

## Book Reviews

*The Heavenly Muse: A Preface to Milton.* By A. S. P. Woodhouse. Edited by Hugh MacCallum. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972.

This book is monumental, in the double sense of nobly celebrating Milton and serving as a memorial to its author, the late Arthur Woodhouse. The double function is performed with economy and ease because both poet and critic were Christian Humanists, both tried for an overall view every aspect of which relates to a main focus, and both wrote with practised decorum, a grave and urgent eloquence.

Intended to present the fruits of a lifetime of teaching and research, *The Heavenly Muse* was partly written at the time of its author's death in 1964. The materials needed to fill out its pattern were retrieved by the editor, with devoted care and scholarly dexterity, from Woodhouse's published and unpublished papers. We have, in effect, the seamless garment that he set out to weave.

Woodhouse believed in historical criticism, in ascertaining the intention of an author when, in a particular time, place, state of mind and context of circumstances, he put pen to paper. He believed that truth can, by dispassionate and assiduous search, be found; that, when found, it can and must be communicated. His shining virtue is his complete consistency, the unbroken continuity of each line of enquiry undertaken, whether biographical, ideological, aesthetic or textual. One concomitant, it must be admitted, is an unwillingness to note that, from another point of view or with another set of criteria than those employed, a different pattern might appear. This double quality was, of course, a marked characteristic of Milton himself,—not to mention St. Paul, St. Augustine, Luther, Bunyan and others who have been markedly influential.

But if Woodhouse's influence had depended on documented dogmatism, he would not be remembered with such respect and affection by his colleagues and by generations of graduate students of the University of Toronto and undergraduates of its University College. To his positiveness he added the capacity to exemplify what he expounded, to practise what he preached and to live in the humane spirit he so much admired, eliciting from poetry the power (as Milton puts it) "to allay the perturbations of the mind and set the affections in right tune".

It is this that accounts for the peculiar urgency and efficacy of his expository style when he is engaged in one of his main arguments. He is a member of that endangered species, the Christian whose secular avocation is academic, whose faith has deep historical roots and whose daily life is sustained by a grasp upon Christian doctrine. When Woodhouse is engrossed with the liberty of the sons of God, we may be certain it is a freedom from the letter of the law and a liberation of intellect and spirit of which he himself knows the continuous enjoyment. When his

researches into the dual nature of the Son of God seem endless—and, indeed, they never reached formal completion—it is, we sense, because in his own career he sought so assiduously (one cannot say painfully, there was so much élan in his endeavour) to clarify from the best authorities, of whom Milton stood the foremost, the means of access from his own strict academic pursuits into an eternal and supra-academic realm. Some of us still recall the excitement of his exclamation, "Saurat is all wrong!" His joy lay in disproving the suggestion that Milton believed a potentiality of evil to exist in matter and therefore in God, who had created it. Such a thought was to him anathema.

Woodhouse's exposition of Milton's text is never less than structural. He studied with long and rewarding care not only the aesthetic form of each of Milton's poetic works but also the genre to which it belongs and genres from which it derived any component element. Nothing is neglected, from classical pastoral monody to Spenserian allegory. Similarly, he not only moves with masterly ease among a maze of doctrinal problems, whether orthodox or heretical, but also identifies kinds of Christian conceptualization such as the persisting antithesis between nature and grace. His phrasing matches his method: he eschews, in matters of conjectural dating, the "pusillanimity" which is "an invitation to perverse ingenuity in others". As Coleridge said of Milton, "He attracts all forms and things to himself, into the unity of his own ideal". We move up the main highway of Milton's purposes, on foot like good pilgrims that no step of the immemorial way may lack meaning for us.

It must be admitted that for these exemplary critical virtues a price—though not an excessive one—must be paid. The individualized characters of the angels Raphael and Michael tend to be overlooked, with all the covert humour and compassion they infuse into their half of the poem. Eve's magnificent midday meal; the splendour of the newly created creatures; the thrill of space-travel; what in general might be thought of as the almond paste and icing on Milton's cake: these are a little neglected. So too is Milton's relation to the contemporary artistic efflorescence on the Continent, a matter not of sources but of analogies.

Such incidental reservations leave the main merit of the book unscathed. To this reviewer it seems likely that, of all the major expositions of Milton, this is the one he himself would have most approved and most enjoyed. It is a triple tribute: to Milton, by demonstrating that, in these days when myth and symbol are prominent in the minds of critics, a passionate concern for the "doctrine and discipline" of Milton's thinking is still possible; to Woodhouse for his utterly consistent handling of the role of the faithful interpreter; to the editor for the labour of love he has brought to completion, true to the traditions of the University and of the College which he and his predecessor alike adorn.

*Culture and Nationality: Essays by A. G. Bailey.* Toronto/Montreal: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1972. Pp. 224. \$4.50.

This collection of twelve essays by Professor A. G. Bailey makes a rewarding contribution to the Carleton Library series, because it brings together in one volume the major essays of an imaginative Canadian anthropologist and historian written over a period of almost forty years. Four of the studies are published here for the first time and the collection is enhanced by Bailey's own introduction which provides a personal exposition of the development of his thought and research interests over the years. The fruits of Bailey's wide-ranging intellect are a testimony to the interdisciplinary approach which is now beginning once again to break through the undue compartmentalization of knowledge experienced during the last three decades.

In some respects, Bailey is to New Brunswick what D. C. Harvey was to Nova Scotia, though the greater depth and breadth of the former's scholarship must be recognized. Both men were concerned with the development of Canadian culture. Three of Bailey's essays are concerned with this theme. In his "Creative Movements in the Culture of the Maritime Provinces" he argues that creative culture requires that degree of maturity which was achieved early in Nova Scotia with the flowering of Haliburton's satiric genius and much later in New Brunswick where the contribution of the Fredericton school of poets constituted another landmark in our cultural history. Despite its later development, one wonders whether the New Brunswick experience did not represent a greater achievement than that of its sister province because it was sustained in the milieu of a provincial university; Nova Scotian universities, partly through fragmentation, partly through parochialism, have never been able to foster outstanding movements of intellectual creativity. The essays "Literature and Nationalism in the Aftermath of Confederation" and "Evidences of Culture Considered as Colonial" stress the derivative nature of Canadian culture and the importance of the poetry of the 1890s and the painting of the Group of Seven.

One questionable theme which emerges from the essays on indigenous culture and those on European-Indian contact is Bailey's apparent conviction that the economic and cultural heartland of the country had to be present-day Ontario because of that area's ability to support a numerous and cohesive population. Indeed Bailey's anthropological essays tend to be less convincing than the others. The discussion of the Iroquoian and Algonkian ordeals meanders aimlessly, while his essay "On the Nature of the Distinction between the French and the English in Canada" is a laborious exposure of the fallacy of the notion of racial differences between Canada's two predominant cultural groups.

Section 3 of the collection entitled "The Case History of a Marginal Province" consists of three essays on New Brunswick's opposition to Confederation, straightforward sticks-and-stones studies which are nonetheless crucial to students

of the Confederation period. Two of the previously unpublished essays concern the Canada First Movement of the 1860s and 1870s. One is an analysis of William Alexander Foster's contribution to the movement, and the other examines the roles played by those two liberal giants of the period, Edward Blake and Goldwin Smith. These essays are topical in light of Carl Berger's attention to Canada First in his recent study of late nineteenth-century imperialism as an expression of Canadian nationalism, a study which Bailey undoubtedly admires. The failure of the political nationalism of the period exemplified by the Canada Firsters did not preclude other expressions of national consciousness, especially in the arts. Two other contributions round off this eminently readable collection—one a poem on Confederation which again reminds the reader of Bailey's eclecticism, the other a review of A. R. M. Lower's *Canadians in the Making* in which Bailey succinctly criticizes Lower's politically-oriented concept of "social" history and roundly condemns him for neglecting the Maritimes.

