

Book Reviews

Henry Irving: The Greatest Victorian Actor. By Madeleine Bingham. Foreword by John Gielgud. New York: Stein and Day, 1978. Pp. 312. 16 Illus. \$10.00 Hardcover.

In 1951 Faber and Faber published Laurence Irving's definitive life of his grandfather—*Henry Irving: The Actor and His World*. It is exhaustively and accurately researched, contains many illustrations of Irving in his major roles, has a rich, musical prose style that is delightful to read out loud or silently, and it captures, like a bottle of vintage wine, the flavour of the theatrical and social life (both high and low) of Victorian Britain. Its only faults are that it tends to sanctify Irving (a fault of all the many, previous biographies of him), and it fails to do justice (because indisputable evidence was not available) to the question still much gossiped about by collectors of theatre arcana: did Henry Irving and his leading lady, Ellen Terry, have sexual intercourse, and, if so, how often? In this new biography of Irving, Madeleine Bingham attempts to correct Laurence Irving's somewhat hagiographic approach, but, alas, she carries her crusade too far, as she debunks with simple-minded and cynical glee the Victorians' grasping faith in the "virtues" of restraint, family life, discipline, hard work and more hard work, Smilesian self-help, God, repression, maintaining social proprieties and keeping one's spiritual and psychological as well as literal skeletons under lock and key. Along the way she makes numerous interpretative and factual errors, engages in unfounded suppositions about the Irving-Terry working and personal relationship, wearies us with laboured plot summaries of plays the spirit of which she does not understand, offers no new information but simply re-organizes what is easily available elsewhere and writes in a style that, while it strives to be cleverly Shavian, is usually merely glib ("Laurel wreaths are bestowed by many hands once the laurels have been hard won."). Moreover, she has not selected enough illustrations to represent adequately Irving's era and the range of his theatrical styles; and many of the illustrations are bad, both as works of art and as sources of information. For example, there is a dreadful sketch by Edouard Rischgitz of Ellen Terry; that it has not been published before is no reason to publish it now.

Certainly Irving idolatry has been all out of proportion to his achievements, remarkable though they are. What is needed, however, is not the inverted snobbery of Bingham's book, but a balanced biography. She should have taken as her guideline Sir John Gielgud's oxymoron "Sacred Monster" which he uses, in the Foreword, as a pithy description of Irving. In fact, in the brief Foreword, Sir John, despite his rather off-putting omniscient tone, manages to suggest more in summary fashion about Irving's temperament and art than Bingham manages in her whole book, laden though it is with factual evidence.

A few examples of the factual and analytical mistakes will reveal the limitations of Bingham's biography. The 1850s were not generally characterized by "declamatory acting" and an "old-fashioned ranting style" (p. 27). What of the trend-setting, restrained and in many respects naturalistic productions and acting of Charles Kean, Ellen Tree, Macready, John Buckstone, Samuel Phelps, Madame Vestris, Charles Mathews Jr. and Helen Faucit? It is surely incorrect to say that Dion Boucicault was a worse playwright than Charles Read (pp. 61-62). Boucicault's own plays and adaptations such as *London Assurance*, *The Shaughran*, *The Colleen Bawn*, *the Octoroon*, *The Poor of New York*, *Rip Van Winkle*, and *After Dark* reveal him to be a remarkable showman with a superb mastery of theatrical effect and dramatic structure far superior to anything shown in Reade's plays, the most successful of which were not entirely by him, but were adaptations and collaborations such as *The Courier of Lyons*, *Drink*, *Dora* and *Masks and Faces*. It is important to note, though Bingham does not (p. 88), that the review in *The Times* on 28 November 1871 of the premiere of Irving's production of *The Bells* was written by John Oxenford. (Oxenford is revealed as the reviewer by Frederick Hawkins in *The Theatre*, 1 December 1896.) Oxenford's praise of Irving in *The Bells* is a judgment that can be trusted, for Oxenford was a first-rate, experienced critic who had been writing drama notices for *The Times* since 1850 or perhaps earlier; he was a well-read, erudite and scholarly man with a particular fondness for drama (in many languages), theatre history, classical learning, folk-lore and German thought (especially Schopenhauer); he wrote, adapted and translated during his lifetime seventy to eighty plays; and he had the honour of being called "an intellectual giant" by Thackeray. It is wrong to insist that the critics to a man slated Irving's 1875 production of *Macbeth* (p. 107). The eminent, thoughtful and reliable theatre paper *The Era*, in its issue of 3 October 1875, praised Irving for showing through the character of Macbeth "that the most abject moral prostration and tremor are not inconsistent with bravery in battle" and for emphasizing the "tortures of conscience endured by a morally guilty man." And Henry James, writing in *The Nation* on 25 November 1875, admired Irving "for making Macbeth so spiritless a plotter before his crime, and so arrant a coward afterward," and, speaking of the dagger scene, James noted that "Mr. Irving . . . is here altogether admirable, and his representation of a nature trembling and quaking to its innermost spiritual recesses really excites the imagination." It is misleading to imply that Salvini's Othello appealed to

cultured London audiences mainly because he spoke in Italian (pp. 110 and 168). Salvini's was a great Othello, in conception and execution, because he had a powerful physical appearance, an extraordinary mastery of graceful pantomimic expressiveness and a commanding voice, as rich as a Cathedral organ. This voice would have been impressive no matter what language he spoke; thus George Henry Lewes said that "in the three great elements of musical expression, tone, timbre, and rhythm, Salvini is the greatest speaker I have heard." Fanny Kemble, who had seen Edmund Kean's Othello, admired it, but admitted candidly that Salvini's Othello was "the finer of the two," because Kean's Othello, while it had brilliant individual moments, was by no means a sustained and complete portrayal, whereas Salvini's was an unbroken characterization from beginning to end. Fanny Kemble and Lewes were not the only intelligent and sensible admirers of Salvini's Othello: so were Henry James, George Augustus Sala, W. E. Henley and Clara Morris, to name but a few. The Lyceum was not "the first theatre in London to be lit by gas" (p. 131). That honour goes to Drury Lane. The Lyceum was the first theatre in London to light the stage by gas, on 6 August 1817. How does Madeleine Bingham know that Henry Irving and Ellen Terry become lovers after the 1878 production of *Hamlet*? And why does she maintain that "Their letters to one another when they were still in love are destroyed" (pp. 133-135)? Many of the letters are not destroyed; some from the years 1882-1895 were sold by C. & I. K. Fletcher in 1961, and only the present owner is in a position to explain the Irving-Terry relationship, if he should ever feel inclined (and he probably won't) to do so. Certainly Bingham should not make idle speculations based solely on hearsay or secondary sources. The review of the 1879 production of *The Merchant of Venice* which appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine* in December 1879 was written, not by an anonymous reviewer, as Bingham thinks (p. 147), but by Theodore Martin; it appears in his book *Essays on the Drama* (London, 1889). To understand the article properly it is essential to know that Martin wrote it, for many of its bad-tempered and often trivial objections to Ellen Terry's Portia arise because Martin was justifiably proud of the quite different portrayal of the role given by his wife, the actress Helen Faucit. Similarly, the "anonymous American writer" who objected to Ellen Terry's Portia because "'she giggles too much, is too free, too osculatory in her relations with Bassanio'" (p. 147) was none other than Henry James, writing in *Scribner's Monthly*, January 1881. Here, too, it is helpful to know who is being critical: James was an ardent Francophile, who used as his yardstick the conventional acting methods of the *Comédie-Française*, and so he found it difficult, indeed impossible, to accept the highly idiosyncratic acting of the English stage, which was not being strangled to death by a rigid, hollow and outmoded traditional style of acting. Writing of the Booth-Irving alternations of the roles of Iago and Othello in 1881, Bingham makes the gross generalization that "*Othello*, as a play, was not well received by the Victorian audience" (p. 168) and then quotes from *Punch* of all things in support of this outrageous observation. Nothing could be more

