an objective view of Lizzie's character. The strength of the play's appeal has been proved by numerous productions and its merits acknowledged by the first Governor General's Award for drama.

The plays all show Pollock's great skill in characterization; in consideration for her actors born of her own acting experience, she gives even her minor characters depth and considerable interest. All her

social settings are effectively created, diverse though they are in these three plays. Each play encompasses a wide emotional range, from humour to anguish. The collection demonstrates that in Sharon Pollock we have an accomplished and versatile playwright whose work seems destined to absorb audiences for many years to come.

SUSAN STONE-BLACKBURN

PUPPETEERS

JOCK CARROLL, *The Life and Times of Greg Clark: Canada's Favorite Storyteller.* Doubleday, $19.95.

BETTY KELLER, *Pauline: A Biography of Pauline Johnson.* Douglas & McIntyre, $18.95.

THE TWO BOOKS UNDER REVIEW have little in common except that both are biographies of Canadians who, through their public personae, achieved "household word" status. Every subscriber to the *Star Weekly* or *Weekend Magazine* was familiar with the folksy accounts of the "King-Size Leprechaun," "the lovable little gnome" who described himself as a puppet-master. And for two generations of schoolchildren, memorizing "The Song my Paddle Sings" was an obligatory task.

The Canadian Press obituary of Gregory Clark (1892-1977) describes him as a pixie-like character:

> Perch a pork-pie hat atop frizzy white sideburns; match twinkling grey eyes with a cherubic smile; clothe a five-two frame in a rainbow of colors; add a gnarled cane and an almost cocky jauntiness and you have Greg Clark.

Though his official biographer Jock Carroll no doubt intended to write a celebration, what emerges is the portrait of an egotist whose craving for attention and approbation expressed itself in overtipping, competitive fishing and hunting, glad-handing the rich and famous, wearing flashy clothes, drinking with the boys, joining elitist male conclaves such as the Madawaska Club, and indulging in "shithouse humour" (Robert Allen's phrase). Carroll's Clark is a red-neck in his attitude to "hairy fairies," a Victorian in his attitude to women (his wife, Helen Murray, was treated as the angel-in-the-house and left alone a good deal), a victim of his father's preference for brother Joe, but who nevertheless displayed the same kind of favouritism in his own family, a romantic whose literary preference ran to Kipling, Longfellow, and Maeterlinck, a big spender who was regularly in debt, and a war correspondent who liked to be mistaken for a general.

Carroll's style is graceless, and even infuriating, marred by an excess of short paragraphs, repetitions, carelessly constructed sentences, clichés, and so much trivia that the central character is often submerged. Do we really need to be told that Mackenzie King would become Prime Minister, that the first Fig Newton bars were produced in 1892 by the New York Biscuit Company, or that in 1911 Charles Arthur McLaren Vining achieved a first-term average of 92 percent at Woodstock College? Can readers outside Ontario be expected to have an insatiable curiosity about Toronto's newspaper personalities (not to mention the nonentities)? The book is most successful when the subject speaks for himself, as in the reminiscence of Hemingway's Toronto interlude or the description of Roosevelt's burial. I suspect that Carroll does less than justice to Clark. Certainly, he fails to convince this reader that Clark was a lovable character and Canada's favourite storyteller. Maybe the book should have been reviewed by a macho male from Toronto.

Carroll's research was facilitated by his tape-recorder, the voluminous diaries begun when Clark was fifteen, years of personal acquaintance with the subject, his

family and friends, and two Canada Council grants. Betty Keller's more extensive and valuable research (apparently unfunded) was inhibited not only by the lapse of time, her subject having died of cancer in 1913, but also by Eva Johnson's destruction of her sister's personal papers and by the lies of Pauline's collaborator, Walter McRaye. The biographer proposes to correct the entirely romantic and complimentary public image sustained in Mrs. W. Garland Foster's *The Mohawk Princess: Being Some Account of the Life of Teka-hion-wake (E. Pauline Johnson)* (1931). The poetess, it seems, was not only a talented, charming entertainer but also a manipulative, aggressive, sexually disappointed woman who used every weapon at her disposal to make her way in a male-dominated world. Unlike Carroll, Keller succeeds in arousing our interest and sympathy.

Emily Pauline Johnson, "the Mohawk Princess," was born in 1861 near Brantford, Ontario, the daughter of Emily Howells and George Johnson (Chief Teyonnhehkewca). Only a quarter Indian and almost entirely Aryan in appearance, Pauline emphasized her native blood because she idolized her father and because she realized the marketability of this undeveloped cultural tradition. She made a point of posing for photographs in profile to highlight her aquiline nose; she adopted her great-grandfather's name, using it as a signature; and for her public appearances after 1892 she wore a fringed buckskin dress low cut at the neck and decorated with silver brooches and ermine tails, wampum belts, a Huron and a Sioux scalp, her father's hunting knife, buckskin leggings, moccasins, a red woollen cloak, and a bearclaw necklace. Educated by her Puritanical and class-conscious mother to be a middle-class wife, she reached the age of thirty without finding a suitor who did not bore her. The only reputable alternative was writing, then reciting, poetry. Later her repertoire was expanded to include travel pieces, children's stories, Red Coat tales, and Indian legends.

A first-class promoter at home and abroad, Pauline seems to have juggled successfully the dual roles of cultivated lady at ease in society drawing rooms and princess from the primeval forest. Yet her life was not an easy one. Her engagement in 1895 to a prosperous businessman eleven years her junior was terminated by his parents who would not accept a "half-breed actress." Her family relationships were inhibited by her extensive travels and the loss of the Brantford home on her mother's death. She was plagued by infected throats and shrinking audiences. Her final years in Vancouver were genteel but impoverished. A new contribution to the Johnson *vita* is Keller's explanation of the poetess's uncharacteristic behaviour in 1900 when she apparently departed from her rigid moral principles "to become sexually and romantically involved with an unscrupulous small-time promoter," Charles Wurz, possibly the only man whom she was unable to manipulate by means of flattery and charm.

Not the least of the book's merits is Keller's evocation of the transient entertainer's life at the turn of the century. Pauline preferred to travel first class on the CPR (and to stay at the best hotel or in the homes of the local gentry), but the caboose of a freight train or a horse and buggy would do in a pinch. Her sponsors ranged from the Rover Bicycle Club of Winnipeg to the Methodist congregation of a tiny mining town in the Kootenays. The locale of the performance might be a small town opera house, schoolroom, or pool hall, and the hazards included rowdy boys imitating roosters, cats and dogs, howling infants, censorious wives who regarded all female performers as immoral, and stagestruck farmers or miners avid for the sight of a beautiful female.

Pauline has little to say about the poetry itself, which it is usual nowadays to treat with disdain. Surely some explanation is required for the fact that Charles G. D. Roberts hailed her as the voice of Canada, that Hector Charlesworth described her as the most popular figure in Canadian literature, that John Greenleaf Whittier commended the strength and beauty of her poems, and that Watts-Dunton, Swinburne, and Alma-Tadema joined in the applause? Moreover, the most prestigious London publisher, John Lane, agreed to publish her first volume, *The White Wampum*, while denouncing her typescript with the words, "I never take a book for publication without the expectation that my author will be great, and how would *this* look in the British Museum labelled, 'Original Manuscript of Miss Johnson's first book'?" Was it charm alone that elicited the praises?

In some ways, Pauline was ahead of her time, championing causes and attitudes that did not become popular for another seventy years — an ardent Canadian nationalism that did not discriminate against "White" or "Red"; distrust of American takeovers; pride in Indian ancestry; collection and propagation of native folklore; and a feminism that encouraged other women to "strive for name and place in this Canada of ours," to quote a church ladies group in Saint John. This scrupulously documented and engagingly related biography may re-establish Pauline Johnson as a minor but not entirely negligible figure in the Canadian pantheon.

MURIEL WHITAKER

COMPLETE ROMANTIC

H. PEARSON GUNDY, ed., *Letters of Bliss Carman*. McGill-Queen's Univ. Press, $45.00.

IN 1908, BLISS CARMAN'S BOOK of essays entitled *The Making of Personality* appeared, a vaporous work best forgotten. The real Making of Personality unfolds in this volume of letters, and what an engaging personality it is! Carman cared mightily about the design of his books, debating choices of cream or white paper, black or brown ink, and one feels that he would have been pleased with this beautiful volume, designed by Peter Dorn, with Tom Meteyard's stylized portrait of Carman on the dust jacket. Inside, we find the man himself laid bare, with all his mercurial moods, his loyal affection for his friends, his love of women and nature, his whimsical humour. H. Pearson Gundy, former Librarian of Queen's University, has selected 630 letters, only a third of those extant, arranging them in fifteen chronological sections with linking biographical passages and a fine general introduction. Gundy's main criterion of selection is "to let Carman reveal himself" in all his complex emotional nature, but Gundy also includes letters in which Carman discusses "social, economic, political and religious topics of the day." Carman was too fuzzy a thinker to hold our interest on such topics; this group of letters could have been drastically reduced without losing the essence of the man.

The book's first letter was written to Carman's mother in 1874 when he was thirteen; the final one was written three days before his sudden death in 1929, at the age of 68. In between is his autobiography in letters: his desultory years of schooling, never really applying himself, in Fredericton, Edinburgh, and Harvard, his Grub Street years in New York and Boston, his life-long vagabondage, flitting restlessly from friend's home to boarding-house to wilderness cabin.

"I feel as if I had crossed the divide and hit the damned old steep trail that leads downwards all the rest of the way," wrote Carman when he was forty-two, and it did indeed turn out to be downhill

all the way. Poetically, he peaked early; "Low Tide on Grand Pré" appeared in the *Atlantic Monthly* when he was twenty-five; his collected works of 1904 contain most of his best work. He kept on writing but knew the Muse had fled. "I tried to write a poem today," he wrote pathetically to a friend in 1897. "It was like a sick kitten trying to crawl." The downhill slide included a nervous breakdown, a bout with tuberculosis, other illnesses, continuing financial debts. Letters to his many publishers reveal a tangle of bankruptcies, general bungling, copyright problems. It was a steep slope, but with a sunlit meadow or two at the bottom. In his final decade, Carman's cross-Canada reading tours brought him both fame and financial security. "People are willing to pay just to see what the darn fool looks like," he wrote in astonishment. The sunny fields of fame were full of Flowers: beautiful, bright young women who wrote him fan letters, and clamoured for his friendship. He chose a handful, and wrote them playful, passionate letters.

The man so candidly revealed in this volume is, before all else, Canada's complete Romantic. Like Wordsworth, Carman had a beloved sister who was his chief correspondent and the mainstay of his life. "The room without your gowns hanging up, the silent table without your papers, the lack of you everywhere — O I hate it," he wrote when she left his wilderness cabin. Her death in 1920 was "the heaviest blow I have ever had." Like Keats, Carman formed his poetic theories in his letters, albeit with much less originality. There are distinct Keatsian echoes: "Amid so many perplexities of aim and activity," writes Carman, "it seems best of all to be devoted to beauty. *That* certainly must prevail at last. And beauty is only truth made visible." The core of Carman's Romanticism was his intense love of Nature and his belief that, without it, there could be no poetry. "Old Nature lies out there in the sun . . . and poetry is what she would say if she could speak," he writes. He hated cities — "cities almost make a body believe in a personal devil" — and hated the stuffy New York and Boston magazine offices where he toiled, a wood thrush in a cage. The best passages in the letters are lyrical descriptions of some forest path or seashore, in which, as in his best poetry, an immediate emotional response to the scene swells to musings on love or death. Carman had the Romantic relish for enthusiasm: "my frenzied enthusiasm is the mainspring of the Universe," and the Romantic reliance on Imagination: "To introduce facts into literature is to ruin it." He restlessly pursued the Ideal: "If I had means, I think I should be always on the move, looking for what is never found!"

And if, occasionally, Carman is, by his own admission, a "weeping sentimentalist," he also has Byron's ability to laugh at himself, to balance the Childe Harold side of his nature with a salty, sardonic Don Juan one. By far the most entertaining threads in the letters are the love affairs of this male Carmen-gypsy. "These women will be the death of me yet," he sighs to a male friend, but he needed their adoration just as Byron did. To be sure, there are fewer lady-loves here than in Byron's letters. We are, after all, in the colonies, where expectations are necessarily more modest. Carman remained a bachelor, although he was engaged twice and subsequently formed a thirty-year liaison with a married woman, Mrs. Mary Perry King. What a pity that no letters to these three have survived! This leaves a most regrettable gap in the collection. There are, however, delightful love letters to those young women who blossomed on the downhill slope. Particularly charming are those to Kate Eastman, the platinum-haired beauty with whom Carman had a reckless and rejuvenating affair in 1922.

His life, on the whole, was a quiet, uneventful one; its drama, mostly comedy, comes from his love tangles. We see plump, aging Mary Perry King trying in vain to uproot all those pretty young things from his path. We see Mary Perry staging her worst "heart attack" just as Carman prepares to go west with Kate. We see Carman, in letter after letter, strenuously exhorting his Flowers never to marry.

Another engaging leitmotif in the letters is Carman's innate modesty and self-insight. He recognized his limitations as a poet, particularly his worst defect: his "baleful obscurity." "A great deal of it," he writes, referring to his early poetry, "I cannot read any more myself. It offends me by reason of its lack of clarity, its lack of definiteness." When a student writing a thesis on Carman's poetry queries him about a specific poem, Carman replies: "There seems to have been some idea or moral purpose in my mind in writing the lines, but I don't remember what it was."

"Letters should never be kept. I always keep too many and have destroyed thousands," wrote Carman to a lady friend. Most of the recipients of Carman's letters saw their worth, and kept them. Now, in this handsome edition, they can delight a wider audience. Carman was never more than a second-rate poet; his letters were the finer creation.

MARIAN FOWLER

COVERING THE TERRITORY

LORRAINE MCMULLEN, *Sinclair Ross*. G. K. Hall, $14.95.

PETER THOMAS, *Robert Kroetsch*. Douglas & McIntyre, $5.95.

IN THE RAPID, SOMETIMES overzealous development of scholarly interest in Canadian letters, what was once a rare occurrence — the appearance of a book-length study of an individual writer — has become a much more commonplace event. Several on-going series now vie to cover the territory. However, while there is deep within us still a desire to applaud and welcome each new entrant at the gate, one increasingly feels a need for tempered evaluation. What does the new study add? How effectively does it undertake its business? Indeed, what is its business? And how felicitously, how trenchantly is it able to meet and treat its subject matter?

Lorraine McMullen's *Sinclair Ross* and Peter Thomas's *Robert Kroetsch* are two such studies, the former a contribution to the long-established "Twayne World Authors" series and the latter the most recent addition to "Studies in Canadian Literature" under the general editorship of Gary Geddes. They are reviewed together for obvious reasons; both writers are deeply interested in the West, both are fascinated by technique, and both have made significant contributions to the development of serious fiction-writing in Canada.

Their differences are, however, far greater than any similarities they superficially share and, though Kroetsch has written provocatively and wittily about Ross (see "An Erotics of Space" in *Crossing Frontiers*, 1979), neither McMullen nor Thomas sees significant links between them. Given this and a disinclination to offer yet another brief treatise on the phenomenon of Western Canadian liter-

ary fertility, my focus here falls rather on the studies themselves. Of the two I found Thomas's the more pleasing and useful, in part because of the freer format allowed by the Geddes series, in part because, with a writer as playful, allusive and confusing as Kroetsch can be, coherent and thoughtful analysis of the sort Thomas offers provides a helpful purchase for further engagement with studhorses and bones.

That a book-length study of Sinclair Ross should appear was inevitable. His stature in the realm of Canadian literature is at present very high and it will doubtless remain high. Professor McMullen has no hesitation in calling *As For Me and My House* "a Canadian classic" or in making a case for the power and variety of Ross's prairie stories. *Sawbones Memorial,* she argues, remains an unrecognized gem many years after it appeared. She gives Ross due prominence in the early development of serious prairie fiction, stresses his fascination with modes of narration, and locates his deepest concern in the search for and the difficulty in sustaining "interpersonal relationships."

The problem with *Sinclair Ross* lies not so much in Professor McMullen's ideas but in the fact that she repeats them so many times. One senses a convergence of problems here. In the first place there is the question of whether or not a writer of Ross's surprisingly small output (4 novels and 18 stories) can sustain book-length analysis. In this regard it is interesting to note that when R. D. Chambers undertook a study of Ross for the Geddes series (1975), he did so by combining Ross with Ernest Buckler, a writer of the same age, and of similar regional significance and limited output. This is not to say that a large-scale study of Ross is impossible. One can imagine a monograph especially attentive to Ross's aesthetic or the relation between his unusually private life and his art. Such is not the case here, likely because the Twayne format calls for a general, introductory approach. This seems to have forced upon Professor McMullen the requirement of going over time and again what is already well-trod critical ground in order to fill out the series' precise demands about length.

As such, it is a book to be used selectively. *Sinclair Ross* provides substantial new information — welcome information — about Ross's personal life and his tastes in reading, the fruit of McMullen's several interviews with him in Spain. It adds to our knowledge of Ross's penchant for revision. It provides detailed readings of most of his stories, of those curious bookends, *The Well* (1958) and *Whir of Gold* (1970), that give a dark twist to the age-old tale of the country mouse and city mouse, and of *Sawbones Memorial,* a novel written, as McMullen interestingly points out, in response to Claude Mauriac's "Nouveau Roman" experimentations in *Dîner en ville* (1959).

The problem is that *Sinclair Ross* reads too much like *As For Me and My House*; the study door slams too often, the wind of repetition relentlessly blows. The crude sort of echo one hears in McMullen's description of Ross's first story, "No Other Way," is a distressing case in point. To write within four paragraphs "Ironically, Hatty has lost her husband through her devotion to a cause she thought they shared, the success of their farm" and "The irony present in most of Ross's writings is evident in the dilemma of Hatty Glenn who realizes that she has lost her husband through her excessive devotion to the farm which she had considered to be their shared concern" is to confess to insufficient material.

What, one wonders, might have been done to enliven this study and to give substance to the interest and variety Professor McMullen sees in Ross's work? While I have already suggested a couple

of fertile emphases, one that needs mention is the book's inattention to the range of criticism Ross's great book, *As For Me and My House*, has occasioned. There is no mention of E. K. Brown's seminal review, of Kroetsch's "Erotics," of Wilfred Cude's highly intriguing pair of articles, or of Morton Ross's "critography" of the novel. Publishing delays may account for some but not all such omissions. *As For Me and My House* remains a controversial novel. Even readers approaching Ross for the first time, whether in Hamburg or New Hampshire, should be aware of the debate it has inspired, the hold it has on its serious Canadian readers. Readers need to know what it means to say that Mrs. Bentley is "not a reliable narrator." Surely the Twayne people, even in their passion for minimal footnotes and seemingly endless chapter subdivisions, don't want their studies to bypass crucial critical issues. Such an approach is in itself a backward step by which Ross may seem to a wider, international audience duller than need be and Canadian scholarship both mute and immature when faced by interesting issues.

Peter Thomas's study is, like the author it examines, more energetic and unrestrained. In his first sentence he cleverly encapsulates his problem: "A critically self-conscious writer both anticipates the responses of his readers and is tempted to betray them." Aware of Kroetsch's trickiness, aware too that Kroetsch has with his latest novel *What the Crow Said* (1978) reached a critical phase in his comic self-consciousness as a novelist, Thomas offers an introductory study of the recognizable patterns and obsessions of Kroetsch's versatile imagination. Calling for further studies along biographical and aesthetic lines, Thomas opens up a complex territory with minimal confusion and critical gibberish. He resists for the most part the seductive tendency to adopt Kroetsch's own elaborate language of Post-Modernism, shamanism and parody, holding back and maintaining a perspective whether considering the novels themselves or Kroetsch's many interviews.

Such caution is both necessary and admirable. Where Sinclair Ross kept his silence amid the steely presbyterianism of his native Saskatchewan, exercising his voice only in staccato bursts over a long lifetime, Kroetsch, like the Alberta that bred him and the tall tales that inspired him, has been irrepressible and voluminous both as poet and novelist since 1965. From the vantage point of a wide literary knowledge and out of a deep desire to write down tales of the sort his father told so wonderfully, he has playfully concocted a written version of oral tradition as if, as author, he sat calmly in the eye of an imaginative storm sweeping up all of the West's history and culture, its kitchens and beerhalls, in one glorious topsy-turvy chaos.

Thomas has prepared himself well, tuning Hemingway's "bullshit-detecting machine" to the voice-madness of Kroetsch's "bullshit artist." While he might well have taken time to locate Kroetsch's debt to older Western writers like W. O. Mitchell and while he provides almost no information to show (and it surely must be an interesting evolution) how Kroetsch emerged quite as he did, he has steeped himself in Eliade, Campbell and Graves, in Scholes and Kermode, in Barth and Sheila Watson. He concentrates almost exclusively on Kroetsch's six novels, offering not only a cogent account of the line of Post-Modernist narrative experimentation from *But We Are Exiles* to *What the Crow Said* but also linking the novels to Kroetsch's poetry of the same period, particularly the studies of Frederick Philip Grove, Tom Thomson, and Albert Johnson, and the books *The Ledger* (1975) and *Seed Catalogue* (1977). He locates Kroetsch's best work in his middle four novels, showing a particular affinity to

what he judges to be the best-conceived and most humanistic of them, *Badlands*. In reaction to the humanism of *Badlands*, writes Thomas, Kroetsch seems to have felt it necessary to create "a conscious counterblast" in the form of the highly negative and bleak *What the Crow Said*.

Attentive to earlier critics and Kroetsch himself, Thomas succeeds in giving pattern and point not only to the evolution of Kroetsch's fiction but to the paradoxes, games, and persistent parody that characterize his trickster's imagination. As critic, Thomas inspires confidence in the way he keeps to his path. At the same time he establishes certain insightful connections especially pertinent for readers less caught up than Kroetsch himself in the fascinations of Post-Modernism. For instance, by linking Kroetsch's preoccupation with the "deconstruction" of traditional characterization, of "the ethical intrusion of personal relationships," to his awareness, culled from an unpublished journal, of his unwillingness to "trust (him)self to interrelationships," Thomas offers a glimpse of the sentimental vulnerabilities the affable author characteristically seeks to disguise, a clue to the emotional man behind the cool Post-Modernist mask. Thomas's efforts overall, make for a refreshing and useful book, one that effectively brings together much disparate criticism while opening up the territory in a variety of intriguing ways.

MICHAEL PETERMAN

CHURCH & STAGE

JEAN LAFLAMME and REMI TOURANGEAU, *L'Eglise et le Théâtre au Québec*. Fides, n.p.

THE STORMY RELATIONSHIP, within Quebec society, of a paternalistic Church and a theatre groping for direction constitutes one of the most interesting and revealing chapters of Canadian theatre history. It is a sad comment on the state of that discipline that there has not been available to scholars until now a single systematic study on the subject. Laflamme and Tournageau's book finally fills this void. Many are sure to receive it with a grateful "at last!" For those who do not read French, one can only hope that an English version will be made available soon.

L'Eglise et le Théâtre au Québec exhibits the strengths and weaknesses to be expected in a pioneering enterprise: excellent in the area of documentation, it is less good in its discussion and analysis of the material presented. This may be partly due to the fact that the book, a project of the *Centre de documentation en lettres québécoises de l'université du Québec à Trois Rivières*, was originally planned as a collection of documents only. As the authors explain in the preface, this limited scope was eventually expanded to serve a threefold purpose: "une connaissance chronologique des rapports et des attitudes de l'Eglise face au théâtre . . . une abondante documentation qui sera utile à l'histoire de la culture et indispensable aux chercheurs intéressés à entreprendre d'autres travaux sur le sujet . . . le tracé d'évolution sociale et morale d'un peuple jeune encore qui s'interroge et s'affirme toujours davantage." Of the three goals they set themselves, the authors have achieved the first two fully; as to the third, the scope and emphasis of the book obviously do not allow for a really meaningful discussion.

On the level of documentation, its primary purpose, the book is excellent. The authors have had little previous work to guide them (although they do use the theatre histories of Jean Béraud and Baudouin Burger); most of the material they present is quite new. To obtain their wealth of information, they have gone to some fifteen archival depositories (National Archives, diocesan and parish archives, archives of educational institu-

tions). Even so, not all the material mentioned is always documented; especially in the case of sermons, second-hand information only is available in some cases. The nineteenth-century polemic between the Catholic clergy and defenders of the theatre is further extensively documented from newspaper material (some thirty-four papers are cited). A general bibliography includes relevant works in both French and English, and will be useful to theatre historians as well as scholars of social and cultural history.