Dalhousie University

JUDITH FINGARD

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*The Tenants Were Corrie and Tennie.* By Kent Thompson. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1973. Pp. 200. \$6.95.

Kent Thompson teaches literature and creative writing at the University of New Brunswick. *The Tenants Were Corrie and Tennie* is his first novel and is an occasionally amusing, but more often annoying, book.

The central figure of the novel is Bill Boyd, an ex-schoolteacher from Ohio who decides to settle and buy a duplex in Fredericton, New Brunswick (Thompson is faithful in his presentation of actual Fredericton landmarks). His intention is to live on the rent from the other half of his house while preserving for himself a life of undisturbed and independent contemplation. Complications arrive, however, in the form of the new tenants, Tennie Cord (an American come to teach at the University of New Brunswick), his three children, and his wife Corrie. Bill's interest in Corrie soon becomes an obsession, and his treasured self-sufficiency is penetrated. This is the basic plot, though it is no more than a thread running through the novel.

The real matter of the book is the mind of Bill Boyd himself. The novel consists of his own first-person recollections of the events involved in his coming to Fredericton, buying a house, letting one half to the Cords, and so on. The point where these recollections merge with Boyd's present is reached midway through the second-last chapter and marks an increase in intensity and a sudden pervasive ambiguity that casts doubt on the reliability of Boyd's entire narrative.

This is not all, however; there is much more. While progressing toward its endpoint, Boyd's thought includes memories of his earlier life (by far the most vivid and satisfying segments of the novel), letters to various Canadian papers,

and continuing instalments from his own treatise entitled "An Alien's Guide to Survival". Within these contexts, Boyd ranges over a variety of topics: the impossibility of the democratic system; the curse of non-returnable bottles; the commercialism of Christmas and the apathy of the clergy; the necessity for New Brunswick to become economically self-sufficient; the desirability of subsistence farming; the irresponsibility of schools and other organizations that use children to sell magazines for worthy causes; and so on. All these hobbyhorses have a common source in Boyd's perception of man's unintelligent and ultimately self-destructive use of himself and his world. As Boyd sees it, this situation has its roots in our overriding materialism and the resulting disappearance of the old virtues of resourcefulness and independence. The inevitable end of our present course, says Boyd, is death by suicide. His proposed solution to this state of affairs, as developed in the "Guide to Survival", is called the "Principle of Rejection":

We are now faced with the necessity of making a choice of ultimate consequences. . . . We must choose—not to *act*—but to *refuse to act*. In short we must choose to *reject*.

It is upon this principle of *rejection* that civilization will either *survive* or *destroy itself*.

For example, we must now reject what are referred to by politicians (of both "left" and "right") as "economic realities". These "economic realities" are in fact nothing more than the extensive myths of *industrialization*. . . . The "economic realist" is concerned only with *jobs*, not with *life*. But it is clear that to choose industrialism is to choose to commit suicide.

For the heroic man who chooses Boyd's way, the rejection of industrialism means a rejection of automobiles, shopping centres, disposable pop bottles, all the luxuries that our industrialized society considers necessities—even a wife and children who are, after all, hostages to materialism.

Boyd's position at the beginning of the novel is that of the hero of his own treatise—the man who has chosen the "Principle of Rejection" and independence as a way of life. With the arrival of Corrie and Tennie, however, Boyd's pronouncements become increasingly dark; his tone mounts to hysteria. He describes himself following the Cord's arguments through the walls from room to room of his house. His meditations on love mingle with images of a butcher and an oppressive sense of man's mortality. Thoughts on the love of Christ strangely juxtapose dreams of himself as a vengeful midnight skulker. His ideas begin to express contradictions, to insanely eat their own tails. The disintegration of the mind that was Boyd is finally apparent in his successive imaginings of one event; he has visions of Corrie Cord coming to his door, entering, and offering herself to him. At the end of the novel appears the final version of this scene, and, by this time, the reader does not know whether this is an actuality or another of Boyd's imaginings. What is sure is that, in Boyd's once orderly, if somewhat prim, mind, nightmarish chaos now reigns. His values, the exposition of which have occupied

most of his thought, have been overthrown. He has accepted his desire for Corrie, a desire which, according to the "Guide", involves babies, a family car, the whole value system of industrialization, and, as Boyd sees it, death. In a letter to the *Saint John Telegraph-Journal*, Boyd, by now reaching the peak of hysteria, identifies copulation, the deluded expression of love, as one more futile effort by our materialistic society to achieve immortality. Confronted at the end of the novel with a smiling Corrie, he perceives the trap, but acquiesces in his own downfall even while madly considering the image of himself strangling her:

Gentlemen, should I kill her? Should I place my thumbs at the centre of her throat and watch her eyes roll back with horror? I've read that you have to find a certain bone there while she struggles. Have you ever seen a mare, mounted by the stallion for the first time? The eyes roll back, leaping, frightened? To press that bone, snap it, kill Corrie.

I shall not hold her against her will. When she is before me, smiling as she always does, I say (feigning shyness), "Will you marry me?" and she agrees.

The problem with *Corrie and Tennie* is to know what the novel is ultimately doing. It contains elements of several things: a study of developing insanity; a history of one man's disillusionment; a protest against creeping materialism and the Americanization of Canada (it is possible to read Boyd as a metaphor for Canada's hopes of autonomy); a satire on North American hobbyhorses; an expression of man's ultimate alienation. Yet, not one of these strains emerges as a central or controlling element in the novel. The result is a potpourri which never achieves the effect of a fused whole. The problem may lie partially in the conception of the central figure. It seems to me that the reader never attains a clear impression of the man Boyd, and this is not due entirely to the demands of his insanity; against the bright colours of his obsessions, anything more subtle disappears. Also, the interjection of Boyd's own writings (rather trite and largely abstract) into the course of the novel is characterized by a jerkiness which adds to the separation of the different elements. Moreover, Thompson's treatment of his various themes (by no means new to North American thought) is, on the whole, superficial and unoriginal and places his novel perilously near the land of ephemera.

The best thing to be said about *Corrie and Tennie* is that it offers the reader the interest of a jigsaw puzzle; the trouble is that some of the pieces are missing.

Dalhousie University

RAK MCCARTHY

*The World Without a Self: Virginia Woolf and the Novel.* By James Naremore.  
Yale University Press, 1973.

The most recent study of Virginia Woolf, which comes at a time of intensive and extensive re-evaluation of the novelist's work, serves something of the same function for our period of criticism as David Daiches' study served for Virginia Woolf's

contemporaries when it was published in 1942. While no new depths of perception are entered, *The World Without a Self* offers a synthesis and summation of critical attitudes, and perhaps a consensus morality for evaluating Woolf's work.