wrong-headed: what of the productions of *Othello* by Salvini, G.V. Brooke, Macready, Phelps—productions that were greeted with great interest and enthusiasm, and not just because they had fine actors in them, but because the play itself was of intrinsic interest. Surely it is unfair to nineteenth-century American theatre to typify it by the rough and ready, frontiersman-like acting style of Edwin Forrest (p. 188, and misspelled “Forest” by the way). It was not just Forrest’s acting style against which American critics and audiences measured Irving’s acting style during his first tour of America in 1883-1884. Americans also considered Irving in relation to the more subdued and modern styles of actors such as E.L. Davenport (who, like Irving, often succeeded because his intelligence could triumph over some of the obtrusive and weak aspects of his physical technique), Lawrence Barrett, Edwin Booth and, in comedy, Joseph Jefferson the third. It is misleading to suggest that as Mephistopheles in *Faust* Irving was sacrificing himself as an actor on the altar of spectacular scenic effects (p. 215). The veteran critic Joseph Knight, one of the more thoughtful and educated critics of his day, declared unequivocally in the *Gentleman’s Magazine* for October 1886 that Irving’s Mephistopheles was his “greatest impersonation”—a remark made *after* Irving’s Shakespearean performances of Hamlet, Macbeth, Othello, Iago, Richard III, Shylock, Romeo, Benedick and Malvolio. In the May 1888 revival of *Robert Macaire*, Irving played Macaire to Weedon Grossmith’s Jacques Strop, not to J.L. Toole’s (p. 233). Edmund Yates died in 1894, not 1895 (p. 261). And so the catalogue of errors, oversights and doubtful interpretations could continue; but this small sample should serve as an adequate warning.

Extremely unfortunate, too, is the distribution of space in Bingham’s book. Its first 204 pages cover Irving’s career to 1884, and then it allots only 96 pages to the remaining years 1884 to 1905. During these years Irving toured North America seven times, presented major productions of *Twelfth Night*, *Macbeth*, *Henry VIII*, *King Lear*, *Cymbeline* and *Coriolanus* and two of his more important non-Shakespearean productions—*Faust* and Tennyson’s *Becket*. He lost control over the Lyceum Theatre which was demolished in 1904. All of these significant events deserve far more attention than Bingham accords them.

Her bibliography is a mass of inconsistencies, errors and inaccuracies (79 at a rough count). It would prove to be a monstrous nightmare to anyone trying to follow up the sources that Bingham has relied on. William Charles Macready, that “eminent,” choleric and above all respectable tragedian is no doubt writhing in fury in his grave at the thought that his name is now McReady (p. 304), a spelling that is close, but not close enough to be accurate, to the spellings sometimes adopted by Macready’s father, namely McCready or M’Cready. And Ellen Terry, blessed with an ebullient, generous and laughter-loving temperament, is probably amused, rather than wrathful, to discover that her *Four Lectures on Shakespeare* are hopelessly mixed up with an edition of her *Memoirs*.

There is, however, solace for prospective buyers of a good book about Irving. Laurence Irving's biography of his grandfather, although it is out of print, is still readily available from a first-rate antiquarian or second-hand bookseller and, if you are careful and fortunate, it won't cost you very much more than Bingham's.

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Denis Salter

Takeover. By Donald Creighton. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1978. \$12.95

Donald Creighton's long interest in literature has culminated in the writing of a murder mystery. Three-quarters of the book has gone by before the murder is committed, and the devotee of the form will not find the identity of the murderer hard to guess. The author does not attempt to conform to conventional mystery structure where we are presented with a corpse and a list of suspects fairly early on, and the unravelling of the plot is designed simultaneously to mislead and give clues to the reader. Judged by these standards, *Takeover* will be a disappointment to the murder mystery addict, though the publishers have aimed at that audience in their jacket blurb: "An American takeover of a Canadian family firm unleashes conflict between the generations—and murder stalks the opulent milieu of the very rich."

Carl Berger in *The Writing of Canadian History* opens his chapter on Creighton with the remark that "No other Canadian historian was so concerned with history as a literary art as Donald Creighton." Berger argues that "Creighton's histories were, if not entirely closed universes, at least self-sufficient ones . . .," which may have had the effect of satiating the reader rather than provoking "wonderment and questioning." Treating literature as history may have the same effect. The motivation of the characters in *Takeover* is determined by their symbolic and historical meaning. The reader is told bluntly what they represent, and there is little opportunity for him to wonder at or question their actions.

Here is Hugh Stuart, the main character, standing before the family pictures and considering the sale of the family whisky distilling firm to Americans:

The Stuarts had stood for the British North America which defied and survived the American Revolution. He thought of Charles the founder sailing north in a ship crowded with Loyalists in the spring of 1783; he remembered the founder's son Alistair joining the York Volunteers as an ensign at the age of seventeen, and fighting at the Battle of Queenston Heights.

Was the sale of Stuart & Kilgour to an American a symbolic repudiation of everything the Stuarts had suffered and achieved?

Though Hugh wants an early retirement, his concern for tradition is what propels him into an attempt to get the consent of every family member to the sale.

Hugh's son, Charles, is opposed to the sale, not because of family pride, but because of his political views. He is a nationalist who wishes to maintain Stuart & Kilgour's "independence as a Canadian company, owned and controlled by Canadians." Creighton seems uneasy about this inelastic approach to characterization, and, shortly after, the reader is told that Charles' nationalism drops from him like a "disguise" when he realizes that his father is "tired of the job."

Making the Stuarts such obvious representatives of Canadian history and traditions slows the momentum of the action (the history has to be spoon-fed to us), and puts some unnatural dialogue into the mouths of the characters. As Raddall has demonstrated, and Parker and Kirby before him, history can be metamorphosed into fiction with ease.

Creighton may have chosen a form with too many conventions. The historical romance might provide a better framework than the murder mystery for the author's vast knowledge of Canadian history. (Creighton's writing spans over forty years, and the influence of his judgments of the past is incalculable.) In addition, the restraint and precision of his writing would show to better advantage in a form where suspense and pacing are not so significant. One hopes Creighton will continue to write fiction. There is plenty of room for the kind of polish and gravity of purpose which he demonstrates in *Takeover*.

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E.L. Bobak

The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson. Volume XIII, 1852-1855. Edited by Ralph H. Orth and Alfred R. Ferguson. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1977. Pp. xxi, 555. \$35.00

Volume Thirteen contains six journals and three pocket diaries. Emerson agonizes here as he does in other journals over the slavery issue, believing that it must be resolved if America is to mature and build a solid future for itself among the nations of the world. His most important speech of these years was delivered in New York on March 7, 1854, the anniversary of Daniel Webster's unforgettable plea for the adoption of the Fugitive Slave act. As he had in private and in his journals, Emerson slashed out at Webster and prophesied the collapse of slavery because it went against the moral law of the world. The year 1854 marked the publication of *Walden* but there is no reference to Thoreau's work in the journals, although they certainly shared the same opinion of slavery, Webster, and the Fugitive Slave act.