In organizing the book, the authors have attempted to impose order upon their somewhat amorphous material by a chronological division into three parts: 1. "Rigorisme de l'Eglise et hésitation du théâtre, 1606-1836"; 2. "Conservatisme de l'Eglise et contestations du théâtre, 1837-1896"; 3. "Moralisme de l'Eglise et provocations du theâtre, 1837-1962." The divisions are based on changes in Church leadership. Part One starts with the earliest available document on the topic, the "Avis donnés par Mgr. de Saint-Vallier au gouverneur et à la gouvernante du Canada sur l'obligation où ils sont de donner le bon example au peuple," 1685, which includes a warning not to allow "Mademoiselle leur fille" to take part in theatricals. It goes on to a description of the close watch kept by Church authorities over all worldly activities; over dramatic performances at schools, which must be in Latin and "on pious subjects"; and to the well-known Tartuffe affair of 1694. Following the Conquest the position of the clergy was rendered considerably more difficult because of the British officers' and officials' love of theatre, and attendance at performances.

Part Two covers the period of the height of clerical power. Attacks are directed especially against the increasingly frequent foreign touring companies. However, as the tide of theatrical activity cannot be stemmed, the Church retreats to a more realistic position in the late nineteenth century, holding the line mainly on the issue of the sanctity of the Lord's Day.

Part Three shows the last stages of the battle for control, with cinema, radio and eventually television changing the scene somewhat for both sides. The Lord's Day controversy remains a major issue, and a new one is added, the question of the morality of newspaper advertisements. Eventually, the rise of a "respectable" native dramaturgy (Father Legault's *Compagnons*; the work of Toupin Leclerc, Gélinas) allows the Church to change its position from *rigorisme* to actual encouragement. With the gradual loss of power by the Church, and especially with the takeover of the educational system by lay authorities, the theatre is finally independent of ecclesiastical interference.

Laflamme and Tourangeau have attempted to present the material objectively throughout — a difficult task. They argue against the prevailing view that clerical repression of "worldliness" is a typically *québécois* phenomenon, pointing out that it should be seen in a wider context. They emphasize the fact that the clergy of Quebec often simply reiterated views held in France at the time (e.g., Bossuet); the difference was often simply the fact that Parisians did not feel duty-bound to obey the teachings of their bishops, while the population of theocentric Quebec did. As well, the relation between episcopal exhortations in Quebec and the prevailing moral climate in Rome is emphasized; the Quebec clergy reacted strongly to the warnings of popes such as Benedict XV, Leo XIII, Pius XI, and Pius XII.

In view of the ferocity of many of the documents presented, one may argue with the moderation of the authors' point of view expressed in the Conclusion ("Ni l'Eglise québécois ni le théâtre ne sont

entrés en guerre . . .") ; while their position is at least debatable, the value of the book as a research tool and source of information stands unquestioned.

RENATE USMIANI

OTHER FRANCOPHONES

L. LEVEILLE, *Le Livre des marges*. Editions des Plaines, $7.00.

MARGUERITE LAPALME, *Éperdument*. Prise de Parole, $4.95.

ALEXANDRE AMPRIMOZ, *Changements de tons*. Editions des Plaines, $7.00.

MONSIEUR LEVEILLE'S *Le Livre des marges* is his second attempt at poetry (for want of a more accurate term), his first work being *Oeuvre de la première mort*. This was preceded by two novels *Tombeau* and *La Disparate*. Critical appraisals of these earlier works evoke the beauty of the imagery, the sobriety of his perfect prose, the preciseness of his metaphors, the rarefied nature of his verse. In the present volume, Léveillé has set out on a somewhat different tack. The author is engaged in a reflexion on the nature of the language and literary expression. His view of literature is summarized in the following defence and illustration of the ludic qualities of the act of writing:

> On dit, à la légère, qu'écrire est un jeu de mots.
> C'est exact.
> Un je de mots.
> Je d'émaux.

The possibilities of this game seem to be endless as we are presented with a variety of sound-sense puns and clever etymologies: Comment taire, Père-mettre, Poètes ou peaux êtes, Tout QUESTion est quête d'être. Punctuation is also scrutinized and it is revealed that a comma indicates propulsion rather than a pause; therefore, when two commas are joined together they form a wheel, a source of momentum. Not to be overlooked is the eloquence of a totally blank page or, to a lesser degree, a wide expanse of margin encasing a gem-like kernel of text. The author's justification for his close analysis of the elements of language is suggested through references from such disparate sources as Marshall McLuhan and the Bible which indicate that words are deities, myths made flesh so to speak.

It is evident that this is not a book of poems, at least not in any traditional sense, but a collection of thoughts. The author has interspersed his own comments with a host of quotations from such well-known philosophers, prophets and writers as: Virgil, Socrates, Gibran, Sappho, Valéry and Saint-Denys-Garneau. Unfortunately, the contrast is only too telling. Léveillé may be in good company but he is definitely outclassed. In choosing to begin and end his work with the trite fairy-tale formulae, "Il était une fois" and "El Le vécut heureux" [*sic*], he has condemned it to the realm of pure fantasy, all illusion and no substance. As the title suggests, *Le Livre des marges* is a book that can only be considered marginal.

Eperdument is a collection of interesting and engaging poems by a young author, Marguerite Lapalme, writing in Sudbury, Ontario. One is struck by the coherent whole these poems form and the recurrent use of certain themes and images. This is not to say that they lack variety, for innovation in form, perhaps more than in content, is definitely present.

From the outset the poet establishes a very intimate, if not erotic, relationship with the reader, "tes yeux glissent sur mes mots / comme sa langue sur mon corps." The exact physical nature of the creative act is further elucidated by Lapalme's statement that she is an "écriveine," ink is the lifeblood which flows in her veins and must find an outlet. The blood in her

veins (veine) like the wine (vin) of life embodies her "ivresse de vivre." The parallel between blood and wine naturally causes her to evoke the Eucharist — albeit irreverently, as the wine-blood becomes coagulated into ketchup and Christ is transformed into the King of the Juice. Thickening or lack of blood is associated with a showing of the life force. This impotence is suggested metaphorically throughout the poems by references to "les manchots" — armless men. The limbless men, however, are not passive and seek to deprive others of the ability to act by sucking their blood like leeches. Love, as well, is violent and destructive as the poet's lover strips her of her limbs the way one plucks the petals of a daisy (marguerite) to determine if one is loved.

Despite the title of the work, the despair is not total. The poet expresses tenderness and love in a poem entitled "À Robert . . ." even though the object of her affection stubbornly refuses to reciprocate. Finally, a promise of happiness is found in dreams "un pays sans frontières / sans hivers et sans déserts . . . / plein d'amour et de joie," although the ultimate end of life still remains "un cimetière / une bière pour nos poussières / au fin mond de l'enfer."

Unlike many of her contemporaries, Lapalme makes extensive use of such formal devices as alliteration, assonance, repetition and rime:

> à front un j'affronte la nuit
> un délire fougueux ravissant mon esprit
> et mon coeur bat tout famélique
> mon coeur bat tout arythmique
> le grand tempo frénétique
> d'une fugue fantastique
> et je rêve je rêve
> au creux de bras imaginaires.

This can become a bit overwhelming but usually the effect is palliated by other passages where these elements are used sparingly. A certain awkwardness is observed, however, when the poet seeks originality at any price. The results strike some rather jarring notes such as:

> un gouffre s'ouvre devant moi
> cyclone de coma
>
> tu disparaîtras [. . .]
> comme une grenouille au bout d'un mégot
>
> je t'ai, tu m'as, on s'a.

Fortunately these are not too numerous and one is impressed less by them than by the integral consistency of the rest of Lapalme's poetic expression.

With several works of poetry to his name, both in English and French, Alexandre Amprimoz is by no means a débutant. A comparison of this most recent work with his earlier works of poetry in French, namely *Chant solaire* (1978) and *10/11* (1979), indicates a definite maturation of his technical prowess and a new sureness of touch. Some of his earlier poems showed flashes of brilliance but often the unusual juxtapositions and metaphors seemed self-conscious and contrived. *Changements de tons* presents a more sustained argument expressed in images that strike one as being more sincerely conceived and more completely integrated into the whole.

The work is divided into five sections. The first, entitled *Mots,* speaks of a desire for liberation either by death or violence, the vanity of words, and a type of hope held out in the form of change:

> le sang gicla
> de la madeleine
> que le songe
> avait changé en moule
>
> tu tendais la main.

The next section, *Orages,* focuses on the suffering and destruction of the innocent (enfants décapités, biche éventrée), the poet's depression ("et toute cette vie n'est que pourriture"), his despair at the inevitable passage of time, and his fatigue ("et je m'épuise / au pied de ta spirale / babel"). In one of the longer poems, iron-

ically entitled "Encore sur le néant," Amprimoz evokes the tenuous situation of man "Seul dans les brumes du savoir / les mains tendues vers l'infini des rêves" and suggests that religion is a sort of parapet that prevents man from tumbling into the abyss. Yet, the poet himself prays "si peu et si mal" that the only hope he sees in the future would be in a human saviour "le fils de l'homme."

In the fourth section, *Solitude des jardiniers*, the poet is seen as the gardener who creates new flowers. The creative act is held forth as a possible means of personal as well as social liberation; yet, the greenhouse is an artificial world that produces "fleurs fictives" and "palmiers du songe." The real world is a frigid lonely plain.

The final section, *Changement de ton*, represents not only a change in tone but also in form as the text is written in prose. Paradoxically, the subject of this prose is poetry itself. Despite his affirmation that poetry should be quite spontaneous — "ne pas tomber dans les pièges de la litterature, ne jamais se relire — voilà la vraie poésie! Je la veux insensée et simple" — this can only be considered a vain hope as Amprimoz' own poetry betrays his academic background. Not only is it worked and reworked, it is also redolent with allusions to literary figures. In his closing verses the poet seems to find satisfaction and a kind of peace in his chosen occupation along with the certitude that there *is* something more:

> Être l'artisan d'un texte. Respirer la satisfaction
> de l'oeuvre finie. . . .
> Déjà tu vois venir un autre monde.

I have deliberately left discussion of the third section, *Graines de lumière*, until the last. This lengthy series of poems (21 pages) is in fact not new material but a revamping of the previously published poems *Chant solaire* and *Deux Points contre le soir* (although no acknowledgement is made to this effect). One wonders what the author felt incorporating this piece (originally a meditation on Egyptian civilization under the Pharaohs) might add to his latest work. Its presence is regrettable in an otherwise commendable volume.

MARILYN E. KIDD

FROM THE ASYLUM

JOCELYNE BEAULIEU, *J'ai beaucoup changé depuis. . . .* Leméac, $6.95.

NORMAND CHAURETTE, *Provincetown Playhouse, juillet 1919, j'avais 19 ans.* Leméac, $6.95.

THESE TWO PLAYS by promising young playwrights underscore the Quebec theatre's continuing obsession with madness analyzed so brilliantly by Pierre Gobin's study, *Le Fou et ses doubles: figures de la dramaturgie québécoise*. In these psychodramas, Jocelyne Beaulieu and Normand Chaurette turn away from the social realism and political themes of the 1960's and 1970's, instead emphasizing the alienation of their characters by placing them in the sterile environments of psychiatric clinics. There, the mentally-deranged protagonists re-enact the past in series of flashbacks, persuading the other chartcters (real or imaginary) to play roles in their personal theatres of the mind. Curiously enough, both sick characters are haunted by memories of killing a child and by the need to give birth. Traumatized by the abortion her lover forced her to have, Beaulieu's heroine wants a baby, but first she must take control of her own life by symbolically giving birth to herself. Chaurette's hero, committed to a mental hospital following the murder of a child during the sole performance of a play he wrote, also craves auto-engenderment, but for him it is a prelude to the act of creating pure art. Despite the striking

parallels in setting and circumstances, Beaulieu and Chaurette use the figure of the *folle* or *fou* for very different purposes. *J'ai beaucoup changé depuis...*, originally written for the students of the Ecole nationale de théâtre in 1979 and later worked for the Théâtre d'aujourd'hui in 1980, examines the case of one woman in order to show the reasons why so many Quebec women suffer from mental illness and how they are treated by psychiatrists. *Provincetown Playhouse, juillet 1919, j'avais 19 ans,* written in 1981, portrays an actor/playwright who risks his freedom and sanity for the sake of realizing a pure theatrical experience and loses. For Beaulieu, the *folle* represents Quebec women whose marginal status in society brings on neuroses. For Chaurette, the *fou* represents the artist (and homosexual) who is driven mad by a society which can neither understand his work nor tolerate his presence and by his own creative dreams.

Beaulieu's play deals with the standard themes of Quebec women's theatre: fears which paralyze women, resentment of the martyr mother figure, rebellion against dependence on men, conflicts between women's professional and personal lives. The heroine remains unnamed; she is called according to the subtitle "F comme dans Folie, Femme." Still trying to overcome the trauma brought on by an abortion, F is back for her third stay in a mental hospital, this time suffering a false pregnancy. Several unresolved conflicts contribute to the illness: her dependent love for her boyfriend and anger at his insistence on the abortion, her desire for a baby and fear of losing the child, her guilt for being a "bad" daughter and rejection of her mother's resigned submission to her brutal drunken father. F's psychiatrist, Marguerite, spurns the usual drug treatment and helps F act out her feelings, fears, and fantasies. F's psychodramas reveal her paranoid fears, persecution complex, and feelings of alienation. Marguerite encourages F to defend herself, to resist and fight back against the dark forces which hound her. With this "anti-psychiatric" therapy, F has made progress, but the treatment is threatened by the impending departure of Marguerite who is pregnant. The male director of the mental hospital criticizes Marguerite's experimental work for its heavy reliance on the identification between patient and doctor. Marguerite is particularly sensitive to this criticism since the close identification threatens her own sanity and because she feels guilty that her professional career interferes with her personal life (her wife/mother role). Seeing that Marguerite also has fears and weaknesses gives F new strength. She imagines leaving the hospital and telling her boyfriend that she does not want to depend on him anymore. The transformation announced by the title, *J'ai beaucoup changé depuis...*, begins at the play's end. In her final monologue, F realizes that she never really existed since she always lived for others. So now is the time to give birth to herself:

> J'vas accoucher d'moé.
> J'vas dev'nir une sage-femme.
> Une sage femme?
> Une sage... femme...

While Beaulieu's play implies a positive message of change and liberation, Chaurette's work suggests the endless repetition of the same obsessive fantasies. *Provincetown Playhouse,* like Chaurette's first play *Rêve d'une nuit d'hôpital,* deals with the relation between artistic imagination and insanity. It ends where it begins, in the mind of the hero, thirty-eight-year-old Charles Charles, who has directed this theatrical reverie every night of the nineteen years he has spent in a Chicago mental asylum. It is a play within a play, the one-man show of a madman who can conjure up the setting, props, lighting, music, characters, and audience he re-

quires. On the surface, the play is an experimental work which ironically becomes a melodramatic murder mystery. The evening of July 19, 1919, a full moon rising in a sky ablaze with the orange glow of the setting sun, three nineteen-year-old actors (including Charles Charles) performed a play which was to be a symbolic sacrifice or immolation of beauty. When the audience applauded the nineteen knife blows to the sack containing the sacrificial victim, a five-year-old black child, it believed that the sack was stuffed with cotton and that the blood was pig's blood. After the "truth" was discovered, the critics panned the play and the courts condemned the actors to death. Young Charles Charles escaped hanging by convincing the judge, jury, and psychiatrists that he was insane. Being a perfectionist devoted to the dream of making art and life coincide, he has become insane in order to play his role correctly. The play's enigma — "Savaient-ils que ce sac contenait un enfant?" — goes unanswered until Tableau 18 (there are, of course, nineteen tableaux in all) when Charles Charles admits he set up the murder by putting the drugged child in the sack. He did it impulsively to punish the infidelity of his lover, Winslow Byron, with the other actor, Alvan Jensen. But even when the mystery appears solved, the question remains whether the events of July 1919 are real or simply the hallucinations of a madman.

Within the plot and structure of *Provincetown Playhouse*, Chaurette touches on a number of complex themes and still finds room for comedy. On the lighter side, Charles Charles's play is at various times a parody of avant-garde symbolic dramas, a pastiche of Ionesco, a satire of murder mysteries, and a comic attack on the notion of "théâtre de la vérité." Chaurette also makes fun of spectators who arrive late, literal-minded critics, and a public which fabricates motives (racism, homosexuality, sadism) to fill its own need for "truth." On a deeper level, the playwright questions the possibility of creating a pure theatrical illusion in which reality and art come together in an eternal present which abolishes the notion of time. With the insertion of excerpts from Charles Charles's *Mémoires*, Chaurette suggests that writing, like silence and madness, attacks and undermines the idea of objective reality. In his preface to *Provincetown Playhouse*, Gilles Chagnon interprets the murder of the child in the sack as the symbolic suicide of the author who became lost in the enigma of his own deranged imagination. The *folie* of Charles Charles reinforces what Chaurette said about the mad poet Emile Nelligan in the preface to *Rêve d'une nuit d'hôpital*: "au bout du rêve, il y a toujours le risque d'un hôpital."

Provincetown Playhouse, juillet 1919, j'avais 19 ans and *J'ai beaucoup changé depuis...* point to new directions for Quebec theatre in the 1980's. No longer obsessed with political and cultural nationalism, Québécois playwrights are exploiting the dramatic potential of their personal, sexual, and aesthetic concerns. If Beaulieu can avoid the clichés of the feminist *pièce à thèse* and if Chaurette can use his wit to keep his poetic drama from becoming static, we may look forward to some original and thought-provoking plays by these two young dramatists.

JANE MOSS

ISN'T REALITY?

ROBERT ALLEN, *The Hawryliw Process: Part Two*. The Porcupine's Quill, $8.95.

I THINK IT'S SAFE to say that if you enjoyed Robert Allen's *The Hawryliw Process: Part One*, you will also get a kick out of *Part Two*. All the metafictional

craziness of the earlier book is present in the later one, with some brilliant new tropes laid on especially for the occasion. In fact, it's all one novel, like those Victorian triple-deckers (if like them only in that respect), and it would probably best serve your interests as a reader to read both volumes at the same time.

Allen is still playing games with the philosophical conundrum of the emperor and the butterfly: just what *is* reality, and furthermore, what is the story on it. This story, "The Adventure of the Novel in Manuscript," which at almost the very end we discover "was never written," may not, within its own fictional world, really have an author; yet there are other worlds, other books. Our world may not seem quite so strongly present when we finish reading this one, but it *is* still here, gentle reader. Isn't it?

The intrepid cast of characters spend a good deal of time traversing Hell, the outer precincts of which they had reached and determined to breach at the end of *Book One*. Hell, it turns out, is a giant underground parkade (well, Dante had the right icons for his time; and it seems to me Allen has made an inspired choice of icons for ours). They spend a lot of time travelling from level down to lower level of the "Parking Lots of Retribution," during which they see a truly contemporary horrorshow of lost souls in various stations of suffering traffic. But Minden Sills, the "author" of the novel, though "paralyzed by uncertainty" (and creating a narrative based on the Uncertainty Principle), is forever finding his story in memory or else having it wrenched out of his control, so the skittering narrative is lively and full of changes, providing many other points of view to complement his.

Sills, as we found out in *Part One*, has been a patient at The Hawryliw Institute, where Docs Hawryliw and Hangham hoped to make a new man of him based on "CHRISTIAN & EMPIRICAL PRINCIPLES." Although he has escaped, followed by the doctors, and taken up with a band of self-created characters, some of whom challenge his authority, much of what he tells takes us back to the Institute and its ideals, which he hates. Here, in the words of Dr. Hangham, is one example of those ideals:

> Language, he said, language is the proper province of the educated — at least proper language, sensible, empirical language. Now we find that rather than steering you on the straight and narrow our help has done nothing but drive your fantasies deeper and deeper into the muddy gerrymandry of words in themselves. Don't you know that words are the sakred marks of *things*, that just as God gave us the world in all of its breathtaking detail and the laboratory in which to range them in temples of empirical science he also gave us words to sing their praises, words to refer, one to one, to the things of the world — each and every isomorphic one? Each sparrow falling is a word. The word is the truth and the thing the word names is truth — the truth of the referent! And now we find you diving into a maelstrom of words stripped from their things, names that name nothing but themselves, twisting round to kiss their own arse like the nonreferential buggerly names they are. . . .
>
> With thin-lipped hatred he glared at me, clenching and unclenching his hands. He was making a large effort to control himself and at last he succeeded.
>
> You make light of all this, he said.
>
> All of uh, what?
>
> Respectable learning, respectable science. Of course because you live in such an unquantitive world you cannot appreciate that science has codified the world of phenomena and put it in complete control of Church, state and business. We have rationalized the world — and I am proud to think that we at the Hawryliw Institute have done our humble part. You believe that what you write somehow is the world, that you make it as you go along —

Neither Sills nor Allen agrees with this, as any reading of *The Hawryliw Process* makes clear. Neither, finally, does Sandor Hawryliw, who, having harrowed and been harrowed by Hell's Pavements,

changes his views on reality. If Hawryliw is finally "saved," many others are not. And even Sills is finally forced to admit he cannot *change* the reality of his own past simply by trying to *rewrite* it. Thus the pain he has delivered to others, the losses he has suffered, remain inviolable.

However, an outline of the plot would miss most of the delights the novel offers. It's a grab bag containing something of everything. If it plays William Gass's metafictional games, it also insists upon commenting, usually in a wickedly satiric fashion, on the culture and society of its readers. Though it never lets us forget we are reading a carefully crafted fiction, it nevertheless captures the voices of its characters so as to grant them real presence in the story. It offers images, large tropes, slapstick comedy, and whatever else comes to hand with such a winsome smile it would be ungracious in the extreme not to applaud such entertainment. And, though obviously not for every taste, it *is* a grand and stylish entertainment for those who do enjoy such farragos.

DOUGLAS BARBOUR

FOUL-WEATHER PASTORALS

GILLES ARCHAMBAULT, *Le Voyageur distrait.* Alain Stanké, n.p.

ROCH CARRIER, *La Dame qui avait des chaînes aux chevilles.* Alain Stanké, n.p.

GILBERT LAROCQUE, *Les Masques.* Québec/Amérique, n.p.

THESE THREE NOVELS, all by experienced and successful Quebec writers (though only Carrier is well known in English Canada), are held together by versions of the climatic claustrophobia that shapes so much Quebec literature into predictability. The climates — two urban summers, one rural winter, two humidities, one endless blizzard — are objective correlatives for the centrality of the sexual-domestic relationship in each book, forcing climate into correspondence with the inward-turning, self-devouring psychological intensity of an emotional claustrophobia. Two of the books are quite deliberately old-fashioned: Carrier has written a sort of classic comics *Kamouraska*, with, as far as I can see, no touch of irony; Archambault, a novel which is very like a fictional memoir. Even LaRocque — *Les Masques* is by no means as Aquinian or as Pavelesque as its title might suggest — only hints at textuality or self-reflexiveness, in order to tell much the same sort of story as the others, though very much more impressively.

Carrier's simple narrative is loosely structured upon an intermittent, half-hearted set of mythic parallels, which explain the present by juxtapositions with the past. His heroine, in mid-nineteenth-century Quebec, trapped in the winter cabin with the husband whom she blames for the death of their baby in a blizzard, plans his death, slowly, obsessively, repetitively, over the whole of one of the longest winters in fiction, drawing herself into ever-closer identification with "la Dame . . ." of the title, a legendary figure from the founding of Quebec, who also killed her husband, and paid the judicial penalty, but found a new life in the new world. Comes the spring, and Carrier's heroine puts poison in her husband's coffee, confesses, is tried, convicted, and nearly executed, when her husband returns and saves her and her second (unborn) child. *Kamouraska* with a happy ending. The repetitiveness and simple, overlapping sentences, representing the thought-processes of a heroine with only one thought to get her through the winter, delineate the slowing down of time in a claustrophobic situation, as well as suggesting the stylization of the main story, as it approaches, like its inner ana-

logue, to the condition of legend, and as it aims to express the intensity of domestic tragedy marvelously turning, with the seasons, into cyclical renewal, reunion and rebirth.