Mr. Naremore links the old and the new criticism in the emphasis placed on biographical information and in the textual application of it. Indeed, certain biographical points of reference—the "effete" life of Bloomsbury, the denigration of estheticism as feminine, and the melodrama of madness—take us back at least one generation in moral as well as literary attitudes:

Throughout, I have been aware that the peculiarity of Virginia Woolf's fiction is determined in large part by a number of historical facts, not the least being that she spent much of her life in a state of mind near madness and suicide. (p. 4)

As a result, Mr. Naremore's approach has a strong psychiatric cast, and has concentrated heavily on the death wish as a source of creativity. The title, *The World Without a Self*, is most meaningful in a context extraneous to the work of Virginia Woolf; Mr. Naremore's conclusion, in fact, is clinical rather than literary: "Her attitudes toward 'reality' are very like the ones described in R. D. Laing's little book on the phenomenology of schizophrenia, *The Divided Self*". Such a statement, of course, begs the question in significant ways and makes philosophic assumptions which are unsupported.

The stylistic analysis of Virginia Woolf's novels, and of her first novel, *The Voyage Out* in particular, are related to the psychiatric credo in interesting ways. Mr. Naremore finds the rhythm of Woolf's style as well as her treatment of character and action to be manifestations of the longing for death. The death wish is first revealed in the style of the dream-states of Rachel Vinrace; subsequently it is found in Mrs. Dalloway, and in Mrs. Ramsay and Lily Briscoe of *To the Lighthouse*. Mr. Naremore is then found in a line of argument (and a very Laurentian one) concerning "feminine" and "masculine" which results in his relating the death wish to the feminine world.

At this point we are faced first with the thorny question of the validity of the terms "masculine" and "feminine" as absolutes. Mr. Naremore uses the terms "elemental" and "archetypal" in referring to the sex roles epitomized by the portraits in *Between the Acts*:

On the one hand is an ancestor who holds the reins of his horse and seems to chafe at having to pose. . . . Opposite him is an anonymous lady who leans elegantly on a pillar and leads the viewer's eye 'through glades of greenery and shades of silver, dun and rose into silence'. The male-female roles are characterized here as in Mrs. Woolf's other novels; even small details like the fact that the male figure 'has a name' and is a 'talk producer' are typical and significant. (p. 233)

Then we are bound to find a degree of over-simplification in the claim that any novel of Virginia Woolf is built on "a masculine-feminine dialectic", for Woolf do

not show men (at least not those to be taken seriously) within the stereotype. Men are not defined merely as ego, action, factuality, and insensibility; the Arnold Bennett mind (as defined in Woolf's manifesto "Mr. Bennett and Mr. Brown") is not the only male mind, as we learn from *The Voyage Out*, *Night and Day*, *Jacob's Room*, *Mrs. Dalloway*, *The Waves*, *The Years*, and *Between the Acts*. Only in *To the Lighthouse* does the stereotype function; and significantly Mr. Naremore responds most favorably to that novel.

An even more serious objection to Mr. Naremore's master idea, it seems to me, is the way in which mysticism and religious desire also become linked to the death wish:

Obviously, an intense desire for unity, the desire to know even one other person completely . . . or, in a more cosmic sense, the compulsive need to relate one's life spiritually to the vast power of nature—all these things can result in the destruction of individuality . . . she is not the first author to make art out of a death wish. (p. 142)

Again,

The major figures in her novels are all 'unifiers', wanting to 'embrace the world with arms of understanding'. But her problem is that such an 'embrace', an intense desire for a kind of ultimate rhythm, for knowledge of and union with something outside the self, can be realized only in death or one of its surrogates, like hypnosis or sleep. (p. 245)

Such judgements merely suggest lack of acquaintance with religious states of meditation and contemplation.

Divorced from the context of assumptions about sex, religion, and reality, certain elements of Mr. Naremore's stylistic study are useful and illuminating. The analysis of the relationship between the narrator and the characters of Virginia Woolf's novels, defined at one point as "multi-personal subjectivity", could have taken the author quite far in making his title persuasive. Also, his tracing of patterns of hypnotic rhythm and of trance is a valuable contribution which has significance for other lines of thematic approach. Finally, Mr. Naremore's study provides a perspective to enable the reader to place a highly original writer in a literary field which contains radically different and more conventional writers, and to see her work in terms of some of the intellectual and moral issues of recent times.

University of Calgary

JEAN ALEXANDER

*The Heart's Forest: A Study of Shakespeare's Pastoral Plays.* By David Young. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1972 (McGill-Queen's University Press, 1972). Pp. 209. \$7.95.

During the past decade renewed interest in pastoral has been reflected in several



specialized studies of writers such as Sidney, Spenser, Marvell, Milton and Robert Frost. These have been accompanied by a number of general studies by critics such as Harold Toliver, Leo Marx, Laurence Lerner, Harry Levin and Thomas Rosenmeyer who (following the lead of William Empson and Renato Poggioli) have considerably broadened traditional concepts of the nature of pastoral. However, as David Young suggests at the opening of *The Heart's Forest*, "there has as yet been no comprehensive study of Shakespeare as a writer of pastoral". David Young's book is consequently timely, though, as so often in such situations, its claim to uniqueness is undercut by the simultaneous publication of a quite independent study by Thomas McFarland entitled *Shakespeare's Pastoral Comedy*.

Young first discusses the problems of defining pastoral, a task in which he is considerably aided by the exploratory work of Empson and his successors, and then explores the working possibilities which pastoral presented to Shakespeare and contemporary Elizabethan dramatists. The merging of pastoral and romance in the prose fiction of Sidney, Greene and Lodge and Sidney's crucial rehandling of the sojourn—"the experience of the pastoral world as a part of a larger set of circumstances, both spacial and temporal, often as a segment of a journey"—are seen as essential intermediary steps leading towards the emergence of Elizabethan pastoral drama. The sojourn, or what Poggioli refers to as a "pastoral oasis" (a brief pastoral interlude in epic or chivalric works), develops in Sidney and other English writers, including Shakespeare, into a tripartite sequential structure, not unlike the separation-wandering-return paradigm of chivalric romance. In the pastoral romance the pattern begins in the normal world, shifts into a rural or wilderness setting and concludes with a return to the normal world. The sojourn furthermore exists in its own right and not as an episode in a larger work of a different kind as is the case with Bk. VI of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. The broad ensuing potential for dramatic social and psychological conflicts, for the exploration of the relationship between man and nature and for the imaginative mirroring of the vicissitudes of fortune must largely constitute, in Young's view, the attraction for pastoral for Shakespeare.

Thus far there is little that is new. More worrying, however, is the possibility that Young's stress on one particular kind of structure and the accompanying motifs of Time, Fortune and Art vs. Nature, though obviously central to Shakespeare's pastoral, nevertheless tends to over-simplify by de-emphasizing the influence of the existing division within the Renaissance pastoral between what Patrick Cullen (*Spenser, Marvell and Renaissance Pastoral*, 1970) describes as the "Arcadian" and the "Mantuanesque", by largely ignoring the underlying psychological nostalgia for the past described so admirably by Laurence Lerner (*The Uses of Nostalgia*, 1972) and by paying little attention to the conflicting ideals of social- and religious—or mythic-inspired pastorals dealt with by Harold Toliver (*Pastoral Form and Attitudes*, 1971).

