

## Book Reviews

*The Prophet Outcast: Trotsky, 1929-1940.* By ISAAC DEUTSCHER. Oxford: Oxford University Press [Toronto: Oxford University Press], 1963. Pp. 543. \$10.00.

On the 31st of January, 1933, after hearing of the suicide of her daughter, Zina, in France, Alexandra Trotsky—the first, abandoned wife of the great revolutionary—wrote to the man who had been her husband: “Our children were doomed. I do not believe in life any longer. I do not believe that [our grandchildren] will grow up. All the time I am expecting some new disaster. . . . It has been difficult for me to write and mail this letter. Excuse my cruelty towards you, but you too should know everything about our kith and kin.”

There is no evidence that Trotsky ever answered this letter. There was, indeed, little that he could say either to comfort his former wife or to defend himself. Alexandra’s fears were only too well founded. All Trotsky’s grandchildren remaining in the Soviet Union disappeared without a trace; Trotsky’s son, Sergei, after spending years in one of Stalin’s concentration camps, was executed by the G.P.U.; and his other son, Lyova, died in France, possibly murdered by Stalin’s secret agents.

Those who have read the two previous volumes of Isaac Deutscher’s trilogy on Trotsky (*The Prophet Armed, 1879-1921* and *The Prophet Unarmed, 1921-1929*; see *Dalhousie Review*, Vol. 40, no. 4, Winter 1960-61, pp. 245-247) will need no urging to read the final portion of this impressive biography. In *The Prophet Outcast*, Deutscher maintains the standard of careful scholarship, detailed research, and extraordinarily good writing that marked his previous books. Moreover, probably no other writer in English has Deutscher’s profound knowledge of the Russian revolutionary movement of this century and of the personalities who made its tragic and momentous history.

Deutscher views Trotsky’s life from 1929, when he was exiled from Russia, until 1940, when he was murdered in Mexico, as the concluding act of a great classical tragedy, and he gives the impression that here, as in the Greek dramas, the cause of the tragedy is to be found in Fate rather than in character. Or—since Fate is a concept not much regarded by Marxists—perhaps it would be more accurate to say that Deutscher tends to hold the impersonal forces of “history” responsible. However, contrary to the custom of the Greek dramatists, who on

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the whole were content to let their tragic heroes be carried off by the Furies before the final curtain, Deutscher attempts to prove that Trotsky's apparent failure contained "victory in defeat."

Of the defeat itself there would seem to be no reason for doubt. It was not only that Trotsky's family was persecuted and slain, that Trotsky himself was ultimately murdered, or that his supporters within the Soviet Union were ruthlessly wiped out in the Great Purges. These consequences of Trotsky's opposition to Stalin, after all, were no more than the results of a brutal *force majeure*. Posterity might well reverse such a verdict, adopting the persecuted exile's beliefs almost out of compassion for him.

But Trotsky's defeat seems to have been more complete than any amount of persecution could have made it. The European working class crumbled helplessly before Hitler's aggression, in spite of all Trotsky's warnings; his Fourth International fizzled out ignominiously; his followers fell away, rejecting not only Trotskyism but also Marxism itself; and the shadows closed in around a system of thought which, in spite of its innumerable valid insights, its grand sweep, and its strong emotional appeal, was already proving itself outdated and of doubtful application.

Trotsky himself remained a staunch Marxist to the end. Yet with the outbreak of the Second World War he declared that

if the war were not to lead to proletarian revolution in the West, then the place of decaying capitalism would indeed be taken not by socialism, but by a new bureaucratic and totalitarian system of exploitation. And if the working classes of the West were to seize power, but then prove incapable of holding it and surrender it to a privileged bureaucracy, as the Russian workers had done, then it would indeed be necessary to acknowledge that the hopes which Marxism placed in the proletariat had been false. In that case the rise of Stalinism in Russia would appear in a new light: "We would be compelled to acknowledge that . . . [Stalinism] was rooted not in the backwardness of the country and not in the imperialist environment, but in the congenital incapacity of the proletariat to become a ruling class. Then it would be necessary to establish in retrospect that . . . the present U.S.S.R. was the precursor of a new and universal system of exploitation. . . . However onerous . . . this perspective may be, if the world proletariat should actually prove incapable of accomplishing its mission . . . nothing else would remain but to recognize openly that the socialist programme, based on the internal contradictions of capitalist society, had petered out as a Utopia.