Gilles Archambault's introspective realism also juxtaposes legend with actuality. The narrator-cum-central-consciousness of the book (Michel) is a not terribly successful writer, pushing fifty. He is obsessed (but with a smiling sadness, rather than an involuted frenzy), with death, the transience of love, his "steadily deteriorating equipment," his own self-knowledge and responsibility for others: he is, in short, caught in the existential dilemma of the sensitive middle-aged male intellectual in our days, as found in many an English-language novel as well: Fowles's *Daniel Martin* is a rather heavy-handed but familiar example. Michel structures his identity quest upon a half-hearted journey in the tracks of the peripatetic Jack Kerouac, whose rather more Dionysian life provides the legendary counterpoint of his own; it is an ironic juxtaposition throughout, however, rather than a heroic identification of the sort which gives Carrier's heroine something to cling to. The never very convincing attempt to recapture Kerouac (in a sort of elegiac romance, no doubt, as it would have been chiefly about himself) is abandoned for the last third of the book. The absent-minded traveller is on his own, definitely "distrait" in turning towards his own existential quest, a detour through areas of his past (notably a neurotic ex-wife) and a return, in terms of muted affirmation, to the stoic melancholy happiness of his present vastly more satisfactory domestic alliance. The book, written with a delicacy and exactness that gives it a real, if low-keyed, distinction of style, deserves more readers than it is likely to get. Predictability is not necessarily a deficiency, but it may be a practical disadvantage.

Another, stylistically more daring, version of the middle-aged writer as hero is found in LaRocque's book. Like Archambault's, his narrator (Alain) explicitly says that his reminiscences will be written in the third-person, and (though not consistently) they are. But Alain has a much more tangible obsession than any of Michel's, and, curiously enough, it is very similar to that of Carrier's heroine. A child has died, by "accident," and someone is to blame. Much of each book, having revealed the mere fact of the death at the beginning, is devoted to working through and uncovering the details of the death and apportioning the blame and responsibility for it. The central characters go over and over these details, but only very slowly do we come to see how entirely blameless (in Carrier) is the child's father, and how truly accidental was the death of the child in the blizzard. And how rather more blameworthy the father (in LaRocque) finds himself to be as he slowly builds up the narrative of his son's death by drowning. If the story had been narrated by the boy's *mother* (Alain's neurotic ex-wife), the thematic resemblance between these two *Kindermord* stories would be very strong indeed. Foul-weather pastorals! As Jay Macpherson reminds us, "a drowning is almost the standard pastoral catastrophe"; children are often sacrificed to the adult world; the enmity of personified natural forces shows itself particularly in "the untrustworthiness of water: the deceptive stream"; snow is awfully cold water, and Canadian pastorals are the coldest of any.

Alain, like the hero of Joseph Heller's *Something Happened* (and many another purgatorial novel), keeps running an obsessive movie of recollections through his head, which tells the same story over and over — "se répéter jusqu'à la nausée dans mon cinéma intérieur" — but finally tells it in its entirety, the story of the (ambiguously) accidental death of his much-loved

son. Only by exploring horrors of his own childhood can Alain achieve such therapy as his creative reconstruction can afford him, such acceptance of unacceptable horror and responsibility as art may make possible. Two central images, those of masks and the river, unify the book: "Il pensait la rivière qui coulait d'un bout à l'autre de ce roman à écrire . . . difficile de démêler masque et face." So dominant is the image of the river that the relevance of the image of masks is not made clear until the climactic scene very near the end. The imagery of stink, chill, filth, and stagnation which prompted one reviewer to speak of LaRocque's olfactory disgust with the world links Alain's nightmare recollections of his own childhood to the partially repressed central episode, and leads to a ghastly identification of himself with Éric, his dying son. Stagnant yet murderously polluted water taints and flavours all his recollections, as his mental cinema circles round the damp, putrid event of the drowning.

The climactic scene, which it would be a pleasure to quote by the page, must surely be one of the great set-pieces of Québec fiction. It is a reworking in a different key of the conclusion of Proust's *Recherche*, where people not seen for years are grotesquely transposed by the power of Time into monstrosities. A petit-bourgeois Dance of Death is enacted on the banks of the river, in a carnavalesque family reunion, where everyone is masked by the changes of time. The cover illustration, James Ensor's "Les Masques et la mort," evidently alludes to the heavily satirical component of this scene, as well as to its key symbolic patterns. The patriarch of the family is as moribund as one can be, and yet alive, but all of us go on living with steps made ever heavier by the clay of time adhering to our feet: "cela commencerait infailliblement à ressembler à ce qu'on appelle la vieillesse." In ironic juxtaposition to his elders, "le plus vieux parmi nous était Éric dont tout le reste de vie pouvait déjà tenir dans une toute petite pincée de minutes." Thus in this scene masks and the murderous river are brought together in Alain's mind; the cruelty of the one leads through his recollection of suffering to the artistic and moral truths of his self-discovery, which constitute a partial removal of *his* mask, at least. Perhaps, after that revelation, the action-filled realistic description of the search for the boy — mere story — is almost anti-climactic, and the very cautious affirmation of LaRocque's conclusion — "je me disais c'est du beau temps" — can be better justified in terms of the pastoral tradition — "fresh woods and pastures new" — than by the damp logic of Alain's existential quest. No matter. This foul-weather pastoral deserves quick translation and wide reading.

P. MERIVALE

IN PRAISE OF INADEQUACY

JAMES CLAVELL, *The Children's Story*. Doubleday, n.p.

GWENDOLYN MACEWEN, *The Chocolate Moose*, illustrated by Barry Zaid. NC Press, n.p.

GLORIA MONTERO, *Billy Higgins Rides the Freights*, illustrated by Olena Kassian. James Lorimer, n.p.

The Mare's Egg, retold by Carole Spray, illustrated by Kim La Fave. Camden House, n.p.

GWENDOLYN MACEWEN once wrote a poem about

> the imponderable agony
> of *being* here, of having
> to have a shape, a foot, an ugly face
> a mind
>
> ("A Dance at the Mental Hospital")

Martin, the distraught *Alces americanus chocolatus* she writes about in *The Choc-*

olate Moose, suffers much the same agony. Since he is made of chocolate, the sun melts his antlers and he leaves brown stains on the piano keys. Worst of all, "whenever he drank milk, it turned into a chocolate milkshake and bubbled out of his ears." Isn't that just too cute for words?

That old poem of MacEwen's implied unending despair over being stuck with oneself. But Martin is in a children's book, so when he gets tired of the annoying consequences of being Martin, he meets a disgustingly cheerful strawberry owl who seems to have a degree in psychotherapy. Having gratefully accepted her own strawberryness, she soon gets Martin straightened out:

> I'm not afraid to be me!
> Everyone's different, don't you see?
> You are you and I am me,
> And that's the way it's got to be!

But hold on a minute, folks: Martin's problem wasn't that he was different, it was that he was chocolate. When Martin swallows the owl's psychotherapeutical get-happy bilge, everybody, including the author, seems to have forgotten that poor Martin's ears are going to keep right on bubbling, no matter how positive his self-image is. The story is as illogical as it is twee. Barry Zaid's pictures for it are as twee as they are old-fashioned; and they are old-fashioned not because of their thirtyish art-deco gestures, but because thirtyish art-deco gestures are more seventyish than eightyish.

James Clavell, who is best known for very thick books like *Shogun*, has produced a very thin book called *The Children's Story*. It's certainly not *the* children's story, and it's not even *a* children's story, for any of the children I know. Come to think of it, it's not even a *story*. It's an allegory, a ponderously meaningful parable about how They take over the school system after They win the war, and how They quickly turn all Our children into unthinking followers of Their ideas.

But for all the fuss Clavell makes about protecting their individuality, he implies that all children are exactly the same as each other, all constantly dumb in the same loveable way. Throughout the book, children all think the same childish thoughts, react with the same childish reactions, and speak with the same childish inaccuracy: "I askt Danny once and he didn't know and none of us knowed really. It's grownup talk, and grownups talk that sort of words. We just havta learn it." The huge disdain for children implied by that attempt to capture their "cute" dialect is confirmed by Clavell's theme: how an entire classroom can be turned into obedient commies, or fascists, or maybe comptometer operators — this is Serious Allegory, so the bad guys aren't specified — in twenty-three minutes.

Gloria Montero has more respect for children. *Billy Higgins Rides the Freights* does deal with life in the depression; Montero does put Billy on the train carrying desperate, unemployed men toward Ottawa for what they hope will be a confrontation with Prime Minister Bennett. In a quotation on the back cover, Farley Mowat says this book is "frank, honest, and gutsy."

But it really isn't any of those things; it just pretends to be. Montero is constantly *saying* that life is tough; but she doesn't show it, and she doesn't make her characters feel it. We get statements like "a free-for-all broke out" with hardly any of the ugly details of the free-for-all; and Billy is so imperviously ingenuous that he emerges from his theoretically harrowing experiences with the same uncynical love of life he began with.

Billy Higgins Rides the Freights is less the "exciting adventure" for children its publisher promises than it is an exercise in nostalgia for grownups. Montero protects her characters from reality by loving

their theoretically awful lives too much, and by shutting up about the awful parts. In the sweet Depression of this novel, there is no sex, violence never hurts much, and swearing goes like this: "Jack was muttering under his breath. 'The sons of . . .,' on and on, over and over." Strong stuff.

After reading about a boy who learns nothing from experience, a classroom of grammar dropouts, and an easily swayed moose, I'm glad to report that *The Mare's Egg* not only does not praise stupidity, but actually laughs at it. The dumb hero of the tale Carole Spray retells, is an inexperienced immigrant to Eastern Canada who buys a pumpkin from a farmer in the faith that it'll hatch into a horse if he sits on it long enough. Spray tends to dissipate the joke by explaining too much too obviously, and her sentences are too unrhythmic to read aloud well. But Kim La Fave's wonderful pictures turn this merely adequate story into an excellent book. While they seem meticuously accurate as to the styles and gestures of the period, the early nineteenth century, they are also ineffably silly — loopy caricatures that let us laugh at the immigrant without depriving him of his dignity. I wish the publishers would have let these pictures do the job they do so well by asking for some judicious cutting of the text they make seem wordy; they are good enough pictures to deserve less.

But *The Mare's Egg* is the only one of these books I would recommend to anybody of any age who likes good stories. It is a good children's book because it does not assume the inadequacy of its audience, does not find inadequacy delightful, and is therefore able to transcend inadequacy.

PERRY NODELMAN

PARTICULARS

GEORGE BOWERING, ed., *Fiction of Contemporary Canada.* Coach House Press, $7.95.

JOAN PARR, ed., *Manitoba Stories.* Queenston House, $2.95.

ROBERT KROETSCH, ed., *Sundogs: Stories from Saskatchewan.* Coteau Books. Thunder Creek Publishing, $7.95.

THE PRIMARY PROBLEM for most editors compiling a collection of Canadian short stories is this: how to justify its existence. Books that give us the previously scattered stories of a good writer are self-justifying; collections of the "best" stories, or the "best new" stories, of a particular year are justified if the editor is a good judge of literary merit; textbooks rest their claims on the existence of a real or imagined market. Beyond these examples lie the majority of recent collections, which are assembled on stylistic, thematic, or territorial premises, and are occasionally justified by good editorial judgment but more often defended by ingenious special pleading. The three collections under review, with the partial exception of Kroetsch's *Sundogs*, fall into this last category.

The titles of these collections might encourage the reader to anticipate that the stories included were selected because, in varying ways, they manifest a sense of *place* and deal with the range of contemporary experience in particular locations. This is seldom the case, despite the claims made in the editors' introductions.

In the title of Bowering's collection the operative word is *contemporary*, not *Canada*; as he says: "I want this set to be an introduction to the contemporary in Canadian short fiction." But *contemporary* does not mean, for Bowering, "of its time"; it means *avant-garde*, or *postmodernist*. This question-begging argument enables Bowering to exclude such important contemporary short-story writers as Hood, Blaise and Valgardson

(among others), and it raises doubts as to the value of his collection as an "introduction" to the genre at this point in Canadian history. Furthermore, Bowering's introduction raises one of the main critical problems for the reader confronting post-modernist theory and art — the art is praised by its proponents for being "open," yet the theory is "closed." "The post-modernist," says Bowering, "invites his readers, & sometimes his characters, to take a hold somewhere & help him move the damned thing into position." Yet the reader (or writer) who does not subscribe to this view is defined, *a priori*, as a recalcitrant modernist (or worse), and denied a place in the "contemporary" scene (which is neatly narrowed thereby to stress the importance of the post-modernists). Bowering's familiar, cheeky, pseudo-colloquial manner cannot, in the end, disguise what is essentially a dogmatic position.

Fiction of Contemporary Canada is interesting primarily as a statement of Bowering's critical views. The stories themselves constitute what might be called supporting evidence (carefully selected) for the theory. The authors include those we might expect to find: John Newlove, Ray Smith, J. Michael Yates, Daphne Marlatt, Dave Godfrey, Matt Cohen, bpNichol, and Bowering himself. (Sheila Watson and Rudy Wiebe are also included, and sit rather oddly among the others despite the editor's explanation for their presence.) Contemporary Canadian experience is seldom a concern for these writers; the emphasis is on the individual or the universal; settings are metaphorically relevant, not referential; social and political issues of concern to contemporary Canadians (contemporary in the right sense of the word) are conspicuously absent from most of the stories, and obscurely presented when they do appear (as in Godfrey's "A New Year's Morning on Bloor Street"). Finally, the value of the collection as an "introduction" is questionable. All but one of the sixteen stories have previously been published in other collections; two of them, in fact, are making their third appearance in book form.

Bowering's collection does, at least, raise some important critical questions; and the writers he has included are all skilled at their craft, however one may judge what they have crafted. *Manitoba Stories* manages to be almost completely uninteresting. A few of the selections are competently written, most are poor, and some are embarrassingly bad. In addition, the book does not live up to the other claims made for it by Joan Parr in her foreword: the stories, she says, were selected not only for their "literary value" but also "for the honesty with which they reflect the experience of life in the province. Manitoba encompasses a great variety of geographical settings, social structures, and climatic conditions. This variety is reflected in the stories." Most readers will disagree, and strongly. The settings are usually vague backgrounds, society is presented and analyzed in ways that seldom reach past the level of popular journalism, and climatic conditions are no more successfully evoked than the settings. Manitoba's complex political life is neglected altogether. *Manitoba Stories* is far less Manitoban than it is anonymously contemporary. The writers Joan Parr includes deal, she notes, with the "conflict between past and present, between conformity and individuality," and with the "seeming disintegration af family ties." Yet these are, as she herself says, "modern" issues; to make them Manitoban the authors would have had to give them a "local habitation," and the great majority have not.

Several of the stories in *Sundogs* do convey a sense of place — of place observed, felt, analyzed, and understood. The idioms and rhythms of ordinary

speech, speech that belongs to the west (if not exclusively to Saskatchewan), are captured and used to good purpose by Edna Alford, Robert Currie, Glen Sorestad, and Ken Mitchell (although Mitchell exhibits his tendency to slide too far in the direction of caricature). Sorestad, W. L. Riley, and Gertrude Story, among others, deal well with the complexities of ethnic relationships. Perhaps none of the stories in this collection could be described as outstanding, but most of them are good, and none of them (apparently) has been previously published — a further reason for recommending the book.

But any recommendation of *Sundogs* must be a qualified one. The range of experience dealt with is limited; not so limtied as in *Manitoba Stories*, but circumscribed nonetheless, particularly so in the superficial treatment (or complete omission) of economic and political issues — issues that have been and still are central concerns in the life of Saskatchewan. Writers of fiction seem too willing to relinquish these questions to the social scientists, and here again one can see the pervasive influence of post-modernist dogma. In his introduction, Kroetsch states that "the awareness of the art of story-telling is everywhere in the collection." Not everywhere, I think, but certainly in many places. The stories here by Mick Burrs, Eugene Strickland, and Geoffrey Ursell, to cite three among several, would not be out of place in *Fiction of Contemporary Canada*. Self-reflexive, self-conscious, and non-referential; art for the artist's sake, art for the reader to polish and give meaning to, art that is narrow in its vision. Post-modernist attitudes are, indeed, so pervasive that they affect many writers who would not, consciously, adopt them. The results may challenge, surprise, or engage the reader, but seldom can writing of this kind deal effectively with the particulars of culture, with the social, political and economic characteristics of a region or a nation. Two, at least, of these anthologies, suggest that the time has come to ask whether many writers of fiction should begin to engage themselves as seriously with the complexities of life as they engage themselves with the complexities of art.

DAVID JACKEL

A TO THE

ROBERT LECKER and JACK DAVID, eds., *The Annotated Bibliography of Canada's Major Authors ABCMA*. Volume Three. ECW Press, $35.00; pa. $22.00.

MICHAEL E. DARLING, *A. J. M. Smith: An Annotated Bibliography*. Véhicule Press, $16.00.

IT IS DIFFICULT not to rate these two books by the titles. The ECW publication is *the*, of the *major*. The Darling book is *an*, of one writer, A. J. M. Smith. There is an *ex cathedra* quality about the first which is supported by self-congratulatory advertising and a similarly self-assured introduction to each volume. The second has a degree of humility; it is content to be another contribution to scholarship. The difference extends to the beautiful textured paper and stylish typeface used by ECW in comparison to Darling's use of offset typescript on plain white paper.

A probable reason for the latter would be that Darling wished to maintain a degree of control over the final product not possible when typesetters are involved. Perhaps ECW felt that their house staff were more than adequate to cope with possible problems. Whether this is the case or not I cannot say. I made a few random checks and those listings are accurate.

ECW sets itself up for at least some errors in its attempt to be up to date. Volume three, with bibliographies of Ernest Buckler, Robertson Davies, Raymond Knister, W. O. Mitchell, and Sinclair

Ross, was published in 1981 and yet it claims to offer "complete information" up to "December 31, 1980." In fact, it tries to go beyond this, as in the listing of a January 1981 *Ariel* article on W. O. Mitchell. The efforts involved are obviously praiseworthy and yet the result is at least partly confusing. The critical works, other than reviews, are given C headings. The section C1 to C35 is given the subheading, "Articles and Sections of Books." Then come "Theses" and then "Interviews." But the last "interview" item is the *Ariel* article, which is clearly not an interview. Was it added too late to be given an earlier number (although the old bibliographer's trick of "a" listings is used elsewhere) or were the preceding pages already typeset? Is any excuse acceptable in a work meant to be "dependable," and, more important, "the"?

There seem to be a variety of other problems with such subheadings. For example, in the section on Ross a piece by William French which the annotation itself shows to be an interview is not listed as such. At first I thought there might have been some intent to distinguish between the loose, at times paraphrastic, interviews in the popular press and the transcripts of dialogue usually presented in semi-scholarly publications. But the inclusion of other pieces very similar to French's belies this.

One might also question the evaluations. In a review of *ABCMA* volume one, D. G. Lochhead showed a general distaste for annotations in any bibliography which claims to be authoritative. I could not go that far but the ECW introduction states, "The annotations in the sections devoted to critical writings are designed to furnish an informed, but objective, summary of the arguments advanced in each secondary source." Of course, any summary is at best chancy, as all writers claim that their argument would not be complete if one word were deleted, a sentiment that every editor has heard expressed all too often. But such a summary could at least attempt objectivity. Instead, a variety of evaluative comments continually creeps in. They are not so obvious in most of the bibliographies, but John Ryrie's, of Robertson Davies, is full of them. By my cursory count he gives thirty-one positives and thirteen negatives. The former are genially assertive, something like "A convincing essay," whereas the latter are hesitant and usually equivocating: "Regrettably, this rough-hewn article does not penetrate beyond the surface parallels to Jungian psychology."

The one place where Ryrie seems to exceed this is in an assessment of an article by Stephen Bonnycastle: "The dense diction in the article corresponds to the weighty tone; Bonnycastle takes the ethical and moral content of the Deptford novels very, very seriously." This sarcastic squib is entertaining but I doubt whether it belongs in an annotation.

For the most part Darling's book is the height of objectivity. The annotations for books by Smith give publishing histories, in many cases quite interesting ones. The annotations for secondary sources are limited to brief quotations and careful descriptions of the central theses. Again, any reduction might be seen as inadequate but, assuming one accepts annotations, Darling could hardly be faulted.

The one exception, I think, is the one time he gives in to a bit of subjectivity. He quotes an amazing series of vilifications in Nathaniel Benson's review of Smith's *Collected Poems*. Among other things, Benson calls Smith, "the Most Unintelligible Bardling who ever scrambled his symbols." Darling ends with a parenthetical comment: "One suspects a personal malice behind this rather heavy-handed hatchet job." I doubt that any reader would require this elucidation.

I appreciated Darling's precise descrip-

tions of the books as physical objects. These are especially attractive after the ECW offerings which don't even go so far as to mention whether books are paper or hardcover. Still, there is at least one point where Darling's careful bibliographic procedure leaves a gap. For the first edition of Smith's *The Book of Canadian Prose* he quite rightly describes the title page as consisting of only a "double rule 101 mm" and then the title and then "double rule as above." In the remaining notes about dimensions, casing, dust jacket and publishing history he does not state who the publisher was. One must turn the page to the entry for the second impression to find that it must have been Gage.

It is important to mention that while they have a number of questionable elements, the ECW bibliographies are extraordinarily useful, particularly in teaching, for suggestions of where to find specific ideas in print. Still, I doubt that anyone doing serious research will be able to use them as more than a starting point. This is particularly the case as so many of the authors are alive and active. Thus for Davies the list of books by the author is already out of date, not to mention the secondary sources. The introduction states that ECW will issue updates in the future. Given ECW's many other ambitious projects, one wonders how soon this will be possible.

Other reviewers, like Lochhead and David Jackel, have already commented on the idiosyncratic choice of who is "major." I notice that the last publicity pieces from ECW do not list who the major authors are. Perhaps this reflects a reassessment of the selection or perhaps just embarrassment at being knocked so often. But still there are other rating problems. The bibliographies are divided into poets and writers of fiction. Margaret Atwood was divided between volume one and volume two to show her stature in both fields, but she is unique in this respect. Thus Knister's position in this volume shows ECW's decision that he is primarily a writer of fiction and his poetry is a secondary matter. The next volume, on poetry, will include Earle Birney. Thus *Down the Long Table* and *Turvey* are relegated to second place.

This might seem like quibbling, as few would disagree that Birney is primarily a poet. But I once again question whether it is the role of a bibliography to make such divisions, as so many writers have this nasty habit of writing in more than one genre. Still, I think a larger issue is raised by that fourth volume. It will include A. J. M. Smith. If Darling's bibliography is used again it will be essentially a reprint in, I think, an inferior format. If another bibliographer is used I doubt whether he can possibly surpass Darling's work, except, perhaps, in a very few additions. In any case, the existence of Darling makes one thing clear. *ABCMA*, useful as it is, is much more of an "an" than a "the."

TERRY GOLDIE

** FREEMAN PATTERSON, *Photography of Natural Things*. Van Nostrand Reinhold, n.p. I'm a fan of Patterson, though not particularly of this book. Its best features are the practical tips it offers the amateur about how to go about photographing animals and plants — close up, in frost, at sunset, out of focus, in foreign places, under water, and in other ways, too. Unfortunately, despite Patterson's skill, the sample photographs don't always suggest that the effort is worth it.

W.N.

** DOUGLAS C. POCOCK, ed., *Humanistic Geography and Literature*. Croom Helm, £14.95. A set of "essays on the experience of place," this collection offers less a coherent discussion of the connections between books and place than a glimpse of the kinds of discussion there could be. There are accounts of

reality, roots, tourist taste, and socioliterature, with reference to Ruskin, Lawrence, Lessing, and Crabbe, among others. Pocock's introduction touches on the geographical basis of much literary "experience," and connects this with the "deliberately cultivated subjectivity" he identifies with literature. Gunnar Olsson's essay on ontological transformation is of particular interest: inasmuch as we gain insights through negation (hence through others), Olsson argues, the most penetrating accounts of home stem from people away (Joyce, James, Nabokov). Expatriate writing (Lowry? Gallant?) is given a new context.

W.N.