Young follows his introductory chapter with discussions of four of Shakespeare's plays: *As You Like It*, *King Lear*, *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*. These "versions" of pastoral are selected to demonstrate the extremely varied ways in which Shakespeare explored the potentials of pastoral. If one is disappointed by the exclusion of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, compensation may be found in the unexpected and convincing chapter on *King Lear*. Taking up Maynard Mack's suggestion that *King Lear* employs the pattern of pastoral but develops into "the greatest anti-pastoral ever penned", Young analyses the pattern of extrusion, sojourn, reconciliation and return in the play (the *Arcadia* as part source being highly significant in this context), together with the crucial themes of man's relationship with Nature and the workings of Fortune. Valuable comments are also made on the role of disguise, uncontrollable emotions and errors of identity all being related to the conventions of pastoral which, Young argues, are here turned inside out to produce a terrifying vision of uncertainty, of guarantees destroyed, of assumptions exposed, of hopes and expectations reversed. After reading this chapter, one may well wish to consider in a fresh light Polonius' allusion to the "tragical-comical-historical-pastoral".

To suggest that Young's essay on *King Lear* is the most interesting contribution of the book is not to deny the value of his commentaries on the other three plays. Though the three works considered are radically different versions of pastoral, and hence manifestations of the immensely varied potential of pastoral itself, certain common developing concerns are seen. Most obvious of these are the extrusion-sojourn-return pattern, the emphasis on Time and the exploration of the familiar Art-Nature and Nature-Fortune dichotomies. More original is Young's demonstration of Shakespeare's increasing use of self-conscious artifice "in order to subvert and confound the art-nature dichotomy", a concern which leads ultimately to that triumph of metatheatre, *The Tempest*. Equally stimulating are his suggestions regarding the relationship between *The Tempest* and the pastoral tragi-comedies of the *commedia dell'arte* and his argument that in *The Winter's Tale* there is a distinction between "tragic" and "comic" time, the former "infinitely prolonged and incessantly re-enacted" in a hostile manner, and the latter connected with the benevolent recurrent natural rhythms "of the seasons of the year and the succession of human generations".

Minor objections may be raised to Young's rather careless employment of those much over-used terms "emblem" and "emblematic", and to his contention that plot in *As You Like It* "held little genuine interest for Shakespeare". One wonders too whether he has not become somewhat extreme in his argument that Shakespeare's conscious artifice becomes a special kind of game or joke. Perhaps Young's metaphor is at fault. Was *The Winter's Tale* really "Shakespeare's joke on those who took their categories too seriously"? Is the description of Julio Romano's creation in the same play really "fun . . . at simplistic responses to art"?

And is the observation of the unities in *The Tempest* really a "game"? Such minor matters apart, *The Heart's Forest* is a worthwhile contribution to Shakespearean criticism and a work that enlightens our understanding of a major literary form through the examination of one of its greatest practitioners.

Acadia University

ALAN R. YOUNG

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*The Acadians: Creation of a People.* By Naomi Griffiths. Toronto/Montreal: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited, 1973. Pp. xiii, 94.

This book is the sixth in the Frontenac Library series and the first to deal exclusively with the Maritimes. Designed to provide students with an introduction to topics of historical significance, the books in this series, unlike ventures by other publishers aimed at the undergraduate history market, are short works of original scholarship instead of collections of documents. Since the end product is little more than a longish essay, the authors are faced with comparable problems of selection to those encountered by the editors of documents.

Professor Griffiths has quite sensibly given her attention to the human element in her historical treatment of the Acadians with the added dimension of trying to present the study from an Acadian rather than an imperial or strategic perspective. Apart from the reclaimed marshlands of the Bay of Fundy which they have not farmed for over two hundred years, twentieth-century *Acadiens* represent the only residue of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century peasant culture which flourished against the great odds of isolation, European neglect, and Anglo-French conflict in this outpost of empire. Their equally remarkable survival in the subsequent two centuries makes the focus on an examination of the roots of their separate identity or distinct nationality a unifying and relevant approach for such a short monograph.

Despite the unimaginative chronological treatment which is sometimes repetitious and sometimes banal, this study of the Acadian people does evoke a mood in which the combination of self-sufficiency, complacency, independence and clannishness which characterized the Acadian culture in the pre-expulsion period is admirably portrayed. Through the well known features of Acadian history—the d'Aulnay-la Tour debacle in the seventeenth century; the neutrality question with the contentious interpretation of the oath in the eighteenth; the exile, the repatriation and the renaissance—the binding themes of the love of the land and demographic cohesiveness clearly emerge. In the chapter relating to the background to the expulsion, Griffiths develops her thesis that "the Acadians considered themselves Acadian, the French considered them unreliable allies, and the English, unsatisfactory citizens". (p. 37) For almost two centuries the Acadians were a colonial people who refused to be ruled, and with their "conquest" by the local

English officials under New England pressure in 1755, they were dispersed to the other American colonies where they filled the poorhouses and burying grounds of many colonial towns. Nonetheless, Griffiths argues, Acadian society in exile was "broken into viable pieces, and not completely atomised". (p. 72) Slowly the Acadian clans returned to their country where once again, despite hardships and poverty, they reclaimed their isolation and cultural integrity though not their lands. And unassimilated they remained, imbued with a profound common heritage—the fact of the expulsion and the ready acceptance of its romanticization by Longfellow. Because of their distinctive historical evolution, their dramatic experiences, and their concept of nationality today, Griffiths contends that they are indeed a unique people.

Although the last two chapters dealing with the post-expulsion period are somewhat disjointed, the rest of the study holds together tolerably well, and Griffiths does devote some of her limited space to Acadian historiography. J. B. Brebner figures prominently, though as an American, when birth and education surely qualify him as a Canadian historian. The book is marred by a rash of typographical errors and an eccentric index which, for example, lists Brebner but not A. H. Clark. The bibliographical note will not prove very helpful to students in the Maritimes.

Dalhousie University

JUDITH FINGARD

*Going Down Slow.* John Metcalf. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1972. Pp. 177. \$6.95.

Beneath the angry and mordant satire contained in John Metcalf's first novel, *Going Down Slow*, lies a brief but subtle scrutiny of compromise and betrayal. Are they indistinguishable? Are they the inevitable consequence of living in a society which champions competition and apotheosizes success, or, in such a social climate, are they even significant?

David Appleby, the central character, is a recent emigrant from England to Canada, and, possessing an outsider's perspective, he readily perceives the crassness, inanity and fraudulent nature of North American culture. As a high-school teacher in Montreal, David is subjected to the petty tyranny and philistinism of his fellow-teachers and the school administration. These affronts to his sensibility he regards merely as a reflection of the larger cultural scene, of the plastic and ersatz world of Odorama Air Freshener, Chubby Chicken, and Reader's Digest Condensed Books. As the novel progresses, however, the reader begins to sense that David's critical zeal colours his perceptions—at the expense of the surface satire. Metcalf's caricatures of the oafish Gym teacher Hubnichuk, the pedantic History teacher Follet, the domineering bureaucrat McPhee, and the myopic prin-

cial Grierson, are humorous and effective, but they become less telling as the novel proceeds because the reader eventually recognizes that these caustic portraits are more than a little the product of David's bilious nature.