The murderer's pick-axe saved Trotsky from having to make any such heart-wrenching decision. And indeed, there is no real likelihood that, if Trotsky had lived, he would have actually accepted his own conclusion. To have done so would have been to deny a lifetime of revolutionary endeavour, to repudiate ideals for which hundreds of thousands had died, either as martyrs or as victims, and to reject, without the satisfaction of positive achievement or the hope of consolation, the basic tenets of the Marxist faith. Younger, less committed, more open-minded men have

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indeed done this without destroying themselves. But Trotsky, who had sent the Red Guards to capture the Winter Palace, who had fought and won the Civil War, who had for so long waged an active and lonely opposition to Stalinism—could Trotsky have ever brought himself to confess at the end that Marx, the master, was wrong? It seems unlikely.

In any case, Trotsky's biographer cannot come to such a conclusion. He finds it necessary to believe—in the face of much evidence—that “The West, in which a Marxism debased by Mother Russia into Stalinism inspired disgust and fear, will surely respond in quite a different manner to a Marxism cleansed of barbarous accretions; in that Marxism it will have to acknowledge at last its own creation and its own vision of man's destiny.”

Whatever reservations may be made concerning this expression of faith and whatever undertones of sorrow and doubt may be detected even in its brave affirmation, students of the twentieth century will turn again and again to Deutscher's trilogy on Trotsky, for it is a classic among biographies.

*Canadian Army Historical Section, Ottawa*

D. J. GOODSPEED

*The Flint and the Flame: The Artistry of Charles Dickens.* By EARLE DAVIS.  
Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1963. Pp. 333. \$6.95.

Mr. Davis tells us at the beginning that “there has long been a gnawing need for an intense study of the artistry and craftsmanship of Dickens.” Earlier techniques of criticism having been too narrow and specialized, Davis proposes an eclectic approach, a “detailed study of the whole artistic record” of Dickens' novels. The idea seems commendable, but Davis' first chapter reveals some strange notions about the nature and importance of previous criticism. He divides criticism of Dickens into three kinds: romantic [Chestertonian], humanitarian, and aesthetic. Trifling foreign studies such as Wierstra's on Smollett and Dickens get attention but not Dibelius and Cazamian. The well-known impact of Wilson and Orwell in the forties is dwelt upon, but not Humphry House's excellent and scholarly work that appeared at the same time. Surely one of the most important developments in Dickens scholarship since the forties has been the superb textual and editorial work done by such critics as Fielding, Monod, Butt, and Tillotson, but except for the passing remark that after Wilson's inspiration some critics “began to look at the manuscripts and the notes Dickens had left and which Forster had preserved,” they are ignored. It is not surprising in view of this that the rare and expensive Nonesuch Edition should be referred to as “this great standard edition of the Dickens novels.” There is no great standard edition of the Dickens novels. Although considerable foreshortening may be excusable in an introductory survey of major trends in Dickens scholarship, Davis, in the very act of describing them, comes very close

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to disqualifying himself. When he comes to Dickens' works, his interest seems to lie mainly in examining sources. Much of the background material is interesting and fresh, and individual comparisons are well drawn; however, as Davis widens his scope to deal with such subjects as melodrama, sentimentality, gothicism, and economic theory, his acuity lessens. His interpretation of Dickens in the end, rather than being the massive, eclectic, and balanced study that the reader hoped for, turns out to be disappointingly uneven, a wavering between detailed commentary on sources and thematic discussion that verges on synopsis. The brilliance of previous critics may have been accomplished with a loss in breadth, but Davis' attempted eclecticism is hardly compensation.