While Emerson seemed to see less of Thoreau during these years, he records walks and conversations with Ellery Channing, Alcott, Hawthorne, who had returned to Concord for a year before taking the post of American consul in Liverpool, and Horatio Greenough. We must wonder at the conversations with

Hawthorne, since Emerson thought Franklin Pierce "odious" and felt that politicians like the President who had been a classmate of Hawthorne's (see Hawthorne's campaign biography), and Webster or Rufus Choate were "low conspirators," "attorneys for great interests," and "toads in amber."

The journals indicate that Emerson felt he had to continue his rigorous lecturing and generally stayed on the circuit for the full six-month season. This was not difficult since he was much in demand and extremely popular. In the three years covered by volume thirteen, perhaps two and one half lecture seasons, Emerson delivered almost 200 lectures in countless localities as far away from Massachusetts as Cincinnati, Chicago, Milwaukee, Cleveland, Montreal, and St. Louis. The traveling was hard on him intellectually and spiritually even more than physically. The "month of February apart from its economical values," he writes, "is a kind of gulf." On the lecture circuit, "Every day is shred into strips of time." Yet Emerson's main business during these years was lecturing, not writing books. *Representative Men* had appeared in 1850 and *English Traits* was not to be published until 1856.

In these journals Emerson as always praises and values solitude above all else and while he has sharp things to say about the world and some of its most celebrated citizens, he has mixed feelings about Thoreau's ability to put people off: "If I knew only Thoreau, I should think cooperation of good men impossible." Nevertheless, he always enjoys recording Thoreau's uncompromising responses to the dull mind: "Lovejoy the preacher came to Concord, & hoped Henry T. would go to hear him. 'I have got a sermon on purpose for him.'—'no,' the aunts said, 'we are afraid not.' Then he wished to be introduced to him at the house. So he was confronted. Then he put his hand behind Henry, tapping his back, & said, 'Here's the chap who camped in the woods.' Henry looked round, & said, 'And here's the chap who camps in a pulpit.' Lovejoy looked disconcerted, & said no more." Thoreau would say to people what Emerson felt should be said but rarely said himself. "Swedenborg says," Emerson records, that "the best spirits live apart," and also notes that "No man [is] fit for society who has fine traits." The "Scholar must be isolated, as some substances kept under naphtha." If there was one idea that Emerson held fast to it was his belief in "the infinitude of the private man." One passage in Journal HO which never got into print could well have been written by Thoreau: "The first men saw heavens & earths, saw noble instruments of noble souls; we see railroads, banks, & mills. And we pity their poverty. There was as much creative force then as now, but it made globes instead of waterclosets. Each sees what he makes."

There are many enjoyable and rewarding entries in the journals contained in this volume. As with the other volumes in this edition the format, organization, and editing are excellent. I applaud the up-dating of the table in the appendix that shows Emerson's journals and miscellaneous notebooks already in print in this edition.

The Glassy Sea. By Marian Engel. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1978. \$10.95.

The bulk of the text of *The Glassy Sea* consists of a one hundred and thirty page letter which Rita Heber, Engel's heroine, writes to Philip Yurn, the Anglican Bishop of Huron, from a farmhouse on Prince Edward Island. The book also includes a short prologue and a concluding section called "Envoie." The letter is ostensibly an explanation of why Rita thinks she cannot take over the job of Sister Superior of Eglantine House, an order of Anglican nuns in London, Ontario, and a spin-off from the Oxford Movement.

Rita had once spent "the happiest and most innocent ten years" of her life in Eglantine House. There she had managed to escape "the flapping wings of Eros" which had caused her to have what was once described as a "nervous breakdown." The Eglantines had also provided Rita with the "thorny pleasures" of a life among roses, that is, a world of mystery, grace and beauty foreign to the "plain country people" of her childhood. Rita's attraction to the "halcyon, flashing" and glorious images in life had dated from her Sunday singing of the United Church hymn "Holy, Holy, Holy." She had imagined herself a participant when the golden crowns of the saints were cast into the glassy sea:

Holy, Holy, Holy! All the saints adore Thee.
Casting down their golden crowns around the glassy sea.
Cherubim and seraphim falling down before Thee,
Which wert, and art, and evermore shalt be.

However, the devotional approach to religion which the hymn takes, and which Rita had found among the Eglantines (all their names were Mary) no longer seems relevant to her life. She declares to Philip Yurn that she cannot take care of roses, and that she comes of a plain people not made for mysteries ("Time wins me away from the diamond of the soul").

Rita believes that she has found the real "sea" around the island retreat to which her ex-husband, Asher Bowen ("prettier than any man" she had ever seen) has exiled her. Rita had married Asher on the rebound from the Eglantines, and though he had seemed to represent sex and love, he had placed a Spanish primitive painting of the crucifixion over their bed. "Ash Bone" had been Rita's brother's name for Asher. Fittingly, Asher and Rita had become parents of a hydrocephalic child who had died young. Instead of dying herself in the Maritimes, Rita begins to feel as if she were in a hymn again ("about resurrection").

These plot details and many many others have to be given to us through the unwieldy literary device of Rita's letter to Philip. It is surprising how long a short book can seem. "The Letter" has far too much weight to carry. Moreover, when "The Letter" can be selective, it is not. Like many lengthy tales which children recount (much of the letter

recalls Rita's childhood), the letter often wearies rather than enlightens. Rita's solid, rural Ontario background is suggested by the description of her bedroom, but we do not need as much as we are given. Lucidity is lost in a ragbag of detail. For example, the oak study table has "twisted legs and end panels filled in with knotted wicker or gut like a tennis racket, and a good heavy gooseneck lamp. And brass bookends with Lindbergh on them."

Another difficulty is that Rita is writing when she is "just past forty," but much of the letter reconstructs what she calls "the tumult and confusion of those years between child and adult. . . ." In order to capture the child, she has to use language as a child would. She refers to "Mr. Martin's trig class," and writes dense sentences in which the phrases tumble over themselves:

The wind came from the west, from across the American border (fools to blame their weather on us) where the big houses were on the other bank of the big river, another country, Michigan, that my second cousin once removed, Mel, ran the international ferry to, that his mother was always boasting about in sentences beginning "My Mel."

Is Rita writing to Philip Yurn, or has Engel temporarily abandoned that fiction in order to make sure that we do not miss the texture and flavour of Rita's childhood? At other times, Rita writes to Philip Yurn in the following way: "How can we know another's soul except by his actions, and when his actions cannot be judged except by inexperienced standards, is judgment by appearances altogether false?" The device of a letter requires a writer to maintain an unusually consistent tone and point of view. Engel saddled herself with a problem which she only partially resolves.

Rita's decision to return to Eglantine House in order to turn it into a women's hostel and salvage some of the "casualties" that are coming in "in greater and greater numbers" turns her into a Florence Nightingale of the War Between the Sexes, a role that does not seem consistent with the character that used to read devotional literature, that married a "profile", and that remembers the Atlantic seacoast as Irish moss drying on the road. It is not enough to have Engel remind us that some hatch in stages. Even given all Rita's doubts about her decision (" . . . I came here [Eglantine House] out of a need, not to serve, but to belong"), the final metamorphosis of Rita into Martha is barely credible.

