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LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ
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ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE CITY
IN THE
CANADIAN REALISTIC NOVEL OF THE TWENTIES

by



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ABSTRACT

Although half the Canadian population was urban in 1921, the dominant form of fiction was still the rural romance. However, the post-war decade was an important transitional period for the Canadian novel, which started to use the city as a setting and city life as subject matter. In addition, realism seemed to be a more appropriate tool than romance for dealing with the social and political turmoil caused by World War I. Thus, the beginnings of both realistic and urban writing are linked together, although realism penetrated the rural novel in the twenties as well.

This thesis discusses the work of a number of early realist novelists who expressed attitudes towards the city in either non-urban or urban writing of the twenties. Among the writers treated are Robert Stead, Bertrand Sinclair, Frederick Grove, Hubert Evans, Douglas Durkin, Augustus Bridle, Madge Macbeth, Fred Jacob, Jessie Sime, Beaumont Cornell, Raymond Knister, and Morley Callaghan. There also is some discussion of Harwood Steele, Peter Donovan, Francis Marion Beynon, Frank C. Davison, Merrill Denison, Ralph Connor, Nellie McClung, and Alan Sullivan. Works are analyzed through recurring themes of the period--the northern myth, the alienation of the returned soldier, rural/urban conflict as a result of the implementation of the National Policy, and the plight of the artist in society. In addition, since the dominant art form of the twenties in Canada was painting, the relation between the northern myth and painting and fiction has been examined. A survey of post-twenties fiction is included as well.

Not only did urban man begin to merit serious assessment in the twenties, but he also began to be seen less negatively. The simplistic polarization characteristic of the rural romance--virtue on the land and vice in the city--was being questioned.

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To

Christian, Laura and Nadia

Introduction

Writing in the late twenties, Raymond Knister¹ reports a series of conversations he had had with Morley Callaghan about the opportunities for writers in Canada. Callaghan had had a few stories of city life rejected by the editor of the Toronto Star Weekly, and it becomes increasingly clear to Knister that his own stories had been "tolerated" by the editor because they dealt with "farm stuff." However, even some of the farm stories had been rejected when the editor had thought them too "real" or lacking in "plot." Thus, the Star not only disliked urban subject matter, but also rural material when it became too realistic. The two men had the rejection of their writing in common, but their differences were significant. As they got to know each other, Knister realized that not only did Callaghan not "care about the country," having "always lived in Toronto," but he thought of Knister as an "idealist and a stylist." Presumably, at this time Callaghan did not view his own work as stemming from "idealism" or as having "refinement of style." Descriptive language of this sort was often used by critics of the twenties to describe the rural and historical romances of the period.² Moreover, Knister describes as an "idee fixe" [sic] Callaghan's belief that Canadian life was not represented by Canadian books, and thus Callaghan's wish to dissociate himself from writing which was not faithful to life as he knew it is understandable. Knister reports that Callaghan was delighted to discover in the files of Toronto newspapers records of the fact that "there really had been in Toronto as many bootleg

killings as there were in his novel" (Strange Fugitive). Though Knister was not as concerned as Callaghan with the city per se as subject matter, his interest in presenting "an indigenous" Canadian life, rural or urban, was just as strong as Callaghan's. He argues that it might be "pleasant" to believe that the "open spaces and association with sagacious animals and noble savages" have made Canadians "braver and more unselfish than other peoples" despite the fact that "half" the population "has nothing directly to do with the great open spaces, not to mention the animals and savages";³ however, he reminds the reader, the differences between men are not more important than their similarities, and Canadians have cities that "in spite of polite contrary pretensions," would like to boast of "skyscrapers higher than those of New York." The two men, thus, concurred in refusing to accept a romantic concentration on rural life as an "all-Canadian literature."

To some extent, this problem is still with us. Though writers no longer churn out rural romances with the same enthusiasm they exhibited in the early part of the century, the experiences of those who live in cities have remained less well documented than the non-urban experience of life. Numerous novels set in the city have been written since the twenties (Callaghan is now one of our principal urban novelists), but fewer than one would expect, given the size of the urban population. Of the major novels written after the twenties, a majority have either non-urban settings or are concerned with the non-urban experience of a city dweller (see Chapter VII for discussion of post-twenties novels). In a recent issue of Canadian Literature, Ann Mandel discusses what she describes as the "peculiar" and "restricted" "'moral reference'" which is "chillingly devoid" of any sense of "men as

city dwellers, as citizens."⁴ She points out that the repeated emphasis in literature and criticism on the land and nature excludes from a share in the literature "the majority of people" who have "no history of contact with 'the land,' who can never own it, who live in cities, are cosmopolitan." She continues as follows:

They are excluded by experience foreign to them and by threat, from something that is valued in this society--intimacy with and ownership of land, and therefore barred from a sense that they are part of that written word. In this literature and criticism of ownership, 'back to the land' stories (re-claiming it), novels about restoring or returning to ancestral homes, tales of getting in touch with roots or family trees, critical reiteration of our wilderness heritage, are further versions of the same exclusivity.⁵

This thesis is an attempt to help in the redress of the imbalance that Knister and Callaghan discussed over fifty years ago and that Mandel drew attention to only a few years ago. She points out that the imbalance is both literary and critical. The latter is naturally a function of the former, as one cannot assess writing about the city if there is none.

However, what perhaps has not been sufficiently noted is that attitudes towards the city are often present in literature whose principal concern is rural life, as well as in novels whose background is principally urban. Thus, the urban dweller may not be as thoroughly excluded from fiction as Mandel's remarks would suggest, though the angle of view may be oblique. The critic may have to look at writing with a non-urban setting to find his urban dwellers or assess the urban experience at second-hand through attitudes towards the city held by those who do not dwell there. In fact, in the twenties a number of authors of novels with rural settings expressed attitudes towards the city. Moreover, many of these books were moving away from the ubiquitous rural romance and attempting to be faithful to the

"indigenous" life that Knister justly thought was being ignored in the writing of the period. In addition, in the twenties a smaller group of novels had appeared whose setting actually was the city, and whose characters were realistically depicted in situations purely urban. This thesis is concerned with these two groups of novels, that is, with both urban and non-urban novels which offer, or claim to offer, realistic views of the city. Though "realistic" novels can be found in Canada earlier than the twenties (for example, the work of Robert Barr and Sara Jeanette Duncan), such works are isolated and do not represent the beginning of a substantial body of realistic writing. That beginning did not occur until the publication in 1921 of Jessie Sime's Our Little Life, set in the slums of Montreal in 1917-18. Thus the twenties are pivotal years for both realism in the Canadian novel and for urban writing as well.

Few writers of the period offer a body of work large enough to merit separate consideration. Most novels can be treated more conveniently in the context of recurring themes of the period. The subjects of Chapter I, Robert Stead and Bertrand Sinclair, wrote a considerable volume of fiction, but, more importantly, they are representative of the two non-urban vantage points from which the city is viewed in the twenties, the farm and the wilderness. Frederick Philip Grove, by virtue of the chronology and number of his early novels (seven works spanning the period from 1922 to 1930), is the only writer to whom an entire chapter has been accorded (Chapter II). Grove's prominence in Canadian letters also forces discrete assessment.

Perhaps the most significant fact about the twenties is that it was a post-war decade. The effect of the war was so great that it helped force realism into existence, a literary mode more suitable than the rural romance

for dealing with the war's legacy of social and political turmoil. This legacy was best exemplified by the returned soldiers, maimed in both body and spirit, who reacted against the urbanization and industrialization which they thought had sent them to the conflict. Literary work which presents the attitude of these men is examined in Chapter III.

Industrialization and urbanization as national political goals are examined in a variety of books of the period, some of which reject these goals in favour of views of the nation which stress its agricultural character. Chapter IV surveys some of these books. The political nationalism which encouraged the growth of cities grew along with a cultural nationalism whose goal was an independent and indigenous growth of the arts. The place for the artist to develop best seemed to be the large city with its opportunities, its audience for art, and the company of fellow-artists, but many novels of the period detail the dispiriting circumstances under which the artist had to work and live. The artist's freedom to create was hampered by his audience's sense of the proprieties and by its simplistic approach to artistic production. Lack of understanding was only part of the problem. The artist often could not obtain the training he required, even in the city, nor could he support himself by practising his art. The subject of Chapter V is thus the artistic climate in the cities of Canada both in the twenties and in the period preceding that decade.

To some extent, painters were an exception to the situation described in the novels discussed in Chapter V. What was probably the most important movement in Canadian painting reached its apogee in the twenties with the work of Thomson and the Group of Seven. That movement was the romantic

rendering of the wilderness of northern Ontario, an expression in painting of the northern myth. An excellent literary exemplification of the myth is Bertrand Sinclair's work (set in British Columbia), discussed in Chapter I, but a variety of other literature of the period is treated in Chapter VI along with Group paintings. Chapter VI also concentrates on two early Callaghan works, No Man's Meat and A Broken Journey, which were a reaction against the northern myth.

Chapter VII offers a survey of both urban and non-urban novels written since the twenties which present clear points of view about the Canadian city. It is not meant to be comprehensive, and the reader will certainly be able to find additional examples, but it is hoped that this short, general treatment of the subject may be enough to indicate some patterns and trends.

The city has been viewed as well in the twenties through the eyes of the immigrant--for example, in Laura Goodman Salverson's novels, in Martha Ostenso's Wild Geese, and in Flos Jewell Williams' New Furrows (about a Belgian immigrant family in Alberta), books which are not treated in this thesis. Grove's A Search for America is also an immigrant novel, as are Bridle's Hansen and Sime's Our Little Life, books which are discussed in this thesis, but on which the emphasis has been placed differently. Another possible vantage point from which to view the city has been through the eyes of labour or the labourer. Certain patterns emerge through the examination of a group of books consisting of Alan Sullivan's The Inner Door, Bertrand Sinclair's Poor Man's Rock, Sime's Our Little Life, Durkin's The Magpie, and A. M. Stephens' The Gleaming Archway. Only two of these five novels have been discussed in this thesis, although, with the exception

of Sime's book, all treat the struggle between the worker and big corporations in such industries as fishing, logging and the production of rubber products. However, as immigration was only one of several goals contained within the National Policy, and as labour problems resulted from its implementation, the choice of novels dealing with the larger issue seemed more logical. Naturally, a thesis concerned solely with literature which dealt with urbanization and industrialization as national political goals would have been structured differently, and would have had to include, for example, all novels of the period which dealt with big business, but could have easily excluded novels dealing with artists,

Since most readers will be unfamiliar with the novels of this period, and indeed, as many of these novels are scattered in libraries over the country and not readily available for reading or reference, I have dealt with them at greater length than their literary merit would warrant. However, until technology, possibly computer technology, makes these books accessible, the critic examining them has no other recourse.

Though this thesis generally withholds literary judgment and treats the novels as social documents, there are some exceptions to this approach. Heretofore, certain writers of the twenties have been ignored or underestimated. Jessie Sime, a pioneer realist writing on city themes who pre-dates Callaghan, was dismissed in The Literary History of Canada as being only of "historical importance."⁶ Though Our Little Life contains a rich fund of information about the social conditions under which the working-class poor lived in Montreal in 1917-18, the novel also links the social detail tightly to a delicately delineated account of an emotional relationship between the two principal characters. Sime is not the only

twenties writer of literary importance who has been overlooked. Fred Jacob, with two novels and a collection of plays to his credit, is another. Robert Stead, who has been given some recent critical attention, deserves to have more of his novels than The Homesteaders and Grain in current reprint. One or two of Sinclair's novels deserve attention as well, and though Madge Macbeth's Shackles has not been treated in this thesis, a new edition of that novel probably would be much appreciated by those interested in feminist literature. Although Callaghan enjoys a considerable reputation in Canada today, his fame rests mainly on his short stories and four novels (Such Is My Beloved, They Shall Inherit the Earth, More Joy in Heaven, and The Loved and the Lost). The significance of Callaghan's early work needs to be re-evaluated, a process which has been begun with the recent re-printing of No Man's Meat but which needs to be continued. An attempt in this direction has been made in Chapter IV of this thesis. The treatment of Grove has been evaluative as well. Against the background of the rural romance of the twenties, Grove looms large, but his present prominence does not survive close scrutiny. Knister as well is surely more significant as a writer of short stories and as a critic than he is as a novelist. To some extent, availability of texts through the New Canadian Library and the Laurentian Library has directed critical attention to certain writers while others equally meritorious have languished on library shelves in their original editions.

As Ann Mandel pointed out, a consideration of man as a city dweller is essential to literature if a large part of the population is not to feel that it has been barred from the written word in its most truthful form.

That a considerable body of urban literature had not developed by the twenties, despite the fact that half the population was urban at the beginning of the decade, may have been caused partly by the compressed nature of Canadian growth as a nation. Not all aspects of a culture proceed at precisely the same rate, and urbanization as a social and historical phenomenon shot ahead before the literary consciousness could absorb it. This may have been accentuated by the fact that urbanization was, to some extent, an artificial development fostered by political decisions. Rural literature predominated because the country was rural in spirit--that is, a view of the city as a part of nature was only beginning to develop. The city, made by man, was viewed as "unnatural." (Lampman's "City of the End of Things," written less than thirty years before the period under consideration, is apocalyptic in its view of a mechanistic city.) That man is a part of nature and that the work of his hands and brain, be it an asphalt pavement or the growth of a stalk of wheat, is the result of the "natural" operation of his being had not yet been accepted by either Canadian literary figures or the public for Canadian books. Ultimately, Grove's view of modern civilization is a polarizing one which separates man from nature, whereas Grove's intent was to link the two. The view that man can be a completely authentic being only when he maintains a relationship with the land suggests that urban social and political relationships which men have formed with each other are false and "unnatural." By extension, the land becomes associated with virtue and the city with vice. This view of life was assisted in the twenties by the absence of large-scale agrarian capitalism. The family farm was still the norm, and most of the visible evidences of power were in

the city or controlled from there. Moreover, it appears now that Canadian penetration of the West, what Ramsay Cook calls "government-sponsored 'defensive expansionism,'" probably operated as a source of regionalism rather than of national integration. From the beginning the West saw itself as a hinterland in relation to a metropolis, and western writers produced literature defensive in character which stressed the virtues of the land and agriculture in order to deny, directly or obliquely, the urban experience.

Once a view of the city as a part of nature is accepted, the simplistic polarization of vice and virtue breaks down. One must then begin to assess urban man in a different way. When one looks at the literature of the twenties, one finds the tentative beginnings of an alteration in this balance, especially in Stead, Bridle, Jacob, Sime, Knister, and Callaghan. Their importance is thus both literary and social, for with increasing urbanization must come changes in our view of ourselves in society. The northern myth, so strong in Sinclair and other popular writers of the period, contributed to the maintenance of the view that the city was corrupt and the wilderness pure and thus slowed the inevitable consideration of man in the mass in constant social contact with others. The myth focussed on the individual who had few social experiences but many contacts with nature.

Thus, the literature of the twenties represents a turning-point in our view of ourselves in society. On the one hand, literature is still arguing for the atomistic view of the individual, on the land and in the wilderness. The growth of food and the development of a spiritual relationship to nature are viewed as important goals of the individual life. The city is seen as separate from nature, as materialistic and mechanistic. On the

other hand, literature is beginning to see that man can continue to be considered as an individual even if his social relationships are multiplied and his basic activities involve machines, and indeed even if he has altered his physical environment so radically that no blade of grass can be seen around him. Individual man continues to have emotional and spiritual needs regardless of the activities with which he occupies his waking hours and regardless of his physical environment. This is not to say that his activities and environment do not influence his emotions and spirit, but only that the journey within certainly is of more significance than the journey without, and whether man is urban or rural is of less importance than the dilemmas encountered along the way--it is the search that is of enduring interest. After the twenties, the city novel became an established fact in the literature, but anti-urban feeling remained strong in both urban and non-urban literature, a testament to a continuing resistance in the Canadian mind to the conditions of life in the cities.

This resistance manifested itself most strikingly in the twenties through Group of Seven paintings. These paintings, in which man rarely appears, separate man from nature even more decisively than the rural and wilderness literature which interpreted man in an urban environment as unnatural. Paintings of a cultivated landscape are representations of a radically altered physical environment, but the painter by his choice of subject gives us a view of human effort--human life is implied by the furrow. No communal relation is suggested to the viewer by the major Group paintings. Harris's Arctic does not beckon, and even Thomson's Algonquin Park has an encapsulated beauty into which it is difficult to project oneself. The paintings idealize the landscape, offering us utopia or a noble savagery,

but hardly an invitation. Nonetheless, it is nearly impossible to view the paintings without ascribing to them qualities which are human--for example, spirituality-- , so frequently have they been linked in writing with "the national character. Nonetheless, they were painted by urban artists anxious to erect a wall between corrupt, materialistic mass man and the purity of the wilds. (Roy Daniells described Lampman's "bell-tongued city with its glorious towers" in the poem "The City" as a "protection from actualities."⁸) Thus, although this thesis is not about painting, it is impossible to ignore the fact that the dominant art form of the twenties supported the generally anti-urban tone of much of the literature. The Group supplied us with a collection of visual images to contrast positively with our negative images of mass man and technology.

As our society continues to define itself in industrial and technological terms, the need becomes greater and greater for imaginative political and social solutions to the problems of urban living. Therefore, literature which keeps us in touch with the human dilemma within the city becomes more and more important. It is only through exploration of the plight of the individual that the plight of the society as a whole becomes clear. Literature that rejects the validity of the urban experience or polarizes city and land excludes and falsifies the experience of the three-quarters of the population that is urban. (Half of the population was urban in 1921.) Thus, it is of importance to us to trace the beginnings of our urban literature.

Notes

¹ Raymond Knister, "Canadian Literati," Journal of Canadian Fiction, IV (Summer, 1975), 160-68.

² See, for example, Louis Arthur Cunningham, "Splinters From a Free Lance: Traits of Canadian Literature," The Canadian Bookman, IX (Nov., 1927), 329, and N. De Bertrand Lugin, "A Peter Pan of Literature," The Canadian Bookman, VIII (April, 1926), 116-17 for critical rhetoric of the sort to which Callaghan objected. See also a McClelland and Stewart advertisement for its current list of books in The Canadian Bookman, II (Jan., 1920), 78.

³ Knister, ibid., 160.

⁴ Ann Mandel, "Critical Streets: Tallman's Criticism," Canadian Literature, 78 (Autumn, 1978), 124-30

⁵ Ibid., 125.

⁶ Desmond Pacey, "Fiction 1920-1940," in The Literary History of Canada, ed. Carl Klinck, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), p. 676.

⁷ Ramsay Cook, "Frontier and Metropolis: The Canadian Experience," in The Maple Leaf Forever: Essays on Nationalism and Politics in Canada (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1971), p. 171.

⁸ Roy Daniells, "Lampman and Roberts," in The Literary History of Canada, ed. Carl Klinck, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), p. 391.

Chapter I

Stead and Sinclair:

The Furrow and the Hidden Places versus the City

The work of Robert Stead and Bertrand Sinclair is representative of the approach to the city taken in many novels of the twenties. Though Stead is a substantially better writer than Sinclair, the novels of both men offer a way into the thinking of the period about urban life. Stead contrasts the rural with the urban, while Sinclair's concern is with wilderness life as contrasted with and superior to urban life, but both writers examine the deleterious effects of materialism on the individual.

Though Stead has a bias in favour of a life lived close to nature, by no means can he be seen as condemning the city. Nor does Stead offer us a view of a benign prairie which totally neglects the harsher aspects of farming there. Stead believed that the universe has what he called "Plan and Purpose," and that it is possible to perceive them with greater ease in a life spent tilling the soil, but he never discounted the rewards of a life in the city. It is materialism and a narrow view of existence ("the furrow") that Stead objects to, and these may be found as readily on a homestead as in the city. Though Stead depicts John Harris of The Homesteaders as admirable in the early stages of his farming career, he becomes unappealing as a character once he has adopted

materialism as a standard though he still remains a farmer. In Dave Elden of The Cowpuncher, Stead creates a big businessman who remains an appealing character because he never fully adopts values based on money. As an early realist, Stead viewed both country and city with a certain neutrality.

The consistent connection that Sinclair's novels make between the independent and individualistic spirit and the British Columbia wilderness places him among those Canadian writers who have accepted and propagated what Carl Berger calls the northern theme (see Chapter VI), that is, the notion that Canada's uniqueness is based on its northern location, the qualities of endurance its people possess, and its liberty. As so many of Sinclair's characters are Americans, the implication is that the Canadian north is providing for the rugged, individualistic American what his own country cannot. Sinclair's characters, if they are worthwhile, suffer hardship without complaint. It is not even a matter of endurance; they hardly notice the difficulties of life in the wild. Many of them see themselves as adhering to a natural ethic derived from contact with nature which is superior to the man-made ethic which governs city dwellers. Living according to a natural ethic breeds a superior type of man who is unwilling to compromise his principles. This man is willing to exploit the environment for the benefit of himself and others because he sees such work as the most creative that man is capable of undertaking. When man works at the heart of nature, he realizes his potential for growth and achieves the greatest possible satisfaction. Nature is so abundant that man can subdue it without necessarily being destructive of it. The materialism that is a function of life in a city can easily be avoided

in the wilderness. Noise, distraction, and crowds are other drawbacks of city life; the wilderness offers silence, peace, and spaciousness. The wilderness dweller is seen as one who puts into practice the conclusions about life that the greatest philosophers have arrived at. The rational process, if carried far enough, eventually leads back to nature. A life in the city is confining both physically and mentally. Moral growth is distorted, and the city dweller finds himself justifying dishonesty and living by codes which are trivial and superficial. He loses sight of the truth as a result of having consistently to make compromises. Sinclair certainly must be considered one of Canada's early realist writers, but much of his writing is an exemplification of the romantic northern theme. The twenties were a transitional period for the novel, and Sinclair helps bridge the gap between the romance popular before the war and the realism that Callaghan ushered in.