University of Alberta

R. D. McMASTER

*Legalism.* By JUDITH N. SHKLAR. Cambridge: Harvard University Press [Toronto: Saunders of Toronto], 1964. Pp. xiv, 246. \$5.95.

Legalism, as Mrs. Shklar conceives it, is an ideology with two rival strains—natural law and legal positivism—both of which she finds too rigidly committed to a morality of rules and too highly formalized to consort entirely usefully with the urgencies of real politics. She dislikes the attempts of legalism at nice definitions. When she herself introduces "ideology", one of her key terms, she repudiates more ambitious definitions in favour of saying "It refers simply to political preferences" (p. 4). She seems to have something more complex in mind later, however, when she asserts "Legalism as an ideology is too inflexible to recognize the enormous potentialities of legalism as a creative policy, but exhausts itself in intoning traditional pieties and principles which are incapable of realization. This is, of course, the perennial character of ideologies" (p. 112). Surely it is not the perennial character of political preferences, which come in all kinds and sizes, some of them apposite and effective!

The passage just quoted indicates some confusion about whether legalism is undesirable or not *per se*. In fact, Mrs. Shklar goes on immediately to acclaim "the greatness of legalism as an ethos when it expresses itself in the characteristic institutions of the law." The latter part of the book, on "Law and Politics", in which the author discusses the war crimes trials (both Nuremberg and Tokyo) and the Moscow trials (as political trials of a more obvious sort), does seem to favour legalism as much as the first half of the book, on "Law and Morals", disfavours it. But little consistency is to be expected of a writer capable of anything so logically ridiculous as the statement (p. 55) "The corollary of 'Law is a sanctioned norm' is, 'Morality is anything not so sanctioned'."

Mrs. Shklar did a good deal of diverse reading in preparation for the book; she has chosen a number of interesting, important, and significantly connected sub-

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jects to treat in it; she even contrives, partly by intuition, partly perhaps by chance, to say some sensible things about these subjects. She rightly holds, for example, that not all the varieties of moral consciousness can happily fit into a morality of rules. Her book as a whole, however, is a display of misguided energy.

Dalhousie University

DAVID BRAYBROOKE

### Books In Brief

*On the Accuracy of Economic Observations.* By OSKAR MORGENSTERN. 2nd Ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press [Toronto: Saunders of Toronto], 1963. Pp. xiv, 322. \$6.50.

This book, rewritten throughout and greatly enlarged, renews the sceptical barrage directed upon commonplace economic statistics by the author's original monograph of 1950. The first part of the book reviews the various types of error encountered, and their sources. The author argues that little progress can be made in testing refined mathematical theories in economics until, as consumers of statistics, economists become much more insistent on a firmer product and until, conceding that some infirmities must remain, they become as habituated to taking errors into account in their theorizing as physicists have become. The second part of the book assesses the quality of available statistics on various different subjects, and finds on subject after subject that the quality is disturbingly low, given the weight placed upon the quantities offered both in testing theories and in making policy. For example, national income statistics, even in the best-informed countries, are subject to considerable errors relevant to policy; and there are surprisingly large discrepancies between Canada and the United States (as between other pairs of countries) in their estimates of trade with each other.

*Self-Knowledge and Self-Identity.* By SYDNEY SHOEMAKER. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press [Toronto: Thomas Allen Ltd.], 1963. Pp. 264. \$5.25.

Directed at some of the most fascinating topics in the whole repertory of philosophy, and carried out in lucid English prose, with a minimum of technical terms and *recherché* distinctions, this book may win a place among the fairly considerable number of contemporary works of philosophical analysis that are accessible to the general reading public. The general reader will perhaps have to muster an unusual amount of patience with intricate argumentation; but he will be rewarded by a display of considerable ingenuity on the part of the author. Shoemaker particularly shines in setting forth the considerations which have led previous philosophers to

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adopt one position or another on his leading questions, which are (roughly) whether selves are substances or logical constructions and whether the criteria for personal identity are bodily or mental. Shoemaker's own position (roughly) is that the former question is an unanswerable tangle of confusions, while the answer to the latter question must be that both bodily and mental criteria are used, though people do not need to use criteria of either kind (and hence need no criteria at all) for judgments of their own identity. The fascination of the book, for those with philosophical tastes, lies in the argumentation by which Shoemaker reaches and defines this position. Philosophical readers are likely to think that some arguments are inconclusive and others fallacious; but even the most captious readers will be thankful for the unusually spirited exercise that they offer.

