

NEW BOOKS

NEWFOUNDLAND TAPESTRY. By Michael Harrington. The Kaleidoscope Press, Dallas, Texas.

Newfoundland is an island with a history. It may be Saint Brendan called here on that voyage of his that passed into legend. Perhaps the Northmen put into port on its coast, or Cabot made landing in 1497. Certain it is that, in August, 1497 Sir Humphrey Gilbert and his fleet dropped anchor in the secure harbor of Saint John's and claimed the island for England by virtue of a Royal Charter.

As the eastmost bulwark of the Americas, Newfoundland battles the tumultuous shock of North Atlantic storms. Her people, though they are a kindly folk, have the hardihood to wrest their living from the turbulent sea. All this—the pride of patriotism, the sternness of the land and the adventurous courage of her sons—lives in the pages of Michael Harrington's book.

This is the authentic voice of Newfoundland, strong, mellow impetuous, flowing as free as a hurrying river to the sea. A passage from the title poem will give a just idea of its quality:

Thus to strangers who come as friends
This hacked and sea-rent fortress, by oceans long beleaguered,
This Newfoundland, this brine-steeped, foam-bearded Island,
Offers its largesse and its proud delights.

A fisher-race, hard-born, hard-reared, hard-dying most,
Our greeting's not a glib and unctuous speech;
Let our land speak for us and our pine-dark,
Jealous sea, and our fog-laced maiden ships;
"A Health to you, Strangers," this warm toast we drink,
In the fresh, clean wine of our hopes and our children's hopes.

SISTER MAURA

THE PORTABLE DANTE: Edited, with an Introduction by Paolo Milano. The Viking Press, New York, Macmillan, Canada. Pp. 662. \$2.50.

This omnibus, containing the complete translation of *The Divine Comedy* and of *La Vita Nuova*, with extracts from the *Rhymes* and the Latin Prose Works, is an attempt to offer Dante to the thousands. In spite of the admirable, scholarly translation of the *Divine Comedy* on which Laurence Binyon worked for twenty years, the verse, in triple rhyme, gains little in grace over a prose translation and loses much in clarity and dignity; the result is quaint rather than vigorous English verse.

Except that Latin phrases have been turned into English, *La Vita Nuova* stands as Rossetti translated it. Rossetti's style, though

precious, is far more readable than Binyon's. The editor further acknowledges Rossetti's pleasant translations of Dante's *Rhymes*; nine out of the eleven poems chosen are given in the Rossetti translation. It is difficult to understand the choice of the other two poems. *A Garland Have I Seen* is attributed to C. Lyell, though it is not the translation published by Lyell in his *Canzoniere of Dante Alighieri* (1835), and no indication is made of the source used. The second poem, *To Forsee Donati*, translated by C. H. Grandgent neither reproduces the original nor conveys the tone of its boisterous humour.

The notes, on the value of which the interest and usefulness of this book might rest, vary greatly in quality. Those to the *Divine Comedy* are excellent; conciseness and scholarship are both evident, though neither Binyon nor Grandgent seems to have added much, beyond brevity, to Tozer's excellent Commentary. Borrowings from such writers as Aristotle, Aquinas, Ovid, or Vergil are not emphasized, but are incorporated as far as necessary for the general reader. References to the Bible, political information and cross-references to the *Divine Comedy* are indicated much more fully. Notes on the *Vita Nuova* are poor. It is unfortunate that the editor could find so little to add to this work. Even more striking are the debilitated notes to the *De Vulgari Eloquentia* and the *De Monarchia*; in spite of the excellent notes in the *Temple Classics* edition, from which the extracts are taken, those given here are wholly inadequate.

The book is really "portable," and it is clearly printed. In spite of the Binyon translations being new, the worth of the volume is scarcely guaranteed by that alone. Its use lies in its compactness and its discreet and sufficient translations. It is not sufficiently original to win converts to Dante, nor fresh enough to give added pleasures to Dante lovers.

The editor provides an Introduction, a skeleton "life" of Dante, and a brief Bibliographical note.

Alice Hamilton

YOUTH AND JOBS IN CANADA. Ryerson Press. 110 pp. \$1.50.