But Metcalf's characterization of David as "ballsachingly adolescent", romantic and principled is deliberate and necessary in order to emphasize David's own compromises later in the novel. Throughout David experiences what he considers apocalyptic betrayals: he discovers that a black folk-blues singer in a coffee-house, his first real contact with a 'pure' tradition which had only been accessible to him through recordings, is a fraud; Garry Westlake, a kindred spirit at Merry-mount High who shares David's interest in theatre and literature, forsakes him for a career as a Guidance Counsellor; his room-mate, Jim, exploits the same field in education, where pay increases occur more frequently and promotions more rapidly. Jim's glib explanation of his purchase of a Galaxie 500 as necessary to project a favourable image seems, to David, a defence of a culture which he abhors:

"What one needs is *style*. That's the thing. None of this thread-bare graduate student stuff. Know why?"

"Because over here, you get largely what you assume you're going to get. And people give you what they assume you're worth. And on what, pray, do they base their assumptions?"

He patted the wheel.

What is compromise for one is betrayal for another.

Yet, although David fails to understand until the final purgative scene in which he vomits up the adulterated liquor that Gagnon, his landloaf, has pressed upon him, he has imperceptibly abandoned his own convictions throughout the novel. In this scene, he claims part ownership of Jim's new car in order to win Gagnon's admiration. Earlier he had acquiesced in the presentation of a bowdlerized version of a school play. Most significantly, he finally accedes to McPhee's censorious demand that he end his relationship with Susan Haddad, the student whose vitality and innocent rebellion seem more genuine than David's rancorous kicking at the traces. Indeed, it is only at the end of the novel that the reader, even taking into account the single unselfish gesture which David makes in associating with an aging Latin teacher, is aroused to sympathize with the central character, who is now aware that he has been 'poisoned' by arrogance and self-deceit.

Despite the sour tone, this novel is only incidentally a social polemic; it is primarily what Metcalf describes as a "distillation of experience", and the fragmented, episodic structure of the novel is consistent with that description. For those who enjoy incontrovertible truths mixed in bitter draughts, this book is worth imbibing.

*Dalhousie University*

J. R. LATROLD

*Frederick Philip Grove*. By Margaret R. Stobie. New York: Twayne's World Authors Series, 1973.

This contribution to *Groviana* by Margaret Stobie is excellent in parts. Like Groves's own writing, Professor Stobie's is rather misty in the middle distance. The documentation of certain aspects of Grove's life is as meticulously detailed as if she were tracing the dynamics of a single snowflake swirling through a prairie storm. Intellectual speculations are made from the observable facts, but little insight or humanity is apparent. The storm is ignored in favour of the snowflake and the cosmos.

Grove's writing is not more appreciated, I would think, for knowing that he got 68 in Latin Authors from the University of Manitoba in 1916; nor that on his western tour after the publication of *Our Daily Bread* he had a good meeting in Prince Albert but lost his cane; nor for sharing Professor Stobie's unremitting concern for his fiscal status in any given month of his Canadian years. These things are small indicators of what the man was, providing more insight, perhaps, into the working mind of the scholar-critic than her subject.

Grove's literary relationships, particularly with Arthur Phelps, Lorne Pierce and Graphic Publishers, are carefully documented through extensive use of correspondence in the Grove Collection at the University of Manitoba. His classroom demeanour is recounted by former students via transcribed tapes. His treadmill career as teacher-administrator is authenticated from public records, newspaper accounts, and the reminiscence of former acquaintances. No personality, however, emerges that might possibly have been the informing psyche of the Grove canon. We are told little of the writer's relationships within his own family, little of the private man or of the creative genius behind the public mask of failing pedagogue or literary doyen.

Stobie is exact in details. At the opposite extreme, she is exact in generalities. The relevance to Grove's thought of Rousseau, Thoreau and the American naturalist, John Burroughs, for example, is explicitly stated. Much of the social and moral philosophy to be found in the fictional canon finds its source in one of these three. Stobie identifies a significant number of allusions to make a good case for their influence at least on his intentions. She has uncovered the occasional direct rendering or steal as final authority. Yet with few exceptions she does not delineate nor evaluate their effect. There is no sense, in Stobie, of how they work, how they are operative in the writing itself. In matters of intellectual predecessors as well as personal life, she refuses to surmise from the facts, to venture into areas of intuition. When dealing with a writer such as Grove, who tended to conceive of reality as fiction, this dependency on exactitude of fact and literary correlations somewhat aridly misses the vigour and intensity of Grove's achievement.

Part of the problem, of course, is that Professor Stobie shows but limited respect for Grove's writing. Her readers cannot help marvelling at the exhaustive

research that has been spent upon a writer whom she feels it necessary, repeatedly, to patronize, to damn with faint praise. My point is not that Grove is the greatest, but that Grove is Grove and a monograph such as this should surely at least accept as an initial premise that the writer is worth treating and, if so, should be considered with critical judgement, not with guilt, with a sense of proportion but not embarrassment, and with as much enthusiasm for the creative achievement as for the trivia, the memorabilia.

It is significant that the two works which Professor Stobie holds to be the author's best, *A Search for America* and *Consider Her Ways*, are the two she best explicates. The former is brilliantly analyzed in terms of dream-vision literature in which the New World is, paradoxically, the world of experience where the Romantic movement will ultimately triumph. The latter, Grove's ant book, is briefly discussed in terms of structure and the centre of consciousness. More is revealed in the process about Grove's writing methods, here, than anywhere else in Stobie's book.

Several recurrent thematic patterns are identified as they appear in various works—particularly those related to sexuality and nature. Sex as defilement and naive as corrupting innocence are counterbalanced in Stobie's readings with variations of hermaphroditic personality and master-slave relationships. These are interesting possibilities to be further pursued. Grove's attitudes towards nature are so much related to other writers that little is revealed of their fictional conception beyond what is immediately self-evident upon reading his works. The good humour with which both thematic spheres are combined in the following quotation, however, is indicative of the incisive wit with which this, for the most part estimable, work is infused from beginning to end:

The impression grows that Grove's people might be in paradise on this earth if only nature had not thought up the distasteful device of genitalia. . . . (109)

There is no question of the value of this book to Grove studies.

Sir George Williams University

JOHN G. MOSS

*Lord Kames and the Scotland of His Day.* By Ian Simpson Ross. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972. Pp. xv, 420. \$17.65.

"A true critic in the perusal of a book", wrote Jonathan Swift, "is like a dog at a feast, whose thoughts and stomach are wholly set upon what the guests fling away, and consequently is apt to snarl most when there are the fewest bones". Since Henry Home, Lord Kames (1696-1782), quoted this sentence from *A Tale of a Tub* with evident approval in his *Elements of Criticism*, the reviewer might be tempted to treat Professor Ross's study with appropriate rapacity. The bones

are meaty enough to ward off his critical snarls, however, and the feast, though not without its humdrum courses, yields a fair quantity of satisfying morsels.

Lord Kames, haughty, scornful, arrogant, salty-mouthed and authoritarian as he was, stood near the centre of the Scottish Enlightenment, flanked by such luminaries as Adam Smith, Thomas Reid, Lord Monboddo and David Hume, and was "scouted" for a fleeting moment by Boswell as a possible subject for a grand-scale biography. Ross believes that Boswell rejected Kames in favour of a more acceptable father figure, Samuel Johnson, but one suspects that there were other reasons, not the least being Boswell's furtive love affair with Kames's married daughter, Jean Heron. Besides, Kames spoke in the "hamely" accent of the Lowlands, frowned upon his young friend's excessive appetite for conviviality, and resembled the biographer's father, Lord Auchinleck, much too closely for comfort. If Boswell really desired a father substitute (a view that has been argued *ad nauseam* in recent years), he had to find one with far more understanding and tolerance than Kames of the furrowed brow could muster.