** LEWIS GREEN, *The Boundary Hunters: Surveying the 141st Meridian and the Alaska Panhandle.* UBC Press, $18.95. The Alaska Boundary Award of 1903, in which the British representative grossly betrayed Canadian interests to secure a rapprochement between Whitehall and Washington, stirred the passionate reactions of Canadians and nurtured nationalism in this country. Like 1812, it is one of our historic dates. Lewis Green is little concerned with the political aspects of the event; his book adds to Canadian history by telling, in greater detail than ever before, the story of the arduous, often adventurous and sometimes highly dangerous task of surveying the boundary between Canadian territory and the Panhandle. It is a workmanlike but rarely exciting book, yet it will be useful to students of western Canadian history.

G.W.

** JOHN SAWATSKY, *For Services Rendered: Leslie James Bennett and the RCMP Security Service.* Doubleday, $22.95. This work will be interesting to readers of *Canadian Literature,* mainly because it concerns Leslie James Bennett, who inadvertently caused a great many Canadian authors to defend the wrong book for the right reasons when he brought a libel action claiming that S., a Soviet mole in Ian Adams's dull novel, *Portrait of a Spy,* was meant to represent him. The real Bennett and the reasons for his dismissal from the RCMP's Security Service is the subject of John Sawatsky's book. Sawatsky has done his work well, and his achievement suggests that investigative journalists are usually somewhat brighter than spies and counterspies, for it is hard to think of a more inept security service than that operated by the RCMP as Sawatsky describes its blundering existence. Bennett emerges as a thoroughly banal man thrust irrelevantly into the limelight. Need we pay $22.95 to read about him?

G.W.

** LEWIS ARMOUR, *The Idea of Canada and the Crisis of Community.* Steel Rail Publishing, n.p. Leslie Armour is an almost lone advocate — but no less passionate for that reason — of our native Canadian philosophers, and the history of "Philosophy in English Canada" which he wrote on the subject with Elizabeth Trott, *The Faces of Reason,* is the only full study of its kind and for that good reason the best. In *The Idea of Canada and the Crisis of Community,* he brings our philosophers to witness on the issues of a pluralist society. The philosophers, in fact, are somewhat recalcitrant to such treatment, and one realizes that, whatever their value as thinkers in other directions may have been, they were not notably originative as social philosophers — not even the shadows of Marx or Proudhon. As Armour glancingly admits, the most interesting ideas about Canada as a political society have come from writers outside the ranks of professional philosophers.

G.W.

* MARGARET CROSLAND, *Beyond the Lighthouse.* Academic Press, $29.50. The subject of this book is both large and substantial: the work of some sixty English-language female novelists of the twentieth century. The style is easy to read. The book is packed with names and plot summaries. But the judgments of the writers from outside the author's own culture reveal the extent to which some English criticism refuses to let colonialism die. If foreign writers don't behave as English writers do, they're considered peculiar. Hence for Crosland, once you start reading May Sinclair you can't stop, but Katherine Mansfield is no experimenter; by the same token, reading Margaret Laurence is "good for the muscles" but not pleasurable; and she has met Mavis Gallant. The personal bias of the judgments reveals more than the judgments themselves, but perhaps that is intentional, and this is more a book about Crosland reading than about modern literature.

W.N.

opinions and notes

"LES TETES A PAPINEAU"

Une Démonstration en stéréophonie

"Les comètes font jaser.
Les monstres aussi."

VINGT ANNEES SE SONT ECOULEES entre le premier roman de Jacques Godbout et *Les têtes à Papineau.*[1] De l'histoire d'un monde colonialiste à la fin tragique de Charles-François Papineau doublement colonisé s'inscrit une quête qui aboutit à la désillusion. Le dernier roman de Godbout, en effet, illustre la situation politique du peuple québécois tiraillé entre une francophilie bien légitime et une anglomanie qui a son utilité, ce qui revient à dire tiraillé entre Québec et Ottawa. La fable politique que livre cette fiction caricature la problématique nationaliste d'une impossible autonomie du "*Canadian*-Québécois." Cette confrontation légendaire, déchirure chronique et écartèlement stupéfiant, organise d'une façon spectaculaire, comme dans un cirque, l'exhibition du monstreux duo. Doublement examiné par le monde, le bicéphale crie à la face des nations l'incohérence, l'incompatibilité, voire l'ahurissement, de deux chefs piqués sur un même col. C'est pourquoi l'inspiration dualiste de ce roman exploite un procédé bipolaire qui permet en quelque sorte d'allégoriser ces deux tendances.

Le chiffre deux

Le chiffre deux et les nombres pairs organisent la toile de fond des *Têtes à Papineau.* Tout d'abord, le père et la mère "des" jeunes Papineau possèdent une double caractéristique: parents et en même temps agents tératogènes. Leur progéniture, doublement surprenante, était déjà comme inscrite dans le prénom aux initiales répétées du père: "A.A." Qui plus est, Alain-Auguste Papineau, journaliste sentimental et impressionnable comme du papier recouvert de sel d'argent, vit déchiré entre deux extrêmes: "Homard thermidor et hotdog stimé sont les deux pôles de sa culture." Sa femme aussi, Marie Lalonde, "a dans le sang l'approche binaire." Quelque temp saprès la naissance de sa fille, la mère se passionnera pour les mathématiques et réservera toute sa tendresse aux binômes plutôt qu'à ses "bi-mômes"! Tant de duplicité devait conduire le couple Papineau, lors de son voyage de noces à New York, à engendrer un enfant aussi exceptionnel que monstrueux — deux petites têtes naquirent, ou si l'on veut, une "petite tête suivie de son écho."

Charles-François, bicéphale ambigu, ou pour les intimes "totos," se présente comme une aventure. Deux dans un, il justifie, évidemment, qu'une mère ait deux seins! Selon la nomenclature de Godbout, il se classe dans la catégorie du "monstre double autositaire du groupe des Atlomydes [*sic*]. . . ."[2] Une telle naissance, celle d'un enfant bicéphale bien vivant, ne pouvait passer inaperçue Le "It looks like a frog" qui a échappé à Irma Sweet, se réfère à l'image publique la plus répandue de l'enfant des Papineau. Cet enfant-monstre, on s'en doutera, possède un double caractère:

> Charles trouve [les] jeux de mots particulièrement idiots. Le côté gaulois de François l'horripile. [. . .] Charles est effectivement discret. François est beaucoup plus porté, en toute circonstance, à gueler, à discutailler, à se plaindre. Il aime baratiner. C'est un enjôleur. La tête à Charles refoule tout. C'est un être complexe, une âme insondable, un volcan paresseux. Enfin.

Charles s'intéresse à la littérature alors que François a un esprit "plus scientifique." Il préfère les HEC. Quand Charles écrit, François parle. Si Charles

a horreur d'être manipulé, François s'amuse à "jouer le jeu." Alors que François apprend le nom des plantes et des fleurs, Charles consent à respirer seulement leurs odeurs. De plus, François s'attache au passé et aime les traditions, même si Charles frémit à toute évocation ancestrale. Bref, l'union de ces deux têtes entées sur un même corps n'est guère vivable:

> Quand une idée, un souvenir, une remarque plaisent à François, cela horripile Charles. Doit-on le noter? Chacun des mots que nous enregistrons doit être approuvé par les deux têtes qui gouvernent. Les lois de nos cerveaux s'ajustent mal. Les discours se croisent, se bousculent, s'entrechoquent.

C'est pourquoi Charles-François demande la "séparation," qu'un éminent chirurgien, le Dr Gregory B. Northridge, pourra effectuer avec les risques que cela comporte.

Toutefois, si la vie à têtes engendre des complications, elle favorise aussi des performances remarquables. Brillants comme des "têtes à Papineau,"[3] ils fracassent tous les records scolaires et savent plaire au public en le divertissant originalement: "Une guitare, deux voix." Leur sexe unique qui dépend de leurs deux cervelets, exige, pour une simple masturbation, une rencontre au sommet des volontés. Mais, lorsqu'il y a synchronisation parfaite, la "Coïncidence" rend raide comme une flûte le pénis unique et provoque l'extase. La rencontre avec Irma Sweet illustre bien l'orgasme himalayen du bicéphale:

> Nous nous sommes redressés un peu plus encore. Notre appendice commun pour la première fois en fit autant. Il était raide comme une flûte. Nous fûmes saisis. A deux mains. Surpris. Ravis. Epanouis. C'était une Coïncidence miraculeuse. Une synchronisation totale, parfaite, sans laquelle notre pénis fût resté flagada.

Le terme "Coïncidence" écrit avec une majuscule suggère l'apothéose certes, mais aussi le lien exceptionnel entre les deux têtes que le *cum* latin transcit. L'un *avec* l'autre, Charles *avec* François! La double entité s'est comme mue en une seule volonté. Ce qui fait dire aux têtes éblouies que l'amour avec cette actrice "était une cour haletante en stéréophonie."

Les prénoms de Charles et de François rappellent enfin une double appartenance. Comme dans *Salut Galarneau!*,[4] le nom de François évoque l'ancienne appellation donnée à la langue française, ses antécédents, ses traditions. D'autre part, Charles, qui, vu de face, est à gauche, jouit de par son prénom, des prérogatives attachées à la personne du prince du même nom, l'actuel héritier de la couronne d'Angleterre. Dans les initiales "A.A." ne se trouve-t-il pas un "Auguste" capable d'engendrer un roi?

En somme, le premier-né des Papineau est une créature qui agit sur deux plans. La bipolarité des caractères, les divergences de goût et l'équivoque du nom composé, tout cela offre un spectacle où le chiffre deux joue significativement.

Il faut ajouter que la seconde fois que Marie Lalonde devint enceinte, ce fut pour enfanter une fille. Le nom qu'on lui attribua correspond à la deuxième lettre de l'alphabet répétée: "Bébée." Encore ici, la récurrence phonétique du prénom exploite la propriété représentative de la fonction du double attachée à la rémonstration intratextuelle.

Pour continuer dans le même sens, les mentions retenues pour faire allusion aux "têtes" reprennent régulièrement des correspondances relatives au chiffre deux. Le rappel des célèbres frères siamois Chang et Eng, qui moururent "à New York le 20 janvier 1874 à deux heures d'intervalle," n'est pas sans évoquer la copulation exceptionnelle, quelque soixante-quinze ans plus tard, dans la même métropole américaine. Pour célébrer les merveilles de la science, "A.A." offre deux bouteilles de champagne aux "têtes." Curieuse coïncidence! La marque connue comporte un

nom double: Moët-et-Chandon![5] Double certes, mais uni par des traits d'union qui les relient comme Charles et François coexistent dans un seul corps.

Bien plus, les activités générales reliées au bicéphale appellent une organisation matérielle double comme, par exemple, les deux écrans cathodiques à leur usage. De la même façon, on ne peut passer sous silence le fait que l'infirmière ait dû s'y prendre à deux reprises pour percer la membrane de caoutchouc qui recouvrait le corps des patients afin que les têtes de Charles et de François seules soient découvertes. Si Britty, toute jeune, tenait ses tresses à deux mains lorsqu'elle travaillait à l'hôtel de son père dans l'Outaouais, c'est aussi à deux mains que Charles-François fut saisi par Irma Sweet qui procura au novice un plaisir bien "synchronisé"!

A venir jusqu'ici, la démonstration "stéréophonique" du récit de Godbout exploitait le chiffre deux pour révéler les caractéristiques du duo issu de parents sensibles à ce qu'on pourrait appeler l'*ambigénèse*. La récurrence soutenue de ce nombre suggère la bipartition cellulaire des cerveaux de Charles et de François, de même que leur double orientation distincte. Mais on ne peut ignorer pour autant l'importance attachée aux autres nombres commençant par deux. A plusieurs reprises en effet, le chiffre vingt, par exemple, s'inscrit comme repère dans le récit. Est-ce seulement l'effet du hasard, si on apprend que "A.A." a eu ses enfants à vingt ans et que, lors de l'opération délicate du bicéphale, Bébée fête ses vingt ans? Pourquoi la naissance du fils de "A.A." arrive-t-elle vingt ans après celle non moins spectaculaire des jumelles Dionne?[6] Curieusement, le jour de la mort des frères siamois tombe un vingt janvier! Enfin, les rejetons de "A.A." séjournent vingt mois à l'hôpital avant d'être kidnappés par leurs parents. Ce n'est pas tout. Le nouveau-né aurait pu mourir vingt fois avant de s'habituer à respirer alors que les "huileux" du Colorado sollicitaient vingt fois les héritiers du lopin de terre légué par la grand-mère Britty. A l'Ecole Nouvelle, Charles-François dut subir l'apprentissage de vingt méthodes "définitives" de mathématiques, et pour avoir droit au spectacle des nains Fontaine, il en coûtait vingt sous. Enfin, lors de l'opération historique du bicéphale, "ils étaient vingt autour du Dr Gregory Northridge qui s'agitait."

Le récit jongle aussi avec les multiples du numbre vingt. S'imaginant au "Ed Sullivan Show," Charles-François rêve de son succès: "Vingt millions de postes cathodiques bleuissant les chaumières nous auraient ouvert les oreilles et les yeux de quatre-vingts millions d'auditeurs éblouis." Ces chiffres sont complétés par les deux cents maladies de dégénérescence que le Dr Bonvouloir, biographe des enfants Papineau, a dénombrées dans les familles du Québec, et les quelque quatre-vingts positions du Kama Sutra qu'un fonctionnaire peut exploiter pour ses ébats sexuels, après son travail.

A considérer tous ces chiffres, *Les têtes à Papineau* ressemble-t-il plus à un ouvrage de comptabilité plutôt qu'à un roman qui décrit les aventures d'un bicéphale? Il ne faut pas être dupe. Le chiffre deux abondamment exploité dans le texte de Godbout se réfère à la parité Charles-François. Les *deux* têtes du premier enfant de Marie Lalonde et de "A.A." impriment une insistance telle au niveau de l'énonciation qu'ils mettent à jour, par leurs diverses activités, le contenu bipartite de l'énoncé. La récurrence attachée au chiffre deux éclaire la dichotomie des entités. Charles et François Papineau ont deux cerveaux mais ne jouissent que d'une seule "identité civile."

Si on scrute avec plus d'attention le sens véhiculé par le caractère pair des chiffres utilisés, on se rend compte que le terme "pair" renferme un signifié double

dont la teneur est presque contradictoire. Comme désignation nominale en effet, "pair" signifie ce qui est égal, pareil. L'égalité prime dans cette définition, de même que l'autonomie entière des parties. En revanche, la connotation du divisible exactement par deux domine lorsqu'il s'agit de l'épithète. En somme, le nombre pair se dit d'une fonction séparable par deux, alors qu'un pair est une personne semblable à une autre quant à la fonction et à la situation sociale. La polysémie de "pair" offre donc une nuance intéressante dans l'élaboration de la pensée godboutienne. Le nom de scène "La Paire" que François a retenu, homonyme de pair, contient une signification où la notion d'union est naturellement incluse. La première acception de "pair" (qui favorise l'unité) sera vite sacrifiée au profit de l'autre (qui sépare) avec l'impair final du Dr Northridge. L'exploitation du binaire tout au long du récit rend plus provocatrice, pour ainsi dire, le réduction en "monocéphale" du monstre né en 1955. Désormais, les deux voix autonomes fondues en une seule font perdre toute signification au dicton que Marie Lalonde aimait proclamer: "Deux têtes valent mieux qu'une."

Bis repetita placent

Selon le double narrateur des *Têtes à Papineau*, le journal de son évolution jusqu'au scalpel se définit comme "un récit bi-graphique." Ce jeu de mots qui exprime la dualité des deux êtres, se reflète dans le discours par la manifestation du dédoublement. En effet, toute similitude tend à engendrer des effets de duplication dans un ensemble unifié.

Dans un premier temps, la répétition du même terme ou du même son entraîne un phénomène d'écho, de réflexion du son comme pour donner un sens aux deux voix du bicéphale. Le perpétuel tête-à-tête auquel sont condamnés Charles et François les tient ensemble: "Cela nous tient ensemble. Ensemble." Un peu plus loin, on insiste: "Et nous mourrons rapidement tous deux ensemble. En-semble." La séparation du vocable répété suggère-t-elle seulement l'écho comme dans l'exemple suivant: "Chacun contenait un être humain à l'état embryonnaire, an-bri-yonère," ou bien le présage de la disjonction des têtes? Quoi qu'il en soit, on ne peut nier l'effet que produisent ces redondances: l'affirmation non équivoque de deux entités qu'exprime avec à propos le "Présentez-nous votre mère! Nous vous présenterons la nôtre! La nôtre," et aussi de deux langues que la traduction phonétique simultanée de "Freak show. Fric chaud" n'est pas sans évoquer!

Si la reprise du même terme dans les exemples précédents illustrait la réflexivité du double comme une occurrence sonore, d'autres répétitions présentent plutôt l'image d'une récurrence définitive, voire sans appel. Dès les premières lignes du récit, l'intervention chirurgicale de la fin pose une interrogation. Sera-t-elle définitive? La reprise du même mot tranche par l'affirmative, et d'une façon incisive. La conclusion que suggère cette redondance prophétise déjà le résultat final de l'opération: "Les droits subséquents, s'il en est, seront versés au survivant, s'il y en a un. Un." "Définitive" et "un" réunis ensemble dans une même formulation nouvelle font songer au sens de la conclusion: *définitivement, un* seul survivra!

Avant de scruter plus en profondeur cette caractéristique du *bis repetita*, il faudrait analyser certaines répétitions d'une idéologie facile à déceler. L'importance de l'intimité des actants est proclamée à plusieurs reprises. En revanche, cette même intimité est comme projetée au grand jour, à la face publique, car tout le monde, tel un rayon X, peut "photographier" et analyser la "structure intime. Intime" de Charles et de François. En d'autres termes, l'insistance provoquée

par la répétition montre la supercherie, peut-être double, jouant contre le bicéphale, même si celui-ci, qui en est conscient, refuse d'y participer: "Nous n'avions pas le temps de nous apitoyer sur la bêtise dominante. Dominante." Charles et François ne sont pas sans ignorer qu'ils sont "solitaires" à cause de la "célébrité" que les média leur ont donnée, et leur côté "intellectuel" pressent que "dès qu'on met le doigt dans les rouages politico-juridiques on en a pour l'éternité. L'éternité." Ces données inscrites dans le journal des Papineau livrent "une collection d'histoires 'vécues.' Vécues." Doublement vécues! La fin du deuxième chapitre conclut sur une prise de conscience double: "Nous ne ressemblions à personne. Personne." Le jeu du dédoublement inscrit donc, pour ainsi dire, la double entité des principaux personnages qui réfléchissent leur pensée dans le miroir de l'autre et l'expriment dans un discours "également" distribué, comme de la stéréophonie!

Ces redondances multiples qui émaillent le récit établissent, d'une certaine manière, la naissance de Charles et de François, doublement conçus par Marie Lalonde. Plus tard, lorsqu'ils feront l'amour avec Irma Sweet, ils personnaliseront leur identité. Ils deviendront non pas *un* homme, mais *des* hommes. Cependant, cette réflexion fait bon marché de la permanence de leur coexistence. Si du "un," ils évoluent vers le "des," après l'intervention chirurgicale, le "des" se convertira en "un," définitivement.

On peut considérer ces nombreuses répétitions, tantôt comme une façon d'exprimer deux voix, deux têtes, et tantôt comme le reflet propre au miroir. La tête de l'un réfléchit l'autre, et vice-versa. Le "bis repetita placent" qu'aimait redire la mère du bicéphale, recoupe la signification sous-jacente aux "six millions de descendants quelques siècles plus tard. Descendants" qui exploitent une vision dédoublée d'une réalité non moins bipartite. En d'autres termes, la "démonstration en stéréophonie" du récit proclame les grandes lignes de "notre véritable livre d'histoire! L'histoire."

Le sens premier du roman de Godbout réside dans la démonstration allégorique de l'*incommunicado* entre les deux têtes, celle de Charles et celle de François. Les deux têtes, à force de se regarder, de se réfléchir dans le visage de l'autre, en viennent à se considérer comme différentes. "François qui se voit comme le Sacrifié" estime son vis-à-vis comme un "Judas," un traître. Le "bicéphalisation" illustrée par la bipolarisation grave l'image d'un Charles-François Papineau relié d'abord par les circonstances fortuites de la naissance et, par la suite, séparé par la science du Dr Northridge. Le trait d'union s'efface, et dans la manipulation du bloc opératoire disparaît ce qui le suit, c'est-à-dire François. Cet "enfant-monstre," véritable entreprise qui fait jaser Ottawa et la Chambre des Communes, "vit" l'incompatibilité de son existence. S'il fut "sauvé" une première fois du carcan de l'hôpital, il succombera au scalpel habile du célèbre médecin anglophone de Vancouver, B.C.

La jonglerie binaire largement exploitée par Godbout tend à une double activité contre-idéologique. D'une part, l'unité du corps des jeunes Papineau est incontestable et, d'autre part, il y a scission de cette même unité dans les deux têtes. Le jeu des dédoublements se solde par la séparation, par l'amputation d'une tête au profit de l'autre. En effet, le "une guitare, deux voix" joue le partage à égale intensité du verbe de l'un et de l'autre, mais le son provenant de l'instrument unique n'est pas nécessairement compatible avec les goûts des "voix." Si l'un ou l'autre préfère une tonalité distincte, comment les mains d'un seul corps pourront-elles accorder des orientations diverses, voire opposées? Tel semble être l'effet que produit un discours où foison-

nent des marques d'un intérêt réel pour le nombre deux et le dédoublement.

Bien plus, les similitudes nombreuses que provoquent aussi bien la convenance chiffrée du nombre deux et le redoublement de certains termes, font songer à ce que Ricardou appelle "des mises en abyme littérales."[7] Le réflexivité que la similitude accorde transmet, d'une certaine façon, ce que le système du dédoublement des mêmes lettres figure. Bien sûr, l'extension qui accompagne ce phénomène lexical projette une nouvelle lumière sur le sens à donner à ce que reflète la répétition. La récurrence ajoute des effets qui obéissent à l'idée sous-jacente. En d'autres mots, les termes souvent répétés ressemblent à une sorte de miroitement de la pensée de l'un dans l'agir de l'autre ou de l'action de l'un issue de l'idée de l'autre. Cette stéréophonie du miroir, d'un visage se reflétant dans l'autre, d'une voix accompagnant l'autre, résume bien la résultat final du "deux dans un" auquel Marie Lalonde refusait de croire.

L'allégorie du bicéphale légendaire fait désormais partie de l'Histoire, car le nationalisme de Godbout dans cet ouvrage romanesque, contrairement aux romans précédents, aboutit à une désillusion que laissait sans doute présager le nom même de Papineau.[8] La prédestination attachée à ce nom, le jeu "double" de ce parlementaire canadien justifie une conclusion où François, le surgeon français, est rayé de l'écran cathodique pour céder la totalité de la place à Charles, le drageon anglais. Tout comme le docteur Northridge qui a oublié son appartenance française aux Beaupré, Charles, à l'image de ce dernier, conservera le vestige de son "tête-à-tête" avec François, en signant Charles F. Papineau.

NOTES

[1] Jacques Godbout, *Les Têtes à Papineau* (Paris: Seuil, 1981).

[2] Dans la section des monstres doubles, les autositaires sont composés de deux individus égaux en développement et jouissant d'une égale activité physiologique. Dans cette catégorie se retrouvent les monosomiens, essentiellement caractérisés par l'unité du corps. Les *atlodymes* et non les atlomydes, un genre dans cette classe, ont un seul corps et deux têtes séparées, mais contiguës et portées par un cou unique. Tel est le cas de Charles-François Papineau.

[3] L'expression québécoise "être une tête à Papineau" signifie être très intelligent, futé. "Référence à Louis-Joseph Papineau, brillant tribun et homme politique de chez nous dont le nom est passé dans l'usage populaire." Pierre Des Ruisseaux, *Le Livre des expressions québécoises* (Montréal: Hartubise HMH, 1979), p. 240.

[4] Jacques Godbout, *Salut Galarneau!* (Paris: Seuil, 1967).

[5] En réalité, la marque de champagne "Moët et Chandon" s'écrit sans trait d'union. Faut-il voir ici, dans l'ajout de ces signes typographiques, une allusion aux liens presque indissociables de ces deux entités?