Robert Stead's seven prairie novels were published over a period of twelve years from 1914 to 1926, and altogether they offer a substantial commentary on the relation between country and city. As a piece of literature, Dennison Grant (1920) is the least interesting of Stead's books. It is irritatingly didactic, containing the most wooden of Stead's characters, Dennison Grant himself, who seems a thinly disguised Robert Stead. But like many books which are only vehicles for an author's opinion, Dennison Grant provides a variety of signposts to Stead's views on problems which he presents with more art in his other works. After acquiring a piece of land, Grant offers us a grandiloquent apostrophe to the soil:

To take a substance straight from the hand of the Creator and be the first in all the world to impose a human will upon it is surely an occasion for solemnity and thanksgiving How can anyone be so gross as to see only materialism in such work as this? Surely it has something of fundamental religion in it! Just as from the soil springs all physical life, may it not be that deep down in the soil are, some way, the roots of the spiritual? The soil feeds the city in two ways; it fills its belly with material food, and it is continually re-vitalizing its spirit with fresh streams of energy which can come only from the land. Up from the soil comes all life, all progress, all development--

(DG, 291)¹

One might see this as a definitive statement of Stead's position on the city in relation to the country, except that as Grant finishes this speech, his plowshare strikes a boulder, and he is spilled from the plow into the soil. As he picks himself up, he remarks that it was fortunate that that train of thought was "ditched" as he was dangerously close to the development of a new "whim." Thus does Stead call a halt, even to his own grandiloquence on the subject of the life of the soil. During the period spent in an unnamed eastern city administering his father's business, Grant takes a walk one day and assesses city and country, art, and nature:

To be sure, it was not like roaming the foothills; there was not the soft breath of the Chinook, nor the deep silence of the mighty valleys. But there was movement and freedom and a chance to think. The city offered artificial attractions in which the foothills had not competed; faultlessly kept parks and lawns; splashes of perfume and color; spraying fountains and yagrant strains of music. He reflected that some merciful principle of compensation has made no place quite perfect and no place entirely undesirable. He remembered also the toll of his life in the saddle; the physical hardship, the strain of long hours and broken weather. And here, too, in a different way, he was in the saddle, and he did not know which strain was the greater. He was beginning to have a higher regard for the men in the saddle of business. The world only saw their success, or, it may be, their pretence of success. But there was a different story from all that, which each one of them could have told for himself. (DG, 223-24)

Stead greatly admired the order and regularity that come with civilization. The combination of art and technology that the "spraying fountains" represent would have intrigued him. His last novel, The Copper Disc (1931), is a detective story about what he saw as a technological miracle that would make art available to millions of people--the radio. In that book he stresses the use of the medium for the transmission of the singing voice. (For further discussion see the concluding chapter.) The automobile figures heavily in The Smoking Flax (1924), as does the steam thresher in Grain (1926). The "artificial attractions" of the city are different in kind from those of the foothills, but they have their own appeal, and a life in the saddle may create saddlesores. Thus Stead reasons that there is "no place quite perfect and no place entirely undesirable."

Nonetheless, Stead's bias towards what he sees as a life of freedom in the west is exemplified through Grant, an urban man who has chosen to live as a cowboy in Alberta. When we encounter Grant, he has rejected his father's fortune rather than live on money he has not earned. He has come to the ranges where he describes himself as "profoundly happy." He believes that he looks ten years younger than his brother Roy, who works as a broker in his father's business, and feels that he has more real friends and is getting more out of life than his brother. With the extremism of the convert, Grant reproduces his Alberta room in his apartment in the east when he is forced to return to Ontario to take over his father's business; he also takes a salary of only two hundred dollars a month for running the business because he believes that is all he is worth. Thus Grant is presented from the beginning as an eccentric idealist prepared to act on his own convictions.

Grant goes to war, and on his return remarks that the "trimmings" of civilian life seem irritating to one who has been dealing with "fundamentals" so long: "Fancy sitting behind a desk, wondering about the stock market, when you've been accustomed to leaning up against a parapet wondering where the next shell is going to burst! If that is not from the sublime to the ridiculous, it is at least from the vital to the inconsequential" (DG, 259). With these words, Stead turns Grant into a "returned soldier," that ubiquitous figure of Canadian life and literature in the twenties. By inserting a returned soldier into his book, Stead can offer a solution to one of the pressing social problems of the period. This returned soldier is a man who has been established already as a social thinker who prefers the west to the east, the country to the city, and "life" to money. Thus Stead has prepared the way for the exposition of a plan he has to alter the nature of Canadian society. The scheme is presented as an alternative to the socialism of the twenties, which Stead saw as destructive.

In The Cowpuncher (1918) Stead has Dave Elden attend a socialist meeting where he admires "the spirit of fair play" which gives every man a chance to speak his mind. Dave hears a lot about "Capital and Labour" and "Masters and Slaves," but he is most impressed by a mother of six who speaks of being unprotected by the state though she is producing the population it claims it so badly needs. Dave's failure to be converted immediately to socialism is clarified when we read Mr. Duncan's strictures on the "destructive brand of Socialism which seizes the fancy of disappointed and disgruntled men and women, and bids them destroy" (CP, 109). Mr. Duncan feels that the quarrel between Labour and Capital can

be resolved by "mutual respect and sympathy, and an honest conception of what constitutes success." Mr. Duncan and his daughter Edith provide the moral fulcrum on which The Cowpuncher turns, so when Duncan offers the "power of Love" as society's "only chance," we must assume that he speaks

Stead:

Doctrines and policies are helpful to the extent to which they cause men to think, either directly or by creating environment conducive to thought; but they will never bring the golden age of happiness. That can come only through the destruction of selfishness, which can be destroyed only by the power of love.

(CP, 110)

Thus Stead is careful to point out that though society is on the verge of being re-organized and indeed badly needs re-organization, pure socialism is not the solution to the problem.

Dennison Grant becomes the spokesman for Stead's plan to set up a social experiment in the Alberta countryside. Grant explains his plan to his future wife, Phyllis Bruce, and to a party of Alberta businessmen. He believes that no one has the right to spend money he has not earned. This belief, which he had held before the war, has been strengthened by his war experiences, which have made even clearer to him the conviction that heroism has no connection with the extremes of wealth and poverty. He believes that since, under our present financial system, we acquire wealth that we do not earn, we should treat it as a "trust to be managed for the benefit of humanity." It is of no use to give one's wealth away because that results in a pauperization of the recipient and a delay in the evolution of new conditions which would correct present injustices. Grant sees the three greatest needs of the post-war period as production (especially of food), instruction, and opportunity. To fill these needs, Grant proposes the following:

I propose to form a company and buy a large block of land, cut it up into farms, build houses and community centres, and put returned men and their families on these farms, under the direction of specialists in agriculture. I shall break up the rectangular survey of the West for something with humanizing possibilities; I mean to supplant it with a system of survey which will permit of settlement in groups--villages if you like--where I shall instal all the modern conveniences of the city, including movie shows. Our statesmen are never done lamenting that population continues to flow from the country to the city, but the only way to stop that flow is to make the country the more attractive of the two.

(DG, 270-71)

Stead's answer to the problem of flow of population from country to city was the same answer devised by other thinkers of the period: bring the advantages of the city to the country so young people will not leave.

Stead has modified this view by the time he writes The Smoking Flax (1924).

Jackson Stake argues that bringing city conveniences, good roads, telephones, and mail delivery to the country can have no effect on the trek from country to city: "You can't make a calf into a kitten an' you can't make the country into a city . . ." (SF, 111). In Grain, three of the four Stake children leave the farm, and Jerry Chansley argues that only living in the city will take the crudeness from Gander.

The economic base of Dennison Grant's scheme is novel. He plans to put up all the money himself, prepare the farms until they are ready to receive a man and his family, sell the man shares equivalent to the value of the farm, and give him a perpetual lease subject to restrictions. The farmer is to keep what he requires for his own use, sell the balance and pay one-third of the proceeds into the treasury of the company. This payment is to be credited towards his purchase of shares, and eventually payment would cease except for levies for running expenses. The shareholders themselves would determine the levies. The keystone of the

idea is buying shares in the company rather than gaining patent to the land through residence and cultivation as in homesteading. A shareholder cannot let the land lie idle or allow machinery and buildings to get out of repair or rent or sell the land, nor can he buy out less successful neighbours and become a land monopolist. If the shareholders have decided that crops must be rotated to preserve the fertility of the soil, this must be done. The community controls the individual, but the individual has the right to argue for changes in the rules of the company at any time. The ambitious in the company would be curbed by giving to each man the same number of votes as he has children. Grant proposes not to get his initial investment back, but to create more farms with the money as it comes in, arguing that there is no limit to what a sum of money can accomplish, provided there are no interest charges. If the experiment succeeds, Grant plans to turn the machinery over to the state as his contribution to the betterment of humanity. If the scheme fails, he only will have demonstrated its unsoundness. Grant believes that natural laws govern man's economic and social relationships and "when those laws have been discovered the impossibilities of to-day will become the common practice of to-morrow" (DG, 276). He plans to make no profit at all from the scheme. Phyllis Bruce describes him as completely unselfish; she sees him as a man who covets no reward for himself, but as one who only seeks the common good. It is the "power of love" that moves Grant, and he fulfills Mr. Duncan's prescriptions for changes in society. Grant plans to farm a half section of his own, but to keep it entirely separate from the company, which he does not want "clinging" about him:

You will notice that my plan, unlike most communistic or socialistic ventures, relieves the individual of no atom of responsibility.

I give him the opportunity, but I put it up to him to make good with that opportunity. I have not overlooked the fact that a man is a man, and never can be made quite into a machine. (DG, 281)

As for society at large, Grant has no "patience with any claim that all men are equal, or capable of rendering equal service to society" (DG, 322), and he wants payment to be made according to service rendered. Grant argues that if a corporation can determine the value of the service rendered by each of its employees, a nation can determine the value of the service rendered by each of its citizens. The problems of society can be solved by hard work, and the "best way to encourage hard work is to find a system by which every man will be rewarded according to the service rendered" (DG, 326).

The implementation of Grant's scheme would halt or slow down urbanization by making the country more economically and socially desirable than the city. Stead was extremely conscious of the fast rate of growth of the prairie city, and though he is never prepared to deny the city its right to exist, he believes that it has grown at a rate detrimental to the nation's economic structure. Dave Elden, the cowpuncher, a character who is identified with both the land and the city, makes the following remarks:

We have built a city here, a great and beautiful city, almost as a wizard might build it by magic over night. There was room for it here; there was occasion; there was justification. But there was neither occasion nor justification for turning miles and miles of prairie land into city lots--lots which in the nature of things cannot possibly, in your time or mine, be required for city purposes. These lots should be producing; wheat, oats, potatoes, cows, butter--that is what we must build our city on. We have been considering the effect rather than the cause. The cause is the country, the neglected country, and until it overtakes the city we must stand still, if we do not go back. Our prosperity has been built on borrowed money, and we have forgotten that borrowed money must,

sometime, be repaid. Meanwhile, in the heart of the greatest agricultural country in the world, we bring our potatoes across the American continent, and our butter across the Pacific Ocean. (CP, 174-75)

One of the side effects of the land boom described in The Cowpuncher is that some of the land bought by the speculators is doomed to lie unused for years. It is no longer officially farm land, but neither can the city expand to populate it. When the boom is over, both the farmers and the developers lose money, and the land remains unproductive. As Dave says, "We started at the wrong end in our nation building We started to build cities, leaving the country to take care of itself. . . . where there is a prosperous country the cities will take care of themselves" (CP, 275). Also implied in Dave's remarks is the unusual pattern of land development in the west in which the railroad entered virgin territory and towns sprang up around the railroad junctions before the surrounding countryside had even started to be farmed. Stead proposes to reverse this process by speeding up the settlement of the land through his co-operative land scheme. His plan would act as a counter to current socialist programmes which involved redistribution of wealth, and would also solve the unemployment problem for the returned soldier. Population would flow from city to country rather than the reverse. The plan would also encourage large families so that the nation would not have to depend on immigration to populate its remoter areas. The historian J. M. S. Careless, in an article on aspects of urban life in the west (1870-1914), points out that by 1911 the percentage of urban population in Alberta was 38.07 and in Manitoba 43.43, "suggesting that during the great western boom urbanization in these provinces was actually proceeding a bit faster than rural settlement--and markedly so in the older community of Manitoba,

which exhibited an urban increase of over 16 percent, double the national average for the decade."² Thus Stead's concern with the relation of city to country on the prairies seems only to have reflected a state of mind which must have been common among prairie dwellers in the early part of this century.

Careless's article also stresses that the "constructive, assertive vigour in early western urban life"³ lay far more in individual entrepreneurs than it did in municipal institutions. In this respect the western cities were elitist rather than democratic, and their development depended a great deal on the individual good will of the entrepreneur. In Dennison Grant, Stead gives us a picture of an entrepreneur, Transley, who helps build up an Alberta cow town into a metropolis. Stead has mixed feelings about Transley, whose vigour and energy he admires, but whose morals he compares unfavourably to those of Dennison Grant. In the early part of the novel, Transley is presented as a decisive man of action, as his handling of his contract for Y.D. and his fighting of the fire demonstrate. When his work for Y.D. collapses, he immediately scents out the activity in the neighbouring cow town which is at the beginning of a land boom, and takes his contracting outfit there:

In defiance of all tradition, and, most of all, in defiance of the predictions of the ranchers who had known it so long for a cow-town and nothing more, the place began to grow. No one troubled to inquire exactly why it should grow, or how. As for Transley, it was enough for him that team labor was in demand. He took a contract, and three days after the fire in the foothills he was excavating for business blocks about to be built in the new metropolis. (DG, 142-43)

Transley realizes there is bigger money to be made if he does not contract all the time for other people. He goes to Y.D. and asks for financial

backing, arguing that the two of them might as well have the cream as the skimmed milk. Transley explains his plan to Y.D.:

"We go to the owner of a block of lots somewhere where there's no building going on. He's anxious to start something, because as soon as building starts in that district the lots will sell for two or three times what they do now. We say to him, 'Give us every second lot in your block and we'll put a house on it.' In this way we get the lots for a trifle; perhaps for nothing. Then we build a lot of houses, more or less to the same plan. We put 'em up quick and cheap. We build 'em to sell, not to live in. Then we mortgage 'em for the last cent we can get. Then we put the price up to twice what the mortgage is and sell them as fast as we can build them, getting our equity out and leaving the purchasers to settle with the mortgage company. It's good for from thirty to forty per cent profit, not per annum, but per transaction." (DG, 149-50)

Y.D., who has been described earlier in the novel as having a "commercialized eye," naturally remarks that Transley's plan "sounds interesting," and thus a city springs up in the Alberta foothills financed by cattle money. Careless's article mentions that cattlemen often financed important municipal undertakings, and that the first Calgary Stampede in 1912 was financed by the "Big Four" cattlemen, A. E. Cross, Pat Burns, George Lane, and A. J. McLean.⁴ Transley's quick money-making methods leave much to be desired, and Zen remarks that his methods are based on the assumption that any man worth his salt takes what he wants in this world. It is this same philosophy that justified the war profiteering that finally consolidates Transley's fortune:

He had seized the panicky moments following the outbreak of the war to buy heavily on the wheat and cattle markets, and increases in prices due to the world's demand for food had made him one of the wealthy men of the city. The desire of many young farmers to enlist had also afforded an opportunity to acquire their holdings for small considerations, and Transley had proved his patriotism by facilitating the ambitions of as many men in this position as came to his attention. The fact that even before the war ended the farms which he acquired in this way were worth several times the price he paid was only an incident in the transactions. (DG, 282-83)

In this respect, Stead compares Transley to Grant, who not only winds up his business and makes his money available to the Canadian government to fight the war, but enlists in the war and urges his employees to do so as well.

Stead, like so many others, believed that one of the effects of World War I was to change the popular idea of what was right and wrong, and he has Grant arguing to Transley that before the war the man who made money by almost any means was set up on a pedestal called "Success," but now that the war is over "the nation demands that he be thrown into prison; the Press heaps contumely upon him; he has become an object of suspicion . . ." (DG, 324). Grant describes this "world wide" change as having come about in five years, and even remarks to Y.D. that some people regard "prosperous ranchers" as profiteers. Neither Transley nor Y.D. take Grant's remarks as applicable to themselves, though Grant is suggesting that their day is over as moral standards have altered so radically. When one realizes that expectations such as Grant's were widespread in Canadian society after the war, one can understand only too readily the disillusionment that had set in by the mid-twenties, especially among returned soldiers. This despair is very graphically described in Douglas Durkin's The Magpie (1923). Nonetheless, Stead connects Transley's qualities with those necessary to build up the country. Zen succumbs to Transley, although she wants Grant because she feels she is in the "grip of a powerful machine" (DG, 154), and Grant observes that Transley used the methods of a "landshark" in winning Zen. Transley seized Zen in the same way he seized the opportunities the country afforded:

She did not fear Transley. She believed in him. She believed in his ability to grapple with anything that stood in his way;

to thrust it aside and press on. She respected the judgment of her father and her mother, and both of them believed in Transley. He would succeed; he would seize the opportunities this young country afforded and rise to power and influence upon them. He would be kind, he would be generous. He would make her proud of him. What more could she want?

(DG, 160)

Stead tries to settle the question of how the Transleys are to be halted by offering us Dennison Grant and his land schemes, but Grant is so two-dimensional and his scheme so unrealistic that Transley runs away with the book despite Stead's efforts to stop him.

However, Stead deals at greatest length with the issue of the growth of a city through land speculation in The Cowpuncher. Again two men are compared and contrasted. Dave Elden is an impoverished young rancher who moves to an Alberta cow town, joins forces with Conward, an urban man interested in get-rich-quick real estate schemes, and becomes a millionaire. Dave is presented as being sucked in by Conward, who finds Dave's honesty and innocence a convenient facade for his shady dealings. To convince Dave to join him, Conward talks up the natural advantages of the city in a way that reminds Dave of "the prelude of an address before a boomsters' club" (CP, 149):

This is one of the few centres in America which has a north and south trade equal to its east and west trade. We're on the cross-roads Every railway that taps this country must come to this city, because we have the start, and are too big to be ignored.

(CP, 149-50)

Careless's article quotes a promotional supplement to a Calgary newspaper, the Herald, published in 1910 which declared that "For 150 miles to the north, south, east and west of us lies a large section of land all of which is absolutely tributary to us, rich in agriculture, in minerals, forests and natural resources, and probably without parallel in the Dominion in

the possibilities of growth and development."⁵ Careless observes that it was anticipation of such possibilities that brought on the Calgary boom of 1910-12, and it was probably Stead's observations of the land boom in Alberta that stimulated The Cowpuncher, Dennison Grant, and parts of The Homesteaders. Dave scoffs at Conward's use of the word "city," but the events of the book prove Conward's predictions about the real estate boom, or as Conward prefers to term it, "industrial development," to be correct. After Dave is successful, he reviews the simple process which has turned the cow town into a big city. It began with the prosperity of incoming money from a small group of speculators and adventurers. These had filled the available hotels and office buildings, and construction began to accommodate them. As labourers were scarce, workmen were brought in from the outside. Space was insufficient to accommodate the labourers, so more buildings had to be constructed:

The thing grew upon itself. It was like a fire starting slowly in the still prairie grass, which by its own heat creates a breeze that in turn gives birth to a gale that whips it forth in uncontrollable fury. Houses went up, blocks of them, streets of them, miles of them, but they could not keep pace with the demand And more stores and more places of amusement were needed. And the fire fed on its own fury and spread to lengths undreamed by those who first set the match to the dry grass.
(CP, 164-65)

Dave observes that the first buyers were cautious, weighing the advantages and disadvantages of the vacant lots carefully, but they were able to sell so quickly at a profit that the "caution of the early transactions was forgotten in the rush for more lots which, almost immediately could be re-sold at a profit." At the height of the land boom, Dave drives through the city streets late at night; the streets are "congested with traffic and building material," and electric riveters are working on

office blocks which are being completed by the aid of arc lights and double shifts. Naturally the flood recedes, and land values become depressed. Building operations cease, and the army of workmen retreats from the city. Trade is reduced in volume, and houses and offices are empty. There is no demand for land. The boom is over.