The Glassy Sea is a book one wants to like. It is an ambitious and courageous book, not only technically, but because of the position Engel takes on sexual politics. When Rita Heber fantasizes at the end about a society in which all women are done away with at thirty because that would bring about a world "free of women who are past their nubile best, who are capable of thinking," one likes her uncharacteristic anger and the stretch of her imagination. Rita imagines that a few generations of such a world would teach men the value of women: "For if there is someone who is hated more than an awkward but intelligent young woman, it is a mature woman." But the reader retreats, as Rita does herself, from what she calls her "mad plan for holocaust as relief."

However, the reader retreats on literary grounds; it is no longer Rita Heber that is speaking, but Marian Engel. Engel's failure to keep a firm hold on Rita may satisfy the justifiable acrimony that author and reader may share about women being retained as "superior servants" by men, but it creates writing problems that mar the conclusion. Though I want to like *The Glassy Sea*, suspension of disbelief proves impossible. Unlike writers inferior to her, Engel suffers from the fact that her readers' expectations are high, and that their disappointment (if it occurs) is all the keener.

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Dorothy Richardson: A Biography. By Gloria G. Fromm. Urbana, Chicago, London: University of Illinois Press, 1977. Pp. xix, 451.

The task that Gloria G. Fromm set for herself as a biographer of Dorothy Richardson was two-fold: "to examine the facts of her life in conjunction with the fictional shape they took, in an effort to determine the role that imagination played in *Pilgrimage* and through that determination get at the art of this novel"; and further, "to ascertain the relationship between the continuing life of Dorothy Richardson and the novel written over such a long period of time" (xiii). Clearly then the route taken by Fromm towards an understanding and appreciation of *Pilgrimage* is unequivocally autobiographical, basing her position on a literal interpretation of Richardson's often reiterated assertion that every novel is a self-portrait of the author.

Earlier attempts at Richardson biography—by Horace Gregory (*Dorothy Richardson*, 1967), accompanying the newly reissued four-volume edition of *Pilgrimage*; and by John Rosenberg (*Dorothy Richardson: The Genius They Forgot*, 1974), marking the centenary of her birth—provided limited introductions to her life and work. Now the promise of Fromm's biographically oriented researches, begun in the early 1960s, and more fully realized in this new and comprehensive biography, greatly expands our knowledge of this pioneer of subjective realism. The early years of Richardson's life, until the First World War, remain conjectural, or limited to available documents or records, or are pieced together from fragmentary reports from family members whose recollections are not always reliably accurate or currently verifiable. Gaps still remain. The relatively stable childhood that gave way to erratic and fluctuating family finances during her adolescence; her father's bankruptcy as a result of imprudent speculations; her mother's mental and physical disintegration and ultimate suicide; her slow but determined progress towards personal and economic independence, the former more easily achieved than the latter: these phases of Richardson's younger years are described to the extent that present knowledge of them can take the biographer.

Dorothy Richardson's career as a published novelist did not begin until she was over forty. She had served her apprenticeship incidentally as a journalist and reviewer. For many years she had earned a meagre living as a secretary-assistant to a group of Harley Street dentists. Through a renewed friendship with a former schoolmate, Amy Catherine Robbins, recently become Mrs. H.G. Wells, she was introduced into the Wells circle. In time Wells became her lover. During the First World War she married Alan Odle, a talented but largely unmarked graphic artist and illustrator, who was fifteen years her junior and expected to die of consumption within six months. The unlikely, seemingly doomed match endured for thirty satisfying and productive years during which time most of *Pilgrimage* was written.

The thirteen-volume novel details twenty years of Miriam Henderson's life, from age seventeen until her mid-thirties. The actual publication of the series took considerably longer, from 1915 when *Pointed Roofs* first appeared, to 1938 when the omnibus edition of eleven previously published novels were issued together with a twelfth and new installment *Dimple Hill*; and finally to 1967, a decade after Richardson's death, when the edition was reissued with the incomplete *March Moonlight*. This thirteenth novel had been put aside in 1938 by its distressed and nearly demoralized author, disappointed over meagre sales and abashed by the premature announcement by her publisher that *Pilgrimage* was at last complete. She worked on *March Moonlight* only intermittently and desultorily during the last decade of her life. In all, some fifty-two years elapsed from the publication of the first volume to the last—something of a record for a single novel.

As "chapter" succeeded "chapter" it became clear that readers and critics were not interested in keeping up with Miriam forever, and after some acquaintance with her, revealed as she had been to them through the intimacy of the subjective method pioneered by Dorothy Richardson contemporaneously with Joyce and Proust, were just as pleased to drop her when in fact she was finally maturing into a far more complex and therefore more interesting character than she had been in the tentative stages of youth. The advantage readers have today is obvious, for they have the novel complete as far as the author has taken it. Patience and longevity are no longer the primary requisites for a coherent reading of *Pilgrimage*. And if early critics like Katherine Mansfield in 1919, scoring points for wit if not for insight, observed of *The Tunnel* and *Interim* (the fourth and fifth novels) just then published, that the content of their author's mind was reproduced "complete in every detail, with nothing taken away from it—and nothing added," other critics like May Sinclair recognized the central importance of these novels to the development of the genre as a whole.

Readers soon recognized the autobiographical nature of the ongoing *Pilgrimage*. Not until the publication in 1934 of Wells's *Experiment in Autobiography*, which Richardson helped see through the press, was the specific correspondence between art and life established when Wells identified himself as the Hypo G. Wilson of the novel. Fromm brings her focus to bear

upon the two strands of Richardson's life during the long creative period of work on the novels: her active daily existence rooted in the present and filled with social and domestic demands, and her creative life absorbed with the past while composing the chapter-novels of *Pilgrimage*. Here is where the biographer's tendency to accept too readily and at face value the life of Miriam, with her ambivalent attitudes and assertions as a near-literal rendering of the life of the author, breaks down. That art does not follow life exactly should be obvious, and why should it be expected that *Pilgrimage* be an exception? Fromm, however, seems to be suggesting that Richardson's handling of the materials of her own life, admittedly reflected in the series of novels, is not as precise as might be; indeed, that Richardson has changed the past, changed history therefore, in depicting her younger self through the main character of the novel.

As Fromm sees the relationship between the author and the character, "Miriam Henderson was the girl Dorothy Richardson had been in the past, but she was not the woman who was now recording, shaping, and subtly altering her young self. Autobiography by its very nature is largely history, and when it is transcribed in the form of a fictional narrative told in the third person, it takes on a new and problematic identity. The configuration of Miriam's life remained that of Dorothy Richardson's, but the internal development of the character, when pressed into fiction, took on certain of the qualities of caricature. The lines of Miriam's strong personality followed those of Dorothy Richardson's but had the sharper edges and more heightened coloring of a figure seen through the lens of a camera. Dorothy would not always be happy with the effect, or with some of her readers' interpretations of her. It was a little as if she herself were being taken out of her own hands" (126). Fromm's conjecture about how Richardson might have felt appears to result from an insistence on an almost entirely autobiographical reading of *Pilgrimage* in the sense of life as history with its time-oriented concomitants of chronology and event. Philosophically and psychologically, Richardson's intention as a novelist and disposition as a thinker are denials of this linear approach to the novel and indeed to life itself. If Miriam's surface appears more distinctly outlined when compared to the indeterminate boundaries of actual life, the more readily can her inner life be presented in greater variety and subtlety than might be accomplished by autobiography even if in fictive form. It would seem that the bounding line of Richardson's art defines the space she needs to explore the many-levelled consciousness of her character. The truer picture as Richardson sees it is the one drawn from within, and if the externals of life, even the manifestations of Miriam's personality, are less real than actual life teaches us to expect, then Richardson has succeeded in demonstrating her point about inner reality. Perhaps if Fromm had been able to devote more critical attention to the novels while presenting her extensive and able description of Dorothy Richardson's life, a fuller appreciation of the rich complexity of Miriam's mind, including its intellectual capabilities and concerns, would surely have emerged.