To be sure, this learned jurist, philosopher and critical theorist had many of the qualities the young Boswell was seeking, but his mind was a work-horse compared to Johnson's thoroughbred. Though he, too, compiled a dictionary, it was a painstaking catalogue of legal decisions of the Court of Sessions—formidable, but in no sense a work of genius. Not even his impressive study of the *Principles of Equity*, one of the "foundation documents" (to use Ross's phrase) of the British legal system, could match the ratiocinative brilliance of, say, Johnson's celebrated argument on vicious intromission, which evoked Boswell's remark that "his intellectual powers appeared with peculiar lustre, when tried against those of a writer of so much fame as Lord Kames, and that too in his Lordship's own department".

That Kames possessed a range of interests almost as wide as Johnson's, his writings on education, aesthetics, business, industry, philosophy and history plainly indicate. He had a similar reputation, moreover, for brisk repartee and decisive pronouncement, often peppered with what a contemporary advocate, James Ramsay of Ochertyre, described as "fretfulness and liveliness in his expressions . . . which did not suit with the gravity and dignity of a judge". In the much publicized Douglas Cause, well documented in this book, he rendered a shrewd, well-balanced, and even sporting verdict for the popular side.

When, in 1762, Kames brought his enviable forensic and discursive talents to bear upon the *Elements of Criticism*, the work by which he is best known to scholars today, he described his subject as "the science of rational criticism" and his intention as less "to compose a regular treatise upon each of the fine arts" than, in general, "to exhibit their fundamental principles, drawn from human nature, the true source of criticism". He was praised by Dr. Johnson for his method: "I do not mean that he has taught us anything; but he has told us old things in a new



way". Professor Ross devotes a full chapter to the *Elements*, but perhaps does less than justice to Kames's memorable attack on Voltaire, the only living author to be so singled out in the book. This attack, which Voltaire resented strongly, was centred upon the French writer's choice, for his *Henriade*, of a recent event in the history of his own country, and upon the way in which he mixed allegorical personages and supernatural beings with real historical characters. Ross might have observed that Voltaire was not the only target, for Kames used the occasion to criticize the epic form in general, sparing neither Homer nor Virgil, neither Tasso nor Milton. By the same token, several of the earlier French poets are censured in the *Elements*, *Corneille* for insincerity, monotony, and pompous declamation; Racine for being "a stranger to the true language of enthusiastic or fervid passion"; and Boileau for confounding fiction with reality. Voltaire resorted by marvelling at the presumption of a Scotsman, of all barbarians, in daring to pass judgment on Racine and Corneille and in declaring Shakespeare superior to them. "Every day the mind of man expands", wrote Voltaire, "and we ought not to despair of receiving ere long treatises on poetry and rhetoric from the Orkney isles". In the fifth edition of the *Elements* (1774), Kames published an equivocal apology for having insulted Voltaire: "My only excuse for giving offence is, that it was undesigned; for to plead that the censure is just, is no excuse".

This verbal exchange is the more interesting when we remember that Voltaire's *Henriade* had first appeared in London during the author's temporary exile in 1726, when he was the guest of various literary celebrities whose fashionable depreciation of the Scots evidently influenced him.

Perhaps it should be said that, in the end, Kames proved to be right about Voltaire, and Voltaire about Kames. The *Henriade* has virtually passed into oblivion, and the epic form has died, just as Kames predicted it would, and largely for the reasons he adduced. As for the *Elements*, Voltaire was correct in censuring Kames for his presumption, though he may have underestimated the extent of his knowledge of French literature. (Incidentally, Professor Ross might have quoted from the original source of Voltaire's remarks on Kames in the *Gazette Littéraire de l'Europe*, April 4, 1764, instead of using Lounsbury and Randall. While his major sources, such as the Abercairny Collection of the Kames papers, are well utilized, there are some surprising minor lapses of this sort).

On the whole, Ross has succeeded admirably in his purpose, "to present what is known about the life and background of Henry Home, Lord Kames, with a view to aiding the interpretation of his ideas and assessing their continuing importance". In addition to depicting the Scotland, particularly the Edinburgh, of Kames's day believably, he has managed to impart to his study something of a contemporary flavour, now and again through the use of quotations in the dialect of the Lowlands, with which he appears to enjoy some familiarity. Unfortunately,

he has had to go to Scott's *Redgauntlet* for an example of what he believes to have been Kames's manner on the Bench, but admits that allowance has to be made for that novelist's colouring.

If there are weaknesses in the book, they are the weaknesses of over-enthusiasm, which sometimes breeds exaggeration and inaccuracy. Is Professor Ross stretching things a little when he sees in Kames's critical doctrine "a premonition of that *cri de coeur* from Keats: 'O for a Life of Sensations rather than of Thoughts!'"? (p. 272). Where and how does Kames anticipate Morgann on Falstaff, and Coleridge, Bradley and Wilson Knight on Shakespeare in general? (pp. 279-80). Did Kant really know Kames's *Elements* well? If so, what is the supporting evidence? (p. 289). If Alexander Kincaid, Kames's publisher, retired from his business in 1773 (p. 335), why does he appear again later as William Creech's partner? But whose book is safe from such catechism?

Dalhousie University

JAMES GRAY

*The Diffusion of Power. An Essay in Recent History. 1957-1972.* By W. W. Rostow. Macmillan, pp. 740. \$12.50.

Now Professor of History and Economics at the University of Texas, Walt W. Rostow was a national figure during his years of service to President Johnson as Special Advisor on International Security Affairs. Titillating accounts of conversations shared with presidents and members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff highlight the otherwise sober development of his thesis that the last two decades have witnessed a slow decline of the bi-polar actors on the international stage. For the monopoly of power by the United States and the Soviet Union has broken down by the emergence of new—albeit lesser—power centres in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East. Some of the new power concentrations are multi-national, such as the European Common Market group; others are confined to a single state, as in the case of China or Japan. The latter is now the third nation in the world in terms of gross national product.

In the *Preface*, the author boasts that he utilized "passages from memoranda I wrote as a public servant to President Kennedy, President Johnson, and Secretary of State Rusk. . . . Some of these were classified at the time". Rostow does not state that the papers have ever been purged of their respective security classifications.

Patterns of current events, and their impingement upon the policies of national leaders—and vice-versa—are woven on a chronological frame. Rostow tells of financial and military crises, and of economic and political decisions during Eisenhower's years in office. Similar subjects are then re-examined during the

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administrations of Kennedy and of Johnson. Briefly and superficially they are used to assess Nixon's tenure.

Rostow leaves out many important aspects of the power struggle: the role of U. S. allies, and of the American Congress. There is nothing in the book about Rostow's lectures to the Latin Americans that they should redouble agricultural production and enter more competively in the world markets for basic commodities—lectures which alienated Latin governments who rejected the advice as being at once neo-colonialist as it affected them, and imperialist as to motivation.