These volumes are two of the half dozen reports of the Canadian Youth Commission being published by the Ryerson Press. In addition to these reports, the Youth Commission has already presented its findings in the fields of education, religion, health and recreation.

The Canadian Youth Commission had its birth late in 1944. For over a year thereafter, thousands of young people and hundreds of "adult experts" studied and discussed, held conferences and meetings, submitted briefs and conducted interviews. The result of all this activity is published in these reports, which make fascinating reading and, for some years to come, will serve a very useful purpose in providing factual information and important ideas to those interested in the special problems and needs of Youth. One is perhaps disappointed at not finding more revolutionary or inflammable findings stemming from a youth-dominated enterprise such as this; for beyond an insistent demand for more government planning and legisla-

tion in the fields of health, recreation, education and employment, there is little here that would not have sounded natural from the lips of many highly respected statesmen in Great Britain, the United States or Canada.

The most interesting section of *Youth and Jobs in Canada* is the generous portion given to summarizing the actual statements of the young people from Halifax to Vancouver, who laboured on this subject. Nearly all of these people were under twenty-four years of age in 1945, yet the motivation of all their thinking seems to have been the depression of the early 30's. In view of the fact that few of them would have been out of grade school in the depression, and that 1945 was a year of more than full employment, it is remarkable how the spectre of another depression hangs over their minds. They are especially aware of what a tragic impact a depression has on the lives of the young inexperienced workers who reach the labour market in such a time. One, therefore, has much respect for their conclusions bearing on "how to avoid a depression." Some of the best ideas presented relate to delaying youth's entrance into the labour market, apprenticeship training plans, on-the-job training while at school, and vocational guidance and training. Special problems, such as those of young people working in agriculture, are also considered.

Youth Organization in Canada is a reference manual that provides for the first time in Canada accurate and comprehensive information concerning the many youth-serving agencies that exist in this country. There are about a hundred of these, and this book gives the salient facts concerning their membership, organization, purpose activities, publications, international relationships, staff and finances. It is an invaluable handbook that will never be far from the desk of anyone working in the Youth field.

LES VIPOND

ALASKA BECKONS. By Marius Barbeau. Macmillans. Pp. 343.
\$5.50.

This is a fascinating book both for the text and the beautiful illustrations, which are by Arthur Price, who has caught admirably the spirit of Pacific Indian art. Mr. Barbeau, seemingly moved to write by the Japanese attempt to invade Alaska, has brought together the fruits of years of study of the Indians of the West Coast and the North-West Territories. We have Indian legends, discussions of Indian art, personal recollections of his various field trips, all bound together by Mr. Barbeau's discussion of the origins of the North American Indians. The author believes that the Indians are of Asiatic origin, but that we need not postulate one or two main waves of migration or one common racial origin; rather, Northern Asia has always been a refuge for peoples from all parts of the continent, and these exiles, when hard pressed or moved by the spirit of adventure, crossed by way of the Aleutians or Bering Strait into the land of promise. Once across, they had three routes: down the coast, along the salmon rivers west of the Rockies, and up the Yukon; this

last route forked, one part leading across the Mackenzie and ultimately to Hudson Bay, and the other south across the plains as far as the Mexican boundary. In working out his theory Mr. Barbeau analyzes the Indian legends in order to find the kernels of fact imbedded therein. Much of the book could be discussed competently only by a fellow anthropologist, but the lay reader will find the book an unfailing source of information and delight. Once again, Mr. Barbeau has increased our great debt to him for his researches into Canadian anthropology. Is it not time that some of our English-speaking Canadian universities honored this indefatigable student?

B. M.

AS THEY LIKED IT. By Alfred Harbage. Macmillans. Pp. 238. \$2.75.