Dorothy Richardson lived a long time, and if her life was not a continuous series of encounters with the more illustrious of her contemporaries, it was nevertheless not lacking in incident. These, the records of her daily existence, typically repetitive as it is for most people, comprise the bulk of this new biography. One might wish that Richardson were allowed to speak more often for herself in longer excerpts from her many lively provocative letters, wherein her wit, ideas, problems, observations, frustrations, occasional triumphs, and frequent joys are revealed at first hand. Undoubtedly, the editorial requirement to compress was a constant deterrent to lengthy quotation from the extensive unpublished correspondence.

A small but important afterthought addressed to readers of this essential biography: The index does not do justice to the book nor does it facilitate the reader's search for information within the text. Not only is the index inadequate in its listing but it is also incomplete in page referrals. Students of Richardson who will be turning to Fromm's book as the most complete source of biographical information to date will have to do some hunting on their own through a copiously detailed text and therefore are advised to check and augment the index for later reference.

University of Alberta

Shirley Rose

The View From the Pulpit. Edited with an Introduction by P.T. Phillips. Macmillan of Canada, 1978. pp. 326.

This book is a collection of essays by diverse hands on selected English divines of the Victorian period. Unfortunately, the title is somewhat problematic. Is the "view" that of the world as seen by the clergyman from his pulpit, or is it the "view" that his parishioners are meant to translate into action as a practical sequel to his sermon? Kitson Clark's helpful Foreword suggests that it is both, and once it is realized that the studies are primarily historical in approach and that each clergyman under review is examined in his total role as he worked against the background of his time, these essays throw much light on the social and political problems facing the Victorians in all departments of life as well as the Christian basis on which they sought to resolve them.

We are largely unaware of the extent to which the tenets of Christianity were brought to bear, in theory at least, on every aspect of life and thought in the period, and we tend to ignore the very large part that religion played in the nineteenth century altogether. It is equally difficult for us, both to realize the status of clergymen then, especially those in the Establishment, and to grasp the authority and general sanction that they could wield in carrying out what they conceived to be the will of God in the affairs of men, whether religious or secular.

With the exception of Peter Allen who teaches English, the eleven contributors to this volume are all professors of history; and all of them except Robert Webb of Maryland are working in Canadian universities. Professors Allen, Distad, Helmstadter, Kenyon, Rose, and Schiefen are all in Toronto while Desmond Bowen is at Carleton, Brian Heeney at Trent, and Hereward Senior at McGill. Under the capable editorship of Professor Phillips of St. Francis Xavier University in Nova Scotia these men have produced an interesting if uneven volume of essays, all heavily documented and adumbrating figures significant in the history of the time, and in so doing they have tapped a rich source of original material that throws much light on it.

There is an essay on each of the following clergymen: Alexander Dallas, Julius Hare, Harry Jones, James Fraser, W.F. Hook, William Hale White (Mark Rutherford), Charles Spurgeon, R.W. Dale, John Hamilton Thom, Nicholas Wiseman, and Paul Cullen. This is a surprising list, but the compilers were probably right to exclude Maurice and the Christian Socialists, many of whom, like Maurice, were clergymen, as well as Newman, if for no other reason than that they are already known, to some extent at least. But why Wiseman instead of Manning, or Rutherford instead of Robertson of Brighton? Each man is perhaps the arbitrary choice of the contributor. On the other hand, the essays have been distributed under three heads, five of them on representative clergymen in the established Church, three on Nonconformists, and two on Irish dignitaries of the Roman communion, so that one glimpses the whole spectrum of denominational activity during the period as well as the unique way in which each denomination and each clergyman within each contributed to the general picture; and common to all of them is of course a concern for ethical relationships as each and all of them faced the equally challenging problems of poverty and ethical training in the teeth of industrialization, urbanization, and the debilitating effects of poor sanitation.

The aim of this book is implicit in the historical sweep of one paragraph in Professor Phillip's Introduction (p. 7). He provides a summary context in terms of "the general social and religious history of Victorian Britain in which the reader may judge the collective, as well as the individual, roles of these clergymen." Victorian Britain constitutes an epoch in the history of a great people and, as Coleridge reminds us, the historic sense resides in "the power of distinguishing and appreciating [its] several results". The efforts of these Victorians to maintain a balance between trade and literature, between secularization and the civilizing role of the Church were heroic. As delineated by the contributors to this volume, they may not have been in the first rank of clergymen who shaped the process of history, but they held the field, and this book serves as a warning that we must redress the balance in favour of civilization and social harmony.

No Man's Meat & The Enchanted Pimp. By Morley Callaghan. Toronto Macmillan of Canada, 1978. Pp. 170. \$9.95.

The novella *No Man's Meat* has been virtually without an audience since its first printing in Paris by Edward W. Titus in 1931. The edition was small, 525 copies, and Callaghan signed each of the five hundred subscriber copies and the twenty-five press copies. In February 1932, Callaghan's work was reviewed by *The Canadian Forum* in a column called "Canadian Writers of Today." Though the reviewer, H. Steinhauer, indicated a knowledge of *Strange Fugitive* (1928), *A Native Argosy* (1929), and *It's Never Over* (1931), he did not appear to be aware of the existence of *No Man's Meat*. Steinhauer saw Callaghan as having "too great a fondness for melodrama" and described *Strange Fugitive* as "extravagant sensationalism." In such a climate of opinion, *No Man's Meat*, whose plot centres on lesbianism, was better consigned to the little presses of Paris, and thus to virtual oblivion in Canada.

Fifty years ought not to have elapsed between the first and second printings of the work, as it is one of the best things Callaghan has ever done. Its length, too short for a novel, too long to be a typical Callaghan short story, may have helped keep it in the limbo usually reserved for fiction of awkward length. Callaghan wrote two other longer novellas around the same time. *An Autumn Penitent* and *In His Own Country* were published as part of the short story collection *A Native Argosy* and have since been reprinted together. The three novellas share a lucidity of perception and structure that Callaghan loses in longer, more pretentious work like *The Many Coloured Coat* and *A Fine and Private Place*.

No Man's Meat concerns a married couple, Mr. and Mrs. Beddoes, who are spending the summer at their cottage in northern Ontario. The two have substituted a "steady calmness" for passion, though the "dark lake" and the "big rock" outside their cottage suggest that the "undisciplined impulses" have been suppressed rather than extinguished. (One of the few flaws in the story is the occasional heavy-handed use of Freudian symbols.) The couple are visited by an old friend, Jean Allen, who had left her husband to pursue an attraction for a young woman. Both husband and wife are attracted by Jean's exuberance and vivacity, but history repeats itself and it is Mrs. Beddoes who leaves her husband because she falls in love with Jean.