Organizationally, *The Diffusion of Power* is faulty. The author appears unable to discard any of his notes and memoranda. They are all here, in one place or another, no matter how incongruous the context. On a page devoted to small talk about a Kennedy speaking trip ("farmers who milk cows have bigger hands than mine") and settling down to fish chowder and a haircut while aboard the *Caroline*—there is sandwiched in reminders that three Democratic Presidents, Cleveland, Wilson, and Truman, had been elected by a minority of the voters. It was, therefore, Kennedy noted, impossible to build a victorious base on the left wing of the Democratic party. (Rostow's reminder came too late for Senator McGovern's Campaign in 1972). Placing key incidents and characterizations in the distant 100 pages of references seriously lessens their impact, and adds to the general scissors-and-paste effect.

Dr. Rostow's essay is a mélange of reminiscences, and anecdotal footnotes to high-level disjunctments, padded with inconsequential bureaucratic detail. As a whole, the volume is not an answer to, but creates an extension of, the credibility gap that prevailed during most of the unlamented 1960s.

WILLARD F. BARBER  
*University of Maryland*

*Fictional Technique in France 1802-1927: An Introduction.* By John Porter Houston. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1972. Pp. vii+ix, 159. \$6.95.

Professor Houston, in this penetrating study, traces the evolution of fictional techniques from the publication of *Kent* to the appearance of the final volume of *À la recherche du temps perdu*. English-speaking critics of French literature have neglected the problem of how the author creates his illusion, while in France essays on fictional technique tend to be polemical and are written by novelists unwilling to accept a plurality of fictional methods. The aim of Professor Houston, however, is to investigate the particular area of technique in which a writer has been most innovative: point of view and narrative devices used to convey it; plot structure and symbolic elements in overall composition; fictional time; chapter and part structure; or stylistic peculiarities of the narrating voice.

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The works of Stendhal, with their wealth of auguries and archetypes, have the thematic unity of poetry rather than the causality of fiction. One can easily construct a chronology for his novels, for Stendhal always followed a perfectly justifiable time scheme, but he did not make of it the structural element that later novelists did. Part II is the thematic centre of *Le Rouge et le Noir*, and it is here that the conventions of theatre so dominate the narrative that the relations between Julien and Mathilde are like ironic re-creations of scenes from seventeenth-century drama. And since comedy, heroism and theatre are the enemies of sincerity and happiness, Julien and Mathilde are trapped in a convention which does not correspond to their emotions. The influence of Corneille is felt in long monologues which reveal the hero's hesitations between two possible courses of action. These literary allusions are highly sophisticated authorial interventions allowing Stendhal to comment on his story. In this connection Houston makes a reference to the epigraphs taken from Byron's *Don Juan* which throw light on the character of Mme. de Rênal; while Julien's quotation from Iago's speech in his farewell letter takes the novel into the realm of tragic poetry before the emergence of a new kind of hero: one rooted in the conventions of myth rather than those of modern psychology.

This tendency towards romance and mythic situations reaches its fullest expression in *La Chartreuse de Parme*. In his review of this novel, Balzac, while praising the realism of the court scenes, criticized the general structure of the book, trying to make it conform to his own notions of realism: the portrayal of events with chronological exactitude and strong implications of causality. Although Balzac makes use of chapter divisions, these are less important than the long day through which he effects a forward propulsion in the main character's experience. To analyse this phenomenon Professor Houston makes a careful study of *Le Père Goriot*, which also serves to illustrate another aspect of Balzac's originality: the concept of a cycle of novels. A powerfully constructed novel, *Goriot* drew other narratives into its orbit, inspiring subsequent production and leading to the reshaping of much that preceded it. Balzac was also innovative in his handling of fictional time and in his ability to view events from a variety of points of view. Houston draws our attention to the brilliant opening of *Illusions perdues* whose past tenses successfully translate distant events, recent happenings in Lucien's life and habitual actions, while loopings back add variety to the narrative and references to a future fixed date when the plot will begin to have a dynamic forward thrust. At first an anonymous narrator views events and characters dispassionately; then in Part II the point of view becomes that of Lucien, struggling to make something of himself in Paris; but it is only when the reader enters the thought-stream of the vengeful Mme. d'Espard that he realizes that Lucien will be a victim of his illusions.



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Flaubert made of this technique the essence of his striking chapter forms: two contrasting episodes, two antithetical parts or the juxtaposition of two interior monologues. However, Flaubert is more important for his successful experiments with free indirect discourse, a technique which welds together a character's impressions of the world around him and his subjective interpretations of them. Zola adapted this technique to his own needs, "blending together description, indirect discourse, and dialogue into a stylistic continuum where the grammar and vocabulary must fuse so that the reader feels no disparity among them."

The romances and confession novels of the nineteenth century are all too often dismissed as minor genres whose main importance derives from the fact that Flaubert and his disciples reacted strongly against their emotive tenor. But Professor Houston recognizes their contribution to the evolution of narrative technique. The confession novel is a free genre in which letters mingle with first-person narrative, theatrical dialogue and authorial third-person accounts. *Sylvie* marks a new departure in the quest for subtle renderings of time and heralds the opening of *A la recherche*. It is also noteworthy for its use of present and present-perfect tenses to achieve interior monologues in first-person narrative; and for the presence of a narrator who has incomplete information regarding the characters he is studying.

These techniques were further refined to interpret the experiences of a new kind of hero: the lonely, perceptive individual, startled by a new direction in his inner life. Dujardin invented a form of interior monologue which Joyce adapted to his stream-of-consciousness novel; Sartre introduced this modified variety into *La Nausée*, and it was later reintroduced by the "new novelists" of the fifties. Dujardin also favoured the unreliable narrator, a device that was to be fully exploited by Alain-Fournier (*Le Grand Meaulnes*), Gide (*L'Immoraliste*; *La Symphonie pastorale*) and others. Gide's works contain many of the techniques that characterized the confession novel, being a mixture of authorial comment, free indirect discourse and first-person narrative forms, including soliloquy, interior monologue, letters and diaries. Then, as Houston points out, *A la recherche*, which, on account of its vastness and complexity, stands apart in the evolution of fictional technique, could also be viewed as simply the most remarkable example of first-person narration in vogue at the time.

This book is eminently readable. Making judicious use of footnotes which guide the reader towards the best studies on individual writers, Professor Houston has succeeded in making a complex subject accessible to all serious students of the French novel.

Dalhousie University

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*With Heart and Mind*. By Richard Taylor. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1973. Pp. 147. Cloth \$6.95, paper \$3.95.

This extraordinarily beautiful piece of writing is not an attempt to engage in "philosophical dialectic". It seeks instead "to convey a certain vision and so might appropriately be called a collage or a montage, were such words not pretentious" (Proem). Mention of a vision is likely to arouse the suspicion of academic philosophers. Suspicion would almost certainly be deepened by a glance at some of the topics discussed: "Love and Separation", "The Eternal", "Divine Love", "Perishing" and "Cartesian Flimflam". It would be convenient to be able to class the author with those misguided souls who from time to time send their visions to the desks of learned men. It turns out, however, that the author of these reflections is a distinguished American philosopher, the writer of several major works.

Everyone who teaches philosophy must at some time feel the frustration of having to treat of the form of philosophy without its content, the skin without the viscera. Their problem is akin to that of the biologist who must kill, or anaesthetize, the frog in order to dissect it. Taylor's underlying view is that being is one and that to philosophize about it is to run the risk of making it into many. For reason must dissect what it would know. It is necessary, therefore, to substitute for knowledge "an absolute love for God and the world". This, as Taylor makes plain, is less a view than a vision; or, as he put it in his *Metaphysics* (Prentice-Hall, 1963) it is probably true to say that "the fruit of metaphysical thought is not knowledge but understanding".