Professor Harbage has written a very fresh, entertaining and stimulating book on Shakespeare. The *they* of the title refers to the Elizabethan audience; leaving aside all recondite theorizing about the nature of drama, Prof. Harbage tries to approach Shakespeare from the angle of the ordinary theatre-goer of the 16th century, who was probably very much like the average theatre-goer of the 20th century. A dramatist must give his audience pleasurable excitement and pleasurable reassurance. To a moral stimulus the audience will give a moral response. Shakespeare's characters are foci of quickened moral interest. There is another side to the problem, however, an audience likes morality, but not moralizing. Shakespeare, a normal man in his view of life and mankind, was ideally suited to please theatre-goers of all times. With infinite wit and good humor, Professor Harbage presents his thesis very convincingly. He is not concerned in this book with Shakespeare as the supreme poet and master of language or with philosophizing on the nature of life; perhaps he ignores too easily the fact that Shakespeare wrote plays that were too long for ordinary performance, a fact that suggests that Shakespeare was an artist expressing something within him. On the other hand, Professor Harbage never suggests that Shakespeare was a mere mercenary entertainer. Within its limits *As They Liked It* is a first-rate book on Shakespeare, and should win converts to Shakespeare where more esoteric books fail.

B. M.

SELECTED POEMS OF ARCHIBALD LAMPMAN. Chosen, with a Memoir by D. C. Scott. Ryerson Press. Pp. 176. \$3.00.

The appearance of a new edition of selected poems by Archibald Lampman is further evidence of the high estimate in which he is held by discerning readers of Canadian poetry. This volume follows closely the collection published in 1925 entitled *Lyrics of Earth*, except that a few poems have been omitted and others added from *At the Long Sault*, a volume of previously unpublished poems selected and

edited by Professor E. K. Brown. In the present attractive volume, which includes a memoir of the poet by Dr. Duncan Campbell Scott, the poems are arranged in three groups, *Lyrics of Earth*, representative of the best of Lampman's nature poetry, the Sonnets, and *Poems and Ballads*, among which is to be found a number of those written later in life when his pessimistic reflections on society are revealed. It is evident that Lampman was repelled by the false and shallow standards and the unprincipled opportunism of the bourgeois environment in which he was compelled to pass his days. It is, however, questionable whether, had he lived longer, further work of this kind would have hastened the revolt against the expansive optimism of the 19th century, effected in Canada by the Montreal poets and others of the 1920's. Nevertheless, his indictments of certain tendencies of society have helped to win him the understanding and respect of the poets of the disillusionment and of the radical ideologies of the last quarter century.

However, it is primarily his keenness of observation, the fidelity with which he records the forms and moods of nature, particularly in the landscape of eastern Ontario, and his ability to enter into the spirit of a scene, grasp its essence and express it in meet terms, that have won the admiration of A. J. M. Smith and E. K. Brown in their recent judgments on his work. The reappraisal has involved the deflation of the reputations of Bliss Carman and Charles G. D. Roberts, but it is unlikely that the last word has yet been written on the subject. Nevertheless, although Carman rose to heights of poetic utterance that Lampman never equalled, it remains true that the general level of the latter's competence is higher than that of any of his Canadian contemporaries. His technical inventions were negligible, but he mastered the forms bequeathed by the great craftsmen of English poetry and made them his own. His thought flows with such a movement of inevitability in the sonnet as to seem the spontaneous contriver of that form. The debt to Keats is more evident in his early poems of nature, notably in the verse forms that he employs; and the conception of nature as an inexhaustible source to which man may go, as to a constant mistress, for solace and renewal, was shared with the English romantic poets.

It is in these poems also that one of Lampman's alleged limitations is to be seen. They nearly always open with an objective depiction of those particular forms and sensory data to which he responded with a fine sensitivity, but he found such delight in certain of them that he sometimes narrowed the content unduly, although he could be equally alive to a wider variety of sensations and could make poems from them if he felt like doing so. The narrow range of his poems of the early period; to which attention has been drawn by students of Lampman, appears to have been the result of deliberate choice, and thus a self-imposed limitation. On the other hand, what might be regarded as a limitation in the light of a recent trend may be noted. So many exciting changes have taken place in poetry since Lampman's day that the modern reader, in returning to his work, might well be moved to speculate on the question of progress in the arts, which