[6] Elzire Dionne et son mari, Oliva, donnèrent naissance entre trois et six heures du matin, le 28 mai 1934, au fond des bois du Nord de l'Ontario, à cinq filles identiques. Selon Pierre Berton, "Les chances qu'une femme mette au monde des quintuplés fraternels étaient de cinquante-quatre millions contre un. La probabilité que de tels enfants atteignent l'âge adulte était infinitésimale. [...] Dans le genre humain, des quintuplés identiques sont une sorte de facétie de la nature." Pierre Berton, *Les Jumelles Dionne et leur époque*, traduit par P. Pourchelle (Montréal: Les Editions Mirabel/CLF, 1979), p. 13.

[7] Cf. Jean Ricardou, *Nouveaux Problèmes du roman* (Paris: Seuil, 1978), p. 159.

[8] Louis-Joseph Papineau, l'homme politique canadien qui donna au XIX^{e} siècle une nouvelle impulsion au parti canadien français fut élu à deux reprises président de la Chambre. Ayant soutenu la révolte des Canadiens français, il fut accusé de haute trahison et dut s'enfuir en 1836. Même s'il fut réélu au Parlement en 1847, il n'en demeure pas moins qu'il s'était discrédité.

YVON BELLEMARE

HUGH BRODY'S "MAPS AND DREAMS"

POST-MODERNISTS DIVIDE into two camps. The deconstructionists examine texts sceptically, pulling here, tearing there, revealing everywhere the decayed meanings in modern thought. Relentless, this scepticism spares nothing, not reality, not criticism, not even literature. The other camp redeems literature. It is no less sceptical, but for it, scepticism is only one stop in the stations of consciousness. The latter camp writes fictions, or critical fictions which insistently refer to a world of detail we used to call reality. The deconstructionists tear at this reality, remarking as they go about its dead coherence. The redemptionists peel the texts of the real entities like onions, and thus, meanings, structures are revived to enchant and enlighten readers again. (Harold Innis, the historian, was such a modernist and Marshall Macluhan was his critical fictionist.)

Hugh Brody's *Maps and Dreams*, a work of anthropology, alternates between narrative and discursive chapters. Brody chose this way of presentation as a means of entering into a discussion, a dramatic one, with white Canada — not all of white Canada, perhaps, but that large part of it enacting the current tempest engulfing the nation as it tries to weather the economic crisis and the simultaneous blowing around the new constitution. Because of its discursive/narrative structure the formal arguments are tested, contrasted, and integrated with Indian realities. The book, however, is not merely an argument against its own formal assertions or against public texts. It is also a redemptive rendering of an Indian drama which for a variety of reasons white Canadians fail to see. The Indians in our public arenas are often converted into stereotypes. We understand these conventions when members of the royal family play theatrics with Indians at the Calgary Stampede or in Rideau Hall pledging undying fidelity "as long as the rivers flow and the sun shall shine." All recognize that drama to be an expression of ideals. Ideals in this sense require very little scepticism. The gap between the ideal and the actual is a given. Brody's redemptive text is directed toward those who believe they deal in actualities. (The late Arthur Laing, when he became Minister of Indian Affairs, said, "These people do not want to work." The zoologist Peter Larkin, in an article on salmon enhancement, referred to the Indians as "natural predators" of the salmon. The poet Al Purdy described Indian women as cariboo horses, "with fire in their heads and slippery froth on thighs." And then there are the do-gooders who see the Indians as a clutch of Little Nells pathetically acting in a show we now call the culture of poverty. A social worker in northern British Columbia took an Indian child from its family, reporting as she did so that the family had no food and lived in a shabby one-room cabin with junk hanging from the ceiling. The junk was the winter supply of dried moose and venison.)

There are more serious opponents of the Indians than these. In the MacMillan Bloedel Building in Vancouver, there is a large collection of B.C. Indian art. That company, one among many, daily destroys the land and fishing base which is the life of the Indian. It is hard to believe that the presence of that art there is the tribute hypocrisy pays virtue. The operations of the forest company are in tune with a main stream of western intellectual life. Hobbes believed the North American Indian to be the exemplum of man in a state of nature, a life which is "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." Locke, Rousseau, and Hegel each in their turn justified attitudes which made the cruelty to Indians an inevitable cost for progress.

Ellman, in his biography of James Joyce, tells how the great writer, late in life, went again to Catholic mass. He said that it was beautiful but all wrong. That spiritual iciness was characteristic of Joyce but it is also a symptom of an emptiness in the enlightenment which accompanies modernity.

Anthropology takes us out of all that. Sometimes it takes us too far out; the conventional judgments by enlightened Europeans, the revulsion at the Arctic peoples who kill the enfeebled old, or the fear of the self-mutilation in the Sundance, can be reduced to the abstracted state called cultural relativity. The great achievement of cultural relativity is that it opens the understanding to an appreciation of human variety. The great pitfall is moral anaesthesia. These two elements of anthropological thinking necessarily weave together in even the wary practitioner. That is why the presentation, the writing of anthropology is difficult. Brody's struggle with that difficulty most probably motivates the form and style of his book; his way out of the problem is the pathway of art, not Joyce's art but the structural device of Brecht's art, the epic stage with its alienation effects and its bifurcated shaping of the stage business into action and direct address to the audience. Thus, Brody's alteration between narrative and discourse engages the reader's emotions and then denies the emotions with an insistence that the reader think and know more than his feelings, know more than the painful drama of Indian life. He must also know the origins of that pain in a set of large structures.

The narrative in *Maps and Dreams* is a rendering of the day-to-day Indian life in northeastern B.C. It opens with a description of Joseph Patsah walking through the snow. He is hunting. The temperature is subarctic and he is lightly dressed. Given the circumstances, his poor dress seems a sign of miserable poverty. All day long this elderly man, the oldest in his band, lights fires. He stays warm and alive lighting those small fires. Despite his apparent poverty, Joseph Patsah is an inheritor of the traditions and technology of one of the "oldest affluent societies" (Marshall Sahlins's term). The rest of the narrative, the mapping, a funeral, a drunken spree in Fort St. John, a passage through the hunting seasons, parliamentary subcommittee hearing on the reserve, Brody composes as would the traditional symbolist author. The symbols are never what they appear. The Indians are furtive about the actuality of their lives; and the whites do not really want to see behind appearance.

The whites seem insistently to believe that Indians are lazy; the hard work the Indians perform goes on ignored. Beliefs which contradict well-known evidence in symbolist dramas most often cover an inner conflict that the players find hard to reveal. The idea of the drama here, what Aristotle calls the whole action, concerns the collision between two economies. The working and the playing, the buying and the selling, the saving and the owning you and I do constitute a conflict against unseen peoples. This is so even though we are unaware of our participant roles. The Indians of northern B.C. are often unaware, too, but they do believe that if their traditional economy is understood or widely known it can be taken from them. Brody's book is a gamble which he and the Indians are taking in the hope that a better understanding of the Indian condition will engage our sympathy and support. Their claim is that the Indian is not a victim, not lazy, not impoverished, but that the Indians on the reserves are viable fully-functioning cultures and economies. Moreover, this society originates in millennia now gone in northeast B.C.: the Athapaskan peoples began a great hunting culture which spread over more than half the continent.

Today, the Patsahs continue to live,

with much adaptation, in a precapitalist economy and in an epic culture. The way they explain the secret power that holds them on this course is with their maps drawn and painted on hides. The maps describe their hunting and trapping routes. These routes go beyond the trip out and back to camp. They are also paths to more spiritual goals. The whole lives of peoples are drawn there, and the places they go after death are shown as well. The spiritual routes come from the dreams of the people. The Athapaskans, like the Iroquois and like some Solomon Islanders, dream in a fashion which is akin to our making of art. These dreams and dreamers require the development of talent. This cultural formation, the one surrounding maps and dreams, bears some resemblance to Nietzsche's conception of tragic forces. The maps are rationalistic and apollonian, and the dreams are dionysiac realizations of death and the natural. That the Athapaskan culture has a tragic motion within it is manifest; these peoples are vulnerable. Brody's discursive chapters show the dreams and maps being interrupted and transformed by broken treaties, incursions by white farmers and hunters, pollution, and mega-projects (pipelines, highways, dams, and mines). The Ingenika people were flooded out by a B.C. Hydro dam without warning or restitution. The Blueberry reserve was gassed by an oil driller and as yet they have received no compensation. Industrial development, particularly in energy, has cut across traplines and hunting preserves. Productive lives and the active wills are thus seriously damaged. The region is famous for the harshness of social life: alcoholism, rape, suicide, murder, accidental death have very high rates here.

Although the archaic economic and social order has been battered, the Athapaskans of B.C. continue their berry picking, their fishing, their hunting and trapping. (Brody does an elaborate calculation of the cash value of the food and fur production and he finds that each family unit, on the average, makes something close to eight thousand 1980 dollars.) The material life they lead, in some ways, is not very different from that of other rural people in B.C. But the Indians in B.C. do more than survive. Adversity, the entry of the tragic into their lives, some theorists argue, has made them tenacious. Other rural populations in B.C. are giving up and moving out to the city as industrialism rolls over their land base. The tragic in the Indian life has become a source of publicly understood enhanced stature. Most of us live relatively prosperous lives; they are a strong people who live close to nature, a nature whose meanings are again becoming clear to us as it gets chewed up to supply us more prosperity. Brody refers to the belief that limitless development is necessary as the "carcinoma of the imagination." The spiritual aspirations of white Canadians overlap with the Indian one in strange ways. The Indians seek a harmony with nature, and we are all implicated in logging, mining, and polluting, but when we are on holidays we seek rural settings, we hunt and fish, we hike and go to zoos. The pathos in civilized lives is that we are fantasy primitives in leisure time; the everyday time of the Indian, his reality, is under onslaught, and a great many Indians experience tragedy, but their unhappiness rises out of direct conflict with the forces opposed to their reality. It is true that we can romanticize the Indian suffering and talk about the dignity of his tragedy, but that is not the point here. The Indian is caught in spiritual struggle; most of the rest of us have given that up. Brody, in short, seeks public support to preserve the Indians' way of life because that support would help us. To protect the people and the land of Canada is to cure the carcinoma of the imagination.

That is the structure of Brody's argument. His conclusions, the style of them, warrant some critical questioning. Brody believes that the Indians can in the future avoid living through an apocalyptic erasure of their culture. He is neither optimistic nor pessimistic about this; Canada, its various constituencies, is now deciding how it will turn out. For a positive outcome, the nation will have to protect reserve lands and crown lands, and in addition the nation will have to honour the treaty and aboriginal rights of the native people. All this is written in a style which is familiar enough, that English lucidity, moral and verbal, we find in writers so disparate as Bertrand Russell and E. P. Thompson. Martin Green refers to that prose instrument as the style of English decency. That style here is part of Brody's rhetorical strategy for persuading Canadians to choose the right course. But that strategy does place some constraints on Brody as he selects his material. The voices of Indians are not heard often enough. I presume Brody wants to hear enough to understand the collective mentality rather than the special buzz of particular experience. His discursive passages similarly leave out emotionalities which would intrude on his strategy. These passages presume a genteel decency which is Canadian. That is fair enough as rhetorical stance. Speakers often flatter their audiences. But the Canadian myth concerning its social traditions — blandness, calm, rationality, deference before authority, and civility — is only a partial description of our traditions. Canada and Canadians are not so nice as the myth-makers would have it; the country and the people are crankier and more violent than Brody's fine writing and focus of decency can openly reveal. In short, *Maps and Dreams* is not an angry book. To avoid anger on this subject, he and we must pretend that this country has operated with some good will. But the maltreatment of the Indian in Canada is more than an oversight by genteel administrators who sought prosperous modernization and then inadvertently neglected to control overenthusiastic entrepreneurs. This nation has evils within it. They need exposure and criticism. Trotsky said about Shaw that he wished that the playwright's blood had about five percent of the acid found in Jonathan Swift's system. It may be carping to ask for more acid in so good a book as this, but the redemption of Canada, a more difficult alchemy than turning lead into gold, needs a strong solution.

What would it mean to have more acid? Brody's book does have some in its ironies. The funeral scene is probably the best — with the white priest trying to preach to a drunk asleep in the back of the church and the few mourners who come to hear the official Christian ritual. The whole community mourns after the priest leaves. The important thing about this scene is that it shows most clearly that the Indians are more than victims. They are active agents who seek their own interest. If they get their own interest it will be so because they have the will to force some issues. We can close with a statement by an Indian whom Brody quotes:

> Are we supposed to be nice and give you our traplines so that you put your pipeline and benefit other people? . . . These traplines are for us, so we keep them. Why cannot you guys understand that? . . . I guess you don't really understand that this is our way of life and always will be.
>
> *Clarence Apsassin*
> *Blueberry River Indian Reserve*
> *Public Hearings, December 1980*

That is the acid voice.

F. E. STOCKHOLDER

THE SAGE OF OTTAWA: WILLIAM DAWSON LESUEUR

IN EVERY GENERATION men of distinction are born who are destined to wield a critical influence upon their contemporaries. Such men are noted for their powers of reasoning, exposition, and argument; they are recognized as leaders among those who strive, in the words of Adam Shortt, "to maintain an interest in things of the mind." Northrop Frye and the late Marshall McLuhan spring to mind as contemporary examples of the type. As the pre-eminent Canadian Victorian intellectual, William Dawson LeSueur was a complex individual. He was not only a cogent critic, accomplished and persuasive journalist, controversial historian, classical scholar, scientific writer, essayist, and litterateur, but a positivist philosopher and original thinker in his own right, contributing something of his own critical intellectual scepticism to the nexus of transatlantic Victorian thought, with the rigour of an intellect that invoked the spirit of Spencer, Huxley, and Mill. His intellectual influences were drawn from some of Europe's finest minds, not only Spencer, Huxley, and Mill, but also Frederic Harrison, Comte, Carlyle, Sainte-Beuve, Lyell, Darwin, and Matthew Arnold. He represented a synthesis of thoughts and values common to Victorian culture and society.

The scanty and elusive biographical data on the Sage of Ottawa is a source of singular frustration to the researcher,[1] but it has been established that the LeSueur family hailed from the island of Jersey: William's father, Peter, being one of a large family that emigrated to Canada around 1828. His health was so precarious the family feared for his life, but it was hoped that a new life in Canada would prove beneficial; this proved to be the case, for Peter LeSueur grew up and proceeded to father thirteen children. He became a civil servant and held the responsible position of chief superintendent of the money order branch of the post office department for many years. He had been sent down to the United States to study their money order system, and upon his return inaugurated a similar system in Canada. Later on he was to become the respected secretary of the board of civil service examiners. The Dawson family came from the town of Sunderland in northern England; William's grandfather had been a master mariner who emigrated with his wife Martha and their children to Canada in 1831. William's mother, Barbara Dawson (who had a brother and two younger sisters), was born in Sunderland on October 15, 1817. It is curious to note from the church record that she was baptized immediately on the day she was born, which reflected the gruesome belief in infant damnation quite common at that time.

William was born at Quebec on February 19, 1840. As a consequence of his French and English descent he was bilingual, and destined to become a professional public servant like his father Peter. Nothing is known of his childhood other than his deep attachment to his large family, particularly his sister Annie. One story that has survived concerns his Aunt Jane who lived in Nova Scotia; when his mother wrote to her, little William would always insist on enclosing a special ink blot in the letter especially for his favourite Auntie Jane.[2] The LeSueur family moved from Quebec to Montreal sometime in the early 1850's, where the young LeSueur completed a brilliant secondary education, graduating "Dux" from the Montreal High School. He was well read in Latin and Greek at a time when a classical education was still the norm, with purely scientific interests being con-

sidered peripheral to the spiritual ideals of scholarship. Writing many years later about his early education, he rejected the idea that the old system had been nothing but memory training and learning by rote, without recourse to the intellectual powers:

> There was some very unintelligent teaching in past times undoubtedly, and there is some very unintelligent teaching today. . . . But it was not all memory training. My own recollection tells me there was much to engage and stimulate the more active intellectual faculties. . . . For those who took any pleasure in intellectual exercise — and I fell in with many in those benighted times — there was ample opportunity for obtaining it.[3]

Through his father's connections, William first entered the civil service in the post office department as a youth in 1856. The department was located in Toronto at this time, as was the seat of government, which had been moved down from Quebec. For his reputation as a voracious reader, his father set him the task of naming the newly opened post offices in the province. He named Gravenhurst, along with Agincourt and literally scores of others, with the tiny towns and villages often taking their names from the new post offices he had designated. Apparently his duties with the post office department were nominal at this time, for he was given ample time off to pursue his studies at the Law School of Osgoode Hall and the University of Toronto.[4] He is listed on the rolls of the Law Society of Upper Canada, but there is no evidence of being called to the Bar. Doubtless his legal training was to prove valuable in later years, while he was involved in wearisome court proceedings over his ill-fated Mackenzie biography. He evidently abandoned the idea of a legal career and entered the University of Toronto, where his best friend was William Henry Corry Kerr, a gold medallist of 1859, who promptly fell in love with William's pretty young sister, Annie, marrying her when she reached her nineteenth birthday.

At Toronto his teachers were John McCaul, James Beaven, and Daniel Wilson. He was to imbibe a lifelong love of Greek and Roman literature from McCaul, who had been educated at Trinity College in Dublin, and had emigrated to Canada to become the principal of Upper Canada College, and eventually professor of classics at King's College of the University of Toronto in 1842. McCaul not only influenced LeSueur as an accomplished classical scholar with an international reputation; he was also responsible for founding and editing *The Maple Leaf*, a periodical devoted entirely to Canadian letters.

LeSueur studied moral philosophy under James Beaven, who was to be characterized by Daniel Wilson in his diary as "A stupid dry old stick we should be well rid of."[5] In 1850 Beaven had written the influential *Elements of Natural Theology* while professor of divinity at King's College; it was to be the first Canadian university textbook. As an orthodox Payleyite, he subscribed to the so-called "argument from design"[6] and felt it his duty to solemnly warn his students of the danger presented to their faith by the pursuit of independent critical thought and inquiry, for this could result in severing their intellect from that of the Deity. He stressed his conviction that natural reason must always be subservient to the sublime truths of revelation. Beaven's fear of free unfettered critical inquiry was manifest in a blinkered ultraorthodoxy, which in LeSueur's case had a counterproductive effect, for his intellectual paradigm developed in reaction to his teaching. LeSueur's lifelong commitment to free thought and his relentless search for philosophical truth was the fruit of his teacher's dogmatic certitude.

He had the good fortune to study history and literature under Daniel Wilson

who was later to become president of the University of Toronto. A graduate of Edinburgh University, distinguished in the fields of archaeology and ethnology, and inventor of the word "prehistoric," Wilson had earned an honorary Doctorate of Laws from St. Andrew's with his work on *The Archaeology and Prehistoric Annals of Scotland* (1851). Along with John William Dawson of McGill, he gave the first Canadian critique of Charles Darwin's *The Origin of Species* in 1860, the year after its publication.[7] From what we know of Wilson's life — his liberal Anglicanism, his devotion to intellectual truth, his commitment to nondenominational education, and his resistance to narrow sectarian ultraorthodoxy — he undoubtedly exerted a compelling influence upon his gifted young student. LeSueur's writings over the years (on evolution, science, education, and free thought) reflect his teacher's devotion to the ideals of truth; Wilson both stimulated his critical spirit, and imbued him with his own deeply moral sense of the sanctity of a sincere and honest striving after truth — wheresoever it might lead one.[8]

LeSueur graduated with a B.A. taking honours in classics as a silver medallist in 1863. He read extensively and was influenced by the best minds of the Victorian age. By the time he left the university the most influential works of the nineteenth century had been published: Darwin's *Origin* and John Stuart Mill's *On Liberty* in 1859; the *Essays and Reviews* in 1860; Colenso's *The Pentateuch . . . Critically Examined* in 1862; while Matthew Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy* was to appear a few years later in 1869, followed by T. H. Huxley's *Lay Sermons* in 1870. LeSueur's firm grounding in the classics and his devotion to the purity of that tradition, were the foundation of his culture, yet did not prevent his deep appreciation of contemporary literary, philosophical, and scientific topics, nor the cultivation of the most intense critical inquiry in the spirit of Sainte-Beuve.

In 1867 he married Ann Jane Foster, the second daughter of James Foster, the head of a well-known Montreal family. They had two children, a son and a daughter; the son, Ernest Arthur, died in 1953, achieving distinction as a Canadian inventor and chemical engineer of some consequence. In 1888 LeSueur was appointed secretary of the post office department, a post he was to hold until his retirement from the service in 1902. As the deputy postmaster general was a political appointee, his was the highest nonpolitical post in that branch of the service; while in many branches of the government at this time, the deputy minister was a civil servant who had risen to the chief position and was independent of the political structure. He was later to be described in *Prominent Men of Canada* as one who fulfilled the

> onerous duties of that branch of the executive with intelligent industry and rare ability. Known and respected as a valued civil servant, Mr. LeSueur enjoys, however, the wider reputation of a literary man, though with the modesty of true worth he conceals his honours under the mantle of devotion to his official duties.[9]

There is something ironic in the spectacle of a man of LeSueur's erudition and awesome intellectual calibre, spending himself in the routine duties of the post office department, but in order to discharge his family responsibilities he felt the necessity of securing a steady income while pursuing his literary activities.

He held positions in many learned societies during his years in Ottawa: he was president of the Toronto University Club of Ottawa, and vice-president of the Canadian Society of Authors, while he was actively involved with the Ottawa Literary and Scientific Society, and the Progressive Society of Ottawa. He was elected a fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 1903, and held the position of presi-

dent in 1912. He had received an honorary LL.D. from Queen's University in 1900 in recognition of his reputation as an essayist, journalist, and thinker. During the war years he was vice-president of the controversial Peace and Arbitration Society, reflecting the feelings of French-Canadians and those in English Canada who sought an honourable end to the protracted horror of a conflict that had claimed the lives of so many native-born Canadians.

After retirement from the civil service, LeSueur continued to live with his family at their modest residence (478 Albert Street in Ottawa), but by 1912 the family had moved to 326 Waverly Street. We know (from a letter written in 1912 to a family friend by the name of Matteson) that he was involved in some sort of automobile accident around this time. It throws an interesting light on the rapidly expanding use of automobiles in the Canadian capital. "I got completely over that accident," he declared, "and am now pretty wary in my movements in the house and out of it, for I do not want another. For a man moving about town I think automobiles are the chief source of danger these days."[10] The consequences of that accident were to prove far more serious for him than he imagined, for he was to suffer pain and ill-health as a result of it until his death from a heart condition on September 23, 1917, at the age of seventy-seven.

A. G. Bailey has noted that William Dawson LeSueur "was typical of the best minds of that period.... So wide and varied were his interests that they almost epitomize the influences, British, European and American, then current in Canada."[11] One might add that Canadian intellectual thought almost wholly derived from those influences, until LeSueur brought to bear his creative original insight. His many years of journalistic experience had the effect of perfecting his readable and incisive style, for he was a regular contributor for over twenty years to the *Montreal Star*, *Montreal Gazette*, and the *Ottawa Citizen*. He was described by the *Citizen* as "a powerful writer, who is noted for the purity of his English and the clearness of his reasoning," while the *Montreal Star* made the observation that: "His writings are chiefly remarkable for purity of diction, clearness of statement, and a masterful vigour in argument."[12] His total literary and journalistic output was remarkable in view of his professional responsibilities as a civil servant. While several of his essays were reprinted in pamphlet form, his most noteworthy books were the highly successful biography of *Count Frontenac*, the writing of which was facilitated by his knowledge of French and his ability to peruse ancient records and documents in that language, and the controversial study of William Lyon Mackenzie which was not published during his lifetime.

Matthew Arnold's attention was drawn to an essay on Sainte-Beuve which LeSueur submitted to the *Westminster Review* when he was thirty-one.[13] It attracted international attention; thereafter he was a prolific writer on a whole host of topics that included poetry, education, science, religion, philosophy, and politics. Over the years he wrote essays and articles for the *Canadian Monthly and National Review*, *The Week*, *The University Magazine*, *Queen's Quarterly*, *The University of Toronto Magazine*, *North American Review*, *The Canadian Magazine*, *The Commonwealth*, *The Nation*, *Canadian Educational Monthly and School Chronicle*, and the influential New York periodical, *Popular Science Monthly*.