Wisely, only very minor changes have been made in the text, for example, the addition of the word *now* to clarify time in the sentence "In the car now Jean leaned against his shoulder. . . ." The text is essentially that of the Paris edition. Callaghan is at his best here, perceiving, suggesting, but saying little directly. He creates a balance between nuance and disclosure, between allusion to character and emotion and literal occurrence.

In the following passage, Mr. Beddoes watches his wife and their guest as they leave for a walk. This departure looks forward to the final departure of Jean and Mrs. Beddoes and to the sexual roles they will assume:

When Jean and Mrs. Beddoes went for a walk through the trees, he followed them with his eyes from the porch, the rounded full feminine figure and the thin nervous alert boy's body of his wife going together through the trees.

As the passage continues, Mr. Beddoes thinks of the excursion he is planning to take with Jean. His sexual attraction to Jean is suggested, but so is the over-civilized strain in him which keeps him wearing "city" clothes in wild rough country, and which finally leaves him isolated with only a stand of first-growth pines to care for:

He felt happy, sitting in the shade, thinking, looking out over the still waters of the lake, that he would take Jean over to the rock in the canoe in an hour, in the cooler, better part of the afternoon, and climb up the path with her to the highest peak. The thought vaguely disturbed the calmness that belonged to his life at the cottage but he did not mind sitting a little further back in the shade.

The title *No Man's Meat* is puzzling. It appears to take a coarse view of a situation which is handled in the work itself with understanding or at least, with dispassion.

The Enchanted Pimp is about a special sort of procurer, one who deals with "solid respectable" men who want "fine young women of their own kind," who will provide the illusion of "something secret, sweet and stolen." The pimp, Jay Dubuque, meets a special sort of prostitute, Ilona Tomory. Clad in a long mink coat, she exudes "gentle compassion," carefully choosing her clients from among those who most need an "angel-of-mercy-in-bed routine." Jay believes that "Such a woman should be a well-known celebrated personality. A great and famous whore. A fabulous whore to be looked at, talked about, fought over because she could create this illusion; she could make a man feel that no matter what he had done he could be excused and comforted." (The language sometimes balances on the fine line between absurdity and credibility.)

Jay's ambition is to get Ilona out of the cheap hotel from which she operates and make her available to "rich, lonely, distressed men." His plan fails, but it results in Ilona's involvement with a scholar of religions who describes making love to her as a "sacramental" experience. The scholar eventually deserts her in search of a new religion, but not before she has come to see him as a "soul-sucker." Her grace lost, she resumes her former life and is murdered by a client. Jay takes care not to forget her and thus guards himself against becoming the "Caliban" she once had accused him of being.

The background characters are sketched with a firm hand, for example, rich Mrs. Loney with the "round young face full of sympathy," and Ilona's parents, who seem both pathetic and majestic in their maintenance of their life of illusion. The Albert Freeman episode gives us another character, briefly but fully developed and also sheds light on Jay, who is prepared to lose his dignity to help convince Freeman to put aside his professional pride and repair Ilona's ancient mink coat. Background details also are precisely chosen. Jay's respectable "white-painted remodelled house with the wrought-iron railing" scrupulously projects the image Jay wants to present of himself to the world. Like the professional he is, Callaghan never loses control of the material.

Nonetheless, there is a certain tiredness about some of the characters. We are offered yet another "literate and interesting bartender" in Silver, and yet another whore who knows the "truth" in the Cookie Lady. Silver, for example, who has "uptown admirers," tells Jay that "there's as much mystery in dirt and dung as there is in heaven." This sort of dialogue casts doubt on Silver's worth rather than proves it. Ilona herself might have become a stereotype had it not been for all the differentiating details that Callaghan gives her. Ilona not only barely misses being the whore with the heart of gold, but she is also too reminiscent of another Callaghan character, Peggy Sanderson. Some of the slang expressions do not work in the way they should. *Joe-boy*, in the opening sentence of the work, though explicit, is dated. *Clown* and *buster* do not work anymore as terms of abuse.

For all that, shorter fiction is what Callaghan excels at, and this story about the power of illusion easily stands next to the author's other sensitively conceived and executed novellas.

Dalhousie University

E.L. Bobak

Figures in a Ground: Canadian Essays on Modern Literature Collected in Honor of Sheila Watson. Edited by Diane Bessai and David Jackel. Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1978. Pp. 365. Cloth \$14.50; paper \$7.50.

The Canadian Imagination: Dimensions of a Literary Culture. Edited by David Staines. Cambridge, Mass., & London: Harvard University Press, 1977. Pp. 265. Cloth \$10.00.

Figures in a Ground is a *festschrift*, as the subtitle indicates, in honour (I decline to adopt the publishers' American spelling of this word) of Sheila Watson. The essays contained in it range from Michael Ondaatje writing on Garcia Marquez to Jonathan Peters writing on Senghor, Achebe, and Soyinka, but whereas the range of the collection as a whole is very wide, the individual essays seem intended for the specialist reader. General readers would probably find Philip Stratford, writing on "Translation as Creation", the most attractive piece in the collection; Canadianists, however, can choose from Robin Mathews on "The Wacousta Factor", Ted Blodgett on Hébert and Munro, Fred Cogswell on "Little Magazines and Small Presses in Canada", and Eli Mandel on "The Ethnic Voice in Canadian Writing". A set of drawings by Norman Yates, entitled "Figures in Space", is also included, with a brief introduction by Yates. The volume is a conscientious piece of work, including Notes on Contributors and a general Index (which seemed to work so far as I tested it), although the placing of the notes to individual essays all together at the back of the book struck me as being irritating and inefficient. The most useful thing in the

volume is the brief biography of Sheila Watson herself, with the accompanying sketch "Sheila Watson in Edmonton", by Henry Kreisel.

The desire of the people concerned to honour as important a writer and teacher in Canadian Literature as Sheila Watson undoubtedly is can be easily understood; that the honour should take the form of a *festschrift* is appropriate in the circumstances. Nevertheless, such a motive is not sufficient to hold the collection together or to justify its purchase. Few readers will have use for more than a small part of it, and \$7.50 is rather a high price to pay for a volume which will be of only partial use.

The Canadian Imagination suffers from a similar but not identical handicap. This volume is a collection of eight essays; five of them were originally given as lectures in a Canadian Literature course organized by David Staines in the Department of English and American Literature and Language at Harvard in 1976, and the remaining three were written later at Staines's invitation especially for inclusion in the volume. The rollcall is distinguished (Margaret Atwood, Marine Leland, Peter Buitenhuis, Marshall McLuhan, Douglas Bush, Brian Parker, Northrop Frye, and George Woodcock) and the subjects varied (monsters, Quebec literature, E.J. Pratt, Canadian identity, Stephen Leacock, Canadian drama, Canadian lack of ghosts, and the land, respectively). Although the essays individually make interesting reading, it is difficult to see what purpose the collection will serve, since for a Canadianist it is a random assortment of general topics, and for the non-Canadianist, too specialized in some essays. It is perhaps intended for the market outside Canada, particularly for those who took (or would like to have taken) the original course, where it might act as a sampler of Canadian criticism on Canadian topics (although it is to be hoped that they see Frye rather than McLuhan as more representative of Canadian critical prose style, since the latter's writing has all the nerve-shredding qualities of chalk squeaking on a blackboard). But even for such an extra-mural market, it must be emphasized that the selection, arrangement, and distinction of the writers concerned by no means add up to what the blurb on the dust-jacket calls a "thorough exploration of the nature, meaning, and prospects of a literary culture that is becoming more and more an expected and familiar part of American and English literary life"; it resembles more the findings of the five blind men who were asked to report on the elephant. Even the Introduction by David Staines himself, which forms virtually a ninth essay, cannot hold the volume together.