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*Canadian Writers—Ecrivains Canadiens: A Biographical Dictionary—Un dictionnaire biographique.* Ed. GUY SYLVESTRE, BRANDON CONRON, and CARL F. KLINCK. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1964. Pp. xvi, 163. \$8.50.

This useful reference book is intended to carry on some of the basic principles of the late Dr. Lorne Pierce's *An Outline of Canadian Literature (French and English)*, which was first published in 1927. Like *An Outline*, it places "French and English writers side by side" and selects authors by a "radical sifting . . . through a coarse screen." Unlike the earlier book, it takes the form of an alphabetically arranged handbook. Each entry consists of pertinent biographical and bibliographical information. The editors have also made interpretative and critical comments here and there, particularly in the longer articles on major writers; occasionally critical summary is given nearly as much space as the recital of bare facts, as in the article on F. P. Grove (pp. 58-59).

The choice of authors generally makes good sense. Sometimes, however, one wonders whether the metaphor of the sifting screen suits the editors' practice. For example, if all Canadian authors had been subjected impartially to the screening process, how did Norman Duncan and F. W. Wallace drop through while Frank Parker Day did not? Of course, the metaphor is not exactly applicable to a process depending on human judgment; the editors, unlike the operator of a gravel pit, had to make qualitative judgments. Disagreement with their decisions is apt to arise only when one is looking in vain for information about some of the many minor or sub-literary writers that Canada has produced in surprising abundance. The important people are all given their due, and many others are briefly represented. A chronological table and a full index of titles enhance the value of the book.

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*English Literature.* By DAVID DAICHES. The Princeton Studies of Humanistic Scholarship in America. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall [Toronto: Prentice-Hall of Canada], 1964. Pp. xv, 174. \$5.75.

This is a lively survey of modern American scholarship in English literature. It should be required reading for the graduate student of literature, and perhaps many university lecturers in English would also do well to read it. Not that Mr. Daiches has a monopoly on wisdom or is uniquely able to assess with objectivity the strengths and weaknesses of the scholarship he surveys. He has, however, the great advantage of knowing intimately both the English and the American academic worlds; and, what is perhaps even more crucial, he speaks out firmly in denunciation of the serious weaknesses and excesses in American literary scholarship—extreme ingenuity and even absurdity in “irresponsible hunting for meanings and symbols”, “concentration on the trivial at the expense of the significant”, a good deal of “solomn nonsense” in “explication run mad”, and so on. His comparisons of American and British approaches to literature are germane and by no means one-sided, however, for Mr. Daiches appreciates fully the magnificent achievements of American scholarship and is not backward in explaining how much farther Americans have gone in many scholarly fields than their British counterparts. Above all, this book is not a catalogue or a bibliography, but a discussion based on one man’s knowledge, perception, and judgment.

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*Joseph Howe: Voice of Nova Scotia.* Ed. J. MURRAY BECK. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1964. The Carleton Library No. 20. Pp. 214. \$2.65.

A sixteen-page essay by the editor introduces this excellent little collection of extracts from Howe’s letters, speeches, and newspaper editorials. Brief interpolations throughout fill in background and elucidate Howe’s life and thought. Professor Beck has organized the selections topically but has maintained a chronological order. The section titles indicate his arrangement: “Mild Tory to Reforming Assemblyman”, “The Struggle for Responsible Government”, “The Limited Domestic Sphere (1848-63)”, and “Wider Horizons”.

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*The Discarded Image: An Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Literature.* By C. S. LEWIS. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press [Toronto: Macmillan of Canada], 1964. Pp. x, 232. \$3.85.