Stead's attitude to the process that he spends so many pages describing may be summed up in the informing metaphor of the book--the episode of the lame calf which, unable to flee from the wolves, is killed and eaten. At the beginning of the book Dave describes the incident for Reenie as "life":

"Everything is a victim, some way or other. Even the wolves 'at tore this little beast'll go down to some rancher's rifle, maybe, although they were only doing what nature said . . . I guess it's the same way in the cities; the innocent bein' hunted, an' the innocenter they are' the easier they're caught."
(CP, 53)

The principal "innocent" victim of the land speculator Conward is the tubercular Merton, who sinks all his savings in a lot miles away from the city, and who dies alone because it takes his son so long to get help. Others are Mrs. Hardy, Gladys Wardin, and Bert Morrison, who loses all her money. In so far as Dave is Conward's victim, he is also an innocent rather than one of the preying wolves. However, Dave has ample warning from Conward about the business methods he plans to use. Conward tells Dave a story about the two brothers in the coal business, one of whom gets religion. The second brother refuses to convert on the grounds that there will be nobody left to weigh the coal. Dave goes along with Conward, allowing him to weigh the coal, up until the point where Conward attempts to seduce a young woman, Gladys Wardin. This incident opens Dave's eyes, and from this point on he no longer symbolically accepts the death of the

calf as "nature," but instead vows to kill the wolf that killed the calf. The real estate boom has collapsed anyway, but Dave can fight the "wolves" in a larger arena: he decides to enlist in the war which has just broken out. Stead brings us back to the calf metaphor with Dave's death at the end of the book. Edith Duncan quotes him as saying, "And when Brownie was killed . . . I said it was the innocent thing that got caught. Perhaps I was right. But perhaps it's best to get caught. Not for the getting caught, but for the--the compensations." Dave has learned to extract a meaning from his observations of predator and prey other than that "it's just 'nature'." As Edith Duncan has told him, suffering and sacrifice stimulate kindness and unselfishness in others, and life is a riddle, its plan and purpose often remaining unclear to us. In the same way that Dave eventually has to come to terms with a natural order which dispatches a lame calf, he must also come to terms with a "system" which creates a city. His full realization of the dubious nature of his land speculation deals causes him to condemn it as worse than war:

They were in the grip of a System--a System which had found them poor, had suddenly made them wealthy, and now, with equal suddenness, threatened to make them poor again. It was like war--kill or be killed. It occurred to Dave that it was even worse than war. War has in it the qualities of the heroic; splendid bravery; immeasurable self-sacrifice; that broad spirit of devotion to a vague ideal which for lack of a better name, is called patriotism. This System had none of that. It was more like assassination (CP, 222)

Edith Duncan sees the war partly as having been caused by the "System," and partly as an opportunity for self-sacrificing behaviour, and therefore as cleansing for Dave and others:

"I know how selfish and individualistic and sordid and money-grubbing we have been; how slothful and incompetent and self-satisfied we have been, and I fear it will take a long war and sacrifices and tragedies altogether beyond our present imagination to make us unselfish and public-spirited and clean and generous; it will take the strain and emergency of war to

"Make us vigorous and efficient; it will take the sting of many defeats to impose that humility which will be the beginning of our regeneration." (CP, 318-19)

Thus Dave's involvement in the war becomes a form of expiation for his and Conward's behaviour. The sacrifice of Merton generates the need to care for Merton's son and makes both Dave and Reenie behave generously to the boy. The "system" becomes submerged in a universal plan, whose purpose is not completely apparent, but which brings forth heroic qualities in humanity. Dave also sends Reenie back to the ranch to help raise the food which is needed to win the war, so that out of the destruction of war comes the abundance of grain production. This theme is developed at great length in Grain, where Stead makes a hero out of Gander Stake, who stays home and raises enormous quantities of wheat. To assure the reader that Gander has the same bravery that the boys in the trenches have, Stead depicts Gander risking his life to save someone from death in a threshing machine, and getting a symbolic Victoria Cross for it.

What is probably the same Alberta foothill town appears in The Homesteaders. When Riles arrives there, the land boom is just beginning, and he finds that the town looks very much like Plainville except that there are "half-a-dozen real estate offices, with a score or more curbstome dealers, locaters, commission-splitters, and go-betweens . . ." (HS, 198), in other words, a variety of persons all taking a percentage of the sale of real estate. Riles also sees many large livery stables which are a clue to the amount of prospecting going on in the hills surrounding the town. The business to be made in supplying mining operations was certainly a factor in the land boom. The events of this episode pre-date the building of the Crow's Nest Pass railway line which linked Kootenay mining development

to Calgary's supply trade,⁶ because one detail in the scheme to swindle Harris involves his buying a coal mine on speculation. The expectation of a railroad on which coal could be transported to Calgary spurred the purchase and development of likely mining territory, and had Gardiner's coal mine actually existed, Harris probably would not have been investing his money badly, that is, if we assume the unnamed town to be modelled on Calgary. Harris actually spends a few hours in Calgary, which is mentioned by name, on his way to the unnamed town, but that would not have prevented Stead from using information about Calgary to describe the other town. High River is another likely possibility, or Stead may have created a composite based on his knowledge of various Alberta cities. Speculation in mining development thus was just as important in creating Calgary as speculation in land development. Careless stresses the dominating power of rail transport which brought all the speculators to Calgary in the first place, and caused the too-swift development of the western cities. Stead becomes eloquent on the number and variety of the speculators that Riles sees clustered in the barroom of his hotel, and links them directly to the building of Canada:

Men were lined three deep against the capacious bar, shouting, swearing, and singing, and spending their money with an abandon not to be found in millionaires. . . . Land-seekers, some in overalls and flannel shirts, some in ready-mades with dirty celluloid collars and cheap, gaudy ties--big, powerful men with the muscles and manners of the horse--and others, lighter of frame, who apparently made an easier and a better living by the employment of their brains; cowboys in schaps and sun-burn and silk handkerchiefs; ranchers, stately English and French stock, gentlemen still five thousand miles from the place of their breeding; lumbermen and river-drivers, iron bodies set with quick, combative intellects; guides, locaters, freighters, land dealers, gamblers, sharks, and hangers-on wove back and forth plying the shuttle from which the fabric of a new nation must be wrought.

(HS, 181-82)

John Harris, who had "lived in an atmosphere of conservatism" all his life, is seized by the reckless spirit of the Alberta town, and becomes "the greatest gambler of them all" (HS, 223-24). Riles as well is only too readily sucked in by the atmosphere to the point where he is prepared to cheat an old friend and neighbour. The less savoury sides of Riles's and Harris's characters had been held in check by the manners and mores of the small farming community (Plainville) in which they lived. When Harris sees Riles's body, he turns his eyes away towards the valley: "On the farther slopes, leagues distant through the clear air, ripening fields of wheat lay on the hillsides like patches of copper-plate, and farther still thin columns of smoke marked the points where steam-ploughs were wrapping the virgin prairie in her first black bridal of commerce" (HS, 314). But Harris sees neither the wheat nor the steam-ploughs; the horror of what he has done is too strong. In capsule form, Stead offers us a beatific vision of the abundance and beauty of what Harris has abandoned, but he also suggests the deterioration into materialism of Harris's vision.

Stead's attack on materialism is too complex to be associated entirely with the cities. In fact, what he is depicting in The Homesteaders is the degeneration of a dream of the good life on the soil. Harris is consumed by greed long before he gets to Alberta, and his original scheme is to make a killing on free farm land there. Stead sees Harris as typical of many Manitoba settlers who kept their idealism amid adversity, but who began to change when they realized that their land was worth money. Farmers from the United States seeking cheaper land came to Manitoba with cash in hand, and the fact that land represented wealth was borne in

on the settlers. In the early part of The Homesteaders Stead details a Plainville communal life of enthusiasm, resourcefulness, good-will, and sharing. When land begins to be sold for money, this sense of community disappears:

. . . in some way the old sense of oneness, the old community interest which had held the little band of pioneers together amid their privations and their poverty, began to weaken and dissolve, and in its place came an individualism and a materialism that measured progress only in dollars and cents.
(HS, 100)

Ironically, the very technology that made farming easier and more efficient also encouraged a dollars-and-cents approach that argued against less tangible values. Stead lists improved agricultural implements, improved methods of farming, greater knowledge of prairie conditions, reductions in the cost of transportation, enlarged facilities for marketing, increasing world demand and higher world prices as factors contributing to the realization that land was worth money. To some extent, Harris is seen as the victim of economic and social changes that are not of his making. But to do Harris justice, as Stead remarks, it is not altogether the desire for wealth that prompts his willingness to leave Manitoba; it is also his long-buried idealism, what Stead describes as the memories of "the joy and the courage and the comradeship and the conquering. . . . the call of the new land . . ." (HS, 116-17). Stead sees Harris's change as a "process of evolution" which requires a shock before it can be halted. The experience in Alberta is enough to "pulverize his gods," and Harris is able to return to his better self. Thus Stead sees a fundamental difference between the pioneering experience in Manitoba and in Alberta. Beulah Harris sums it up in her letter to her mother:

The homestead rush is on here in earnest; the trains are crowded,

mostly with Americans, and the hotels are simply spilling over. They're a motley crowd, these homesteaders. Down with us, you know, the settlers were looking for homes, and a chance to make a living, but up here they're out for money--the long green, they call it. Their idea is to prove up and sell their lands, when they will either buy more or leave the country. But the great point is that they are after money rather than homes. They belong to a class which has been rushing for a generation ahead of a wave of high land values Of course this will right itself in time; the first flood of land-seekers are soil-miners, but the second are home-builders.
(HS, 160)

Beulah, though she does not realize it, has given her mother the explanation of why the "soil-miners" have come to Alberta before the "home-builders." She takes the "trains" so much for granted that she does not realize their significance. The letter tells about a train trip through "enormous prairies" with "no settlement; not a house, nor stack, nor any sign of life" (HS, 158). Transportation to Alberta was created in advance of settlement, and the "soil-miners" were quick to realize the possibilities of gain. Conward's booster speech to Dave in The Cowpuncher makes this very clear. By contrast the principal mode of transport during settlement of the Plainville district was horse and wagon. In fact, the Harris family had to make a detour through the United States, where there was a railroad, to get to Manitoba at all. Settlers got off the train at "Emerson," which is depicted as having many of the qualities of High River, and made slow, arduous journeys in search of a suitable claim. The town of Plainville is built in anticipation of the railroad:

. . . Dr. Blain . . . had his headquarters at the new town of Plainville, which consisted of Sempter's general store and a "stopping place," and which had sprung up near the junction of two streams in anticipation of the railway.
(HS, 72)

Stead describes the "boundless prairie reaches of Manitoba" as being "comparatively well settled" after twenty-five years, but by then

"railways had supplanted ox-cart and bob-sleigh as the freighters of the plains" and the "howl of the coyote had given way to the whistle of the locomotive . . ." (HS, 89). The railroads had made their contribution to civilization and prosperity, but, as with the improvements in farm technology which gave the land a "money value," they had brought losses as well: "less idealism and less unreckoning hospitality" (HS, 90).

In The Bail Jumper, Ray Burton travels in a colonist train to the Alberta foothills to file on a homestead. Stead observes that the "two slender threads of steel seemed the only connecting link with modern civilization . . ." (BJ, 197). Burton feels the lure of the west in the chance "to be in at the beginning; to lay new foundations of business, government, and society, unchecked by tradition, unhampered by convention, undaunted by the arrogance of precedent" (BJ, 197-98). The immigrants travelling with him exude a feeling of being hunted and oppressed, but they are still full of hope, wonder, and ambition. Though Burton and the Central European immigrants are genuine "home builders," Burton is accosted by a "soil-miner" as soon as he gets off the train. He is urged to buy a homestead from someone who does not yet have a patent for it. When Burton is not taken in, the man tries to get him to pay for the information that a notice of cancellation on the homestead will be posted. If the country is not alluring enough, perhaps the city will be--he is offered "top-notch" town property for five hundred dollars which can be resold for a "cool thousand before December." Through Burton's trip to Alberta, Stead gives us a picture of the motley combination of idealism and materialism that helped build up the west and people its cities.

In his last two prairie books, Stead shifted from the big city back

to the rural district he had first described in The Bail Jumper. The Smoking Flax and Grain return to Plainville and its surroundings. As a vehicle for his social analysis, Stead creates the character of Cal Beach, a sociologist whose immediate plan after being graduated "was to do a series of sociological studies for one of the more serious-minded magazines, and at the same time gather material for a book for popular circulation . . ." (SF, 28). He is advised by the doctor to spend a year or two on the open prairies for his health; he winds up on the Stake farm near Plainville, where his first "observation" is that the Stake farm buildings point in every direction and are in a bad state of repair. His first act is to clean and re-organize the granary where he and Reed are to sleep. We are told that the topic of Cal's "prize thesis" at university was "The Reaction of Industrialism Upon the Rural Social Atmosphere." Thus we are prepared for Cal's realization that he can take a "post-graduate course in sociology" right there on the Stake farm. He sees the Stake homestead as prosperous "in a gross kind of way" (SF, 87), and therefore perfect "raw material" for his experiments. His aims are grandiose:

Fancy injecting idealism into this clay; substituting art for materialism; living for being alive; implanting an intellectual consciousness; attuning minds to the infinite reactions of Truth; broadening horizons until they included the world, the universe itself!
(SF, 88)

All of Stead's heroes and heroines have these aims to some degree, and Gander Stake's departure from the farm in Grain is a deliberate attempt to expand his universe and act out a larger truth than the one he has learned plowing a straight furrow. Thus Cal's reordering of the farm buildings is seen as a substitution of art for crudity and ugliness.

When Cal hitches up the Ford engine to the cream separator and lightens Mrs. Stake's work load, he is attempting to remove her one step further from the animal. Stead's positive view of technology must be seen in this light to be understood. Stead did not see man as the slave of technology, and thus he does not view Gander Stake's love of horses and machines as incompatible. Cal Beach, who has a "mechanical turn of mind, as well as a philosophic one" (SF, 98), comes close to being Stead's perfect man. In Neighbours, Frank proves himself to be a good farmer, but he has to turn himself into an artist and poet before he can win Jean. Stead speaks of the "divine urge" which bade Cal bring order into the chaos of the Stake farm. Cal is seen as a propaganda mechanism which can be used to awaken spiritual consciousness on the farm, a quality which cannot flourish in the monotony of farm labour:

If he [Cal] could bring order into the chaos of farm labor, if he could touch with one glimpse of beauty the sordidness which was expressed by "forty dollars a month and found"; if he could awaken to spiritual consciousness the physical life of which the Stake farmstead was typical, and at the same time gain a livelihood for Minnie and for Reed: that, surely, would be something worth while. (SF, 167)

At the end of Grain, we are led to believe that Cal, through his writing, is fulfilling these goals.

Thus Stead, despite his praise of the life of the soil, is well aware of the stultifying effects of the drudgery of farm labour. Minnie describes farmers as "Always tired, or just getting over being tired, or just going to do something that'll make 'em tired. It becomes chronic" (SF, 121). In the course of the two books, three of the four Stake children leave the farm. Jackson Stake Jr. leaves because his father will not pay him wages; Minnie leaves because of the drudgery, symbolized

for her by the everlasting milking, and because "a girl must have some one to talk to" (SF, 89). She describes the environment as "always the same people, the same fields, the same horses, the same cows (SF, 122). Gander leaves partly because he has been made aware of a higher standard of behaviour than his life has hitherto presented him with, and to follow through on his other love--machinery. All reject the farm environment for the city, Stead offers us a spectrum of experiences for the three Stake children. Jackson becomes a drifter and n'er-do-well who eventually commits suicide. Minnie goes to Winnipeg only to take advantage of the business course which is available there, but returns to the rural town closest to her roots. She does not remain in the city, and in Plainville never takes a house or apartment of her own. She lives in a boarding-house and goes "home" on weekends and in the evening. At home she still milks the cows. When she marries, she settles in a log cabin near a lake with a man who values the rural life and whose confessed aim it is to make it more palatable. Stead gives us the impression that Gander will succeed in the city. In the note he leaves for Jo, he writes "I've got a good job in a garage. I like working about machines" (G, 280). One cannot imagine Gander, who has driven farm machinery from the age of ten, and who places his hand on the boiler of Bill Powers' threshing machines as if he is reassuring a nervous horse, ever failing as a garage mechanic. One day after repairing the Stake car, Gander takes it out for a trial run: "Its renewed life seemed to feed life back to him through the steering-wheel, the switch, the gearshaft, through every contact" (G, 193). Thus Stead does not take a negative view of the drift of farmers to the city. He believes that some equilibrium must be achieved. Though Stead presented

technological improvements on the farm as having contributed to the growth of the materialist side of John Harris's nature in The Homesteaders, technology is also the genie that puts a boy of ten on a binder and turns him into a "magician" who slays "serried ranks of wheat in less time than a score of grown men with aching backs and swinging cradles" (G, 49). Stead remarks that an "industry which has been so mechanized can spare a Jackie now and again--and does" (G, 49). Once Mrs. Stake starts to do the washing and the cream separating with the help of a machine, Minnie's departure seems less significant.

The Gander Stake of Grain is linked so closely to the machines he operates that it is difficult to imagine him in any other context. His father, Jackson, readily adopts the idea of large-scale farming, the disc drill, bulk handling of wheat, and steam and gasoline threshers. Stead points out that Jackson Stake is but one unit in a hundred thousand "who were making possible the great trek from the country to the city, a trek which never could have taken place but for the application of machinery to land" (G, 44). Gander himself readily solves the "mysteries of the self-binder" at the age of nine, but he regards "book-learning" as "non-essential and irrelevant" (G, 42). At ten, Gander can drive a two-horse team on the mower and a four-horse team on the binder. As a child, Gander loves horses, machines, and Jo Burge. His ambition is to fire the engine of a threshing machine some day. Stead tells us that though books do not fire Gander, he is deeply stirred by the "romance of machinery, of steam, which at the pull of a lever turned loose the power of giants" (G, 61). Though a child, Gander can take a man's place on the farm because he can manage most of the farm machinery. He can boast to

Minnie that he can tell the difference between a Deering and a Massey-Harris across a fifty-acre field. During the war Gander temporarily holds a job firing a threshing machine. Stead offers an elaborate step-by-step description of the interaction between Gander and the machine which culminates in the following comparison between Jo Burge and the thresher:

She was away! Gander let her ramble gently for a few revolutions while the exhaust beat its pleasant tattoo inside the stack, then slowly gave her more steam while he watched the quickening flywheel and knew the thrill that comes only to those who hold great power in the hollow of their hands. Jo Burge? This-- this power--this mighty thing that sprang at his touch--this was life! (G, 129-30)

After Stead has shown us the machine in full operation, he concludes, "This was Gander's day of romance" (G, 133). This rather startling analogy in which machine wins over woman offers a partial explanation of why Gander misses his chance with Jo, and of the connection that Stead makes later between Jerry Chansley and urban machinery. The thresher not only offers Gander romance, but it also offers a chance for heroism. We are told that Gander, a man of limited imagination, cannot visualize a danger so remote as the war in Europe; however, he reacts instantly when Walter Peters falls on the moving belt of the thresher. Gander throws himself on the belt in order to stop it and becomes the "hero of the hour," meriting, as Powers says, a Victoria Cross. Thus the machine functions as a field of war as well as a field of romance. Gander is similarly fascinated by a locomotive that he sees one day in Plainville. "That was power for you! That was life!," he thinks when he sees the engineer with a lever in his hand. Jackson Stake buys a Ford and within a week Gander "had ferreted into its innermost parts, without destroying any vital organs. He knew

every gradation of its most whimsical mood before his father could distinguish between a cylinder knock and a flat tire" (G, 181). Gander is driving the Ford when he meets Jerry for the first time, and his departure for the city to work on cars and presumably to renew his acquaintance with her seems no violation of his nature when seen in the light of the foregoing. Gander is never presented as a lover of the soil so much as an efficient tiller of it. His higher self is stimulated by the potential of the farm machinery rather than by the growth process. If the machinery is an end in itself, a car is as good as a thresher, and Gander simply shifts arenas, probably becoming a super-mechanic rather than super-farmer.

In July, 1919, a review appeared in The Canadian Magazine of a book called The Farmer and the Interests by Clarus Ager. The book was an appeal to the farmer to stop himself from being exploited and to maintain the economic gains of the war. The anonymous reviewer uses the car as a metaphor for the farmer's recent prosperity, and he urges the farmer, as does the writer of the book, to recognize his chance to keep his car: "The car has become a symbol in the country--the symbol of many a man's social and mental and spiritual metamorphosis, of many a community's obvious transformation."⁷ The reviewer argues that special war conditions have given the farmer what he should have had anyway, and any re-organization of society must guarantee him a "return in terms of the amenities of civilization commensurate with what he now awakens to believe he always deserved." Jackson Stake buys his Ford in the third year of the war when "crops had been good and prices unprecedently high" and his bank account is "bulging" (G, 180). By the time of the post-war period described in

The Smoking Flax, Jackson Stake proudly announces that he drives a Dodge. There are many other prosperous farmers in the Plainville district. When Gal drives to Plainville for the first time, he notes the two rows of automobiles, "representing all grades of value and condition lined against the cement curbs" (SF, 113), and he parks his "dog-eared Ford" alongside the "pretentious car of some wealthy farmer" (SF, 113). Stead is documenting a social change whose implications were as far-reaching as those of the railway. Jackson Stake complains that before he had a telephone and a car he used to be in Plainville once a month, but now "it's a dull day we don't run out o' somethin'" (SF, 111), and he finds himself constantly in town. Inevitably, the town must grow to accommodate these frequent trips by Jackson and others. Jackson complains that when he used to make the occasional trip with a team, he thought nothing of it, but the very ease of the trip now has made it into a burden: "That's labor-savin' inventions for you. Another invention or two an' we won't get nothing done but windin' up inventions After you sleep for a while on feathers you don' take to the feel of straw like you useta" (SF, 111). Jackson argues that politicians who believe they can stop the trek from country to city by making city conveniences, such as cars and telephones, available to country dwellers are trying to make a calf into a kitten: "An' the more they give us o' those things the more the kids beat it for town." Although the introduction of urban technology to rural life apparently satisfies rural aspirations, it actually creates new needs which can only be satisfied by a more complex technology, which eventually necessitates a move to the city. Jackson argues along similar lines in Grain when he tells Fraser Fyfe that having a new house means

that he must now buy a piano. Stead concludes their conversation with the observation that each new need, when supplied, creates other needs in its way "as is the way with a civilization which grows more complex with each accomplishment" (G, 109). But on the whole, Stead's attitude is that of the anonymous reviewer of Clarus Ager's book, and he presents the Stakes as a family who do not suffer economically as a result of the loss of Jackson Jr. and Minnie. We must assume that the loss of Gander is just as easily absorbed.