The Sainte-Beuve essay was based upon a paper he had given before the rather select membership of the Ottawa Literary and Scientific Society in 1870. The great French critic, universally recognized as

the first literary critic of the age with his famous articles in the Paris *Globe*, had died the previous year. Sainte-Beuve did not think the job of the critic was to be a judge so much as to be a systematic inquirer. Sainte-Beuve had declared the need to call constantly into question his judgments on a given subject, and recast his opinions if they appeared no longer valid. LeSueur drew attention to the fact that his method of criticism was not a pedantic system of rules and precedents but a living science. Sainte-Beuve rejected the concept of criticism being subjected to some external authority or some preconceived idea: it could only be sustained by systematic intellectual inquiry. For LeSueur, "One consequence of the effort which Sainte-Beuve made to pursue criticism in a scientific spirit, is that of all critics he is the least dogmatic." Sainte-Beuve exercised a profound influence upon LeSueur and was to inspire the Sage of Ottawa to follow in his footsteps. As A. B. McKillop explains it:

> LeSueur insisted throughout his life that the essence of civilization lay in an individual's ability to exercise, in a responsible fashion, a critical enquiry that asked nothing more than honesty and sincerity and sought nothing less than truth. His was a moral as well as an intellectual vision. The thought of William Dawson LeSueur, as set forth in scores of essays published over the last quarter of the nineteenth century, provides abundant evidence of a mind that knew few intellectual boundaries.[14]

Between 1871 and 1915 LeSueur wrote seventy-two articles on topics as diverse as "Bernardin de St. Pierre" and "Bigotry." In a wide range of articles on politics he articulated a fundamental critique of the institution of party politics in a democracy. As a Comtean Positivist he subscribed to an organic concept of society as a "whole" in which each individual is called upon to work for the common good, and assume responsibility for other individuals.[15] The organization and structure of party politics in a democracy — what he termed "partyism" — was antithetical to such a concept. In "Party Politics," which appeared in the *Canadian Monthly and National Review* in November 1872 under the pseudonym of "A Radical," he claimed that parties in themselves created antagonism and tension, with the party in office *proposing* and the party out of office *opposing*, rather than *both* simply opposing that which was demonstrably wrong. Both of course *profess* to do so — yet if they actually did so, there would be no particular reason for calling one faction an opposition, for both would be united in their resolve. The party system "puts a ban on the free exercise of a man's mind, and leads people to conceal or misrepresent their real opinions." The party was to be supported at all costs even if conscience and true feelings were violated in the process. The State was "set on fire with all kinds of false and factitious issues," for the sole purpose of partyism was the naked pursuit of power for its own sake. While all men can see the hollowness and bitterness of partyism which can "give shelter and asylum to all kinds of crimes," those who call for a truly national system based on honesty and disinterestedness in which men would seek to make their opinions prevail by legitimate means, are denounced as doctrinaire dreamers. Sensible, practical, realistic political men complacently laugh at such an outlandish idea, without bothering further to inquire into its value.

In his article on "Partisan Government," which was published in the *North American Review* in January 1881, LeSueur observed how a party in power will cheerfully sacrifice the very principles that caused its triumph at the hustings, rather than relinquish the privileges and emoluments of office. As for the daily press:

> Day after day, the same miserable evasions, the same varnishing over of unsightly facts, the same reiterances of unproved charges against opponents, the same taking for granted of things requiring proof, the same proving of things which nobody questions, the same hypocritical appeals to the good sense of electors whom every effort is being used to misinform and confuse, the same dreary unmeaning platitudes, in a word, the same utter abuse of the reasoning faculty and of the functions and privileges of a free press.

These articles are exciting to the modern reader who comes to them with a shock of delight and recognition, because they are so true and fearless, as fresh, pertinent and relevant for the 1980's as they were for the 1880's, not only for the alienated intellectual, but for the ordinary citizen, disgusted with the posturing of political hacks and the hypocrisy, cynical expediency, and ignobility of modern party politics.

LeSueur's ideal of democracy was enshrined in the Athenian model of Pericles; in its contemporary garb he subscribed to the dictum of de Tocqueville that democracy represented "the reign of the commonplace." He felt that when equality was divorced from the moral and intellectual achievements of the individual, and the desire for absolute freedom — "doing as one likes," to use Matthew Arnold's phrase — was divorced from a sense of social responsibility, the ultimate end was anarchy. The anarchy of modern politics resulted from the setting up of *progress* against *order*, by the lack of a standard of morality in public life which was duplicated in the private sphere. A *reasoned* subjection to law, rather than the factionalism and self-interest of party politics was the fundamental basis of civilization. Profound disgust with the corruption of party politics in Canada found LeSueur united with such disparate figures as the idealist Macphail, French-Canadian nationalists like Henri Bourassa, imperialists like Stephen Leacock, and loyalists like Colonel Dennison. All were profoundly disturbed by the idea that the narrow interests of the business lobby were paramount in Canadian life.[16]

In the developing conflict between science and religion initiated by the Darwinian revolution, LeSueur played a crucial role in Canada, finding himself at the centre of the evolutionary controversy. "The great intellectual issue of the present day," he declared, "however some may try to disguise it, is that between dogma on the one hand and the free spirit of scientific inquiry on the other."[17] As the leading Canadian controversialist of his time, he was a bête noire to the orthodox and an intellectual hero to their opponents. The battle raged in lecture halls and pulpits, in pamphlets, periodicals, and in the press. LeSueur was a model of rectitude: polite, restrained and utterly serious in debate, which he insisted be conducted on the highest intellectual plane. It must have taken an extraordinary amount of moral courage to have remained serene in the face of the personal attacks and virulent abuse, which was the common lot of the declared agnostic and free-thinker in Victorian Canada. In his confrontations with raging orthodoxy, this slight, gentle, dignified man inevitably invites comparison with T. H. Huxley, for like Huxley he disbelieved the crude supernatural aspects of religion and substituted for them an ethical morality. He saw the "religion" of the future being based upon science and culture, for culture was a continual quest for perfection in which the living of one's life became an art in itself.

John Travers Lewis, the Anglican archbishop of Ontario, made a bitter attack upon agnosticism in a lecture given in the St. George's Hall in Kingston in 1883, which was subsequently published in pamphlet form. LeSueur responded with a pamphlet entitled "A Defence of Mod-

ern Thought" which was later published in a shortened version in the *Popular Science Monthly* in April 1884. An editorial commenting on the confrontation in the *Ottawa Daily Citizen* observed of the archbishop: "No man is better qualified than he to defend the citadel of orthodoxy," but that in replying to Mr. LeSueur he would find "a literary foeman worthy of his steel."[18] In response to the archbishop, LeSueur affirmed his positivist social theories, and denied that they were materialistic or that modern thought was "agnostic" because it sought to rebuild society on sound scientific principles. As for the affixing of labels on those who do not believe in revealed religion, "Let their opponents coin names if they will: they whom the truth has made free feel that their creed is too wide for limitation."[19]

He sought a foundation for morality based on the intellectual life, for the purely intellectual life was essentially a moral life, where intellectual concern was also moral concern. In his essay, "Morality and Religion," LeSueur traced the existence and evolution of the moral impulse — natural morality — quite independent of religion or theology, affirming his conviction that an ethical influence could be assured by the critical scientific spirit. Like Matthew Arnold, he noted the absence of high idealism among large sections of the religious world: "What they wanted was not truth, but an easy, comfortable frame of mind . . . the idea of loyalty to truth has no recognition, and where, therefore, it is enough to condemn any opinion to say that it is an 'uncomfortable' one."[20]

While clearly standing for free thought, such thought was of no value to him unless it was also *responsible* thought. He demonstrated the universal character of all great thought in his essay, "Free Thought and Responsible Thought," in which he deplored the narrowness of those who held that the reason was independent of the moral nature; rather it was the moral nature that gave direction to reason.[21] This reflected his organic view of life and society and his belief in a cosmic moral order. In the essay "The Intellectual Life," he observed how vexed and irritated people became with those whose sole aim was to pursue truth, using right ends and right means. Most people seemed to set opinion above truth, rather than truth above opinion. They dread not the loss of truth "but the loss of persuasion: that truth *may* be on the other side they cannot help at times suspecting, but they are determined never to be brought face to face with the proof."[22]

Carl Berger has said LeSueur delighted in baiting ultraloyalists "as much as he enjoyed confuting the reactionary clergy with the latest revelations of Huxley and Spencer." LeSueur rejected an idea of loyalty which was nothing more than deference and fidelity of an inferior to a superior, having for its purpose the preservation of Canada's colonial status. While rejecting Canada's dependent position with respect to the mother country, he rejected even more strongly the idea of annexation by the United States.[23] He saw both as a threat to the cultural independence of French Canada, for pushed to excess the only result could be assimilation and the outright destruction of its culture; this anarchy could only be avoided by the realization of true Canadian independence and sovereignty.

The theological establishment mounted a fierce attack upon Herbert Spencer with the publication of his *Data of Ethics* in 1879. LeSueur defended him, writing an article called "Mr. Spencer and his Critics" for *Rose-Belford's Canadian Monthly* in April 1880. He sent a copy of his article to Spencer in London, who replied:

> You have not only given a very admirable exposition of certain of the cardinal principles contained in the work but have very

> effectively enforced them by arguments of your own. How much importance I attach to your essay you may judge from the fact that I am about to forward it to my friend Professor Yousmans, of New York with the suggestion that it might be with advantage reprinted in the *Popular Science Monthly*.[24]

This is indeed what happened; the article was republished as "A Vindication of Scientific Ethics" in the July issue of the influential American monthly. In answer to the objection that Spencer's system did away with the essential distinction between right and wrong, LeSueur remarked "I fail to see that under this mode of treatment the distinction between right and wrong is in danger of disappearing. Those possibly who have considered it a pious thing not to know why right is right or why wrong is wrong may resent being told that a *rationale* of the antagonism between the two has been discovered." The impression his article made was such that he was invited to join the *Popular Science Monthly* as a contributing editor; his association with it was to further enhance his international reputation as he wrote on topics such as: "Creation or Evolution?," "Evolution and the Destiny of Man," "Science and its Accusers," and "Mr. Goldwin Smith on 'The Data of Ethics.'" When Spencer was given his famous testimonial dinner at Delmonicos Restaurant in New York in 1882, LeSueur was invited by the organizers to represent Canada.

There can be no doubt the Sage of Ottawa was greatly influenced by Spencer, but while a conservative in the Burkean sense he was not a reactionary, and far too astute to fall into the trap of many of the followers of Darwin and Spencer in drawing conclusions that helped to erect the edifice of Social Darwinism. Darwin objected to natural selection being used to justify the more brutal aspects of nineteenth-century industrialism, while Spencer, in stressing mutual dependence, can be used as much to criticize laissez-faire society as to condone it. LeSueur's conservative-radicalism was wrongly seen as tory reaction in the Canada of Mackenzie King, but he was no tory and supported no party; as a positivist critic of "partyism" he was apolitical. He was a radical in his defence of intellectual freedom in the face of coercive orthodoxy and in claiming knowledge was gained through scientific method, rather than Christian metaphysics. While he was nominally a positivist with much that was empirical in his thought, we cannot classify LeSueur too rigidly, for there is also a component of idealism in his thought. We can see this in his idea of a university, in his moving and spirited defence of classical education, and in his Arnoldian conception of culture.

In one of his major philosophical essays, "Idealism in Life," he marks the secret contempt of the world for the idealist and the artist, for those who do not habitually *think* money, and make a fetish of mammon worship; "in most pursuits, money broadly speaking is the greatest criterion and measure of success." He suggests that truth can only be found when there is patience and disinterestedness. The mind was open to many choices; should it choose the easiest or the more difficult? Should appetite or reason prevail? "I call that man an idealist . . . who asks, regarding an action, not whether it is profitable, or safe, or calculated to win applause, but whether it is *the* action, which under the circumstances, *ought* to be performed." In the last analysis the question facing humanity was simple: "Shall we idealize life, or shall we vulgarize it? . . . if we choose the former we choose struggle, but the struggle will be for ever upward and our last days shall be our best."[25] In his devotion to the purity of moral truth his positivism "came within a hair's breadth of philosophic idealism" and in addition "owed

far more to the spirit of Christianity than his opponents cared to admit."[26]

After his highly successful biography of Frontenac for the "Makers of Canada" series — it remains one of the three volumes of the series that has been reprinted — LeSueur was invited by the publisher, George W. Morang, to make a second contribution: this time a biography of William Lyon Mackenzie. The fascinating story of the Sage of Ottawa's most controversial work is told by A. B. McKillop, thanks to whose persistent efforts the book was finally published in 1979, seventy-one years after it had been written and its publication blocked by Le Sueur's foes. The author's frustrating attempts to publish his work, McKillop suggests, "may constitute the most lamentable episode in the history of critical intellectual enquiry in Canada."[27]

When it became apparent he had written an objective rather than a partisan study, Mackenzie's heirs held that he had obtained improper access to a collection of family papers and materials in the custody of Mackenzie's son-in-law and first biographer, Charles Lindsey. They maintained he was unfair in his analysis of Mackenzie and too sympathetic to the "tory" point of view. Mackenzie King conspired to put pressure on Morang to reject the completed manuscript on these grounds. He went even further and refused to return the manuscript to Le Sueur, who was forced to sue for its recovery. The issue was simple despite the complex legal wrangling which dragged on in five court actions between 1908 and 1913; it involved historical interpretation. In writing the first critical and objective Canadian biography LeSueur had dared to question the unquestionable, by suggesting that, hitherto, historians had been so biased in favour of "reformers" and rebels like Mackenzie that they had unjustly denigrated and obscured the solid work of the Family Compact, and that the beginnings of a more realistic form of government had actually preceded the agitation and rebellion of Mackenzie. He realized he was involved in slaying sacred cows, in his effort to expose sacrosanct partisan myths, for in a letter to his friend John Lewis he acknowledged that he had presented the Family Compact in a new guise, and had removed many of the "repulsive features under which an enlightened posterity has loved to contemplate them. They were all, or nearly all, decent old-fashioned folk doing their duty in the several stations to which they had been called in an honest old-fashionad way — not entirely unsuited to the comparatively undeveloped situation in the country. . . ."[28] He frankly acknowledged he was treading on dangerous ground by taking away "a favourite object of detestation."

The Mackenzie heirs could not stomach a dispassionate, objective biography of their illustrious forebear; they demanded one that was laudatory, and capable of upholding the liberal "myth" of Mackenzie's single-handed creation of so-called responsible government. "Even the most enlightened survivors," Sir Harold Nicolson points out, "are inclined to entrust the biography of their dead chief, not to an outsider who may take too objective a view of his subject, but to some inexpert, but loyal, member of the family, who can be trusted to suppress all unfavourable truth."[29] Such was certainly the case with the Mackenzie decendants, for Charles Lindsey's official biography almost borders on adulation of its subject.

In old age LeSueur was ordered by the court to surrender his original manuscript, and the notes and materials he had taken while consulting the Lindsey-Mackenzie papers; an injunction was granted that prevented him from publishing a book based on those materials. Despite ill-health, his devotion to intellectual truth was such that he set out virtually to duplicate his laborious research, using

source material from other than the Lindsey-Mackenzie collection. This heartbreaking task took him to within a few years of his death. His mood of despondency can be glimpsed from a letter to his friend John Reade, a poet, essayist, and literary critic for the *Montreal Gazette*:

> But what troubles me more than the costs is that the judge should most unjustly, have taxed me with bad faith. It is still in my power to appeal . . . some excellent legal authorities . . . are confident that I would win an appeal. . . . It is mainly on account of my health and in view of the age I have reached that my family urge me to drop the matter. It has acted at times on my spirits, and in that way on my health to a rather serious extent.[30]

By defending the Family Compact in Upper Canada he had sought to maintain that the essential nature of history "is not affirmation but enquiry." The writing of history in Canada was dominated from the 1850's by the Whig interpretation of history, which saw great men as the prime movers of history — as exemplified in the writings of Carlyle. In a Canadian context it centred on Mackenzie's role in the struggle for so-called responsible government. LeSueur disproves the myth of intolerable social conditions before the rebellion, and shows that the Family Compact had genuine support from the electorate; indeed, without the unhappy combination of Mackenzie and Sir Francis Bond Head, it is doubtful the rebellion could have taken place. He shows that with or without the actions of the rebel agitator, there were political and economic forces at work in Great Britain, the United States, and Upper Canada, which would have eventually brought about a more developed form of government quite naturally, without recourse to revolt.

The nature and depth of LeSueur's inquiry was such as to reveal new facts and insights about his subject who emerges as a complex character. His painstaking research digs out the facts and lets Mackenzie's record speak for itself. The case against Mackenzie as a rabble-rousing demagogue, agitator, and traitor is based on his own public speeches, his own newspaper articles, and his own public and private letters. If he stands condemned, it is by virtue of his own words. LeSueur is at pains to show the less negative aspects of his personality, but in his final estimation of Mackenzie's character, he is perhaps more generous than the facts he has presented us would allow. Only those who are completely indifferent to the truth can fail to be repelled by Mackenzie's squalid sojourn in the United States and his disloyal slanders against his Queen. His hand was turned against his country and his home, and "He was willing to make it the theatre of civil war; he invoked the aid of foreigners to put down its government by force, and meantime to devastate its frontier. . . . he desired, and did what in him lay to bring about, a war between Great Britain and the United States."[31] It is surely ironic this same Mackenzie was subsequently pardoned and treated with magnanimity by the young Queen and by both provincial and imperial governments he had so eagerly vilified and slandered while a not entirely welcome guest of the Americans. Furthermore, he was to become the living embodiment of a myth he largely created and sustained himself, which "partyism" has been at pains to perpetuate without regard to the truth. LeSueur's achievement was to explode the simplistic mythology of the reform tradition, which had developed into sacrosanct legend and lingers with us still.

There is a footnote to the whole sad story of the Mackenzie affair. As president of the Royal Society in 1913, LeSueur was in attendance in his official capacity at the celebrations of the society. For the procession to table he was taken over to meet his partner who was a blind

man. He was very much amused to be introduced to Mr. John King, who was none other than the father of W. L. Mackenzie King. Despite his shabby and vindictive treatment at the hands of the Mackenzie clan which almost broke his kindly gentle spirit in those unhappy final years, LeSueur was without bitterness or rancour. In his own way he was a deeply spiritual man, with his sense of a cosmic force of moral truth at work in the universe. Despite poor health he returned to a study of history, translating some of the work of the great figures of French Canada, notably La Verendrye and Champlain. In his unpublished *A History of Canada from 1763*, he remarked: "In history we are led to see the connection between events, only in proportion as we do so, our studies, instead of merely burdening the memory, yield us the pleasure and profit which always accompany expanding intelligence."[32]

As we have seen, the Sage of Ottawa resolutely confronted the orthodoxies of his time: to what extent was his livelihood as a permanent civil servant threatened by the freedom with which he challenged them? We do know that in order to protect himself he felt impelled to employ the pseudonym "Laon" in some of his articles. The debate with G. M. Grant on the evangelists, Moody and Sankey, was conducted under this pseudonym, although by 1885 "Laon's" identity had been revealed to the general public.[33] Although the intellectual climate by the 1880's was slightly freer, we have evidence that prejudice died hard with respect to LeSueur. The Royal Society of Canada had been founded by Lord Lorne, the Governor General, in 1882. An interesting unsigned article, "Founding of the Royal Society of Canada," possibly by the editor, G. Mercer Adam, appeared in *Rose-Belford's Canadian Monthly* in 1882. It reads in part:

> We are aware that the appointments to membership in the society . . . [are] made on recommendation to Lord Lorne, who is not personally responsible for the omissions from the list. Mr. LeSueur's name, for instance, does not appear on the list, and if there is a man in Canada entitled to that honour, and who by achievement and reputation, both as a thinker and a writer, deserves to sit in the highest seat in a native Academy of letters, it is the able and learned gentleman we have named.

As we know, he was to wait twenty-one years before clerical prejudice was sufficiently overcome for him to be elected as a fellow of the Royal Society in 1903. However, his outstanding devotion to his public duties, the high regard with which he was held by his superiors in the civil service, his exemplary character and private life, and above all the loyalty and devotion of his friends, were to serve as a shield to protect him from the pettiness of those who were morally and intellectually his inferior.

Noting a forthcoming review by LeSueur in *The Week* (of Matthew Arnold's *Discourses in America*), their mutual friend Goldwin Smith, writing to Arnold, commended him as "the best critic Canada has. A St. Beuve she has not. . . ."[34] A. B. McKillop reminds us that he was the first to introduce the spirit of modern criticism into Canadian life. Why then we may ask has William Dawson LeSueur been so shamefully neglected by the Canadian historical-literary establishment? As a truly representative Canadian, native born, product of both cultures, he presents a far more recondite intellectual paradigm than the Anglo-Canadians. The depth and variety of his philosophic, ethical, political, scientific, and historical concerns, particularly his authorship of the revisionist Mackenzie biography, assure him the position of quintessential Canadian critic of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, a position moreover, fully recognized by his contemporaries. This position has been routinely

allocated to LeSueur's friend, English-born Goldwin Smith, ex-Regius Professor at Oxford, who moved to Canada in 1871, and who led the continentalist faction who ardently desired annexation by the United States.[35] As Wayne Roberts has pointed out in "Goldwin's Myth" (*Canadian Literature*, No. 83), the reason for this is perfectly clear. Smith's academic liberalism was tailor-made for the historians of the reform tradition. One might add that here was the essential *great* critic and intellectual, imported and ready-made for the standard Whig version of Canadian history.

What is the nature of the animus against LeSueur? It is both political, religious, and racial. The liberal establishment still looks with distaste on those who question the reform tradition. A. B. McKillop reminds us, in his editorial introduction, that even as late as 1945, LeSueur's son was told it would take another fifty years before the book could appear, when animosities had diminished. The long arm of Mackenzie King protecting his illustrious forebear and his sacred image reached down to our time. A. B. McKillop also points out how even the Canadian literary imagination, like Canadian political history, has been attributed to the development of some mysterious Canadian "maturity" which resulted from reform, as though there were no Canadian literature or literary spirit prior to the 1837 rebellion, or any political events worth chronicling in the Canada of Sir Francis Bond Head.

In his confrontation with the religious establishment in Victorian Canada, LeSueur trod upon a number of clerical toes, for which he was both feared and hated. As a formidable intellectual opponent he was impossible to ignore in life, while in death he merited that silence which has been meted out since time immemorial to those who persist in asking awkward, uncomfortable, and searching questions in their lonely pursuit of the truth. While the principles of intellectual freedom and liberty of conscience which LeSueur fought for are universally accepted in a post-Christian age, prejudice lingers in some quarters, for we may seek in vain for any recognition or discussion of the crucial role he played in improving the ethical and moral climate in Canada.

Finally, LeSueur has been ignored by the historical-literary establishment, in both French and English Canada, as much for his race as anything else. He has little appeal to the more anglophobe faction among the Quebecois, for he stands for nothing less than true reconciliation of the two founding races of our nation, while for English critics like George Woodcock, he is an intellectual of the "cold-hearted" kind, whatever that is. Both ignore the basis of his Canadianism: an affinity for *both* cultures. As a bicultural, bilingual, freethinking Canadian, with a negative attitude towards democracy and party politics, he does not slot easily into the all-encompassing rubric of the historical-literary establishment in English Canada. His obvious sympathy with Quebec and its attempt to preserve cultural independence has a timely relevance for us, but was suspect to many of his contemporaries, and to some of his modern critics. For his part he saw Quebec differing from the uniformity and greyness of life style existing in English-speaking Canada. Like Matthew Arnold he was excited and stimulated by the values and traditions of French Canada as they were organically linked to the great classical tradition of the past. Despite its ultramontane base, he felt the culture of Quebec, with its ancient traditions, could have a beneficial effect upon the undifferentiated sameness of the rest of the North American continent.[36]

In defending the Family Compact in Upper Canada and the Château Clique of the *ancien régime* in Lower Canada,

LeSueur used history as a tool in an attempt to accomplish his conservative goal of bringing together both races from which he derived his common heritage. His life and work were directed to the task of harmonizing and reconciling these two disparate elements which constituted the nation. As we have seen, he rejected both an outmoded British Loyalism and the traitorous continentalist faction which yearned for democratic levelling and subjection by the United States, but for the Sage of Ottawa, only genuine independence could preserve and guarantee the unique bicultural reality which constituted the nation. These are some of the reasons why LeSueur has been ignored by the Canadian establishment, and as a consequence, is barely remembered today by his indifferent countrymen. In view of this every student of Canadian intellectual history acknowledges the debt he owes to A. B. McKillop, whose original work and scholarship have done so much to illuminate this unjustly neglected thinker of our Canadian past.