The problem with both *Figures in a Ground* and *The Canadian Imagination* is that the motive for collecting them springs from something external to the essay topics themselves. Consequently, they are flawed in two ways—aesthetically and practically. Aesthetically they lack unity and practically they are too general to be of much use. It is a pity that so much hard work has gone into the production of two volumes whose purchase cannot conscientiously be recommended.

The Curious Perspective: Literary and Pictorial Wit in the Seventeenth Century.
By Ernest B. Gilman. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1978. Pp.
xii, 267. \$16.00.

Ernest Gilman uses his subject, visual and literary wit and perspective, as a glass through which to cast a refracted and magnified image of the changing attitudes towards perception and knowledge in the Renaissance. His is not only an extremely thorough and useful book for its identification of the techniques and uses of perspective and of the shift from the natural to the curious perspective, but it is also a provocative one for its ability to adapt this material to a critical approach to individual literary works and to the period as a whole. I doubt if there is any important reference to perspective in English literature of the period which is not examined or at least mentioned here.

To a large extent Gilman's success derives from his sensible view of the limits of such an interdisciplinary study, for as he argues in his theoretical introduction, there is a common intellectual impulse behind the art and literature which makes use of witty perspective, and it can be identified in terms of their similar effects on the audience, and as Gilman says, the "experience of a witness to a literary text . . . and to a painting are comparable in a way the objects themselves are not" (p. 10). And although there is frequently an imbalance or awkwardness in Gilman's use of the visual arts—he repeatedly places their analysis in the midst of his literary criticism, thus diverting the flow of his argument—he never makes unrealistic assumptions about the influence or interrelatedness of the arts.

Instead, in his early chapters outlining the development of the Albertian perspective, he explains that behind it and the analogous literature is the "assumption that the world *can* be comprehended by a rational method" (p. 26). Alberti's rationalism succeeds in subsequent decades to the skeptic's challenge of the humanist point of view, and perspective, which was originally perfected to create the illusion of realism, was used instead to "conceal the optical truth and produce an experience of doubt and readjustment" (p. 38). In the various forms of *trompe l'oeil* in the visual arts, and in the witty literature of the seventeenth century (much of it making far more specific use of perspective techniques than has been realized), Gilman perceives how "both the nature of the world depicted and of the viewer's relationship to it undergo a change" from previous decades (p. 34).

Gilman goes on to demonstrate specific but important uses of perspective technique in Shakespeare (*Richard II*, *Twelfth Night*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*), Donne, Herbert, and Greville, and Marvell's *Upon Appleton House*, interlarding his discussion with numerous lesser examples and with often distracting visual analogues such as Holbein's *The Ambassadors* (for *Richard II*) and Velazquez's *Las Meninas* (for *Upon Appleton House*). These critical chapters are less convincingly and less clearly argued, suffering from too much digressive detail that obscures his argument. In particular, Gilman's technique

creates something of an anamorphic perspective on the literature, so that we must view it from the oblique, qualifying angle of an obtrusive analogue: Holbein interferes with our perspective of *Richard II*, an analysis of *Las Meninas* distracts from our view of *Appleton House*, and an ill-placed look at *Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay* obstructs our vision of Shakespeare's comedies. While these readings are themselves sound, the rationale for their placement is doubtful, and they leave us, finally, not with a clear perspective, but with a sharply divided vision of the material.

This is especially true of the chapters on Shakespeare. There is no doubt of Shakespeare's interest in perspective, but Gilman does not really make clear why it is appropriate for Shakespeare's comic vision that Orsino, on the brink of understanding, should describe the scene of Viola and Sebastian together as a "natural perspective, that is and is not" (V.1.209), or reconcile the differences between Bottom's "double nature," Hermia's double vision, and the contrasting perspectives of Theseus and Hippolyta. Individual readings remain unintegrated, and we are forced to return to Frye, Barber or even Coghill for a more coherent view of Shakespearean comedy.

A similar problem besets the treatment of *Richard II*, where Bushy's rather misleading description of Isabel's fears as "perspectives, which rightly gazed upon/ Show nothing but confusion - eyed awry,/ Distinguish form" (II.2.18-20) forms the basis for an over-intricate view of Shakespeare's view of history. Gilman's point, that "the painter's anamorphic 'perspectives' lend the playwright not just a local metaphor but . . . a conceptual model for seeing the chronicle of English history" (p. 97), is sound and important, but is unfortunately greatly obscured by the odd shape of his argument.

Fragmented as the criticism often is, it is frequently insightful. Gilman's analysis of the metaphysical poets' adaptation of the new optics for a clearer vision through the Pauline glass (1Cor. 13:12) is very interesting and gives a new perspective on their understanding that grace is a way of perceiving God aright and that, as Herbert says, the "devils are our sinnes in perspective." And, notwithstanding Velazquez, Gilman succeeds in demonstrating how Marvell's repeated shifts in point of view affect the reader and bring him into the mutable world of Nun Appleton, forcing him to experience the moral ambiguities of that poem.

But the important thing that Gilman accomplishes with the book as a whole—apart from his interest in the visual and literary arts—is to make us keenly aware of the implications of the word "perspective." By reminding us that the word now commonly used to designate a correct point of view was originally less charged with moral presumptions, Gilman suggests how the arts perforce question human cognition, its limits and potential, and how very aware of this were the writers and artists of the Renaissance. The divided vision that is essential to perspective techniques is, as Gilman says, "the condition of our knowledge since we came out of Eden" (p. 230).

A Canadian Millionaire. By Michael Bliss. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1978. Pp. XI, 562. \$19.95.

The sub-title of this valuable work, "The Life and Business Times of Sir Joseph Flavelle, Bart., 1858-1939", is indeed an apt one. Flavelle's entire story is placed in the context of business, even when he is acting the roles of "Holy Joe," "Joseph the Provider," or plain "Old Black Joe". Since the author has skilfully placed Flavelle in the centre of Canadian business growth this book represents a very worthwhile contribution to the study of Canadian capitalism coming of age. Of almost equal value is the light shed upon the character of Flavelle for, regardless of how much distaste some might develop for his attitudes, especially in business practices, it is difficult not to like and admire the man. The author is critically fair in his presentation and discerning in his interpretations. The massive amount of research necessary for such a study, especially in the analysis of business and financial procedures, is impressive. Michael Bliss has used his material well.

It might be stated that Flavelle was a devout Canadian exponent of the Puritan ethic. Regardless of the argument that his Methodist background deferred present gratifications in hopes of future reward, the evidence strongly suggests that present rewards were a very positive factor in Flavelle's thinking. His brand of Christianity easily loaned itself to business success; hard work and self-discipline were not only religious injunctions, they were the practical tools necessary for self-advancement. It was not difficult for one of Flavelle's Methodist background to make the transition from godliness to worldliness. This is not to imply that he was a religious hypocrite for he was not; it is to suggest that he represented a not uncommon species in the growing capitalist society of Canada. Not all of our successful businessmen were Presbyterians.