However, Stead does lay out the negative side of the situation for us. Jackson Stake's first hired man is "turned at large" during the winter months. In those days one did not pay thirty dollars a month to any man after "freeze-up." Stake's hired man might possibly drift into Winnipeg where a "compassionate city" would at least see that he had something to eat during the long period of unemployment. Obviously, many men would prefer to work for steady wages in the city rather than suffer a period of unemployment annually. Thus, the second year after Jackie's departure, Stake is more willing to dicker for help on a board and lodgings basis through the winter rather than risk not getting someone in the spring. A problem that Cal has in The Smoking Flax is that during his brief period as a hired hand, though he is earning "good wages," he cannot marry on them: "There was no place to live; no place in which they could rear their children" (SF, 165). Cal thinks that if lawyers, doctors, and bricklayers were the victims of a social system which gave them no opportunity to reproduce, there would soon be a shortage in these areas: "No wonder the skilled farm laborer has disappeared! He's dead, and his children have never been born. His employer wouldn't let them" (SF, 165).

In Grain the hired man, Bill, explains to Gander that he is unmarried because no married man is wanted on the farm, and no children were wanted. "If a man was well off and had a home of his own, of course he could get married; but if he was just a hired man, what was he to do?" (G, 63).

This problem is compounded by the farmers themselves who, in some cases, drive their children off the farms by their ambitions; John Harris in The Homesteaders has mapped out a career for Beulah which includes her marrying "a doctor, lawyer, merchant, tradesman, even a minister, but not a farmer" (HS, 123). Stead remarks that it is a peculiarity of the agriculturalist that he holds his own work "in the worst repute." Stead sees the "germ of the cityward migration" in the fact that the farmer is looking for "something better" for his children. Harris's principal objection to Jim as a suitor for Beulah is that Jim is a farmhand. It is to Beulah's credit that she sees past these self-denigrating and self-created class distinctions. Minnie is also presented as seeing past the fact that Cal is a hired man. Stead describes her as having a mind as "big as her prairies" (SF, 139), and as not being taken in by the false class consciousness which would normally make her prefer a bank clerk to a hired man:

The fact that Cal was a "hired man" did not disqualify him; snobbery does not root deep on the prairies, even in the second generation. But it roots a little. To the first generation of pioneers the farm-hand is preferred above the bank-clerk; to the second, the bank clerk is preferred, a little, above the farm-hand; in the third, collars and cuffs are in the saddle.
(SF, 139)

Thus, if the farmer sees a white-collar occupation in the city as a desirable rise in social status, his children will quickly drift off to "something better" as soon as they are grown. Hence, Stead's insistence

in book after book that materialism and drudgery are the dangers of a life on the soil, and that these must be fought with a combination of spiritual awareness and technology.

In Plainville, Stead does not show us a big city. He depicts an overgrown community centre, or even a "farmyard overgrown" as it appears to Cal Beach's eyes on his first visit there in The Smoking Flax. "The main thoroughfare is wider than the principal street of a metropolis, obviously because space is not yet at a premium. The street itself is unpaved though there are cement sidewalks. To the sociologist Cal Beach, who thinks of "Main Street" as a "mercenary and visionless monster"

(SF, 114), the street seems "cheerful, innocuous." The business blocks house "as reputable a class of occupants" as those on "Broadway or Yonge Street." Stead remarks that "in the country places one has to be reputable--at all costs" (SF, 114). The street is untidy, containing vacant lots littered with packing boxes and empty tin cans. The only three-story building is the Palace Hotel, which has stopped serving meals since Prohibition. The only restaurant is the "Chink's" where Cal gets a meal for forty cents. Behind the business section there are a few churches, a few residences and lumber yards, a skating and curling rink, and a red brick schoolhouse. "The whole effect was strangely reminiscent of that produced by the cluster of buildings on Jackson Stake's homestead" (SF, 116). In short, it lacks art and finish, and Stead implies it requires the same sort of order and polish that Cal is instilling on the Stake farm. The two sources of entertainment are the "Electric Theatre" and the Roseland Emporium where ice cream and soft drinks are served. Plainville residents who want to have a good meal drive to Ferndale, a dozen miles

away, and eat at the hotel there, as Minnie and Archie do. The town has a newspaper, The Plainville Progress. On Saturday night Plainville livens up when the farmers congregate to exchange news. It is still largely drawing its vitality and energy from its rural surroundings and is not yet at a stage where a city generates life of its own. It is a commercial centre in the sense that it is the place where the farmers sell and ship their wheat, and where they buy hardware and their wives buy yard goods. The Bail Jumper gives a very precise picture of the kind of commercial activity that takes place in the general store (there are two in that novel). Minnie Stake works in the lawyer's office, but she considers the Stake farm home, and boards during the week at Mrs. Goode's, which is also Ray Burton's boarding-house in The Bail Jumper. Town and farm merge easily into one another. For example, on his first night in Plainville, Ray Burton goes to a dance at the Grants without an invitation, and is received hospitably. The Grant farm performs the function of a public dance hall without having any of those negative associations.

During World War I, Plainville becomes artificially animated by the excitement of the war. The farmers congregate there to get the latest war news, and a company drawn from the surrounding district is recruited there. There are "crowds" in the town, and the soldiers introduce a higher standard of dress. Gander feels uncomfortable eating at the Chink's because he is long-haired, unshaven, and wearing overalls. He is driven to spending a dollar and a half at the tonsorial establishment in town. By the time the war is over, Gander will not go to town in farm clothing, and we see Jackson waiting while Gander shaves and dresses for the trip to town. Plainville gets larger; it evolves from town to city,

but Winnipeg remains in the background as a standard. Minnie takes her business course there. In order to get really away from Jo, Gander must go there, and of course Jackson Stake Jr. went there only to move on again. Thus, though Stead covers about forty years in the evolution of Plainville, from 1882 when the Harrises homestead in the district, to about 1920-21 when Gander leaves for Winnipeg, we never see what appears to be Plainville's inevitable alteration into a city similar to Winnipeg.

Stead's novels present us with a fascinating picture of western urbanization, which he views as a vital and exciting process indispensable to the development of the nation. He counters what he sees as the materialism inevitable to the process with a mixture of Christian principles, the intelligent application of technology, and a very modified brand of socialism, a term he would have deplored, but one which fits his idealistic land scheme. His preferences are for the rural life, but it is a rural life in the west that he argues for, not in the east, which he associates with the encrustation of convention and class consciousness. He is egalitarian and democratic, arguing that Gander's "savvy" is equal to Cal's formal education, and his characters with a formal education must succeed on a practical level. Irene in The Cowpuncher, bred in an eastern city, and an artist, has to succeed as a western rancher as well. Stead argues for law and order, as he indicates by his picture of the Mountie in The Homesteaders and the orderly filing of land claims in The Bail Jumper; but he sees law and order as a necessary part of the civilizing process in the west, a process essential to the expansion of the nation. Stead was incapable of viewing urbanization negatively, so integrally does he link it to the development of Canada. The dubious methods by

which Calgary was developed have to be submerged in lengthy expositions of the nature of Christian sacrifice, or in a shift of ground onto a utopian alternative like Dennison Grant's land scheme. Stead has less trouble with urbanization in the Plainville district of Manitoba because the town is only a brighter projection of its surroundings, and even in Grain, where the picture of farming cannot be separated from the picture of technology, Stead talks about the "elemental fascination of the soil." In earlier novels, Stead finds it easier to link the creative life to the soil because he does not exhibit the same passion for realistic detail that he does in Grain, which forces him into a recognition of farming as a process. The most extreme tribute to rural life in The Bail Jumper ("What great thing has ever been that could not be traced to the land?") comes from city-bred Myrtle Vane, who has come to the west in search of honesty and truth. Needless to say, she finds them.

Stead's heroes move fairly easily between urban and rural life. Ray Burton winds up running a general store in Plainville, but he has been a farmer, and he hires out successfully as a farmhand. Dave Elden is a rancher who succeeds as a big businessman, but he sends Irene as his surrogate back to the land. Dennison Grant is an eastern businessman who adopts the land out of conviction rather than necessity. Frank in The Neighbours is a farmer from start to finish, but he has to develop spiritual consciousness before he can be seen as a person of worth. Cal Beach is an educated easterner who proves himself as a farmer. Farming also becomes the subject matter of his magazine articles. Gander's aptitude for machinery turns him from farmer to mechanic overnight. Except for Neighbours, which is set almost exclusively on unsettled land in

Saskatchewan, all the novels give us realistic details of early urban settlement in the west. The Cowpuncher is the most graphic in this respect. Stead's "prairie" novels thus offer considerable commentary on both the nature of early farming and of early urbanization in the west. Stead's devotion of so much of his writing to the western city is consistent with his observation that the cities were developing at a somewhat more rapid pace than the countryside.

Bertrand Sinclair is much less concerned than Stead with "urbanization" as a process. Sinclair takes for granted a fully developed city (Vancouver or an Ontario city) and presents its material values as a fact. He does concern himself with life in the wilderness as a "process," and some sections of his books seem like "do-it-yourself" guides to survival in northern British Columbia. Sinclair's judgments of the city are more black-and-white than Stead's, but Stead links the development of the country to industrialization and urbanization while Sinclair sees northern wilderness life as characteristically Canadian. Therefore, Stead is prepared to take a realistic view of the city that Sinclair is not. Sinclair's novels, on the other hand, make the assumption that cities are a foreign growth on a pure landscape and that the Canadian identity is tied up with the ability to appreciate, live in, or endure unspoiled landscape. Indeed, Sinclair believes that the greatest satisfactions in life derive from the maintenance of an intimate contact with nature in its wild state. He is certainly more romantic than Stead in his view of non-urban life despite Stead's belief in the almost mystical relationship of man to the soil he tills. Unfortunately, Sinclair is also the slighter writer of the two, and the myth about the north that

he presents in his writing is therefore less convincing than Stead's view of rural life. Where the two men unite is in attacking materialism as a life goal.

Sinclair's writing career started in 1908 and continued until the fifties. Though much of his writing is little better than hack work, he was capable of better. In fact, his best work was written between 1914 and 1924 when his concern with the contrast between wilderness and city was greatest. The theme evidently inspired him to a less superficial treatment of his plots and characters. Raw Gold (1908) is a Mounted Police story set in the Northwest Territories. It is little better than a potboiler, and it is clear that Sinclair had not yet found his stride. In The Land of Frozen Suns (1909) the locale is the same and so is the writing. However, by 1914 when Sinclair published North of Fifty-Three, he had found the theme that was to give his writing substance for the next ten years, that is, the contrast between the city and the materialist ethic that governs life there and the British Columbia wilderness and the "natural" ethic derived from contact with nature. Sinclair developed his theme further in Big Timber (1916), Burned Bridges (1919), The Hidden Places (1922), and The Inverted Pyramid (1924). In addition, he wrote Poor Man's Rock (1920), a novel about the salmon fishing industry in British Columbia; Wild West (1926), a formula western; Gunpowder Lightning (1930); Pirates of the Plains (n.d.); Down the Dark Alley (for discussion see Chapter VII), a novel about Prohibition set in Vancouver; and Room for the Rolling M (1954) and Both Sides of the Law (1955), both westerns.

In Sinclair's first important work, North of Fifty-Three, the hero,

Bill Wagstaff, is an American from Chicago, which he describes as "big and noisy and dirty, and full of wrecks--human derelicts in an industrial Sargasso Sea--like all big cities the world over" (NF, 77).⁸ Bill has built himself a cabin in the B. C. wilderness which he has stocked with books, and he explains that it is there he can most easily find the "essentials" of life and "happiness":

We must eat, we must protect our bodies against the elements, and we need for comfort some sort of shelter. But in securing these essentials to self-preservation where is the difference, except in method, between the banker who manipulates millions and the post-hole digger on the farm? Not a darned bit, in reality . . . Having secured the essentials, then, what is the next urge of life? Happiness . . . Here I can secure myself a good living . . . and it is gotten without a petty-larceny struggle with my fellow men. Here I exploit only natural resources, take only what the earth has prodigally provided. Why should I live in the smoke and sordid clutter of a town when I love the clean outdoors? The best citizen is the man with a sound mind and a strong, healthy body; and the only obligation any of us has to society is not to be a burden on society. So I live in the wilds the greater part of the year, I keep my muscles in trim, and I have always food for myself . . . and I can look everybody in the eye and tell them to go to the fiery regions if I happen to feel that way.

(NF, 131-32)

Bill abducts Hazel and takes her to his cabin because she fits his conception of an ideal mate. He wants to give her an opportunity to judge his worth, realizing that she would never let him court her under normal circumstances. Her protests he views as the operation of an "artificial standard"; though he is considerate of her feelings and she is attracted to him, she cannot deny "the repressive conventions of her whole existence" (NF, 150). She insists that he return her to Vancouver, where she becomes aware for the first time of the roaring and bellowing of the city. She has become accustomed to the "vast and brooding silence" (NF, 157) of the wilderness:

In the afternoon she walked the length of Hastings Street, where the earth trembled with the roaring traffic of street cars, wagons, motors, and where folk scuttled back and forth across the way in peril of their lives. She had seen all the like before, but now she looked upon it with different eyes; it possessed somehow a different significance, this bustle and confusion which had seemingly neither beginning nor end, only sporadic periods of cessation. (NF, 158)

Nonetheless, Hazel has not yet become completely convinced of the virtues of wilderness life. She returns to Bill, in spite of, rather than because of, his environment. Hazel and Bill get married, and they go to an even more remote spot in the wilderness, to the middle of the Klappan Range where they can trap and prospect for gold. Hazel becomes fearful of what she describes as the "inexorable" quality of nature which does not allow for mistakes: "You could die here by inches and the woods and mountains would look calmly on, just as they have looked on everything for thousands of years." Bill explains that "life isn't a bit harsher here than in the human ant heaps":

"Only everything is more direct; cause and effect are linked up close. There are no complexities. It's all done in the open, and if you don't play the game according to the few simple rules you go down and out And what does the old, settled country do to you when you have neither money nor job? It treats you worse than the worst the North can do; for, lacking the price, it denies you access to the abundance that mocks you in every shop window Here, everything needful is yours for the taking I don't think the law of life is nearly so harsh here as it is where the mob struggles for its daily bread. It's more open and aboveboard here; more up to the individual." (NF, 206-207)

Hazel is depicted as actually making a "mistake" in the wilderness; she allows the fire to blaze up too high in the chimney and the sparks set the horses' feed on fire. Bill must shoot the five horses which have no way of surviving the winter without food. Bill's lesson about cause and effect in nature is driven home to Hazel.

The book shifts to Granville, a city in Ontario with a population of 300,000 (probably Toronto). Granville is Hazel's former home, and the city from which she had been driven by unfounded, malicious gossip. The rumours about Hazel now have been proven to be unfounded, and she is anxious to show off Bill to Granville society. They find that "In a society that lived by and for the dollar, and measured most things with its dollar yardstick, that murmured item opened--indeed, forced open-- many doors to herself and her husband which would otherwise have remained rigid on their fastenings" (NF, 259-60). In order to present Bill's wilderness ethic in conflict with "the ordinary business ethic" (NF, 276), Sinclair has Bill and a group of Granville businessmen form a mining company to exploit a "quartz/lead" that Bill had discovered in the Klappan Range. Bill explains his part in the business venture in the following way:

"I despise the ordinary business ethic It's a get-something-for-nothing proposition all the way through; it is based on exploiting the other fellow in one form or another. I refuse to exploit my fellows along the accepted lines--or any lines. I don't have to; there are too many other ways of making a living open to me. I don't care to live fat and make some one else foot the bill. But I can exploit the resources of nature. And that is my plan. If we make money it won't be filched by a complex process from the other fellow's pockets; it won't be wealth created by shearing lambs in the market, by sweatshop labor, or adulterated food, or exorbitant rental of filthy tenements. And I have no illusions about the men I'm dealing with. If they undertake to make a get-rich-quick scheme of it I'll knock the whole business in the head." (NF, 276)

The men Bill is dealing with do attempt to make a get-rich-quick scheme of the company and Bill does "knock the whole business in the head." He beats up the other members of the company on the floor of the stock exchange and in the company offices and returns north, alone. Hazel has

not yet come to understand that specious craftiness of mind passes for brains in the city, and that a "dog-eat-dog" code prevails whenever people are jammed together in an "unwieldy social mass" (NF, 317). Left alone in Granville, Hazel begins to question her choice when she realizes she has lost status and that she is being shunned by lifetime friends. This is the second time she has been judged unacceptable by distorted city standards. This time she returns to Bill and the north for good. Instead of dreading the profound silence, she finds peace and security in it. Twice she "had found the wild land a benefactor, kindly in its silence, restful in its forested peace, a cure for sickness of soul" (NF, 340). Hazel's wilderness neighbours, the Lauers, befriend her as Bill is away, and she realizes she is pregnant. She learns from them the true meaning of neighbourliness, "that kindness of spirit which is stifled by stress in the crowded places, and stimulated by like stress amid surroundings where life is noncomplex, direct, where cause and effect tread on each other's heels" (NF, 339). The same direct operation of cause and effect that had required that the horses be shot provides her with the help she needs until Bill returns to their wilderness cabin.

Sinclair's Big Timber is concerned with the logging industry in British Columbia, and the contrast of wilderness ethic and urban materialism, which is central to North of Fifty-Three is presented in a more oblique form. Charlie Benton, who had been a problem to his parents at home in Pennsylvania, had been sent west to British Columbia as an experiment. His sister, Stella, joins him after his father's death, only to discover that Charlie is following in his father's footsteps:

. . . save that he [Charlie] aimed at greater heights and that he worked by different methods, juggling with natural resources

where their father had merely juggled with prices and tokens of product, their end was the same--not to create or build up, but to grasp, to acquire. That was the game. To get and to hold for their own use and benefit and to look upon men and things, in so far as they were of use, as pawns in the game.
(BT, 109)

Charlie's materialism is seen by Jack Fyfe, another logger whom Stella eventually marries, as "feverishly hewing a competence . . . out of pretty crude material" (BT, 145). Fyfe excuses Charlie on the grounds that "he's a youngster, bucking a big game. Life, when you have your own way to hew through it, with little besides your hands and brain for capital, is no silk-lined affair" (BT, 146-47). Though Charlie eventually declares that he has learned a lot about life through contact with his sister, his wife Linda, and with Fyfe, the text offers only slight evidence of an alteration in Charlie's characteristic method of riding rough-shod over everyone to obtain his ends. For example, Charlie is presented as preferring the simplicity of a wilderness honeymoon to an expensive trip through the cities of the south, but, on the whole, Sinclair is more effective at damning Charlie than at regenerating him.

Stella is presented as having no "tried standards by which to measure life's values" (BT, 3). She becomes a cook at cook's wages in her brother's logging venture because her education has never given her an "economic relation" to the world. Her brother exploits her, and she lives a lonely life at hard, mean labour. Her brother prevents her from leaving his camp by refusing to pay her her wages, so she escapes her existence by a marriage to Fyfe, who is rich. She still sees herself as dependent on a man's favour, and when she discovers that her singing voice (introduced late in the plot) has returned to her, she leaves her husband to study music in Seattle. When it becomes clear that she can support

herself by singing, and that she has achieved a tolerable artistic success, she is offered some concerts in Vancouver. These are received very favourably, and she realizes that she can leave the Pacific coast if she so desires. At this juncture, fire completely destroys Fyfe's timber holdings, and he is almost completely penniless. Stella's choice is clear. She allows her love for Fyfe and their life in the wilderness to triumph over her aspirations for a singing career. We are given a glimpse of the life she is giving up:

When she came back to her room after that last concert, wearied with the effort of listening to chattering women and playing the gracious lady to an admiring contingent which insisted upon making her last appearance a social triumph, she found a letter (BT, 288)

It is also clear that Stella and Fyfe will continue to live in their white house on Fyfe's timber limit rather than in Vancouver among the local capitalists. Both Stella and Fyfe had discovered they were "bored" (BT, 160) by Vancouver when they had spent some months there before and after their child was born. Stella had longed for "the wide reach of Roaring Lake, the immense amphitheater of the surrounding mountains, long before spring" (BT, 161). We are given a picture of the Vancouver "heights" area, where the "fortunate climbers enriched by timber and mineral" (BT, 267) live. The local capitalists segregate themselves in "Villas" and "Places" and "Views," all painfully new "and sometimes garish, striving for an effect in landscape and architecture which the very intensity of the striving defeated" (BT, 267). It is clear that Stella's education, though it had not fitted her to earn her livelihood, has given her standards by which to judge wealth, or "the getting of wealth" (BT, 110), and though for a long time she finds it hard to define

what she wants, she eventually realizes that the good life lies with Fyfe away from the pressure of a career in the big cities.