In his study of Canadian history, LeSueur felt it lent itself, by its very nature, to misrepresentation and misinterpretation which resulted in "an imperfect blending . . . of certain of the constituent elements of the Canadian people."[37] A nation without a strong sense of its own history, along with the divisiveness of "partyism," was doomed to anarchy. In his unpublished manuscript, which is of timely significance for Canada today, LeSueur wrote: "Until a nation knows itself and has found itself, there is always the possibility of an outbreak of internal strife. With true self-knowledge comes the spirit of appeasement, of national cohesion founded on mutual comprehension leading to sympathy between class and class, and element and element in the population."[38] The lack of a cohesive, assertive unified history on the part of Canadians is a factor that has bedeviled us to the present day and which contributes greatly to our current malaise.

LeSueur felt the function of history was the uniting of divergent peoples, like the French and the English, in mutual respect and friendship, for all nations, like all individuals, had both faults and virtues; yet each owed a debt one to the other.[39] It was a view that reinforced his positivist concept of a mutually dependent society, which was the antithesis of the fragmented, anarchistic cult of selfish individualism, wherein total freedom, without mature responsibility, could lead only to enslavement and spiritual death. He sought to synthesize not only the French and English fact in Canada, but also the warring camps of science and religion, and idealism and empiricism, through the prism of his eclectic intellect.

F. W. Watt has remarked that to be a disciple of Auguste Comte in Victorian Canada was to be almost a unique phenomenon, but we cannot begin to understand LeSueur without reference to his positivism, not only in terms of positivism as a scientific outlook and variation of empirical ideology, but in terms also of the official positivist philosophy of Comte and his followers.[40] Despite his complex paradigm LeSueur was an intellectual who dwelt in the real world rather than in an ivory tower. As a first-rate polemicist he never shrank from disputation, but as we have seen pursued a distinguished career in Canadian letters for over forty years, engaging the orthodoxies of his time with dignity and courage. His incisive probing criticism and defence of intellectual inquiry in the face of dogmatism and reaction was to raise the level of the debate between science and religion immeasurably in Victorian Canada. His impartiality was such that even when science itself became too dogmatic, he did not hesitate to castigate it with the same verve he reserved for faulty theology.

LeSueur aspired to a moral and intel-

lectual ideal in his exercise of the critical faculty and his search for truth. He was concerned less with rigid moral formulations than with cultivating the force of moral vision. Devoted to the classics, to the spirit of Homer and Marcus Aurelius as much as to the modern spirit of Sainte-Beuve, he stressed the importance of the humanities in education, along with purely scientific and technical concerns. Notwithstanding his admirable and uncompromising Canadianism, he exemplified the cultural ideals of France, Europe, and the English-speaking world. The very tenacity with which he pursued the critical spirit and his single-minded devotion to the sanctity of truth represent his most enduring memorial. Culture for the Sage of Ottawa was a high and holy thing; it involved a spiritual journey, an odyssey of mind and spirit. His life was an eloquent testimony to that inward perfection he sought. He aspired to the good, the true, and the beautiful, but above all to the true, for he could find no refuge but in truth. His credo can be found in the words of the poet Arthur Hugh Clough:

> It fortifies my soul to know
> That, though I perish, truth is so;
> That, howsoe'er I stray and range,
> What'er I do, Thou dost not change.
> That, if I slip, thou dost not fall.

NOTES

[1] The most extensive biographical treatment of LeSueur thus far can be found in A. B. McKillop's introduction to *A Critical Spirit: The Thought of William Dawson LeSueur* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1977), and the section on LeSueur in his *A Disciplined Intelligence: Critical Inquiry and Canadian Thought in the Victorian Era* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's Univ. Press, 1979).

[2] I am deeply grateful to Miss Muriel Sissons and Mrs. Shelia K. George of Whitby, Ontario, surviving grand-nieces of William Dawson LeSueur, for sharing their recollections of "Uncle Will" with me, and for supplying new biographical material on the LeSueur and Dawson families, and for allowing me to examine unpublished letters and materials of LeSueur.

[3] W. D. LeSueur, "Education, Past and Present," *The University Monthly*, 11 (May 1911), 279-92.

[4] According to the librarian of the Law Society of Upper Canada, the Law School of Osgoode Hall was only renamed the Ontario Law School in 1873; therefore most standard sources are incorrect in calling it that when LeSueur attended in 1862.

[5] Daniel Wilson Diary, entry for November 25, 1853, Univ. of Toronto Archives. Most of the diary was destroyed after his death; what little has survived makes interesting reading. See n. 8.

[6] William Paley (1743-1805) inferred the existence of a deity, as throughout nature there is ample evidence of a plan of design. As we have no possibility of design without a designer he came forward with the so-called "argument from design."

[7] See my "First Canadian Critics of Darwin," *Queen's Quarterly*, 88, No. 1 (Spring 1981), 100-06.

[8] For evidence of Daniel Wilson's more open-minded attitude to intellectual enquiry, see his letter to the Anglican Bishop of Huron refusing the headship of a new Protestant university on the grounds that higher education must be free of ecclesiastical control. As quoted in H. H. Langton, *Sir Daniel Wilson: A Memoir* (Toronto: Thomas Nelson, 1929), pp. 88-89. Several entries in the diary are revealing, such as that for April 29, 1888: "Men may venture on sayings in the orthodox precincts of Oxford that dare not be whispered in the State University of Ontario." See also his Presidential Address, Convocation of the University of Toronto, October 16, 1885 (Univ. of Toronto Archives).

[9] G. Mercer Adam, ed., *Prominent Men of Canada* (Toronto: Canadian Biographical Pub. Co., 1892), pp. 199-200.

[10] Letter from W. D. LeSueur to Mr. Matteson, August 29, 1912. W. D. LeSueur Papers, Vol. I, Public Archives of Canada.

[11] A. G. Bailey, *Culture and Nationality* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1972), p. 66.

[12] H. J. Morgan, ed., *The Canadian Men and Women of the Time*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: William Briggs, 1912), p. 654.

[13] American edition of *Westminster Review*, 95 (April 1871), 208-27.

[14] A. B. McKillop, *A Critical Spirit*, p. xiv.

[15] The genesis of some of LeSueur's ideas can be found in Auguste Comte, *The System of Positive Polity*, 4 v. (London: Longmans, Green, 1875-77).

[16] Carl Berger, *The Sense of Power* (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1970), p. 199.

[17] W. D. LeSueur, "Ex-President Porter on Evolution," *Popular Science Monthly*, 29 (September 1886), 577.

[18] This editorial appeared on February 15, 1884, at the time of Matthew Arnold's visit to the capital. He lectured on "Numbers" at the Grand Opera House on February 16, with the Governor General Lord Lansdowne taking the chair.

[19] W. D. LeSueur, "A Defence of Modern Thought," *Popular Science Monthly*, 24 (April 1884), 781.

[20] W. D. LeSueur, "Morality and Religion," *Rose-Belford's Canadian Monthly and National Review*, 4 (February 1880), 166-71.

[21] W. D. LeSueur, "Free Thought and Responsible Thought," *Rose-Belford's Canadian Monthly and National Review*, 8 (June 1882), 614-20.

[22] W. D. LeSueur, "The Intellectual Life," *Canadian Monthly and National Review*, 7 (April 1875), 320-30.

[23] W. D. LeSueur, "The True Idea of Canadian Loyalty," *Rose-Belford's Canadian Monthly*, 8 (January 1882), 1-11.

[24] Letter from Herbert Spencer to W. D. LeSueur, April 2, 1880. W. D. LeSueur Papers, Vol. 1, PAC.

[25] W. D. LeSueur, "Idealism in Life," *Canadian Monthly and National Review*, 13 (April 1878), 414-20.

[26] A. B. McKillop, *A Disciplined Intelligence*, pp. 149, 169.

[27] A. B. McKillop, *A Critical Spirit*, p. 249. See W. D. LeSueur, *William Lyon Mackenzie: A Reinterpretation*, ed. and intro. by A. B. McKillop (Toronto: Macmillan, 1979).

[28] As quoted in A. B. McKillop, *A Critical Spirit*, pp. 281-82.

[29] Harold Nicolson, *The English Sense of Humour, and Other Essays* (London: Constable, 1956), p. 149.

[30] Letter from W. D. LeSueur to John Reade, March 8, 1913. Quoted in Percy Ghent, *John Reade and his Friends* (n.p., 1925), p. 48.

[31] W. D. LeSueur, *William Lyon Mackenzie: A Reinterpretation*, p. 307.

[32] W. D. LeSueur, "A History of Canada from 1763" (unpub. mss.), W. D. LeSueur Papers, Vol. II, PAC.

[33] See "Messrs. Moody and Sankey and Revivalism," by "Laon" (pseud.), *Canadian Monthly and National Review*, 7 (June 1875), 510-13.

[34] Letter from Goldwin Smith to Matthew Arnold, August 17, 1885, as quoted in Arnold Haultain, *A Selection from Goldwin Smith's Correspondence, 1846-1910* (Toronto: McClelland & Goodchild, n.d.), pp. 175-76.

[35] Comfortably ensconced in The Grange in Toronto, aping the social milieu of an English country gentleman, Goldwin Smith was hostile throughout his life to the concept of Canadianism, and can still be found writing and talking against Confederation as late as 1885 in a letter to Justice Langley of Halifax. Although he generously supported the periodical press in Toronto, his ideas were unpopular with the rank and file of loyal Canadians. Characteristically, after living in Canada most of his life, he bequeathed his considerable fortune to Cornell University upon his death in 1910.

[36] See B. B. Opala, "Matthew Arnold in Canada," unpub. M.A. thesis (McGill University, 1968), p. 114.

[37] W. D. LeSueur, "The Political Development of Canada, 1763-1841," p. 2 (unpub. mss.), W. D. LeSueur Papers, Vol. II, PAC.

[38] Ibid.

[39] See W. D. LeSueur, "History, Its Nature and Methods" (1912), his Presidential Address to the Royal Society of Canada. *Proceedings of the Royal Society of Canada*, 1913. App. A, LVII-LXXXIII.

[40] F. W. Watt, "Literature of Protest," in *Literary History of Canada*, ed. Carl F. Klinck et al. (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1965), p. 460.

CLIFFORD G. HOLLAND

"ST. URBAIN'S HORSEMAN"

THE NOVELIST OF THE HOLOCAUST faces the unique problem of reconstructing an order of experience the human mind never confronted before — the eruption of unprecedented explosive irrationality into history. He must create art out of the most extreme form of anti-art. The organizing and clarifying power of art is undermined by the irrational events he must explore. He must exercise his imagination on situations which, when experienced, transcended the imagination. For the survivor, who attempted to transcribe his experience into artistic form, the imagination with its capacity for bringing incidents into sharp focus, was potentially the most painful and self-destructive of all his faculties. The difficulty for the Holocaust novelist, according to Lawrence Langer, is "to devise an idiom and a style for the unspeakable at the heart of the Holocaust experience."[1] Alvarez suggests that the most convincing method of penetrating the inferno and recording the scope of mental and physical suffering is "the way in which dreams express anguish: by displacement, disguise, and indirection."[2] North American novelists, historically insulated from the agony of the experience, confronted with a challenge to the imagination, must approach the unknown territory of the European catastrophe with limited credentials. Rather than reconstructing the unspeakable suffering from within, through the eyes and minds of its victims, they generally employ indirection, through a form of witness, or historical reconstruction, or through a leap of fantasy charged with nightmare.

In his essay "The Holocaust and After," Mordecai Richler notes the influence of the Holocaust in the contemporary Jewish novel:

> the Holocaust is at the very core of the most serious Jewish writing since the war. It is what binds Malamud to Bellow, the one having made the moral gesture of *The Fixer* and the other continuing to write the novel of the survivor's reflections and self-justification. It is what connects both of them, through Isaac Bashevis Singer, who carries Warsaw, as it was, in his mind, to the documentary account of events, notably Raul Hilberg's *The Destruction of the European Jew* and ultimately, Elie Wiesel, our witness.[3]

Malamud, in *The Fixer*, uses analogy to explore the meaning of Jewish persecution through a fictionalized historical incident, the Beilis case in Czarist Russia. Bellow, in *Mr. Sammler's Planet*, uses recollection to reconstruct the Holocaust experience through his protagonist, a Jew who confronted and absorbed the major cataclysmic events. Wallant, in *The Pawnbroker*, reconstructs his protagonist's concentration camp experience through a succession of nightmare images. Wallant, like Richler, draws a grisly catalogue of atrocities from the vast accumulation of survivors' accounts to convey the immense suffering of those who endured the experience, images that have become the objective correlative for Auschwitz and a part of the contemporary collective consciousness.

Richler discusses the impact of the tragedy on his own emotional life and provides a clue to the novel's genesis in "The Holocaust and After":

> For some time now, I've been reading published memoirs about life in the Warsaw ghetto, the Paradies-ghetto of Terezin in Czechoslovakia, Treblinka, and the Janowska camp near Lvov, Poland. After all these years, the record is still terrifying, enraging, and impossible to digest more than a small chunk at a time.[4]

In this novel, Richler distills the experience into basic symbols — sharp impressions, actions, grotesque images — to evoke the atmosphere of the death camps. They recur as an obsessive element in the

protagonist's consciousness in the form of nightmare, hallucination, and personal fantasy. The "attic aerie" to which Jake withdraws intermittently, with its photographs and journals depicting the Nazi terror, is a symbol of his imagination haunted by the sense of intolerable violence. A series of overlapping images intermittently flash through the narrative like camera shots repeated and relocated in various contexts in the novel, images of human beings reduced to impotent victims. The repetition functions emotively to heighten the shock, and intellectually, through the sheer restatement, to induce a mood of brooding and thoughtful contemplation.

Richler's protagonist in *St. Urbain's Horseman*, a Canadian expatriate in London in the sixties, experiences the Holocaust vicariously through his encounter in Israel and Germany with authentic journals, photographs, and eyewitness accounts of brutalities. The novel penetrates and illuminates the dark areas of an inner life and the deepest perplexities of a moral world shaken by events of the Holocaust and its images. Richler establishes tension between the fictive situation and the inescapable horror of the historical past to suggest that the Holocaust has become a part of the modern Western consciousness. Through the novel, the familiar gives way to threatening intimations of disaster and Existential *angst*. Even when the protagonist is "cavorting with his family," he is caught up by anxieties, scrutinizing the surrounding woods for advancing Nazi troops, haunted by fears of sharks, submarines, fires, gas leaks. Authenticated by the historical images of death, the terror under the skin of the death camps explodes into his very living room in a concrete image of dehumanized extermination:

> In Jake's Jewish nightmare, they come into his house. The extermination officer seeking out the Jewish vermin. Ben is seized by the legs like a chicken and heaved out of the window, his brains spilling to the terrace. Molly, whose experience has led her to believe all adults gentle, is raised in the air not to be tossed and tickled, but to be flung against the brick fireplace. Sammy is dispatched with a pistol.[5]

To overcome the reader's inability to apprehend the terrifying magnitude of the ultimate in human suffering, to bridge the abyss between those who endured the anguish and those who did not, Richler brings the unimaginable new order of experience close to the reader's consciousness through the stark realism of his images and through duplicating the personal trauma of the Holocaust victims in a familiar setting. He explores the malaise arising from the knowledge that, in a savage world which can accommodate such atrocities, anything is possible.

To carry this burden to post-Holocaust anxiety, Richler uses as central figure, Jake Hersh, minor character in his earlier novel, *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*. Jake pursues the life of the imagination as television and film director. Through focus on Jake's inner life, Richler dramatizes a contemporary cultural phenomenon, the posture of self-indictment of the educated Western sensibility. Jake is both observer of life around him and observed from the reflective narrator's viewpoint through frequent introspective expository intrusions in the narrative.

Richler constructs his narrative around a single event, a three-day trial. He uses suspense centred on the trial as a structural device beginning in the novel's opening with the first two days of the trial and returning in the concluding book to the initial crisis to give an account of the trial's resolution. Realities are introduced in the guise of flashback as the narrator reaches back into Jake's childhood in the Jewish ghetto of Montreal, to the cultural establishment in Toronto, and to the expatriate film colony in London. In his

interplay among settings and in the fusion of art with reality as the artifacts of life from various cultural elements flow into the work, Richler provides a startling mixture. This disjunctive narrative is particularly suited to the portrayal of a mind disoriented by personal trauma.

The novel's opening prefigures the fictional pattern which deliberately violates normal time sequence. The reader is plunged directly into Jake's mind which darts from present to past to future unhampered by spatial or temporal orientation. He alternates between reality and compensating fantasies, between the Nazi nightmare and anxieties centred on illness and death. Random phrases in the opening book, initially mystifying, are later incorporated in their logical context and clarified.

Structurally, the novel resembles a musical composition written in four movements with multiple motifs that weave congruently through the entire work, each with its own mode and tone. Motifs recur at important junctures of the novel signalled by echoes of earlier phrases. Along with recurrent motifs are the shifts in focus. Often perspective opens into dramatic scenes which capture accents, intonations, and rhythms of speech. The expanding and contrasting points of view with their multiple perspectives on reality and their rapid shifts in focus impart vitality, a dynamic upbeat quality to the novel.

The unifying strand beneath the disparate elements and perspectives is the protagonist's search for his picaresque cousin Joey. The spiritual quest incorporates a circular structure with recurrent images in the novel's conclusion corresponding to the novel's opening, implying the cyclical rhythm of an eternal search. One motive behind this unique structure is to suggest the impact of Jake's voyage to Israel and Germany. The central experience, the reality of the nightmare, the eyewitness accounts of the atrocities, endure beyond his acquittal, casting their shadows across the future. Richler superimposes other experiences over his protagonist's inner life. The superimposition breeds confusion as well as multiple vision as two time senses, present and past, exist simultaneously.

Richler presents the central episode, his protagonist's journey to Germany, retrospectively as an obsessive memory in Jake's mind. In Germany, Jake's imagination is placed in the very centre of the Holocaust. There, by attending a trial of the war criminals, he experiences an immersion in the facts. Through the authentic recitation of the victims, he inherits their portion of pain. In his thoughts as Jake drifts from Jazzkeller to Jazzkeller, Richler dramatizes the response of the Jewish sensibility to the "concentrationary universe."

> Jerky accordion music reverberated in his ears, even on the black night streets. You're in Gehenna, Jake. The lowest regions. Shouldn't he raise fires? Shout at passerby? Murderers, murderers. But he continued to walk. One foot, then another.... Hatred was a discipline. He would have to train harder, that's all.

Elie Wiesel confesses to a similar inability to sustain hatred during his return to Germany seventeen years after his detention in a Nazi death camp:

> The Germans did their best to teach us, but we were poor pupils in the discipline of hate. Yet today even having been deserted by my hate during that fleeting visit to Germany, I cry out with all my heart against silence.[6]

Ingrid, a German *au pair* girl, the plaintiff who accuses Jake and his co-defendant, Harry Stein, of sexual assault, functions in the novel as a symbol of modern Germany. Her presence evokes Jake's Nazi-haunted nightmare. As Existential man, Jake recognizes that the logic of revenge presupposes a belief in the exis-

tence of order, harmony, and justice; he apprehends the dissonance between the fact of atrocity and the principle of justice. He becomes aware that revenge is incommensurate with the enormity of the Nazi crimes, nor is it possible, as Ingrid indicates, to reverse the contemporary German denial of complicity. Elie Wiesel, in his essay "Appointment with Hate," articulates the survivor's moral response to revenge:

> In Palestine, in Kibbutzim and around Palmach campfires, the idea of vengeance was violently argued — and rejected. The basic principle was that Nazi crimes must be opposed by human justice: hate must not be fought with hate. We had to show the executioners our moral superiority, prove to other people that Jews are incapable of deeds of hate.[7]

Richler dramatizes this conception in Jake's encounter with Ingrid.

In the novel, Jake confronts the dual aspect of violence embodied in Harry and Joey. Ingrid is the abstract focus for Harry's malice; in his role, she provides an occasion for Jake to test the viability of heroic revenge. Unlike Duddy Kravitz in the earlier novel who, uninhibited by social ritual, is moved by spontaneous impulses and desires, Jake, more cultured and socialized, is inhibited by civilization. As an outlet to unsocialized aggression, he resorts to fantasy and to a vicarious fascination with violence. Harry symbolizes the negative aspect of revenge. A victim of the indignity of poverty and exclusion, Harry becomes a ticking bomb of fury and resentment seeking a scapegoat. In Harry, appreciation of the arts, an intelligence quotient which places him among the intellectual élite, co-exist with anarchic, sadistic impulses brought to critical pitch in blackmail, bomb threats, attempted murder, obscene phone calls, brutality to women. Harry reinforces the bitter lesson Nazi Germany taught the world that culture and knowledge are no barriers against inhuman, barbaric behaviour, that extermination camps could function in a country with a tradition of culture, the arts, and famous institutions of learning.

In the concluding episode in the novel, through Jake's abortive suicide, Richler explores its validity in an age which has witnessed a catastrophic failure of human possibilities. In the *Myth of Sisyphus*, Camus explores the alternative of suicide as a viable response to an absurd universe. Jake's discovery that he cannot shoot himself is an occasion of self recognition: "I want to find out who I am, he had told Issy Hersh. It's taken years but now I know." Consciously, Jake, like Camus, rejects suicide as a morbid solipsistic response to a universe devoid of moral order. Like Camus, he affirms survival without recourse to self-delusion. Yet his rejection of illusion is equivocal. The trick revolver, which fascinates Jake, is Richler's metaphor for illusion and fantasy. Fantasy is an inextricable part of his life, persisting as a submerged theme beneath his other experiences. Unassimilated like the letters of personal anguish in William Carlos Williams's *Paterson*, they form a sharp contrast to the daily banalities and frustrations.

Against the dark theme, the historical madness of the Holocaust, Richler sets his satire of the Jewish middle-class community of Montreal, insulated from the realities of contemporary history by an obsolete set of rituals, traditions, and the middlebrow Jewish ethic. Richler provides a close-up through Jake's reflection after his father's funeral:

> Jake was incredulous, that after so many years and fevers, after Dachau, after Hiroshima, revolution, rockets in space, DNA, bestiality in the streets, assassinations in and out of season, there were still brides with shining faces who were married in white gowns, posing for the Star social pages with their prizes, pear shaped boys in evening clothes.

For Jake, this tranquil community has the

unreality of a nostalgic memory of the pre-Holocaust era when it was still possible to dream of peace, of God's benevolence at the centre of an ordered universe, and of the power of man's rationality and imagination to synthesize fragments of reality. Marooned on a sea of complacency, in search of self-definition against the existential void, Jake is an intellectual orphan. He is spiritual heir to the images of encroaching chaos and the burden of metaphysical *angst* which the Holocaust unleashed in the modern world. Jake's reflections recall Sartre's indictment of bourgeois complacency in *Nausea*. As witness to the naked contingency at the heart of daily life, convinced that the social, spiritual, and cultural structures are false and insecure, Roquentin, Sartre's protagonist, observes, with clairvoyant amazement, the meaninglessness of bourgeois society:

> They come out of their offices after their day's work, they look at the houses and squares with satisfaction, they think it is their city.... They make laws, they write popular novels, they are fools enough to have children. And all the time, great vague nature has slipped into the city, it has infiltrated everywhere in their house, in their office, in themselves.... I know that nature ...it has no laws.... What they take for constancy is only habit and it can change tomorrow.[8]

For Richler, Sartre's encroaching chaos is the historical irreversibility of the Holocaust, the landscape of total disaster which broods over contemporary life and which functions in the novel as a metaphorical focus of the immense circumference of public and private violence and human suffering, the climate of extremity in which any lunacy of oppression or sudden devastation has become credible.