Another positive influence on Flavelle was his devotion to his mother, his wife and family. Because of his father's weakness for strong liquor the standards of the family were established and maintained by the mother, for whom Joseph had a lifetime devotion. Her opinion was of great importance to him; the exhortations and admonitions of his mother remained always as an integral part of Joe's character. This may help to explain why he was usually one rung up on his competitors.

Flavelle moved to Toronto in 1887 at the age of twenty-nine; even at that time Toronto was becoming known as Hogtown due to the impact of the William Davies Company, the largest pork-packing company in the British Empire. Thirteen years after his arrival there Flavelle was a millionaire. He and Hogtown seemed to be made for each other. Involving himself with banks, insurance and trust companies, the Robert Simpson Company, and the powerful Davies firm, his influence expanded with that of the growing metropolis. The inter-relationships, some would argue monopolies, described as prevalent in Toronto's business growth are most impressive. Flavelle, despite his doubts on the ethics of certain business practices, was involved in a myriad of companies

which were assuming an increasing role in national business affairs. Regardless, he tried, and usually succeeded in maintaining a strong code of ethics in his own work. In many respects his conscience was sensitively attuned to the social obligations which he believed men of wealth owed to society generally. Although his commitment to individualism was without limits, he showed a paternalistic regard for his workers in an age before union leadership was able to exhibit the same type of concern.

It was this sense of obligation which led him to make very generous sacrifices of time and money towards community projects such as the Toronto General Hospital and the University of Toronto, to mention only two of the many institutions he assisted. Flavelle House itself, which later became the home for the Department of History, was a sizeable donation and must hold a special place for the author who was first tutored in history in what had been one of the servant's bedrooms. Most of the never ending requests for assistance were answered, usually with an amount of money. His religious beliefs remained strong in a changing world.

It was as the head of the Imperial Munitions Board that Flavelle made a very significant contribution in wartime, for he organized, as perhaps no other Canadian could, Canadian munitions production. It was also in wartime that his company was accused of profiteering, by selling bad meat to the soldiers overseas. As much as Flavelle denied the story it remained throughout his life as a blot on his reputation. The author deals with Flavelle's wartime contribution in great detail, perhaps inordinately so. One suspects that the documentation for that period was heavy and Professor Bliss believed that he had to use most of it.

Flavelle's comments on certain Canadian businessmen and leading politicians appear in retrospect to have been very shrewd. Though a long time Progressive Conservative he became disenchanted with the party and rather disillusioned with government generally in his later years. He experienced a similar feeling of disappointment with the United Church, an institution which he believed had strayed too far from the Methodism of his youth.

Finally, although Flavelle had a solid grasp of national business operations, his understanding of Canada developed from his life in Peterborough and Toronto. If a policy was successful for business in Toronto it was assumed to be good for Canada. 'Ontario regionalism writ large' represents only one interpretation of Canadian history. It is a perfectly understandable one, but it must also be kept in context, for every cultural region in Canada uses its own prism in viewing the colors of Canadian nationalism.

This is a very solid work; Michael Bliss has done his research well and has used his obvious talents to create a good story—and write a good history of "The Life and Business Times of Sir Joseph Flavelle, Bart., 1858-1939."

The Journals and Miscellaneous Notebooks of Ralph Waldo Emerson. Volume XIV, 1854-1861. Edited by Susan Sutton Smith and Harrison Hayford. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1978. pp xxvi, 523. \$35.00

There are five journals and six notebooks in this volume. They are very much like other journals from the decade prior to the Civil War, which Emerson kept. Over and over he returns to the question of slavery. "What times are these," he wrote to his brother in 1856, "& how they make our studies impertinent, & even ourselves the same! I am looking into the map to see where I shall go with my children when Boston & Massachusetts surrender to the slave-trade." These years (1854-1861) were momentous for Emerson as well as for the nation. The year 1855 found him writing his famous letter to Whitman; in 1856 he published *English Traits*; in 1860 he completed *The Conduct of Life*; and in 1861 the war began.

While reading R er's translation of nine Upanishads, Emerson wrote what is perhaps his most singular poem, which he first called "Song of the Soul" but which he published as a contributing founder in the first issue of *The Atlantic Monthly* under the title "Brahma." It summed up the oriental cast of two decades of transcendental speculation, although he remained convinced that while "We read the orientals" we "remain occidentals." With the slavery issue on his mind, he mused "The hour is coming when the strongest will not be strong enough." He continued as always to distrust movements and organizations, "The abolitionists are not better men for their zeal. ...The roarers for liberty turn out to be slaves themselves; ...the question is how many honest men are there in town?" "I go," he writes in 1856, "for those who received a retaining fee to this party of freedom, before they came into this world. I would trust Garrison, I would trust Henry Thoreau, that they would make no compromises. I would trust Horace Greeley, I would trust my venerable friend Mr. Hoar, that they would be staunch for freedom to the death." But he felt even Greeley and Hoar might be taken in by the seeming honesty of the other party and he was troubled that their "benevolent credulity" was "unsafe." Emerson trusted neither the South nor Southern sympathizers in the North. In 1859 he wrote, "the insanity of the South" offers no solution "but servile war & the Africanization of that country." He was hissed and heckled by an audience whose sympathies were divided when he attempted to speak at a meeting of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society in Boston in January of 1861. For a man at odds with "movements" he nevertheless was always ready to do his part. The mid-1850's found him preparing to address the Women's Rights Convention in Boston. His doubts ("nihilizing" he had called it years before) always haunted him: "the artist life seems to me intolerably thin & superficial." He saw, however, no alternatives in the trades or professions, which were "wretched" in their own ways and "without end or aim."

Troubled as he was by his own feelings of loneliness, his admiration and love for Thoreau was expressed frequently in ambivalent terms. As he wrote in his essay on Thoreau several years later, he felt Thoreau lacked ambition. "My dear Henry," he wrote, "A frog was made to live in a swamp, but a man was not made to live in a swamp. Yours ever, R." Emerson knew he could not reverence the wild like Thoreau and he realized his loneliness was in some way related to what he called his lack of "animal spirits." The solitary pilgrimage in nature on which Thoreau was embarked attracted Emerson, "Henry avoids commonplace, & talks birch bark to all comers, & reduces them all to the same insignificance." Intellectually Emerson understood the meaning of Thoreau's life as he understood the metaphysics and religious perspectives behind "Brahma," but he could not *feel* either. His orientalism was not instinctive.

Emerson had to struggle in order to complete *English Traits* and was steadily at work on the book even during his lecture tours in the West. Four years later he expressed his immense relief to be finished with *The Conduct of Life*, although he was already refining another series of lectures to be published as *Society and Solitude*. In the late fifties and thereafter, Emerson did not seem to have the same joy in writing that he had experienced with his earlier essays. He often expressed his weariness in these journals, proclaiming "I am a natural reader, and only a writer in the absence of natural writers. In a true time, I should never have written." While this is clearly an expression of intellectual exhaustion, he had long before written in "The American Scholar" that "There is then creative reading as well as creative writing."

Volume Fourteen is forever interesting, containing provocative journal entries written amidst turmoil and doubt just prior to the beginning of the War between the States, a war he saw as inevitable. The editing is excellent.