Sinclair, like many other writers of the period (Madge Macbeth and Stead, for example), is interested in portraying an independent woman, and he has some difficulty linking this theme with the wilderness theme. In this respect North of Fifty-Three is a far more successful book than Big Timber. Hazel does not do the fairly rapid about-face that Stella does; Hazel also has an independent relationship with the wilderness which Stella has only as a consequence of her marriage to Fyfe. In addition, Stella lives in a fair degree of luxury in the wilderness, and it is hard to take her experience as seriously as that of Hazel, whose appearance suffers as a result of her winter in the Klappan mountains. Throughout his career, Sinclair uneasily mixed the realistic and the romantic in his novels to the detriment of his structure and themes.

Burned Bridges (1919) is a clearer exposition of the northern theme. A life in nature is not only contrasted with a materialistic business ethic but with a form of religion that is hypocritical and materialistic in aim. The principal character is Wes Thompson, who has been sent as a missionary to the Indians on the shore of Lake Athabasca in the Northwest Territories. Thompson exhibits a "general incapacity" for wilderness survival, which is viewed as a side-splitting joke by the two voyageurs who deliver him to his post. He responds to his environment with an "offended resentment" (BB, 24), and shrinks from the forest as from an open grave (BB, 33). The Hudson's Bay factor, MacLeod, points out that the God of the missionary does nothing to alleviate the long struggle with hardship that the Cree must endure. The Board of Missions

is attacked as a circle of worthy gentlemen ignorant of the north, and the book makes clear that Sinclair believes the essence of Christianity may not be the exclusive possession of Christians.

Thompson gets to know two outsiders who are completely competent in the wilderness, Sam Carr and his daughter Sophie. Sam, like Bill Wagstaff and Charlie and Fyfe, is another American who has chosen to live in the Canadian north. Sam is from the "eastern States," and had retired to the north with his young daughter after his wife had left him. Sam has raised Sophie to live by logic, and she is always able to confute Thompson when they argue about religion and economics. Because of Sophie, Thompson comes to realize that his ministerial ambitions have been based on a desire for material success:

Whatever other sorts of a fool he might have been Thompson was no hypocrite. He had never consciously looked upon the ministry as a man looks upon a business career--a succession of steps to success, to an assured social and financial position. Yet when he turned the searchlight of analysis upon his motives he could not help seeing that this was the very thing he had unwittingly been doing--that he had expected and hoped for his progress through missionary work and small churches eventually to bestow upon him a call to a wider field--a call which Sam Carr had callously suggested meant neither more nor less than a bigger church, a wider social circle, a bigger salary. And Thompson could see that he had been looking forward to these things as a just reward, and he could see too how the material benefits in them were the lure. He had been coached and primed for that. His inclination had been sedulously directed into that channel. His enthusiasm had been the enthusiasm of one who seeks to serve and feels wholly competent.

(BB, 91)

Thompson is also compared with Tommy Ashe, an English remittance man, who has adapted totally to the wilderness. Both vie for Sophie, who rejects Thompson because she feels she cannot live in an atmosphere of sermons and shams, and Ashe because she realizes her attraction to him

is only physical. Sophie and Carr leave the wilderness so that Sophie can gain experience of society.

Thompson comes to feel the vast futility of his efforts as a preacher in the wilderness, and eventually he simply spends his time adapting to the environment. He takes a job with the Hudson's Bay factor and loses "that intangible dread of the wilderness which had troubled him" at first:

He was beginning to grasp the motif of the wilderness, to understand in a measure that to those who adapted themselves thereto it was a sanctuary. The sailor to his sea, the woodsman to his woods, and the Duplevardier to his beloved avenues! Thompson did not cleave to the North as a woodsman might. But the natural phenomena of unbroken silences, of vast soundlessness, of miles upon miles of somber forest aisles did not oppress him now. What a man understands he does not fear. The unknown, the potentially terrible which spurs the imagination to horrifying vision, is what bears heavy on a man's soul. (BB, 126-27)

Having lost his fear of the wilderness and gained a measure of control over it, Thompson leaves the ministry because he feels that he cannot set himself up as a "finger post for other men's spiritual guidance" (BB, 142). He and Tommy decide to make a long overland trip to northern British Columbia. The trip through untouched wilderness, which starts in February and ends in May, is a symbolic re-birth for Thompson. As the two men travel through "the coldness of the sub-Arctic," "making" "forty-below-zero camps along the Peace, in the shadow of those towering mountains where the Peace cuts through the backbone of North America" (BB, 148), they develop a "rare and lasting friendship" (BB, 147). The tough trail has also toughened "the mental and moral as well as the physical fiber" (BB, 149) of Thompson, and he believes that things can never dismay him again as they had done in the recent past.

Tommy goes to Vancouver while Thompson works in a "pile" camp in

Wrangel. At this stage Tommy has more confidence in his ability to tackle a city than Thompson has, but having saved some money at the camp, Thompson decides to go to Vancouver as well. He takes the wrong boat and lands up in San Francisco, which he views as a challenge different in nature from the challenge of the north:

Here the big game was played. It was the antithesis of the North in as much as all this activity had a purely human source and was therefore in some measure akin to himself. The barriers to be overcome and the problems to be solved were social and monetary. It was less a case of adapting himself by painful degrees to a hostile environment than a forthright competitive struggle to make himself a master in this sort of environment. (BB, 159)

Thompson sees the city as a way of making money. He sees that "in a world where purchasing power is the prime requisite a man without money is the slave of every untoward circumstance" (BB, 160). Money looms before Thompson as the "key to freedom, decent surroundings, a chance to pursue knowledge, to so shape his life that he could lend a hand or a dollar to the less fortunate" (BB, 160). Thompson's experience in the woods has taught him that he cannot work behind dusty windows, and he will not take clerical jobs. He spends time in the library "sharpening" his mind, reading the same writers that Sophie had used against him in the wilderness. He gains a rational explanation of his intuitive belief in the logic of a wilderness life: "He began to perceive order in the universe and all that it contained, that natural phenomena could be interpreted by a study of nature, that there was something more than a name in geology" (BB, 164-65). On the verge of leaving San Francisco, he is handed the business opportunity he had been seeking. He is offered a job selling cars by the "biggest toad" in San Francisco's automobile puddle. Though he accepts the job, Thompson demonstrates an essential integrity by insisting on

learning all about the car mechanically before he will undertake to sell it. He spends six months in the garage and eventually becomes a super salesman. Sinclair stresses that at this stage Thompson sees money as the "indispensable factor" (BB, 205). Thus Thompson achieves the material rewards he had been seeking.

The book shifts to Vancouver where Thompson sets up a dealership for the San Francisco car company. Though World War I breaks out, Thompson continues his business activities and does not enlist. "Material factors loom bigger and bigger" on his horizon (BB, 220). Vancouver enjoys an "industrial rejuvenation" because of the war:

The war went on, developing its own particular horrors as it spread. But the varying tides of war, and the manifold demands of war, bestowed upon Vancouver a heaping measure of prosperity, and Vancouver, in the person of its business men, was rather too far from the sweat and blood of the struggle to be distracted by the issues of that struggle from its own immediate purposes. Business men were in business to make money. They supported the war effort. Every one could not go to the trenches. Workers were as necessary to victory as fighters. People had to be fed and clothed. The army had to be fed and clothed, transported and munitioned. And the fact that the supplying and equipping and transporting was highly profitable to those engaged in such pursuits did not detract from the essentially patriotic and necessary performance of these tasks.
(BB, 227)

The men who do not go to war justify themselves by arguing that business is necessary to support the war effort. Chief among these is Tommy Ashe, who has gone into ship-building and is making huge profits through government contracts on which he can never lose money.

Initially, Sam Carr is against the war, which he sees as the result of a misguided nationalism and a materialism run completely out of bounds (see discussion of Burned Bridges in Chapter III), but he eventually supports the war because he sees the Allies as genuinely on the side of

justice and honour. Sophie has seen the war as a just one from the beginning and has become increasingly skeptical of Thompson's failure to react to it. Wes feels that he cannot fight for a "political abstraction," but when the war has been going on for two years, Thompson receives what he views as dispassionate evidence of the Belgian atrocities, and he imagines German military power prevailing over France, England, and even Canada. Then he enlists. Ashe takes the "material standpoint" (BB, 255) on Thompson's enlistment, and argues that there is plenty of "cannon-fodder" in the country without men of Thompson's caliber "wasting themselves in the trenches" (BB, 255). Thompson knows he is making a "poor move" from the "material standpoint," but he can no longer adopt it as a guide. Having abandoned a second set of goals and values, Thompson's return to the wilderness is inevitable. This return is prepared for through a conversation that Sophie and Carr have about living in society versus living in the wilderness. Sophie points out to her father that though they are eating a greater variety of food, wearing better clothing, and living on a scale that by their former standards is the height of luxury, none of her dreams has come true, and he is increasingly finding solace in a wine glass when he used to find it in books. The war seems to her a symbol of what society is all about:

"Over in Europe men are destroying each other like mad beasts. At home, while part of the nation plays the game square, there's another part that grafts and corrupts and profiteers and slacks to no end. It's a rotten world." (BB, 264)

Society has not proven itself to be an improvement on the wilderness. The book makes only cursory reference to Carr's abandonment of his Indian wife and three half-breed children. It is an interesting comment on the age that a book could concern itself so single-mindedly with morals

and still have a moral blind spot about the Indian.

Carr and Sophie return to the British Columbia wilderness to set up a timber and land undertaking for returned soldiers. They combine their desire to avoid society and live a useful life in contact with nature with an attempt to ameliorate the consequences of the materialist ethic which governs society. Carr argues that he has tried a variety of things since he left the north and none has seemed worthwhile. Helping the returned men who do not fit into society is a public-spirited act which may spearhead a national undertaking. Carr sees the biggest war of all as man's struggle to subdue the environment to his needs; thus the soldiers' new life in the wilderness ranks higher on the moral scale than the conflict in which they have just taken part.

Thompson, for whom money had lost its high value even before his departure, joins the Carrs in the wilderness on his return from war. Standing at the window of his hotel in Vancouver, looking over the traffic, he smells the sea and the fir and cedar on the mountain. In Carr's camp, Thompson observes the logging activity and sees it as the ultimate constructive force: "It was like war . . . that purposeful activity, the tremendous forces harnessed and obedient to man--only these were forces yoked to man's needs, not to his destruction" (BB, 300). It has taken six years, but Wes has "sloughed off prejudices and cant and ignorance and narrowness . . . as a tree sheds its foliage in autumn" (BB, 307). The book comes full circle and returns Thompson to the environment which had catapulted him into his quest for a social ethic which was not founded on materialism.

The Hidden Places (1922) is the story of one of these ex-soldiers

who does not fit into society, but for whom the wilderness provides a refuge. Robert Hollister, from eastern Canada, has a face made grotesque by war wounds, a war described as having been caused by "the suavities of international diplomacy" and "the forces of commercialism in relation to the markets of the world" (HP, 14-15). Sinclair has Myra, Hollister's first wife, make the most bitter speech about the war in the book:

"The country! That shadowy phantasm--that recruiting sergeant's plea--that political abstraction that is flung in one's face along with other platitudes from every platform What does it really mean? What did it mean to us? Men going out to die. Women at home crying, eating their hearts out with loneliness, going bad now and then in recklessness, in desperation. Army contractors getting rich. Ammunition manufacturers getting rich. Transportation companies paying hundred per cent dividends. One nation grabbing for territory here, another there. Talk of saving the world for democracy and in the same breath throttling liberty of speech and action in every corner of the world. And now that it's all over, everything is the same, only worse. The rich are richer and the poor poorer, and there are some new national boundaries and some blasted military and political reputations. That's all You know that the men that died were the lucky ones. The country that marched them to the front with speeches and music when the guns were talking throws them on the scrapheap when they come back maimed. I have no faith in a country that takes so much and gives a little so grudgingly."
(HP, 216-18)

Hollister owns a timber limit in the Toba valley in British Columbia and decides to have a look at it. He recalls with pleasure a year spent on the British Columbia coast at the age of eighteen, where he had been sent to recover from an eye ailment:

He lived in the woods, restored the strength of his eyes amid that restful greenness, hardened a naturally vigorous body by healthy, outdoor labor with the logging crews. He returned home . . . with unforgettable impressions of the Pacific coast, a boyish longing to go back to that region where the mountains receded from the sea in wave after wave of enormous height, where the sea lapped with green lips at the foot of the ranges and thrust winding arms back into the very heart of the land, and where the land itself, delta and slope and slide-engraved

declivities, was clothed with great, silent forests, upon which man, with his axes and saws, his machinery, his destructiveness in the name of industry, has as yet made little more impression than the nibbling of a single mouse on the rim of a large cheese. (HP, 12)

When Hollister arrives on his timber limit, he is not oppressed by the solitude. He has lived so long among "blaring noises, the mechanical thunder and lightning of the war, the rumble of industry, the shuffle and clatter of crowds" (HP, 42) that he has forgotten what it is like to be alone. By comparison with the mankind which had marred him, the silent woods seem friendly. He feels astonishingly content.

Hollister notices a thriving settlement in the lower Toba valley, with the forest being logged off and the land being cultivated. The settlement turns out to be Sam Carr's returned soldier cooperative, and it is Carr's community that eventually buys some of the timber on Hollister's land. Thus Hollister is linked in a communal relationship only with other returned soldiers who have suffered at the hands of society. Sinclair stresses that Hollister is in "a vast, fecund area out of which man, withdrawing from the hectic pressure of industrial civilization, could derive sustenance,--if he possessed sufficient hardihood . . ." (HP, 50).

By chance Hollister encounters a blind woman, Doris Cleveland, with whom he falls in love. Aware that his first wife is still alive, Hollister still marries Doris:

He did not shut his eyes to the fact that for him this marriage would be bigamy . . . But current morality had ceased to have its old significance for Hollister. He had seen too much of it vaporized so readily in the furnace of the war. Convention had lost any power to dismay him. His world had used him in its hour of need, had flung him into the Pit, and when he crawled out maimed, discouraged; stripped of everything

that had made life precious, this world of his fellows shunned him because of what he had suffered in their behalf. So he held himself under no obligation to be guided by their moral dictums. He was critical of accepted standards because he had observed that an act might be within the law and still outrage humanity; it might be legally sanctioned and socially approved and spread intolerable misery in its wake. Contrariwise, he could conceive a thing beyond the law being meritorious in itself. (HP, 113-14)

Hollister, like Bill Wagstaff and Jack Fyfe, has learned to subscribe to a higher truth than that offered by conventional morality. Hollister's connection with the wilderness, like that of the other two men, has reinforced his own individuality and enabled him to re-evaluate social codes that he once lived by and accepted. Doris also does not feel bound by standard ways of thinking, and though she is aware of Hollister's disfigurement, she has learned to love the wilderness in preference to the city, and is perfectly prepared to live her life there with him:

"I love the smell of the earth and the sea and the woods. Even when I could see, I never cared a lot for town. It would be all right for a while, then I would revolt against the noise, the dirt and smoke, the miles and miles of houses rubbing shoulders against each other, and all the thousands of people scuttling back and forth, like--well, it seems sometimes almost as aimless as the scurrying of ants when you step on their hill." (HP, 143-44)

Hollister's decision to live on his timber limit and log it puts him "at the primitive source of things," and he learns "the pride of definitely planned creative work" (HP, 152). Until the war, Hollister had been a businessman, using money to make more money, dealing with tokens rather than the things themselves. He had been so far from the source of nature's raw materials that he had never perceived the complexity of modern industry. For the first time, he perceives the relationship among the town, with its manufacturing, the plains, which grow food, and

nature, with its store of raw materials. He sees himself as paying for his food and clothing with the timber he shapes. Thus it is contact with the basic elements of the social order that makes him finally perceive its structure. Sinclair believes that this structure includes an element of chance which saves man from being "in the inexorable grip of destiny" (HP, 159). As Doris puts it, "Most of us at different times hold our own fate, temporarily at least, in our own hands without knowing it, and some insignificant happening does this or that to us" (HP, 160). Hollister regards himself as one who has profited from "this factor of chance" (HP, 160). Had it not operated, he would not have been in the wilderness, living in happiness with Doris:

The land held out to them manifold promises. Hollister looked at the red-brown shingle bolts accumulating behind the boom-sticks and felt that inner satisfaction which comes of success achieved by plan and labor. If his mutilated face had been capable of expression it would have reflected pride, satisfaction. Out of the apparent wreckage of his life he was laying the foundations of something permanent, something abiding, an enduring source of good. (HP, 176)

Sinclair depicts Hollister as venturing into Vancouver again with Doris because there is a possibility that her sight will be restored, but nothing has changed. He continues to be treated as a freak by the society for which he had sacrificed himself, and he longs for the impassive, impersonal silences of the wilderness.

The book closes with a series of catastrophes which shake Hollister's world (a double murder and a fire which destroys his timber). Temporarily he believes that nature is blind, ruthless, disorderly, and wantonly destructive. In addition he fears that his wife may turn from him when she sees his face. At the close of the book, Hollister's greatest fears remain unrealized, and he is able once again to respond sympathetically

to the wild beauty of nature. This sympathetic response is described as "purely subjective" (HP, 317), so "resilient and adaptable a thing is the human mind" (HP, 317). Though Hollister has a feeling of "pleasant security" about the future, and everything seems "good," the book takes a more skeptical position than Sinclair's earlier work about "the common assumption that all things, no matter how mysterious, work out ultimately for some common good" (HP, 305). The life Hollister builds for himself in the wilderness ultimately seems fragile and easily shaken. In this respect the book offers a more complex view of nature than that of North of Fifty-Three, or even of Burned Bridges, which stresses that a life in a natural environment is a life lived according to the highest dictates of reason.

The Inverted Pyramid (1924) is Sinclair's most ambitious book. In it he makes his most extensive statement about the distorted commercial ethic which dominates society and has caused the war. The book has a bitter twist: in order to uphold honour and justice, man is forced to destroy ruthlessly the natural world. The book deals with the Norquay family, whose founder had accompanied George Vancouver on his voyage of exploration in 1792. In 1809 Roderick Norquay had built a stone house which he called "Hawk's Nest" on a twelve-hundred-acre headland called Big Dent near what was to become the city of Vancouver. The family had prospered, buying up land and timber, and passing on its wealth to what is now the fifth generation. This includes Rod Norquay, the youngest son, who is presented as the upholder of family traditions, and one who appreciates the natural environment. The oldest son, Grove, who inherits the property and timber (as the result of a family tradition resembling

an entail), is not interested in the family forestry operations, but instead wants to be a Napoleon of finance. Grove's financial manipulations and those of his colleagues result in the near liquidation of his trust company, which is saved from going under only because his father and Rod are determined to save the family name. Thousands of acres of forests are relentlessly and swiftly logged in order to pour capital into the Norquay Trust Company. Grove commits suicide. Rod is left with a moral victory and acres of land that have been pillaged of their natural wealth.

Sinclair based the book on the scandal involving the Dominion Trust, which Martin Robin describes as "one of a host of companies, equally fraudulent, which collapsed in the pre-war years."⁹ However, its failure was particularly dramatic as its managing director died suddenly in October, 1914; his death resulted in an inquiry which revealed that the directors had made huge, unauthorized loans involving more than a million dollars in popular deposits. Five thousand customers were left without recourse to compensation. The British Columbia Tory government, whose Attorney-General was William Bowser, had not probed the company's financial solvency before its incorporation. Bowser's law firm had also acted for the Dominion Trust, which had avoided regulation under the lax Companies Act. Before the Tories were voted out of office, Bowser briefly became Premier of British Columbia (1915-16). Robin points out that the list of limited liability companies in British Columbia in 1912 included 4,760 firms floated largely on watered stock with a capitalization of \$1,177,000,000.¹⁰

The Tories were in power in British Columbia in the early years of this century until they were ousted by a reform government headed by a

Liberal, Baptist Harlan Brewster in 1916. The Liberals used the Dominion Trust collapse as a weapon in their electoral campaign. Before the Liberal victory, Tory Premier Richard McBride and Attorney-General William Bowser, known as the "Gold Brick Twins," had pursued a reckless policy of land sales and timber alienation.¹¹ New timber licence legislation resulted in large tracts of Crown land falling into the hands of a few large corporations. McBride also fathered the Canadian Northern Pacific Railway deal with Mackenzie and Mann, who received terms which allowed them "to load millions of dollars of capitalization on the householders of British Columbia."¹² Under McBride, speculation in land sales was rampant. The government boasted in 1911 that it had sold two million acres in seven years.¹³ Robin refers to the three-year period between 1913 and 1916 in British Columbia as the "carnival of graft,"¹⁴ and sums up the period of Tory control over British Columbia politics in the following way:

Bowser's grimy machine and McBride's sky-blue vision of a great northern empire were built on the base of economic prosperity Resource alienation provided the funds necessary to grease the party machine Frenetic speculative and investment activities continued unabated through 1912 and few people, except wise insiders, dreamed that prosperity would ever desert the blessed province The boom peaked in 1912 and was soon followed by a severe down trend Suddenly there was a curtailment of credit, and financiers, and bankers muttered about overdrafts and deferred payments Pockets of unemployed appeared British Columbia . . . had taken a moral holiday. The pathetic bleatings of the miniscule opposition about machine rule, misappropriation of funds, extravagance, corruption and rampant resource alienation, were faintly heard by electors who romped in Mammon's garden Mr. Bowser, who cared little about the rule of law or the concept of justice, spoke for the speculator, the prevailing culture hero who pursued profit by utterly disregarding accepted rules Economic circumstances, that cruel educator, dispelled McBride's vision of the northern empire.¹⁵

It was in this political-economic atmosphere that the Dominion Trust Company collapsed in 1914. Robin points out that a "scourge of moral indignation"

swept British Columbia in the immediate pre-war years. As he colourfully puts it, "The flames of righteous indignation, fanned by the prospects of a patriotic imperial war and by the crunch of economic depression, burned brightly in Sodom by the sea."¹⁶ The Norquay Trust Company in The Inverted Pyramid actually collapses in 1919, not in 1914. Sinclair's purpose is to make clear the linkage between the building of shaky financial empires and the war, so he freely adjusts economic history. As Sinclair has one character state, "Armies are the policemen of trade" (IP, 181).