many students of culture, such as Alfred Weber, have denied. Although a general progress may not be discernible, it may be possible to discover advances to higher levels of integration within specific areas, accomplished perhaps by the sacrifice of desirable qualities. The tendency in Lampman and other poets of his time was to evoke scenes and then to state the character of the reactions to them afterwards, the evocation and the statement being disparate procedures. Lampman does not present his experience as an integer in which his own ego, the external world of sensory stimuli, and the moral implications are completely fused. The convergence of several developments, each the product of a subsequent moment of history, has issued in the kind of subjective imagism with integral didactic overtones that one finds in Dylan Thomas and, in Canada, in some of the work of the Premier Group of Montreal. By contrast with modern poetry of this type, and with reference to this particular quality of multiple vision, much of the poetry of the Group of '61, to which Lampman belonged, seems elementary and less instantaneous. Nevertheless, it was because he spoke with an authentic voice, even though in a manner that is now less current, that his poems will continue to give pleasure and that the publication of the present volume is to be commended.

A. G. BAILEY

PREFACE TO PHILOSOPHY. By William Ernest Hocking, Bland Blanchard, Charles William Hendel, John Herman Randall. Macmillans. Pp. 504.

Four experts have joined to make this book, which, with a companion *Book of Readings*, is to "help men and women solve their individual problems" and to "open up interesting and practical ideas to individuals who are too modest to claim to be philosophers." Arranged under the heads, "What is Man?" "Personal Ethics," "Social and Political Philosophy," "The Meaning of Religion for Man," and "A World View" the scheme is admirable; and although the editor apologizes for a possible lack of completeness there can be little complaint on that score. To mark out some prominent areas of the philosophic field is all such a study can reasonably attempt. Each section is, in fact, comprehensive and the ground in each is conscientiously covered.

The suggestion that the immediate purpose of the book is practical may be misleading. Philosophy and philosophies of life are not identical, and efforts to prove the immediate "usefulness" of the former are mostly unedifying. "If we knew that the passage of a bill through Congress would increase the sum of human happiness, we could pretty safely urge its passage, even if we knew nothing whatever about it but this one fact," writes Professor Blanchard in justification of Ideal Utilitarianism in ethics. It might (conceivably) increase the sum of human happiness if all who were prepared to act on Professor Blanchard's principles were to be decapitated under this bill. But does this approach do much to commend the study of ethics to the practical man?



"Here's the New Look — longer than ever."

"Here's a Sweet Cap — better than ever."

SWEET CAPORAL CIGARETTES

"The purest form in which tobacco can be smoked"

Another danger is that these two volumes will be used less as a Preface (which suggests that the real spade-work of study has still to follow) than as a compendium of All-You-Need-To-Be-Up-In-Philosophy. The *Textbook* gives no guide to further reading except the selections in the *Book of Readings*. And it has the fault of other textbooks in being often both dogmatic and inconclusive. There are no adequate efforts to show that there may be lines of thought quite other than those the writers favour and that real and unsettled conflicts exist between different philosophic systems. Too much effort is expended in trying to see the truth in all theories, and the resulting eclecticism is not always convincing. This is peculiarly obvious in the case of religion. Professor Randall, though he sees difficulties, ends with the hope that each of the great religions will complement the others, while developing its own special insights. But religion, even less than philosophy, can be truly served by the fiction that we can make the best of all worlds and serve many masters. A typical sentence of Professor Hocking reads, "Cooperation with the eternal leaves the human will its widest freedom to create novelty, to shape ways which were never in any mind, even in the mind of God." Enlightened Theism with an anthropocentric focus thus appears as a formula to offend nobody. So, while throughout the book Christianity is treated with respect, not to say deference, the result will satisfy neither Christian nor skeptic. It is not really helpful to present the enquirer with the least common multiple of opinions. Equally, the effort to put everything popularly does not necessarily make a book easy to read.

It may be, as F. H. Bradley (who is not mentioned in this book) contended, that only a few can benefit from a study of metaphysics. It may be that the philosopher and the ordinary man can meet on the common conviction that anything worth while can be achieved only by stubborn and fearless challenging of the facts of experience. But it is unlikely that this book will convince every man that the speculative reason is an effective weapon in this task. It catches too many minnows and starts too few hares.

KENNETH HAMILTON