All of the forty brief reflections in *With Heart and Mind* support the theme of the identity of every spirit to the rest of creation. Since they are reflections, and not arguments, they cannot be dissected by argument; they are more appropriately commended than reviewed. The introductory piece, "With Heart and Mind", is a critique, more poetical than analytical, of the "testimony of the intellect". While it is a mistake to go against the testimony of intellect in its own sphere of competence, a great blunder, for example, to try to *show* that "we are God's children", it is also true that "reason can be an incredible ass" (p. 2).

Reason errs when it adopts the stance of empiricism, where the tyranny of "fact" turns the holy into the profane. Another error is Cartesian egoism. The separateness with which the ego is perceived produces a gulf between it and everything else. And "the gulf is not one I can step across, for it is metaphysical, the creation of my own thought" (p. 28). In other words, "distinctness, difference, separation and plurality" are philosophical creations. At some point, therefore, metaphysics must return to the elementary beliefs which men hold with a degree of conviction prior to philosophical analysis. The analyst must become a poet again. Rationalism must make peace with mysticism.

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But "what a fool is the mystic, an impostor or at best a simpleton". To find out whether God exists, he asks, and down comes the answer: "Yes, George, I'm up here all right. You can tell the people so" (p. 70). That is what philosophy students are told about the mystic's "proof". "Our professors were all pretty much agreed on this, and they made it so that none of us would ever want to call himself a mystic". For Taylor a mystic is a man who thinks without arbitrariness and dogmatism on the basic problems of existence. He is more likely to be a child or a poet. Academic philosophers might find Taylor's vision unsatisfactory, but perhaps they will be struck by the beauty of his language—which is another kind of argument. It is, after all, only a matter of taste to elevate the dictates of the intellect above the cravings of the heart.

Mount Allison University

C. F. POOLE

*Poems*. By James Reaney. Edited, with "Introduction" by Germaine Warkentin. Toronto: New Press, 1972.

Like the alphabet, this book constructs new forms of delight from the fragments of what we already know by heart about James Reaney and his relation to the development of a national mythology. One of the most beautiful books of poetry I've seen, James Reaney's *Poems* reminds us first that the best book making in this country still comes from our courageous fledgling presses. They prove the durability of precariousness as an imaginative value: the "eterné in mutability", perhaps, of the Canadian bush garden. The book itself proves that Reaney's strengths lie in what might be taken for weaknesses in another poet. His is a wholly "local", self-absorbed vision. But the confined view fixes on a generous object. Reaney's obsessive self-remarking asserts the power of vigorous growth, change and renewal while setting it against almost overwhelming enemies: sterility of mind or body, love's failure, blindness to the clear hard light of self-irony. The idea recurs in his image of the wise child, the "Holy One" who withstands the threat of mental death while he gains wisdom and experience.

*Poems* contains virtually all of Reaney's published verse to date, and includes both originally published and much revised versions, together with work from notebooks and other sources. Germaine Warkentin's supple editorial concept reminds us that poetry can make a life, as much as a book, and our sense of what there is still being written and revised provides a flowing, open frame for the collection. She gives us a truer impression of Reaney's living presence that we have yet had from any of his published volumes. The risk here was that the book might have seemed too finished, too definitive for a writer only now at the peak of his powers. But this did not happen. Its detailed fullness—its copiousness—makes us recognize the chief moment of Reaney's force as a writer: his restless drive towards the total possession of his life's meaning. He risks everything in that elusive act

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R. G. Belliveau

best  
**tea**  
you  
ever  
tasted...



**MORSE'S**



of total recollection. He risks eccentricity—and he *is* eccentric. He risks academic obscurity—and he *is* obscure. He risks the retributive backlash the satirist draws upon himself when he imaginatively enacts vice and folly. The critical victimization Reaney has already endured may prove the truth to be a type of vulnerability, an absence of protective hypocrisies. For Reaney's foolish honesty is that of the naif who can declare when the emperor is clothed and when he is naked. Or, in terms of the more appropriate Reaney setting, what parts of the Queen may be seen on a Royal Visit, and what may not. The permanent value of Reaney's personal vision rests on just such delicate but necessary distinctions. The strength consists in the open guise of frailty.

Reaney's insatiable memory overwhelms us with nostalgic indulgences: a greedy enumeration of a life's entire contents. So that finding the co-ordinating principle remains a task heroically incomplete—validated because threatened. Reaney's is an Orphic "severed head that sings", a goose-vision of the universe that begins with the premise that "everything is mysterious, far/And unnameable". I like to think that Reaney's use of audacious, difficult methods of formal control balances, or at least stands in fruitful tension with his ungainliness, his untidiness. We have in the fortuitous falling together of things, or the troublesome refusal of incongruities to be resolved, a marriage of Heaven and Hell. Our sense of the odds against the success, for instance, of transposing almost literally the iconography of medieval *danse macabre* to London, Ontario makes us acknowledge the ingenuity of such simple solutions in Reaney's handling. Likewise, his recent experiments in emblem making,—his circle, rectangle and triangle, or his circle, heart and gyre—accomplish a seductive variety. He has hand drawn them with a child-like plainness that includes both delicacy and crudeness of style, and fits their stark geometry into human patterns. Reaney chooses the allegorical or hieroglyphic symbol before the organic one partly because it is more forceful and surprising, (and hence has the impact of a discovery upon the reader), partly because all symbols are in some fashion the imposition of the human form on intractable matter (thus deliberate perversity assumes redeeming significance), partly because such symbols admit the quality of the grotesque and are capable of rich irony. For example, the scholarly complexities of *A Suit of Nettles* can only be contained within the controlling image of the barnyard if we read the poem as a parody of its own learnedness and academic traditions, like E. K.'s gloss of *The Shepherdes Calendar*. The game model for this kind of activity might be the child who parodies adult behaviour in mimicry, building a microcosmic town out of branches, fruits and vegetables, and then purposely falling into it while tripping over a turnip.

It is sometimes difficult to accept the rigour of Reaney's demanding games. If poetry really is a game, the engaged reader must be allowed to make up some of the rules. There is nothing quite so frustrating as playing games with a bossy

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child who wants everything done *his way*. When, as in *Colours in the Dark* (in the text of the play, not in the performance, where the demands of actual production force the playwright to co-operate) Reaney specifies so much that symbolic turgidity spoils the comic wit. In the *Poems*, however, one is allowed to pick and choose—to build one's own imaginative models from the materials the poet and his editor provide. The book is a kind of poem-kit. But again Reaney's own metaphor is better—that of the playbox.

Out of this seriously playful miscellany emerges the shape of a poet who has mastered virtually every technique available to him from literary tradition or modern technology. He tries every tool, every medium from pantomime to literary doodle. It is astonishing to rediscover just how much of contemporary literary vocabulary Reaney seems to have introduced to Canadian writing. If I am not mistaken, he is our first "concrete" poet, our first "pop-art" poet (e.g., "The Katzenjammer Kids"), our first successful poet of the theatre, our first multi-media poet. Reaney's willingness to experiment is related to his pastoralism, to his achieved innocence. He is still fresh, open, surprising, crafty. Hence, we may be assured, the present *magnum opus* is not final. As fine a book as it is, it must become part of the miscellany of some other, fuller work. *Poems* is a list, a type-font, an alphabet out of which something else must be made.

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