By 1924, Sinclair had come to think of the colonization of North America as a subject for epic literature. Especially was this true of the British Columbia coast, which he believed had the most majestic natural environment on the continent. He puts these sentiments into the mind of Rod Norquay, who attempts, through part of the narrative, to write a book that would capture the spirit of his native land:

Rod Norquay . . . found himself wondering why no poet had sung the song of this swirling water; why no novelist had lovingly portrayed this land as a back-drop for his comic and tragic puppets? Why was there no Iliad of the pioneers, no Human Comedy of men and manners peculiar to the North Coast? . . . That it deserved a Homer and a Burns he did not doubt.
(IP, 1-2)

The epic of fur and timber and the conquering of a wilderness peopled with savages.

(IP, 79)

Rod sees the writing of such an epic as the creation of "something of worth above the measure of money" (IP, 173). Though he never writes his book, Mary, his wife, discovers during the war that she has a thesis to communicate. She writes a book called The Swirl, whose message is "that stupidity and ignorance and intolerance are more fatal than guns" (IP,

206). One publisher rejects the book because it casts "doubt on the great moral forces underlying the war" (IP, 207). The implication is that Mary will write the epic work that Rod had envisaged, but that in the short term an immediate statement of truths about the war was more necessary.

The contrast between Rod's and Grove's values is made most explicit through their reactions to the war. Grove's trust company does not miss the opportunity to profit from the situation. It runs an advertisement in the paper which reads as follows: "Your country calls you. Before you go overseas put your affairs in the capable hands of THE NORQUAY TRUST COMPANY" (IP, 178). Rod revolts against "being a pawn in the European game" (IP, 179), but he believes that he should fight if statesmen have committed his country to a war. Though he agrees with Andy Hall that "war . . . is the most senseless pastime any nation can engage in" (IP, 182), he has an "emotional certainty" that he must act: "If everybody stands on his rights and demands a readjustment of a faulty arrangement of things before he will make a single defensive move--we'll be whipped out of hand" (IP, 185). Andy's position (and he speaks for the author) is that "Struggle for commercial supremacy has started every war since the Crusades, and a few of the dynastic rumpuses. This is a row over property rights, real or potential" (IP, 182). He argues that as he is a common worker, he has no property to protect: "Why should we, who have only the shadow, sacrifice ourselves for those who have the substance?" (IP, 184). Nonetheless, the old "tribal instincts" that are "stronger and deeper" than civilization stir in him, and he imagines German cruisers "slinging shells" at the west coast. Like Rod, who resolves the conflict

he has "between two powerful sets of feelings" (IP, 187), he enlists.

As a result of the war, Grove becomes "a big man in his chosen field" (IP, 210). Rod notices that Grove is quoted in the newspaper every day, getting as much space as the Peace Conference. He appears to be achieving greater fame and fortune than the founder of the family. Rod wonders whether his ancestors would have found much pleasure in discounting notes, in "squeezing little debtors and bolstering up big ones for a consideration" (IP, 211). Grove's material success is only part of the general prosperity which has transformed Vancouver as a result of the war. New industries, shipyards, and an abundant supply of money have changed the face of the city. Rod is cynical and disheartened by the post-war world:

"... I don't know any place where democracy is in good working order. We certainly put a crimp in German militarism, but our own militarists are in a very flourishing condition, especially in France. In fact, a lot of men . . . are beginning to ask what we did fight for. The few weeks I've been in civil life haven't enlightened me Some people, quite a lot, regard it as some sort of spectacular game at which our side won. They seem to be rather eager for the distribution of prizes. And there aren't any prizes Nothing but bigger taxes, higher prices--a hell of a struggle to pay the bill--labor demanding to know why, after having fought a war and won it, they must come home and get to work and pay the bill. Oh, we won the war right enough, but it's a Pyrrhic victory. The significance of that long-drawn wrangle at Versailles doesn't seem obvious to many people." (IP, 204-205)

Grove and Rod indicate their contradictory values through the marriages they make. Rod marries Mary Thorn, a neighbour with whom he has grown up and who shares his love of nature. Mary is described as supremely "natural" (IP, 55). Her father, Oliver Thorn, summarizes his philosophy of life for Rod:

"My wants are simple. My family's wants are simple. A reasonable amount of leisure. A reasonable amount of security. A chance

to read and think. Freedom from hurry and worry Each season I cut a few hundred dollars' worth of cedar Each year the value of the stand increases When I choose to sell, it will bring me enough for a decent living as long as I'm likely to live, and something left over for Mary. That's good enough." (IP, 58)

Grove, acting as head of the family, warns Rod away from Mary, the "half-wild daughter of a dreamy-eyed incompetent" (IP, 24), but Rod ignores the warning and convinces Mary to marry him: "We're both thoroughbreds. It isn't class that counts. It's character. All the rest is just trimmings" (IP, 193). Mary's ancestors were Americans who went west before the Boston Tea Party (the book has a strong British bias). Just as Rod's ancestors were pioneers in Vancouver, Mary's were pioneers in Minnesota and Idaho, always restless, prepared to strike out into new territory, "independent, always competent to fend for themselves" (IP, 175). Thus Rod and Mary are presented as the same sort of people, despite their class differences, with a similar relationship to the land. "What do shops and streetcars, cities and frontiers mean to us here? People handicap themselves when they grow too civilized," Mary observes (IP, 174).

Grove, on the other hand, makes a socially advantageous marriage to Laska Wall, the daughter of a rich man. Though Laska really cares for Phil, the second Norquay son, the implication is that she is not courageous enough to ignore Grove's fortune and as a result makes a loveless marriage. She finds the world "a rather hollow affair" and Rod senses a "vague fretfulness about her" (IP, 76), but she does not have the independence to rescue herself. Her sister, Isabel, on the other hand, defies her family to marry Andy Hall, a political radical and a lumberman who works for Rod.

Rod and Grove are contrasted as well in their treatment of the loggers who work the Norquay land. The loggers strike in order to obtain a fifty-cent-a-day raise and bathing facilities. The loggers, who are "putting more timber per man per day into the booming ground than any crew on the coast," are clearly entitled to the wage increase. Grove is not open to reason, and wants to reject the demand on the ground of "principle": "You simply cannot afford to allow a crew of dissatisfied loggers to imagine for a minute that they can tell you how you're to run your business" (IP, 159). Rod, who has learned logging from the ground up working in the lumber camp alongside the men, cannot think of his workers as an inconvenient part of the production machine. He sees them as men and their requests as reasonable. Grove's response to his workers is presented as typical of that of the businessmen of the day to what they viewed as socialist agitation:

These worthy gentlemen over their wine and cigars affected to believe the State, the home, the nation, reeled to ruin before union wage scales. The rancor in their voices when they spoke of working-class demands amazed Rod sometimes.

(IP, 315)

During the disastrous autumn of 1920 when the British Columbia sawmills are silent, Sinclair presents the Norquay lumber operations under Rod's management as functioning without a single creaking joint. Rod's men, who are taken into his confidence instead of being treated as machines, agree that a lowered wage is better than idleness: "The reddest radical among them believed in him sufficiently to go ahead on the assurance that wages would automatically keep step with prices for the product of their labor" (IP, 315). In fact, Rod's camps take on the aspect of a community: "Some of the married men built float houses on rafts which

could be moved when the camp changed, and brought their families there to live away from rent and fuel costs in town" (IP, 314). The government is even persuaded to set up a temporary school.

When the Norquay Trust is seen to be insolvent, Rod initially is inclined to let Grove suffer the consequences of his folly, but their father argues that the family name and prestige have been the foundation on which the "tottering Colossus" was built. In the public eye the Norquays stand and fall as a family; thus none of them can shirk Grove's obligation. Half of the family wealth is in standing timber. Rod's father observes that "The woods will have to be our salvation" (IP, 221). The only redeeming feature of the situation is that Grove has not actually been dishonest. The other members of the trust have feathered their nests and left him "holding the empty sack." These same men regard Rod and his father as fools for wanting to pay back the investors. "What's the Limited Liability Act for?" they ask. Rod ruminates on Grove's career: "A matter of dollars. No question of honor or duty, no sacrifice for anything resembling an ideal, no vision of usefulness to his family, his friends, or his country had illuminated Grove's headlong way Only power, the purely material aspect of power, was a thing he valued" (IP, 23). Rod must, in effect, rape the forest to raise the money to save the Norquay trust:

There was no picking of prime trees and care to conserve the younger growth, nor far-sighted culling of the forest crop. It was complete destruction. Within the boundaries of each limit the earth was stripped to its primal nakedness. Sky-line and high-lead gear ripped strings of logs over the surface, plowing deep furrows in the scant soil, tearing up saplings, shouldering aside rotten trunks and small boulders, bursting into dusty clouds the dead snags in the way. When the loggers shifted to a fresh stand they left desolation behind. Timber

great and small was money. Every stick landed in tidewater went for something; number one export, number two, the broken cedar for shingles, the poorer grades of spruce and hemlock for pulpwood that the mills chewed up and spat forth in tons of news print. (IP, 271)

Finally, he must even strip the timber from the twelve hundred acres surrounding the family home. At the eleventh hour, John Wall, Grove's father-in-law, offers to buy the family home and its acreage from Rod for somewhat more than he needs to make a final honourable liquidation of the Norquay Trust. Rod refuses rather than sell his family home to a man without conscience or ethics. So the trees are felled:

Upon that twelve hundred acres the trees stood bough to bough, --clean, straight, tall, enormous of girth and sound to the core. From the level center of the island an easy slope fell away to the water on every side. For a mile back from Hawk's Nest to walk abroad was like walking in the nave of a Gothic cathedral For a hundred years the Norquays had warred on the thickets and undergrowth The floor of that forest was the floor of a park. Bough to bough the trees stood in endless ranks Dim aisles ran out into shadowy perspective. Only on the southern fringe bordering the house and lawn had the forest been thinned to let in sunshine and become clothed with grass. All the rest was carpeted with moss. (IP, 320-21)

Rod has destroyed a "stately forest" in order "to preserve a tradition, to discharge an obligation, to live with honor in his own sight" (IP, 336). Rod believes that tradition, obligation, and honour have a meaning to many men, even in a "world that worshipped Mammon above all other gods" (IP, 337). Though Grove has destroyed the work of four generations before him, Rod believes that rebuilding is possible. He feels that he knows precisely what to avoid as he has been bitterly schooled in the way of a world which "had abandoned the old faiths to pursue things" (IP, 337). Like saplings, he and his family can grow to the old stature if Rod wishes it. As the book closes, Rod's eyes turn to the waste land

that now surrounds his home, and it is clear that he plans to begin the restoration of the forest.

Thus the work of Stead and Sinclair forms a good jumping-off point into the realistic novels of the period. For example, the Great War and its repercussions are social issues that both writers attempt to grapple with. Both men view the cause of the war as the world-wide pursuit of materialist goals, which Sinclair particularly associates with urban values. Stead is more enthusiastic than Sinclair about Canadian participation in the war on the grounds that a costly but important lesson will be learned as the result of the bloodshed. Sinclair argues for participation only as a measure of self-defence and because he ultimately becomes convinced of the moral superiority of the Allied over the German cause. Both men view war-profiteering with repugnance. Again Sinclair associates these profits more directly with an urban economy than does Stead. Both writers offer schemes for the re-settlement of the returned soldier which involve him in a rejection of both urban life and urban values. Characteristically, Sinclair's returned man finds himself logging timber in virgin forest and Stead's returned man finds himself in a semi-socialist farming cooperative raising food. Neither writer suggests an immersion in a city life or a city economy as an answer to the sense of displacement and disillusion that the returned man suffers.

Stead's less ruthless attack on urban materialism hinges on his association of the development of Canada as a nation with the necessity to develop its cities. In one sense his novels are really fictional versions of contemporary federal political thinking. Even Stead's

apostrophes to the soil are associated with the political and economic wisdom of Canada as a national entity to feed itself rather than to import necessities such as food. Sinclair did not think in political terms. His approach to "Canada" as a nation is almost mystical--that is, Canada is one of the last places where an individualistic ethic can survive. The unspoiled north is the "true" version of the country, and its cities are a distortion of the truth.

Stead admires technology in the city and on the land when it is applied appropriately, that is, with discipline and moral rectitude, and when it helps raise man out of an animal state. Sinclair stresses that technology tends to get out of control, though he does not deny it a place in logging operations in the wilderness. Stead also has more tolerance than Sinclair for the kind of civilized arts that the city fosters, for example, architecture that combines skilled technology with a sense of aesthetics. Sinclair believes that the lessons that the arts of a highly cultivated civilization have to teach may be submerged in the social pretenses with which art is often associated in the city. Both men admire learning, but both are wary of its use for hypocritical purposes. Sinclair especially believes that though learning may provide a guide to life, an intimate relationship to nature will teach the same things that can be learned from books.

Stead is a believer in the Christian ethic, though he thinks it is not applied enough in practical affairs. Sinclair stresses the hypocrisy of masking unfair business practices and immorality behind the facade of a Christian life. He sees the city as encouraging the creation of what is only a Christian veneer rather than true Christianity. In the wilderness,

man learns to live by a "natural" ethic that is suggested to him through the need to survive and endure in nature. Sharp business practices associated with the city are viewed with more toleration by Stead, who sees the entrepreneur as making a positive contribution to the development of the country even though he enriches himself at the expense of others. Ultimately, both men are anti-materialistic and uphold individual solutions to the problems of society. Though Stead appears to be a Christian socialist, actually he is wary of large socio-economic solutions and relies on change in the heart of the individual man. Sinclair is even more leery of government and business on a large scale and has his heroes relying on a kind of rugged individualism to solve their problems. Though Stead is far more tolerant of the city than Sinclair, both men ultimately associate the good life with a non-urban setting. This position is taken as well by Frederick Grove, as Chapter II will demonstrate.

NOTES

¹ All page and other references to Stead novels are to the following editions: (BJ) The Bail Jumper (Toronto: William Briggs, 1914); (HS) The Homesteaders (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1916); (CP) The Cowpuncher (Toronto: Musson, 1918); (DG) Dennison Grant (Toronto: Musson, 1920); (N) Neighbours (Toronto: Hodder and Stoughton, 1922); (SF) The Smoking Flax (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1924); (G) Grain (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1926); (CD) The Copper Disc (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, Doran, 1931).

² J. M. S. Careless, "Aspects of Urban Life in the West, 1870-1914," Prairie Perspectives 2: Selected Papers of the Western Canadian Studies Conferences, 1970, 1971 (Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada, 1973), 25.

³ Careless, Ibid., 34.

⁴ Careless, Ibid., 34.

⁵ Careless, Ibid., 29-30.

⁶ Careless, Ibid., 29.

⁷ Anonymous review of The Farmer and the Interests by Clarus Ager, "The Library Table," The Canadian Magazine, LIII (July 1919), 227-28. This attitude towards the automobile was not limited to the farmer alone. Books describing car trips were very popular during the period. No strong narrative was needed. Descriptions of the joys and vicissitudes of driving, scenery, buildings, and persons encountered along the way were enough to make a book. See, for example, two books by Percy Gomery,

A Motor Scamper 'Cross Canada: A Human-Interest Narrative Of A Pathfinding Journey from Montreal to Vancouver (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1922), and Curve: Go Slow; a Romance of Pacific Coast Highways (Ottawa: The Graphic Publishers, 1927). The former book included an end-paper map of the route followed. The sub-titles of these books offer a good indication of their contents.

⁸ All page and other references to Sinclair novels are to the following editions: Raw Gold (New York: M. A. Donohue & Company, 1908); The Land of Frozen Suns (U.S.A.; No publisher, Copyright G. W. Dillingham Company, 1910); (NF) North of Fifty-Three (New York: Grosset & Dunlap, 1914); (BT) Big Timber, A Story of the Northwest (New York: A. L. Burt, 1916); (BB) Burned Bridges (Boston: Little, Brown, 1919); Poor Man's Rock (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1920); (HP) The Hidden Places (Boston: Little, Brown, 1922); (IP) The Inverted Pyramid (Toronto: Frederick D. Goodchild, 1924); Wild West (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1926); Gunpowder Lightning (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1930); Pirates of the Plains (London: Hodder & Stoughton, n.d.); Down the Dark Alley (Boston: Little, Brown, 1936); Room for the Rolling M (London: Wright & Brown, 1954); Both Sides of the Law (London: Wright & Brown, 1955).

⁹ Martin Robin, The Rush for Spoils, The Company Province, 1871-1933 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1972), p. 149.

¹⁰ Robin, Ibid., p. 149.

¹¹ Robin, Ibid., p. 91.

¹² Robin, Ibid., p. 112.

¹³ Robin, Ibid., p. 117.

¹⁴ Robin, Ibid., p. 125.

15 Robin, Ibid., pp. 136-138.

16 Robin, Ibid., p. 120.

Chapter II

Grove's Cities:

Poisonous Flowers in the Woods

Grove generally is considered the major realistic writer of the period, but he is less balanced than Stead on the subject of the contrast between urban and rural life. Like Sinclair, Grove offers a romantic view of non-urban life, but it is rural rather than wilderness life that concerns him. Though Grove never ignores the problem of materialism in rural life, he saves his heavy artillery for urban materialism. The extremity of his negative position on urban life casts into doubt even the clarity of his view of farming as a process. At this distance in time, Stead's presentation of rural life appears more "realistic" than Grove's. Though in many ways Grove is a more sophisticated writer than Stead, his lack of balance makes his work appear simplistic and pompous. Stead's more modest aims as a writer make his failures less striking.

Twelve of Grove's Canadian books had been published before his death in 1948. In 1976 a Canadian translation of Mauermeister Ihles Haus (1906) appeared in Canada under the title The Master Mason's House, and Grove novels still await publication. However, Grove had published seven of the twelve Canadian books in the brief period between 1922 and 1930. Despite Grove's many problems with publishers, the appearance of what amounted to a book every year during the twenties would argue that publishers, at least, believed Grove to be reflecting current taste at some level.

That his books did not sell well suggests that the gap was still wide between the popular taste for romantic fiction and what publishers and critics saw as a new maturity in Canadian writing. As we look at the twenties from this distance, Grove still is considered the major novelist of the period and thus his view of the city should be examined with some care.

As Stead had observed, the independence and growth of Canada were inextricably linked with the development of an urban economy, though Stead also noted that the growth of western cities seemed to foster materialistic goals in life at a swifter rate than these developed in a life on the land. Grove was unwilling to see a connection between industrialization and national development. He consistently linked the maturity of Canada as a nation to a spiritual association with the soil. Unlike Stead, who saw that a materialist will grow on farmland as well as between the cracks in the asphalt, Grove thought that urban life fostered the pursuit of material goals to the exclusion of all others. Grove linked the proliferation of materialism and a mechanistic approach to life to American influences and saw the Anglo-Saxon tradition in Canada as part of a larger European tradition whose goals were the pursuit of goodness and truth. He believed that this larger European tradition still was to be found in western Canada among the rural dwellers. Thus the belief that the path to national greatness lay through industrialization and urbanization was antithetical to his thinking. Grove's belief in the mystical value of ownership of land implied that the city dweller would find it difficult, if not impossible, to reach out into what Grove described as "the dark mysteries" which surround us; in fact, he carries this

position to the extreme of associating virtue with the land and vice with the city, a simplistic point of view that is unexpected in someone considered a major writer. A corollary of this view of vice and virtue is that Grove associates ideal marriage and domestic happiness with the land, rarely with the city.

At the time of the writing of A Search for America, Grove also appears not to have been sensitive to the geographical and cultural differences between Canada and the United States, as he makes judgments gleaned from his experiences in one country and applies them to the other. Another possibly more serious error which Grove makes in judging the city is to confuse it with the term civilization, which, prefaced by the word modern, becomes an abusive phrase covering a variety of social phenomena which Grove dislikes--for example, fashionably dressed women, artificial lighting, crowds, selling, automobiles, and sexual license (this covers everything except sex within marriage). Again the reader is disappointed by this superficial approach to the cities of Canada, which by the twenties were of striking significance in the overall social picture of the country.