Underlying the rambling account of the crisis in Jake's life and the extended introspective passages is the dilemma of the materially affluent Jew whose inner life is haunted by the moral and social legacy of the Holocaust which challenges the very foundation of his existence. He is convinced that retribution for his enjoyment is approaching and looks for it in persecution by "injustice collectors." His response to the threat posed by his trial for alleged sex offences is an interplay between fear and relief rising out of conflicting desires. On the one hand, he is afraid that his security will be undermined; on the other hand, he is relieved, because he would like to climb down from the penthouse of success. Unappeased by the cultural spokesmen who attempt to adjust with the coolness and smoothness of reason to the unbearable, he is burdened with the mentality of the apocalypse. Living in the shadow of his estranged father's impending death, he is haunted by the images of entropy, like the characters in Thomas Pynchon's novels. Fear of dissolution clings to him like an incubus. His father's death is both a revelation of man's precarious condition and an awakening to life. Returning from the funeral, he asks: "What of me and my house?" Against his father Issy Hersh's imminent death, Richler sets the birth of Jake's children, symbol of regeneration and the viability of personal happiness and home, a source of stability and value to counterbalance his protagonist's anxieties and the dark theme of the holocaust-haunted imagination — the concentration camp of the mind.

In this atmosphere of crisis, the basic question Richler asks in his novel is this: What can be the meaning of human life, human aspirations, and the destiny of the human species to post-Holocaust man? For Jake, the answer lies in the discovery that his private destiny is not to seek revenge, but to reaffirm his commitment to moral values infinitely fragile, yet viable: justice, conscience, honour, dignity, accountability. Beyond social and personal values, however, he is still troubled by the perplexing twentieth-century prob-

lem: the presence of pervading violence and the collapse of faith in the shadow of the Holocaust experience.

NOTES

1 Lawrence Langer, *The Holocaust and the Literary Imagination* (New Haven and London: Yale Univ. Press, 1975), p. xii.

2 A. Alvarez, "Literature of the Holocaust," in *Beyond All This Fiddle: Essays 1955-67* (New York: Random House, 1969), p. 26.

3 Mordecai Richler, "The Holocaust and After," in *Shovelling Trouble* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1972), p. 95.

4 "The Holocaust and After," p. 84.

5 Mordecai Richler, *St. Urbain's Horseman* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971).

6 Elie Wiesel, "Appointment with Hate," in *Legends of Our Time* (New York, Chicago, San Francisco: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1968), p. 142.

7 "Appointment with Hate," p. 140.

8 Jean Paul Sartre, *Nausea*, trans. Lloyd Alexander (New York: New Directions, 1964), p. 158.

EVA TAUBE

LANDSCAPES

CANADIAN PUBLISHERS HAVE a love affair with landscape which I suppose will not die as long as there remains a market for views of lonely lighthouses, distant parks, and waving grain. The latest batch of landscape books occasionally rises above such photographic clichés, but not often enough. *Canada*, subtitled "Pictures of a Great Land" (Macmillan/Gage, $39.95) at least portrays people in the landscape, but the glossy pictures are more the stuff of tourist brochures than art, and burdened by grandiloquent captions ("Man in the loneliness of the mountain world"). It is harder to explain why Lorraine Monk's *Canada with love* (McClelland & Stewart, $29.95) also dissatisfies, for the photographs (by amateurs and professionals alike) are far more skilled and far more skilfully reproduced. But the main problem may have something to do with the hype that surrounds the book. Billed as a Gift of Love at a time of acquiring a Constitution, it comes with capital-letter Eloquence; the photographs repeatedly focus on golden leaves and golden grain under a wide and blackening sky, and mist performs a nicely sentimentalizing role as (with love and a constitution) we Canadians drift eloquently into our century. Harold Town's "Prologue" eulogizes: "There are in Canada no superb urban centres to soundproof us from the call of the wild. We possess clean cities, pretty cities, even quaint cities. But we do not have a city that is greater than its myth, that dangles in the imagination of the world. . . . We . . . are similar to the Celts in our mythical determination to remain in flux, in movement with the wind. Though Canada has an immense government we have no sense of being governed. We believe in earth, trees, and sky. . . ." Well, nonsense. We have dirty cities, a violent crime every 15 seconds, myths that we have to live with in abundance (including that of an unlittered land), and scores of picture books that perpetuate the call of the wild by ignoring the lives of some 25 million residents.

Canada Coast to Coast (Oxford, $24.95), in 186 postcard plates, takes us on another cross-country tour of the familiar. Oxford's much more splendid regional series ($15.95 each manages to come closer to the character of each of its subjects; it's not just a question of having a smaller compass, but also one of trusting the metaphor that each photographer has in his mind's eye. Of the three most recent volumes in the series (Robert Taylor's *Manitoba*, which is all museum pieces and carvings, replete with a sense of frozen history; Peter Fowler's *Niagara*, which lovingly contrasts the uniforms of tourist carnivals with the workwear of daily routine; and Paul von Baich's *Northern Ontario*, with an anecdotal introduction by Al Purdy), my favourite is the last. It has its share of lonely roads and sparkling streams, but they're all punctuated by pictures of people — of worn shutters and telephone lines and vans and violins: the accoutrements of culture on the ragged edges of rock, reminders of a people's desire to communicate as well as to be alone. And *Canada: A Landscape Portrait*, ed. J. A. Kraulis (Hurtig, $27.50), grandly demonstrates what can be done in a book about landscape alone: this is a book about texture, colour, form, and therefore about the act and art of perceiving. The photographs (by several eyes) that Kraulis has evocatively arranged are alive with light, because the photographers themselves have been stirred as much by the pleasure of design as by the power of convention or the will to record.

Of several related books, one — *Spirit of Place* (Oxford, $14.95), by F. W. P. Bolger

et al. — follows the pattern of the Monk book (mist, sea, sky, with literary quotations accompanying), but as it is designed to portray *L. M. Montgomery*'s version of P.E.I., it proves more successful; the sentimentalizing is part of the subject, as is the joy Montgomery felt, more in nature, perhaps, than in the people she so often ironically observed. *On the Frontier*, ed. R. G. Blackader (Ministry of Supply & Services, $19.95; $23.95 outside Canada) is more historical and documentary, though in some ways no less lyrical. A collection of sepia and black-and-white photographs taken by the Geological Survey of Canada, from the 1860's to the 1960's, it records winter camps in the Peribonka, canoes at Moose Factory, Victorian middle-class fashions at a buffalo skin lodge in Manitoba, Franklin's sundial, a Peace River cooking scow, Indian villages in the 1870's, and Bell helicopters in the Arctic; it records, in other words, the people's presence on the land, tilling, harvesting, observing, recording, analyzing, using. Bryan Holme's *The Enchanted Garden* (Oxford, $20.95) is a strikingly beautiful record of a different tradition, of European and Asian *gardens* that gave delight because they were under human control. Perhaps the impulse to sentimentalize the wilderness in Canada is part of this same garden tradition, an endeavour to accommodate the wild by arranging it outside human experience; but the facts of technological adaptation in Canada tell a different story, one which many of the landscape stereotypes have yet to understand.

W.N.

ON THE VERGE

***** ULLI STELTZER, *Inuit: The North in Transition*. Douglas & McIntyre, $29.95. *Inuit* is a combination of the photographs which Ulli Steltzer took during many months wandering in the Canadian northland and of oral statements by the people — mostly Inuit — she persuaded to speak to her tape recorder. As a collection of photographs it is superb, convincing that black-and-white is a far better medium than colour photography for trapping the stark, cruel contrasts of the beauty of the North. As a document it is fascinating, since it emphasizes the extraordinary rapidity of northern changes. People speak who remember the days before even rifles were common in the Arctic, the days of that superbly adapted native culture which the Inuit developed to keep them alive through the Arctic winters. And the photographs show people who still live mainly by hunting, beside other Inuit who are TV technicians and mine surveyors. Not only the North as a geographical unit, but also the whole Inuit way of life is in acute transition; one senses from this book that the Inuit's adaptability, which allowed them to survive almost unendurable conditions in the past, will cope with the new conditions, however difficult the change. They neither speak nor look like a dying people.

G.W.

**** ARTHUR C. TWOMEY, *Needle to the North*, ed. William C. James. Oberon, $11.95. This book is a throwback to the Victorian days when great naturalists like Darwin and Huxley, Wallace and Bates, wrote absorbingly interesting narratives of their journeys in search of the unknown species of plants and animals that still crowded the barely known remotenesses of Africa, Asia, South America, Oceania. In 1938 Twomey and Kenneth Doutt set off on a winter journey into the interior of Ungava, seeking a hitherto unidentified freshwater seal. After much hard travelling, they found the animal. Later disputes in scientific circles as to whether the seal was a true subspecies are really irrelevant at this stage, since it is for its exceptional narrative vitality that *Needle to the North* emerges again into print after being virtually unnoticed when it was published in 1942; after being disregarded for forty years, Twomey's is the kind of prose, idiosyncratic yet highly serviceable and clear, that keeps well. *Needle* is one of the fine travel books about Canada, and by a Canadian.

G.W.

**** CLAUDE LEVI-STRAUSS, *The Way of the Masks*, trans. Sylvia Modelski. Douglas & McIntyre, $24.95. A lucid translation of *La Voie des masques*, which appeared in two parts in 1975 and 1979, this splendidly illustrated work provides an opportunity to perceive the connections between structural anthropology at work and critical theory about literature. Lévi-Strauss's first subject is the connection between mask and myth; probing the one (in particular the Swaihwé and Dzonokwa masks) leads him to explain their apparent opposition in the binary terms of complementarity. Extrapolating further for his second subject, he probes the significance of the masks and myths in encoding the "rules of avoidance" by which the West Coast cultures (he focuses on the Salish

and Kwakiutl) were preserved. Beyond the anthropological significance of these notes, the literary scholar can find examples of an instructive process of analyzing tales, and a substantial context for writers as disparate as Emily Carr and Anne Cameron.

W.N.

**** CHRISTOPHER MOORE, *Louisbourg Portraits: Life in an Eighteenth-Century Garrison Town.* Macmillan, $19.95. This is an attractive and informative book, and good popular history. Christopher Moore worked for some years as staff historian to the Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Park, and now he has turned his researches into an original series of portraits of the times. Taking the stories of five ordinary people who in some way attracted attention in the small garrison community, he uses their tribulations and their small triumphs to show what it was like to live in a military outpost on the North Atlantic nearly two and a half centuries ago. It is all presented with descriptive vividness, with empathy and irony, with that excellent alternation between participation and observation which goes to make the best kind of informal history.

G.W.

*** GLYNN BARRATT, *Russia in Pacific Waters: 1715-1825.* Univ. of British Columbia Press, $24.95. In a backhanded way, the history of Russian intervention in Alaska is very much part of our Canadian history. If the Russians had not moved into the seas north of the Queen Charlottes, the British presumably would have been able to acquire title over the whole of the North Pacific coast as a result of the Nootka Convention with Spain. And then the foolish situation would never have arisen, in which the Hudson's Bay Company turned down an opportunity to buy out the Russians, thus leaving Alaska open to American purchase and British Columbia liable to be caught, as it is, between American pincers. All this gives Russian-American history a special interest for us, which is largely satisfied by *Russia in Pacific Waters, 1715-1825,* in which Glynn Barratt tells for the first time (in English at least) the full story of Russian naval activity in the Pacific during the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. It is a well-written and researched book, presented with vividness and even humour. It forms part of the excellent Pacific Maritime Studies series published by the University of British Columbia Press.

G.W.

Among recent reference books are several of particular interest. From Dalhousie University's School of Library Service comes Charles T. Laugher's *Atlantic Province Authors of the Twentieth Century: A Bio-Bibliographical Checklist* (n.p.), which lists writers born in the area and writers who lived there long enough to publish work while there. Biographical information is reduced to dates, places, positions; "publication in magazines" is limited to listing magazine titles; play productions are listed, but academic and journalistic writing are only sometimes included (Malcolm Ross merits listing, but other academics are left out). That Bliss Carman is also listed gives some sense of the historical range. The two volumes of *A Reader's Guide to Canadian History* (Univ. of Toronto Press, $8.95 and $7.95), variously edited by D. A. Muise and by J. L. Granatstein and Paul Stevens, splendidly update and expand their earlier annotated guide to sources in Canadian history, *Canada Since 1867*; selective and evaluative, the 2 volumes are somewhat different in structure (vol. 1 ignores literature, for example, though vol. 2 acknowledges it), but are sound and instructive guides through a mass of material. *Scottish Literature in English and Scots*, ed. W. R. Aitken (Gale, $40.00), is of less direct use; its entry on John Galt lists some of the Canadian commentary that exists, but his account of Frederick Niven ignores all Canadian commentary and republication since 1962. Gilbert Forest's *Petit Dictionnaire héritage des Citations* (Héritage, n.p.) lists 2,500 quotations from 437 Québécois novels, by keyword (*mensonge, prêtre, discipline, terre,* etc.); a sourcebook to poets and political writers would now be a most welcome companion volume. *Guide culturel du Québec,* ed. Lise Gauvin and Laurent Mailhot (Boréal Express, n.p.) is still another kind of compendium, full of useful addresses (of magazines, publishers, archives, stores, galleries, institutions, all with annotations about their special interests and functions); mini-guides to Quebec writers (both English and French, with a notable omission of Ralph Gustafson), artists, architects, and others; developments in music, theatre, political culture, and more. It's a teacher's guide to finding things, and a cultural browser's whole-earth catalogue. *Revue d'histoire littéraire du Québec et du Canada français* (2. 1980-81; Bellarmin, $20.00) variously surveys the problems of writing literary history and probes semiological and other solutions, then goes on to provide an extensive bibliography of Jacques Ferron's writings and a list of literary criticism published on francophone

Canadian writers in 1976-1977. *Livres et auteurs 1981* (Laval, $15) critically and bibliographically reviews Quebec publications, and commentary on Quebec writings, for that year. And the massive and highly valuable *Dictionnaire des oeuvres littéraires du Québec*, ed. M. Lemire et al. (Fides, n.p.), has reached its third volume, which covers the period 1940-1959. As with the earlier volumes, there are substantial entries for book titles, groups, and the cultural framework, together with illustrations and reference guides.

Among recent books for children are three sprightly novels from Clarke Irwin: Eric Wilson's adventure, *Disneyland Hostage* ($10.95); Florence McNeil's account of a girl growing into her own, with the help of others, called *Miss P. and Me* ($10.95); and J. R. Jones's thriller, *Danger on the River* ($12.95). From Fides comes Roger Gicquel's *Si Tous les enfants du monde . . .*, with a preface by Félix Leclerc; hopeful, eager for international understanding, the book collects the aspirations and observations of children around the world. In letters, poems, colourful drawings and cartoons, they speak of peace and possibility, of beauty and nature, and of a machine that gobbles snackfood, garbage, loud noise, and violence, and transforms all into hearts, harebells, and birdsong. Also from Fides is a series of four graded anthologies, edited by Yoland Grisé; in order (from primary text to secondary school text) called *Parli Parlo Parlons*, *Les Yeux en fête*, *Des Mots pour se connaître*, and *Pour se faire un nom*, their distinguishing feature is that they draw their examples entirely from franco-ontarian authors.

Recent paperback reprints include André Major's *L'épidemie* and Jacques Benoit's *Les Princes* (both Stanké, n.p.); Peter Such's *Riverrun* (Clarke Irwin, $5.95); four of Roderick Haig-Brown's best books on fishing, *Fisherman's Fall*, *Fisherman's Winter*, and *Return to the River* (Collins, $10.95 each), and *A Primer of Fly Fishing* (Douglas & McIntyre, $8.95); three novels by Félix Leclerc, *Andante*, *Adagio*, and *Allegro* (Fides, n.p.); and (to celebrate the centenary of the author's birth) Maurice Constantin-Weyer's *Un Sourire dans la tempête* (Les Editions des Plaines, n.p.). *Earth-Light* (General, $9.95) is a splendid paperback collection of Gwendolyn MacEwen's selected poems from 1963 to 1982; *Brick*, no. 16 ($2.00), is a special collection of new translations of stories and essays by Jacques Ferron; George Myers's *An Introduction to Modern Times* (Lunchroom Press, $6.00) includes an essay on the prose of Opal Nations; and a new journal of poetry, fiction, interviews, and commentary has begun, called *The Canadian Literary Review*, available from P.O. Box 278, 1678 Kingston Road, Scarborough, Ont. MIN 1S6. The first issue (with some remarkable poetry, and lively comments on or by writers as diverse as Leacock, Kosinski, and Layton) promises much to come. Another new journal, *Arts Manitoba* (88 Frances Street, Winnipeg, Man. R3A 1B3), substantially illustrated, is devoted to all the arts; vol. 1, no. 1, contains a commentary on Ivan Eyre, plus interviews, book reviews, and notes on photography and theatre.

W.N.

One of the most attractive features of Léandre Bergeron's French-English *The Québécois Dictionary* (Lorimer, $17.95) is the introduction: a witty, polemical account of the political origins and earthy character of the "real language of Quebec." To the notion that only "Parisian" is correct, Bergeron has a ready reply: "Parisian" is not so much a foreign accent as a deliberate political act, an imposition of a "laundered language" on Quebec by the "reactionary French religious order" that structured its educational system during the nineteenth century. The 6,000 words and expressions in the dictionary itself — condensed from the 1980 *Dictionnaire de la langue québécoise* — provide a clear guide to the local vocabulary, including a set of graphic and often highly instructive demonstrations of Québécois inventiveness with epithet and metaphor.

More sedate is the Canadian version of Paul Bonnevie's *Dictionnaire CEC jeunesse*, prepared under the direction of Jean Darbelnet (Centre Educatif et Culturel, n.p.). A version of the 1980 Hachette dictionary for children, it is generally clear and frequently illustrated. Despite the "Canadianization" ("orignal" is there, as is a labelled illustration of a baseball game), one looks in vain for some of the ordinary Quebec vocabulary one finds in Bergeron: "char," for example (for "car," rather than "chariot"), or "debarquer" (for "get out of a car" rather than "sail away"). It's a useful young student's guide, but for quality of definition (both of verbal meaning and of colour plates) it's not a patch on the junior Larousse.

Other books of particular interest in schools will be Peter Baltensperger's *Souldust and Pearls* (Belsten Publishing, $7.95), an anthology of Ontario student poetry from 1981 (elementary rhymes, defensive wit, young people's wishes, adolescent dreams), together with poems by their teachers. Many appear to stem from set themes ("If I were an..."), but are none the less able for that; there are young *writers* here, with naive artifice but also a lot of sensitive aspiration. The book is yet another reminder that a society does well to place its faith in its people and to devote its resources to encouraging the abilities of the young. *The Novice and the Newcomer,* ed. George Bancroft (Third Eye, n.p.) is a set of University of Toronto student teachers' views about multiculturalism, with the editor's prefatory comments on the discriminating force of accent, colour, and cultural assumption when people move outside the norms to which their childhood or upbringing has accustomed them. The student papers tell anecdotally of immigrant experience, adaptation, the difficulties of avoiding some form of *faux pas* with a multiethnic group. They call for teacher sensitivity, more than ever. Bancroft himself offers some rather more concrete suggestions for teachers. But at the heart of the whole book lies a tension about the nature of multiculturalism itself: about whether the new ethnicity has made historical norms intrinsically embarrassing *in Canada* and whether a culture can sustain the surface illogicality of multiple *norms* comprehensibly co-existing.

Several of the Indian portraits of Nicholas de Grandmaison, the post-czarist émigré to Canada who was drawn to the life and features of the Plains Indian, are splendidly reproduced from the Bank of Montreal Collection as *History in Their Blood* (Douglas & McIntyre, $40.00). An able text by Hugh Dempsey anecdotally records the surface eccentricities of the painter's life; it traces, too, his quest for a romantic history which he found in Sarcee and Piegan faces and idealized in the aristocratic notion of a pure-blood line of inheritance. (Wilfrid Eggleston's *Homestead on the Range* — Borealis, n.p. — tells another account of the Piegan country; an autobiographical account of the opening up of Palliser's Triangle around 1910, it is full of tales remembered and details of farm and school life, to which local historians will be appropriately attracted.)

Québec, The Fortified City: From the 17th to the 19th Century, by André Charbonneau et al. (Parks Canada, $45.00), is a history of quite another kind. With a solid, clear text and the support of many tables, graphs, and integrated data, the book is a detailed account of the defence structure planned and shaped for the city, and will be fascinating for military buffs and historians of the changing regimes in Quebec. For more casual enquirers, the extraordinary wealth of visual material may take precedence; of maps, plans, photographs, drawings, prints, and paintings, there is an abundance. The book makes apparent the garrison centre that guarded both the city itself and the kingdom of trade and of souls that was its province.

W.N.

LAST PAGE

THERE IS A HEALTHY INDUSTRY in collections and reprints, motivated sometimes by sheer commercial enterprise, sometimes by cultural nationalism (whether in Canada or abroad), sometimes by new fashions, a new focus of ideas, or a re-evaluation of what matters. The new status accorded the short story in England, for example, has led to a host of reprints of stories by Buchan and Stevenson and Kipling, and to the Collected Works of writers like V. S. Pritchett and Elizabeth Bowen — for reasons of quality first of all and Bowen for feminist reasons as well. For feminism is one of the chief efforts in our day to re-evaluate accepted sets of standards. Virago Press, for example, has done a fine job of searching the past for works-that-matter by women, many of whom have been neglected because they were women, or because they were colonial, or both (there are many ways that people in authority define "peripheral"). The rediscovery of Miles Franklin's *My Brilliant Career* (a bad novel but a good film and a sharp revelation of the pressures that inhibited women's independence at the turn of the century) tells us much about the decision to republish. There has to be an audience — but in Franklin's case it is an audience for issues and history rather than for a consummate art.

The film and the issues have nonetheless aroused an interest, and now there comes from the University of Queensland Press ($14.95) a previously unpublished Franklin novel called *On Dearborn Street.* Set in Chicago and narrated by a mechanical male of substantial means, it tells of an infatuation with Rapture and Woman — treating comically (but not denigrating) the serious issues of *My Brilliant Career.* When World War I breaks out, so does a lot more attitudinizing ("I decided to

take up aviation seriously and go to France"), but so do women then break free from a lot of stereotypical roles. The central female figure, named Sybyl, decides she does not need to marry ("'I should be glad to marry... if things were different.' 'What things?' 'Men.'"); but when she changes her mind, as soon as The Hero admits to his foolishness, one begins to wonder about Franklin's intent. There are moments when her satiric impulse interrupts her narrative and when her aspirations for social order in a time of war will settle conflict more neatly than a contemporary reader might find credible.

No such orderliness surrounds another reprint, Jean Devanny's *The Butcher Shop* (Auckland/Oxford, $9.95), which was banned when it first appeared in New Zealand in 1926 because it was considered "disgusting and communistic." Even Devanny questioned the literary merit of her novel; it had "sincerity," though, and it had a thesis, which the narrative directly serves. In the argument, women (the first agriculturalists) were subverted by monogamous marriage, by which they became men's property, like sheep; made neurotic by this recognition, they turned from sex and their husbands turned to prostitutes — a situation that only socialism would resolve, by establishing an equality of mind and body ("a society of reasonable men and women unsoiled by filthy conventions"). Flamboyant in its rhetoric, graphic in its details of sheep-farming, precise in its property metaphors, and violent in its conclusion, it bears rereading. The reprint comes, moreover, with an instructive account of the history of its suppression.

I am less persuaded by the reprint of Helen Shaw's *The Gypsies* (Victoria/Price Milburn, $4.50), a set of mannered stories mostly from the 1950's. Beside them Dan Davin's *Selected Stories* (Price Milburn, $12.95) seem still fresh, and Ian Wedde's "Dick Seddon's Great Dive," reprinted in *The Shirt Factory* (Price Milburn, $8.95), positively experimental. Wedde's colloquial idiom addresses itself directly to the disorder of the day; male strutting in these stories hides male insecurity. So it does in Davin's much earlier sketches of a Catholic boyhood and a New Zealander's warfare, but with less apparent consciousness. Clearly the childhood sketches are meant to explore the roots of violence in a pastoral culture, but in the war stories and other later tales the characters seem not to know how much they strut and how much their language betrays them. In the brilliant stories of the late Maurice Duggan (*Collected Stories*, Oxford, $25.00), however, language is all. Catholic boyhood, troubled marriage, plain loneliness, resourceful age, sheer sexuality: the themes are familiar — but in Duggan's hands the language flowers; it becomes a mode of living as well as a mode of telling — variously plain, ornate, outrageously clever, and deliberately contrived — matched to its purpose, celebrating the joys of living and the dilemmas to which people who live joyfully are led.

W.N

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