The late C. S. Lewis’s life-long interest in the “history of ideas” side of literary study is exemplified in this book. His purpose was to supply a “map” which

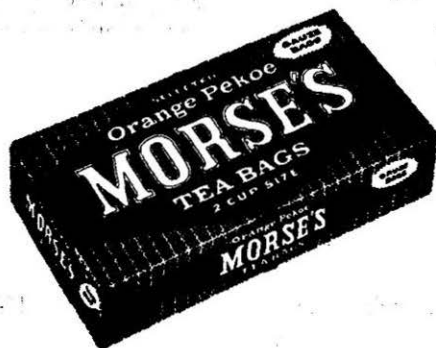
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would help readers of medieval and Renaissance English literature to understand the strange terrain and to prevent them from mis-applying twentieth-century conceptions in their reading of a literature that is erected upon very different premises and images. While there is much here that is well-known to the serious student of the periods discussed, not all is well-trodden ground. Lewis's theme is the definition and explanation of the medieval "Model"—the "medieval synthesis itself, the whole organization of their theology, science, and history into a single, complex, harmonious mental Model of the Universe" which was not entirely abandoned until the end of the seventeenth century. Besides the main body of the discussion, Lewis's consideration of the significance of this "construction of the imagination", its relation to what we commonly call "truth", and the "truth" of all human "Models", including our own of the present century, is well worth reading. C. S. Lewis was a scholar whose study of the past enabled him to see the present in wise perspective.

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*Montcalm and Wolfe.* By FRANCIS PARKMAN. Foreword by ESMOND WRIGHT. Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1964. Pp. xx, 719. \$11.00.

This stout book is a reprinting of the last volume of Parkman's *France and England in North America*. It was first published in 1884 and was considered by Parkman to be his most important work. Despite the marked biases that colour Parkman's account of his subject (the editor justly remarks that "like all history, Parkman's is as much a product of his own day and of his Boston as of the world he describes), *Montcalm and Wolfe* is a classic of historical writing. Esmond Wright calls it "the greatest historical work ever to come out of America."

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*Milton in Early America.* By GEORGE F. SENSABAUGH. Princeton: Princeton University Press [Toronto: Saunders of Toronto], 1964. Pp. xii, 320. \$6.75.

This is an account of American interest in Milton from Colonial days through the first twenty-five years of the Republic. The author's preface sums up his findings: "As centres of culture increased on the seaboard, interest in his name and works eventually so grew that by the end of the eighteenth century he had become a nationally recognized figure, admired by citizens of the entire American community. His singular powers to instruct and inspire so appealed to Americans searching for ideals and values that for a few decades they deferred to what he had said . . . for a while in American history Milton moved through the whole cultural community, impressing not only poets but also editors and free-lancers, statesmen and lawyers, schoolmasters and doctors and clerics." The ways in which Milton shaped American attitudes are explored in detail.

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*Toronto During the French Régime: A History of the Toronto Region from Brulé to Simcoe, 1615-1793.* By PERCY J. ROBINSON. Illustrated by C. W. JEFFERYS. 2nd edition. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965. Pp. xx, 274. \$5.95 cloth; \$2.25 paper.

The original edition of this book appeared in 1933. This new printing adds several notes made by the author after the publication of the first edition and summaries of three articles he had written between 1938 and 1953, the year of his death. For the average reader of Canadian history, knowledge of Toronto's past begins with Simcoe's founding of York in the summer of 1793. While this date signifies the beginning of a settled civilian community, the Toronto region has a history going back to the time of Brulé, in 1615. The Toronto Carrying-Place, a portage between Lake Ontario and Lake Simcoe, was an important route traversed by the early explorers and fur traders, and traders often congregated at the mouth of the Humber River. In 1720 Sieur Douville established a trading post (probably on the east bank of the Humber). Fort Toronto was built by order of the Marquis de la Jonquière in 1750 and a second fortified post, Fort Rouillé (at the foot of the present Dufferin Street), in 1751. After 1760, settlement lapsed until the late 1780s. It is this little-known period in the history of Toronto before it became the town of York that is covered in this book.



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