However, Grove had touched a tender spot in the nation's sensibility. The development of industrial capitalism in the cities had brought with it a distrust of the "commercial ethic," and as post-war Canada prospered, it decried its own accumulation of wealth. This paradox invited exploration, and Grove was ready to grapple with it. The explanation of the popular failure of his books may lie in his use of realistic techniques to suggest a romantic solution to the problem of the cities. He is urging the land on his readers as a source of spiritual succour, but when Grove

writes about farming he often spares no detail of the unremitting hard labour involved in working the land. The apparent contradiction may have put off the general reader, who preferred to think of rural life in terms of trilling birds and spectacular sunsets. Grove's high-principled approach to urban materialism did not deter critics, however, who found in him an earnestness and high moral tone lacking in the literature of the period. Nevertheless, in terms of their attitudes towards the cities, Grove's high principles appear less realistic than Stead's, a writer with a lesser reputation.

However, Grove did enjoy some popular success. For example, on January 26, 1929, while on a lecture tour, Grove is able to report to Mrs. Grove from Montreal that all the bookstores have "huge" displays of his work,¹ and that Our Daily Bread is among their best sellers. On the following day, Grove assures his wife that the Search is "slowly selling, with emphasis on selling rather than on slowly."² In this letter he also remarks that he is considered "the leading man in Canada at last." Moving from one extreme to the other, Grove writes to Watson Kirkconnell on June 12, 1929, that Canada seems to have nothing to offer him, and that he and Mrs. Grove are "discussing the advisability of definitely leaving the country"³ because he cannot make a living from his writing. Grove's literary reputation⁴ did not bring him the material rewards he expected, and one feels a faint surprise that a writer who argued so stridently against materialism in his work should feel so injured when his success resulted in little that was concrete in his life.

During his lecture tours of Canada, Grove delivered an address which he called "Nationhood." Grove considered it of sufficient importance

to include it in the March, 1929, issue of The Canadian Nation, a publication of which he had just become associate editor. That same year It Needs to Be Said appeared, a collection of eight essays, the crowning piece of which was, again, "Nationhood." Margaret Stobie calls It Needs to Be Said a "potboiler."⁵ One can only concur, with the proviso that if the ideas and language of these essays constitute a "potboiler," their presence in Grove's fiction makes it questionable as well. "Nationhood" is a distillation of much of the thinking in the early books, and does not differ substantially in tone from, for example, Our Daily Bread. Grove begins "Nationhood" by pointing out that although one hears frequently of the "inexhaustible resources of the Dominion," material civilization is nothing to boast of. "Wealth produces at no time true values" (NBS, 137).⁶ Though Canada's untapped resources may make it the "centre of the British Empire," only "danger" lies in such a situation, as "true civilizations" grow out of a "spiritual soil, not a material one." The wealth of Canada is its greatest menace. Grove sees as praiseworthy in Canada's past the survival of French Quebec, which he sees as resulting from the federal, rather than the melting-pot principles of the British Empire. Even more praiseworthy, however, is Canada's resistance to influences from the United States:

South of our borders lives a mighty nation which is reaching out with its tentacles over the globe--with a view towards the Americanisation . . . of that globe: a nation which, by the help of two processes, has evolved a mechanical civilization unique in the modern world--the two processes being mass-production and standardization (mass-production doing away with artistic aspirations, and standardization, with individuality): a nation proud of its wealth and power and proud of its great material civilization All over the world, that influence is, by thoughtful minds, considered as dangerous: as a shallowing of ancient standards, as a re-orientation of men's minds and desires, from things spiritual, towards things material and economic

in that nation, the great Anglo-Saxon tradition as it came from Europe is in grave danger of going into eclipse.

(NBS, 142-44)

Grove describes the Anglo-Saxon tradition as part of a European tradition whose god has been "goodness and truth," whose dream has been "beauty," and whose law has been a retracing of a "divine law born within us which cares for nothing but what is right." The aim of the tradition is "the realization of man's fullest potentialities as a creature formed in the image of God . . ." (NBS, 144).

In contrast, "Americanisation" means the reorientation of the minds of immigrants towards a "jealous god" called a "Standard of Living," and toward "aims which exhaust themselves in sensual enjoyment and the so-called conquest of nature." Grove sees the course of British history as being reversed in America. Canada and the United States have been engaged "in a war of principles" which is at present at its height. But although Canada has "lived for centuries in the shadow of a more powerful brother" it has held out "against the influence of example and pressure and almost compulsion . . ." Grove sees this as an achievement of which Canadians may justly be proud. He goes on to argue that the essence of nationhood is the "individuality" of the nation's civilization; that is, it must develop a "new or distinctive shade in the generally tragic reaction of the human soul to the fundamental conditions of man's life on earth." The distinctive shade of tragic reaction found in the people and environment of the Canadian prairies accords with that in Grove's own soul, which stems from the authentic European tradition, and he concludes that a true spiritual life is available in western Canada:

Let me speak for a moment of myself. I am a Canadian by choice. I am a Westerner by choice. I am also one who, whether

successfully or not, strives after beauty. For reasons which are not relevant here I left Europe. Whether I knew it at the time or not, I was searching for an environment which would help me to express that individual, tragic reaction to life, the world, the universe--to God--which I felt to be alive within me. I sought it in vain in the United States. I found traces of it--but there was more of it in Canada; and so, after having left this country, I returned to it. What kept me in Canada, and more especially in the Canadian West was the fact that I found here more clearly than elsewhere the germs of such a new or distinctive shade in the generally tragic reaction of human souls to the fundamental conditions of man's life on earth. I did not find these germs in the great cities with their churches and schools and universities. There, life is too strenuous, too prone to conformity with the rest of the continent. I found them among the plain, rough people of the prairies.

(NBS, 154-55)

Grove thus makes a clear distinction between western Canada, which he sees as continuing a spiritual European tradition, and Canadian cities, which he sees as imbued with the materialistic spirit of the United States. The population of the Canadian west is preoccupied with "the essentials and fundamentals of life rather than with the inessentials and accidentals," and this preoccupation, naturally, is found in the "poverty-stricken pioneer districts rather than in the well-settled and prosperous districts." This population stands distinctly opposed to "the proud march of our great material civilization which is . . . the great material civilization of our neighbours to the south." Lest the reader begin to infer that there is an "essential difference" between the level of intelligence of city and country, Grove hastens to assure us that though the rural dweller "may not have the ready phrase bred by the quick and incessant intercourse of the marketplace," the most intelligent discussions of national problems he has heard have been in the "open country." Grove compares the westerner to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the mid-European peasant and the British yeoman, all of whom were and are concerned with "eternally

valid things. The westerner, however, has something more than the European peasant, "a new hopefulness" bred by something peculiar to Canada. Grove speculates whether that "something" could be "the wider spaces of our plains, the greater height of our mountains . . .", or whether it comes from the fact that westerners "own the soil on which they stand." Nimbly, Grove connects the owning of land to true nationhood, and concludes his essay on this note:

. . . I take it to be a desire still inherent in man as born by woman to own that bit of land whence, with tentative mind, he reaches out into the dark mysteries which surround us.

In that reaching out he strives for that distinctive element in the generally tragic reaction of the human soul to the fundamental conditions of man's life on earth which I have defined as individuality in a people's civilization. On that individuality, I have said, depends true nationhood.

(NBS, 163)

Grove must have realized that he had to make a clear distinction between Canada and the United States if he were not to sound as if he were insulting his audience on his speaking tours. This may account for the arbitrary nature of some of his judgments, and the fact that rhetoric is more prominent than reasoning in the address. Also he must have felt that a frankly nationalist periodical like The Canadian Nation required this sort of approach.

In A Search for America (1927), published only two years before It Needs to Be Said, Grove includes the epigraph "America is a continent, not a country," on the title page. In the "Author's Note," Grove tells us that the book had been rewritten eight times, but that it still contains "anachronisms." One of the "anachronisms" which he retains in the book, but disavows in footnotes, is the following judgment of the difference between Europe and America:

In Europe the city was the crown of the edifice of the state; the city culminated in the court--a republican country like France being no exception, for the bureaucracy took the place, there, of the aristocracy in other countries. In America the city was the mere agent of the country--necessary, but dependent upon the country in every way--politically, intellectually, economically. Let America beware of the time when such a relation might be reversed: it would become a mere bridgehead of Europe, as in their social life some of its cities are even now.* The real reason underlying this difference I believed to be the fact that Europe, as far as the essentials of life were concerned, was a consumer; whereas America was a producer. The masses were fed, in Europe, from the cities; the masses were fed, in America, from the country. Blessed is the nation that remains rural in this respect, for it will inherit the world. Freedom and happiness flee, unless "superest ager."

(SA, 435-36)

In the first of two footnotes, Grove disavows the first set of statements (marked with an asterisk) by reminding the reader that they were written "decades" ago. After the passage quoted above, Grove continues his text by remarking that he had mistakenly taken "ideals for facts, aspirations for achievements." He now believes that "America is an ideal and as such has to be striven for; it has to be realized in partial victories." This statement also merits a footnote: "I have since come to the conclusion that the ideal as I saw and still see it has been abandoned by the U.S.A. That is one reason why I became and remained a Canadian." With these two footnotes, Grove almost entirely discredits A Search for America. He certainly puts into question Branden's description of the search as not a geographical one. One wonders why Grove bothered to publish the book at all if it no longer represented views he held.

If one leaves the footnotes out of consideration in judging the book, one is left with the perplexing question of why Branden chooses to settle in Winnipeg when he has come to the conclusion that the Abraham Lincolns are to be found in the rural districts of the United States. At the point

when we leave Branden, his only experience with Canada has been in the "hell" of a cheap Toronto restaurant. Branden's decision to help immigrants has been based on his own experience and what he has seen of the difficulties of other immigrants to the United States. Has Branden acquired his knowledge of Canada through some mysterious process never described in the book? Or does the real logic of the book lie in the epigraph-- "America is a continent, not a country"? Despite Grove's footnotes, and his virtual disavowal of A Search for America in the essay "Nationhood," I believe that the book's internal logic depends on an acceptance of the epigraph--that is, no distinction can be made between Canada and the United States. One must accept as the main thrust of A Search an earlier footnote of Grove's in which he explains that he uses the word "Americanizing" in a "wider sense in which it includes what is commonly called Canadianization" (SA, 92). In this sense, Toronto and New York are American cities, as is the "Winnipeg" where Branden goes to teach. The soul of the rural United States which Branden penetrates is the soul of rural Canada, and Abraham Lincoln must be seen as a Canadian hero. When Grove went on his speaking tours in the late twenties, he must have had very clearly in mind his rather naive failure to make clear distinctions between Canada and the United States in A Search for America. The extreme position Grove takes in "Nationhood" is suddenly far more understandable: Grove had to reject some of the ideas in his own book, which was selling well, without actually dissociating himself from it.

Despite these problems in assessing A Search, one thing stands out clearly--the simplistic association of vice with the cities and virtue with rural life. As Branden tramps through the countryside, he feels that

a new vista is opening before him:

What were cities and towns? Mere specks on the map. Here was the ground-mass of the nation--the soil from which cities sprang, like strange, weird, sometimes poisonous flowers in the woods. For the first time I saw the true relation: the city, the town working for the country: the farmer, though not yet realized as such, the real master of the world who would one day come into his own. I understood that, before I could say that I had a fair view of America as it is, I should have to mingle with the men who tilled the soil.

(SA, 356)

Branden/Grove sees the proliferation of the "poisonous flowers" as the most damaging thing that can happen to America. He points out that America is "fast changing from an agricultural country into an industrial one" (SA, 248) and that what is commonly called civilization "is indeed a movement from the essentials to the accidentals." The word "civilization" is thus misused to refer to trivia such as the problems of transportation. Branden/Grove remarks that in "that mistaken sense" he considers civilization "a chronic disease of mankind which every now and then breaks out into some such acute insanity as the late war" (SA, 249). He points out that what is commonly called learning is an encumbrance which leads to "Thinking-in-Ruts." Branden/Grove argues that "personal satisfaction" and the "amount of contentment" and the "ratio of joy to suffering" in life can be increased by following Carlyle's advice in Sartor Resartus: "The fraction of Life can be increased in value not so much by increasing your numerator as by lessening your denominator" (SA, 250); that is, you will obtain more if you wish for less. Simplifying one's wants has no necessary connection with tilling the soil, or with living on the edge of starvation, or with the rejection of learning, yet these are all positions that A Search takes at some point or other. A man tilling the soil with an undernourished body and an untutored mind is more likely to be bestial

than god-like, and only a romantic would see him as the latter rather than the former. Grove is forced into a black-and-white presentation of city and country through his passionate linkage of the life of the spirit to the life of the soil.

A little over half of A Search for America is concerned with scenes of city life. Grove chooses the principal Canadian and the principal American city as examples to demonstrate the quality of urban life. On the whole, Branden goes from bad to worse when he leaves Toronto for New York, though he does encounter a decent man, Ray, in New York. Out of ignorance, Branden passes right through Montreal, missing, as he claims, an "opportunity to see, and to get the flair of, a city which to-day holds for me the strongest and strangest fascination" (SA, 17). In precisely what way Montreal misses Grove's general condemnation of the city is never explained, but Branden presents his overlooking of Montreal in favour of Toronto as a mistake.

Branden finds Toronto an indifferent, callous place imbued with the commercial spirit. The churches advertise, and there are few, if any, jobs available to a person without experience. Branden's appearance and his painful honesty about his lack of experience are against him. The reader hovers between thinking him a fool and admiring his persistence in sticking to the unvarnished truth. But Grove's intent is to give a picture of a romantic hero in a sordid world, so we are called on to sympathize with Branden's plight. Eventually, painful honesty is rewarded, and Branden obtains a job in a restaurant whose policy, as stated by the manager is not "to please our customers" but "to get their money out of their pockets into ours" (SA, 39). The staff quarters of the restaurant

consist of "an excessively dirty subterranean room" whose light bulbs are "covered with thick dust and bespattered with mud," and men's and women's dressing-rooms whose air is "stifling, saturated with the odour of human sweat, foul with the exhalations of slow, dry decay" (SA, 45). The corridors and kitchen upstairs are similarly unappetizing, and Ella, a waitress who wears an expression of "desperate, dumb determination," describes rush hour in the restaurant as "hell." Branden soon concurs. Branden's "lower depths" experience in the restaurant makes of him an instant socialist. His observations of "Whiskers," an elderly "omnibus," convince him that the man should be retired with a pension: ". . . society is at fault if it leaves the provision for old age to the individual's thrift, or, worse still, puts it beyond his powers to look out for himself" (SA, 69). The "great industrial organization" of America is at fault, but Branden also realizes that had he "submerged" in Europe his sympathies might have been similarly awakened. Branden forms a friendship with another waiter, Frank, who introduces him to the "great American game" --graft. Frank garners tips from his regular customers by serving them extra or better food without making the appropriate charges for it. He argues that graft permeates society, offering as examples the tax assessor who accepts bribes to underestimate the value of property, and the railroad conductor who accepts a dollar bill to let people ride free. Branden concludes that during the first few years of his life on this continent he fell in with an amazingly large number of people "who lived more or less exclusively on this or that form of graft" (SA, 93). However, because Grove is determined to prove that honesty is the best policy, he has Branden eventually earning more money by honest methods than Frank earns

by dishonest. Nonetheless, Branden feels "chained underground . . . with an uncontrollable yearning to get to the light, to the life of the sun, to the real world" (SA, 100). The feelings are aroused in him by the beauty of a September morning when the "virile odour of the humus of the soil" pervades even the city streets. Despite his yearning for the natural world, Branden concludes that New York is the place to go next. He sums up his first impression of America in the following way:

My first impression . . . was that of a floating tide, changing quickly, unthinkingly, continually--like the winds which blow over the continent. But it is the surface only to which I belonged and to which I still was to belong for years to come. Underneath this frantic motion, this ever-changing surface-agitation, I have, in the course of years, learned to discern an ever-growing, solid foundation which is firm as the rocks, moving only in a quiet, steady, unvarying motion--a motion headed towards clearer insight and firmer resolve to assert itself--a motion as irresistible as that of the Earth herself, and as continuous and unobtrusive. The trouble is that in our cities we stand in the turmoil of the day; nearly all that finds utterance through the voice belongs to this turmoil. In order to catch the real trend of American thought you have to get your ear down to the soil to listen. Then you will hear the sanity, the good sense, and the good-will which are truly American. While you stand upright in the clash of the surface, your ear is filled with the clamour and clangour, the brassy din of fleeting noises which drown the quiet whisper of destiny. The future must redeem the day. And lucky we, since it is coming, coming. (SA, 112-113)

Grove's "frantic motion" versus "quiet, steady motion, that is, city versus country, has a superficial veracity, but it is categorical and lacks the balance we expect of a writer of Grove's reputation.

Branden's experience in New York is an intensification of his Toronto experience with "graft." His complete disillusionment with Frank comes when Frank's cards of introduction to persons in New York prove utterly worthless. Though Branden is presented to us as a sophisticated man familiar with European capitals, he immediately falls prey to two New

York card sharks. The newspapers publish an inaccurate account of his participation in the swindle, but he waits in vain for a retraction. Again, he seeks a job, using painful honesty as a weapon, and again fails to find one, even offering to work for nothing to gain experience. He feels that America--"using the word as a collective name for that part of the population of two cities with which [he] had come into contact" (SA, 153)--is crude. However, while roaming through the Hudson River Valley, he comes to feel that there is something in the hills and woods at variance with that population. He also discovers "American Lettres," that is, Lincoln, Lowell, and Thoreau, and realizes that there is a spiritual world in America that he has not yet discovered. He finally obtains a job canvassing for a book company, but when he realizes the lengths to which he must go in order to make a sale, he is plunged into gloom:

All the ostentation of pride and wealth in this great city looked like a hollow show--like the powdered and painted face of a woman of the street who hides despair and shame behind the smile of effrontery. (SA, 179)

He explains to Mrs. McMurchy that his difficulties in closing a sale are of an "ethical" nature; that is, he cannot sell the books to those who cannot afford them. When Branden does make his first sale, however, it is based on a community of feeling with his customer, resulting from their mutual appreciation of nature: "We both were men, face to face with Nature" (SA, 188). The sale is completed in an atmosphere of domestic bliss, and Branden is invited to stay for supper. We learn that his other sales are made under similar circumstances, that is, in the open country, and without a "hard sell." When Branden does sell a set of books to a young couple who cannot afford them, he makes the first payment himself.

Eventually, Branden is engaged by a second book company which specializes in prestige sales to the wealthy. The first sale in which Branden participates is to Mr. Kirsty, whose name "was a synonym for enormous wealth," and who has gained his fortune by exploiting "preempted natural resources" and "inventions useless to their inventors because they lacked the capital to exploit them . . ." (SA, 220). Again Branden is successful selling books only in the open countryside and because he sells the book rather than the prestige of owning it. Side by side with his adventures in "Graft and Sharp Practice," however, Branden always nurtures a desire to find the soil from which Lincoln had grown, and he eventually cuts himself loose from the city to go in search of the spirit of Lincoln.

Branden divests himself of his belongings and goes west, not only deliberately avoiding cities, but initially avoiding all human contact. Grove has Branden relying heavily on literary signposts in his search for the life of the spirit. Branden starts his search after reading Carlyle's advice to lessen his denominator. In Branden's pocket are copies of the New Testament and The Odyssey. In Pennsylvania he is sheltered by an elderly couple reminiscent of Baucis and Philemon. Another who shelters him temporarily is a hermit who looks like Mark Twain, and who does not speak other than to make the affirmative statement, "I reckon." Branden accepts the hermit's silence as a mark of wisdom:

. . . talking largely keeps you from thinking. Without reading as yet, certain passages in the story of Jesus had taken on a profound and new significance for me. A deep-rooted suspicion of all that is called learning, progress, culture pervaded all my thinking. I was no longer so sure of my superiority over those who had not received my "education" . . . I began to suspect that there might be more wisdom in this "hermit's" mode of life than in that of the most refined and cultured scholar. Yes, I sometimes doubted whether he might not have

deeper, truer thoughts than any one I had ever met before
 . . . More and more my thoughts began to circle around
 Jesus. (SA, 297)

As Branden circles around Jesus, he encounters Abraham Lincoln. The weather turns bad, and he contracts pneumonia. He asks for and receives shelter in a smoke house belonging to a poverty-stricken immigrant family. The family take him into their two-roomed house and give up their kitchen and their bed to him; they nurse him back to health with the help of the local doctor. As Branden had divined earlier, the Lincolns were living all about him: ". . . there were thousands of them, hundreds of thousands, millions! If there were not, what with graft, 'con', politics, and bossdom the country would long since have collapsed!" (SA, 315). We are given a picture of the good doctor: he believes that the "really intelligent man" longs for "production" (farming) above all. However, the kind family that rescues Branden is never delineated. It is a curious omission, because the incident is the dramatic climax of the book, and one would have expected Grove to make more of what is the real culmination of Branden's search. Grove prefers to work with "literary" characters in A Search, characters who already have a prescribed value for the reader.

Branden's next significant encounter is with a "Jesus" figure, a Russian named Ivan who resembles "Titian's paintings of the Lord of Christianity" (SA, 370). Like the Mark Twain hermit, Ivan does not speak unnecessarily. He advises Branden that the city is "no good," and helps Branden to food and shelter. Ivan is also linked with Levin in Anna Karenina, "the man who stands squarely upon the soil and who, from the soil, reaches out with tentative mind into the great mysteries" (SA, 399). Ivan acts as Branden's guide to the great wheatfields of the United States,

and takes Branden to a vast gathering of hobos on their way to garner the wheat crop. The army of homeless indigents is seen by Branden as "a vast confluence of numberless multitudes engaged in a pilgrimage to some Mecca" (SA, 386). Branden is impressed by the "independence" the hobos display, and he notes that they are not "suffering" from their mode of life. They display an air of "general prosperity"; there is "no want of anything," and the merchants of the town are "waxing rich by the purchases of this vast crowd" (SA, 390). Grove's literary eye distorted reality in quite surprising fashion sometimes. These same hobos later are depicted as "a handful of the drifting population of God's earth" who are "virtually selling themselves into slavery" (SA, 421) by gambling away their earnings on the Mackenzie farm. But Grove's purpose later in the book is to attack gambling as a "symbol of much that is horrible in modern life" (SA, 421), so he willingly shifts from seer to sociologist.

This shift in the author's role creates an inconsistency of tone in the book. Grove frequently offers us straightforward expression of opinion on social issues of the day, which at least has the virtue of showing that the author is thinking about the problems of "modern civilization," and not just reacting emotionally to them as he does when he takes on the role of seer. However, some of Grove's social analysis is so ill thought out that one is hard put to decide between rhetoric and reason. The end of A Search is almost entirely given over to undiluted exposition of Grove's views of politics and society. Mackenzie functions as a sounding-board for Branden, who argues variously for the European, the American, or the radical socialist view of a matter. On the issue of conservation of natural resources, Branden pushes a "careful policy of

conservation" and attacks "America's wastefulness." Branden quotes Lincoln's Gettysburg Address to Mackenzie, who quotes back Louis XIV:

"Because you are wasting the biggest opportunity any civilized nation ever had; because there is even in you a spark of that spirit which found the word Government of the people, by the people, for the people."

"The people!" Mr. Mackenzie scoffed. "Who are they? I am the people."

I gasped. "Do you know," I said, "that you are not the first one to use words to that effect?"

(SA, 429)

To what potential reader could Grove have been addressing this anachronistic argument about monarchy versus democracy? And what potential reader needs Grove's simplistic analysis of European and American legal systems:

"The whole civilization of Europe is based on the theory of the original sin. Right is done only when might enforces it. Even the life of the individual is regulated. But here there is a profound suspicion that in his heart the human animal wants to do right and is good. Take the case of mere honesty. The railway-system, the customs, the police-organization of Europe--they are all built up on the presumption that everybody, unless watched, is a crook. Here the presumption is that the average American is honest." (SA, 431)

One has the profound suspicion that Grove had only a superficial knowledge of social and political philosophy. Mackenzie accuses Branden of being a "radical," and later Branden admits that he is going to "talk Red" to millionaires like Mackenzie and "be the most conservative of the conservatives" when he talks to "the men." Grove obviously was not totally ready to be labelled a "red," though he has Branden arguing that if he were the owner of such a large farm as Mackenzie's, he would divest himself of his property:

"It is surely better for the country if the same amount of grain, or even a smaller amount, is produced by a greater number of independent farmers, each holding a fraction only of what you

hold. I am not an economist, but I can see that real democracy can be arrived at only in one of two ways, by collective ownership or by a limitation of wealth."

(SA, 434)

Branden argues for the general improvement of working conditions on the farm--for example, the provision of proper dormitories for the men ("a white-tiled bunk-house with proper bathing and washing facilities and decent beds") which would settle the lice problem. The gambling to which Branden objects could be dealt with by providing a "reading-room, and playroom equipped for the proper kind of games." (Grove seems embarrassingly naive.) Year-round employment would anchor part of the floating labour supply.

Other social issues on which Grove has an opinion include old-age pensions (discussed in connection with Whiskers), the sanctity of marriage (discussed in connection with Frank's alimony story), and the motivations for philanthropy (after Branden meets Kirsty). The social problem which gets the most extended attention is, of course, the immigrant's adjustment to society. Branden/Grove is critical of government policy towards the immigrant: after Branden casually decides to move from Toronto to New York, he attacks the "hit-or-miss" manner in which the "rural, alien" population makes decisions about where to settle, lacking government guidance in the matter. This point is repeated by Dr. Goodwin, who exchanges commonplaces on the matter with Branden after he recovers:

"Our policy is at fault," he said. "We lose sight of the immigrant. But I suppose it is the same all over the world."

"It is, and it isn't," I replied.

He looked a question.

"Who would think of going to England, to France, to Sweden --anywhere," I argued, "without carefully laid-out plans and prearranged connections?"

"Yes," he agreed, "there is something in that. We invite the immigrant. We tell him, Come and you will find freedom and economic independence. And when he follows the call, we turn him loose to shift for himself."

"You even forbid him to make arrangements beforehand. And think of the countless thousands who do not even know the language of the country."

"I know," he said. "I've sometimes thought of that. Unless they gather in alien communities, they become a prey to sharp practice."

"And it is the one who comes in good faith who suffers most," I went on. "You match two men for a fight. One you strip of his weapons; the other you leave fully equipped."

The doctor got up. "Don't rub it in," he said.

But I did. "And because they are foreigners, you turn them over to the scoffing derision of thoughtless ignorance. No wonder you remain foreign to them. Yet they, too, have made part of America." (SA, 331-32)

A Search for America can only be said to be an "immigrant novel" because of didactic passages such as these. One has only to compare it to Connor's The Foreigner and Salverson's The Viking Heart to immediately realize the difference. Another interesting comparison is with Salverson's Confessions of an Immigrant's Daughter, which is fictional autobiography, just what Grove claimed A Search was.

Branden, in his role as a radical social thinker, moves in uneasy harness with Branden the seer and observer of multitudes on their way to Mecca. Neither Grove the visionary nor Grove the man of affairs is totally satisfactory.

Over Prairie Trails (1922) and The Turn of the Year (1923) are Grove's hymns in praise of nature. Nonetheless, the dramatic tension of Over Prairie Trails comes from the struggle of the protagonist with natural forces which have the potential to destroy him. The appeal of the book lies not

so much in the descriptive passages as in the heroic qualities that the narrator acquires as the weather worsens and the obstacles to his passage increase. Success crowns his efforts every time despite the skepticism of the shadowy representatives of society of whom we are made aware. The popular failure of The Turn of the Year, which contains natural description of the same quality as that in Over Prairie Trails, may be accounted for on these grounds. The Turn of the Year does not offer the pattern of repeated tension and resolution which makes the earlier book so successful.

What drives the protagonist on in Over Prairie Trails is his desire to reconstruct the family circle, to see his little girl sleeping in her "cosy bed," and to see the "young woman," his wife, whom he imagines sitting in the dark, "her face glued to the window-pane." His family provides the motive force for all his endeavours. Like Ivan, the Jesus figure from A Search for America who is saving money to buy a farm and establish a family on it, the protagonist of Over Prairie Trails places the highest value on the sanctity of marriage. Niels Lindstedt, John Elliot, and Len Sterner are similarly motivated, though the books in which these three characters appear detail the deterioration of the ideal of the family on the land. The successful realization of this ideal is presented in the three vignettes which appear in The Turn of the Year: "Love in Spring," "Love in Summer," and "Love in Autumn." "Love in Spring" describes the preliminary stages of life-long married love. A farm-boy and a farm-girl appear on the scene coming from opposite directions. The boy is driving a five-horse team drawing a two-bottom plow, and the girl is driving a team of two horses pulling a harrow. The boy and girl eventually meet, embrace, and declare their love, while the horses "graze

on the ribbon of grass along the plowing." The horses "know not that two human destinies are being decided in the sun-dappled shade of the little thicket of plums" (TY, 71). In "Love in Summer," this couple, John and Ellen, are to be found on "a small, exceedingly neat and trim farmyard in the bush" (TY, 111). The woman is cooking and tending a baby and two other children play outside. John appears from the fields for dinner driving a heavily laden hayrack. "A great softness" comes over Ellen's features, and the little boy "is crowing with delight." After dinner, Ellen gently lifts the baby "to give her suck" while John looks on "contentedly." The scene ends in the evening after the children have been put to bed with the couple making love behind their haystack. "Love in Autumn" takes place when the couple are old. Four of their five children are married; the fifth drowned twenty years ago. Ellen sobs over their lost child. "Life and death," says John. The author speaks:

The feeling of that companionship which still endures conquers grief. Love tempered by sorrow has welded two lives into one: God's hammer struck the joint and made the welding true. Peace enters the soul and resignation into that which was His will.

By the side of the old, white-haired, and hollow-eyed man sits an old, white-haired, and hollow-eyed woman, crooning softly some old song. (TY, 216-17)

If one bears these vignettes in mind, the three Grove novels published in the twenties, Settlers of the Marsh, Our Daily Bread, and The Yoke of Life, seem far more credible than they do when the books are read in isolation. The vignettes represent the ideal which the three male protagonists do not achieve, and the extremity of their behaviour is consistent with the loss of that ideal. As Grove presents it, the ideal is bathetic, and the three novels often descend to bathos as well.

The protagonist of Over Prairie Trails is at odds with the town he teaches in ("I disliked the town, the town disliked me"), and he tells us that "neither by temperament nor by profession" has he ever "been given to the accumulation of the wealth of this world" (OPT, 20). He objects to the conspicuous "moneyedness" that is found in the new west. A "new and up-to-date" house that he passes on his drives meets with his disapproval because of its "modern inconveniences." The barn is of the "Agricultural-College type," that is, "it may be good, scientific, and all that, but it seems to crush everything else around out of existence" (OPT, 30). (By implication, subsistence farming suits the landscape.) The protagonist mentions, in passing, a teacher who had arrived in the bush in a car, and left immediately when she understood the circumstances under which she was expected to teach. Grove observes that unfortunately "it is not the woman--nor the man either, for that matter--who drives around in a car, that will buckle down and do this nation's work!" (OPT, 37).

In a very telling passage, the protagonist links up his family-centredness with this disapproval of modern civilization, making a clear cause-and-effect relationship between them, which is significant for all of Grove's work:

Children are among the most effective means devised by Nature to delude us into living on. Modern civilization has, on the whole, deprived us of the ability for the enjoyment of the moment. It raises our expectations too high--realization is bound to fall short, no matter what we do. We live in an artificial atmosphere. So we submerge ourselves in business, profession, or superficial amusement. We live for something--do not merely live. The wage-slave lives for the evening's liberty, the business man for his wealth, the preacher for his church. I used to live for my school. Then a moment like the one I was living through arrives. [His child's illness.] Nature strips down our pretences with a relentless finger, and we stand, bare of disguises, as helpless failures. We have lost the childlike power of living without conscious aims. Sometimes,

when the aims have faded already in the gathering dusk, we still go on by the momentum acquired. Inertia carries us over the dead points--till a cog breaks somewhere, and our whole machinery of life comes to with a jar. If no such awakening supervenes, since we never live in the present, we are always looking forward to what never comes; and so life slips by, un-lived.

If my child was taken from me, it meant that my future was made meaningless. I felt that I might just as well lie down and die.
(OPT, 190-91)

In this passage, the protagonist numbers himself among those who live by the standards of modern civilization, and who therefore require their children to assure them of their own worth. The worth of the family is not linked up with the tilling of the soil. The family, in fact, is seen as indispensable to the survival of the "machinery of life"--it supports an otherwise barren existence. Modern civilization, rather than deliberately destroying the family, supports it for the sake of its own survival. Whether Grove sees the tilling of the soil as "living without conscious aims" he does not say, but this is implied by his other work. When farming takes on the "artificial atmosphere" of the "Agricultural-College" barn, it has become a conscious aim, as it is in Fruits of the Earth.

The protagonist of The Turn of the Year has as a host one night a farmer who has only three acres broken. The man has placed himself outside the money economy by growing only enough food and keeping only enough animals to feed himself and his family. He sells a little butter, eggs, and fish to get the little cash he needs. The protagonist comments that the man did not have a "laborious life": "If this was primitive, it seemed refreshingly dignified to me. The man was neither dependent nor helpless: he never worried; Nature and God were his only two concerns"

(TY, 140). A more elaborately drawn example of the same sort of character is the "Sower" in The Turn of the Year. The sower is a former Icelandic sailor who has taken up homesteading in the west. In order to supplement their income, his wife works in the city in the winter. She begins to like city life, "the company she found and the shallow ease of life" (TY, 59). She hates the "slavery" of the farm and becomes estranged from her husband. Eventually, she leaves with the three children. Why does the sower continue seeding and reaping despite the departure of his family? Grove offers a clear, unhesitant explanation:

So long as the land was not cleared, it was God's and supported that life which He had planted there. When man came and cleared it, he drove the wild life out to support man's life with what it could produce. To clear the land and leave it untilled, would be sin. And the children, even though they may be, as it is called, making their living, yet need bread; and so they may not take that bread from others who need it and for whom there is no one to grow it, he must still grow it for them that their life remain free of sin. This country is the granary of a world. To put it to that use for which it was meant is serving God; not to do so is defying God. (TY, 64)

The sower is presented as barely articulate, and it is the protagonist who must interpret the sower's unconscious aims. In this respect the sower is similar to the dumb Mark Twain figure in A Search for America whose existence must be interpreted for us by Branden.

The protagonist of The Turn of the Year encounters yet another silent man with whom he establishes an instant sympathy. Though they never exchange a word, they work side by side pitching hay in complete communion. The man is of Slavonic origin and stronger and more efficient than the protagonist. The scene is a duplicate of one in A Search for America in which Ivan, the Christ-like and powerful Russian, pitches hay with Branden. The mysterious man on the road becomes to the protagonist

the man who "from his soil reaches out with tentative mind, and with a great seriousness--far beyond that of a mere thinker or scientist--gropes his sure and unmistakable way into the great, primeval mysteries which are the same to-day as at the dawn of history" (TY, 211). In nearly the same words, Grove closes the "Nationhood" essay a few years later.

Grove's position on the virtues of nature is so extreme that, towards the close of The Turn of the Year, he introduces to the countryside some "interlopers from the city: poor, depressed, and almost lachrymose victims of our cavernous modern civilization" (TY, 221). The city-dwellers are disappointed at the rain, and this gives the protagonist the opportunity to self-righteously remark that were he a dweller "in the caverns of the city," he would "rejoice" to find nature at her busiest work when he goes out to visit her. This incident is reported entirely without humour. Though Grove objects in the essay "Nationhood" to the misuse of the word civilization, he often misuses it himself as a synonym for cities. Modern is used as if it meant depraved. The phrase modern civilization thus becomes an expletive.

Settlers of the Marsh (1925), Our Daily Bread (1928), and The Yoke of Life (1930), the three novels which Grove published before the decade closed, are "thesis" novels designed to illustrate in fictional form many of the ideas laid out in "Nationhood," A Search for America, and the two short "nature" books. All three books deal with pioneering in the west, and all explore the relationship between the dream of domestic bliss and the land. Niels Lindstedt achieves the dream, though artistically he should not; John Elliot has apparently experienced it in a past that

occurs before the action of the book--what we are given is the deterioration of the dream; and Len Sterner fails to achieve it, though it is within reach, because he cannot compromise it in any detail. Of the three men, Niels is the only immigrant, and to some extent the realization of his dream is the result of a search for and a finding of America. Sterner, who is presented as a "genius," wavers between the land and the life of the intellect, and Grove seems to be suggesting that education interferes with the establishment of a relationship with nature. The characters are never fleshed out enough to be memorable in their own right--too frequently they stand only for ideas and prejudices that Grove has, and thus they fail to develop a life of their own. John Elliot, for example, who should have grandeur and dignity, degenerates into petulance and bombast because Grove puts pompous expositions of his ideas about modern civilization into the character's mouth. A less rigid adherence to preconceived ideas might have given the characters and plots greater coherence and consistency of tone.

Settlers of the Marsh is the best of the three novels. Niels is a Swede whose mother was a scrubwoman in the homes of the wealthy. He recalls standing outside one of the mansions where she worked, not daring to touch the shining brass knocker on the door. As a child he was devastated by "fierce and impotent hatreds," and developed a "dream to emigrate to a country where such things could not be" (SM, 50). By some "trick in his ancestry" he longs for land, a house of his own, and "a wife that would go through it like an inspiration" (SM, 51). It seems to Niels that everybody's fate is fixed in Sweden because there he must overcome not only his own poverty "but that of all his ancestors." In

Canada, the "land of the million farmsteads," he need only be young and strong. "In this country, life and success" did not, as they had always seemed to do in Sweden, demand some mysterious powers inherent in the individual. It was merely a question of persevering and hewing straight to the line. Life was simplified" (SM, 61). But Niels has already realized that "material success," which he sees he can easily achieve, is not enough. What appear to be the "accessories of life" are really "the essentials," that is, "himself and a woman in a cosy room . . . the pitter-patter of children's feet . . ." (SM, 61). Early in the book, Niels finds a woman who represents the "essentials," Ellen, for whom he immediately feels "a great tenderness, such as he had felt for his mother when she had been slaving away to keep her little home free of debt" (SM, 59). Not only does Niels instinctively sense the connection between his mother and Ellen, but Sigurdson, who functions as a parental figure for Niels, tries to make a match between the couple. Had events taken their normal course, Ellen would have accepted Niels' proposal of marriage on the afternoon of the day Sigurdson dies. Sigurdson dies in the belief that he has guided the pair to each other.

When Niels finally proposes to Ellen, he tells her that from the first day he had seen her, six years before, he felt that he had found the mate of his life:

Ellen, when I filed on that homestead, I did so because it was near to you. When I fenced it, I drove your name into the ground as the future owner with every post. When I cleared my field, I did it for you. When I dug the cellar of the house, I laid it out so it would save you work. When I planned the kitchen and the dining room, I thought of nothing but saving you steps. When I bought the lumber, I felt I was taking home presents for you. Whenever I came driving over the Marsh, I saw you standing at the gate to welcome me Ellen, no matter what I have

done during these years, it was done with you in mind.

(SM, 154)

I was sitting with a woman, my wife, in the light of that lamp, when the nightly chores were done; and we were listening to the children's feet on the floor above as they went to bed; and we were looking and smiling at each other. Ellen, always then, in that dream, the woman was you

(SM, 156)

In no sense is Niels asking Ellen to share an uncertain future with him. Niels' proposal is clear and specific in its details: it is a vision of the ideal life of the couple in The Turn of the Year vignettes--domestic bliss on the land. To this end Niels has kept himself chaste.

But the vision of The Turn of the Year has gone wrong in Settlers. The degeneration of the marital ties between Ellen's parents has distorted Ellen's view of sex and marriage so that the natural coupling between herself and Niels cannot occur. Amundsen is presented as a man for whom the domestic ties were always weak. Initially he had wanted to leave Sweden without his three children, and though he finally agreed to take Ellen along, he arranged to surrender his rights to the remaining two children to their grandparents. In Canada, rather than abstain from intercourse with his wife, Amundsen allows her to be a "murderess" and abort a series of babies. In addition, we are told that he patronized the district prostitute. Amundsen is presented as a pious hypocrite who prays before forcing himself on his ailing wife. His material success has been obtained partly by forcing both wife and child to work like men on the land.

Ellen herself is an excellent farmer. She functions as both man and woman on the farm, making dinner for Niels and Sigurdson, but also

holding her own with them on the hayrack. After Amundsen's death, she runs the farm alone with little or no help. Her prodigious ability to work makes her a fit mate for Niels, who performs marvels on the land. She is the sort of mate that Ivan of A Search is seeking. Niels, of course, is an Ivan type. Like Ivan and the silent harvester in The Turn of the Year, Niels pitches hay in "record time." Ellen is continually identified with nature; She meets Niels in a "natural bower in the fringe of the bush." She tells Niels that she likes to watch a storm, and most of the scenes in which she appears take place outdoors. She has superb control of her horses and is able to deal with a pair her father cannot handle. Ellen's clothing is simple and practical; outdoors she wears sheepskin and tam. The first time Niels sees her, she is busy at the range:

Her hair was straw-yellow and neatly but plainly brushed back and gathered into a knot above the nape of her neck. Her dress was of dark-blue print, made with no view to prettiness or style, but spotlessly clean. (SM, 21)

Ellen shares with Niels an inability to make casual or trivial conversation. She guards against "jesting" remarks from Niels. Grove observes, "Neither of them was a conversationalist" (SM, 59). Silence to Grove signals profundity, and in Ellen's case it is a sign that she is inviolate as well.

Niels is presented as being uncomfortable in the small town of Minor. It seems to him that the most important problem "town-people" have is "what to do with their time" (SM, 126). In the dining-room of the Minor hotel, he speaks in a "curt, gruff tone" to the "rouged and powdered waitress" (SM, 129). Niels is impatient to get back to the farm, and a feeling of "general dissatisfaction" possesses him:

This was the first time he had spent more than a few hours in town. He had often had the same feeling before.

On his land he was master; he knew just how to act. Here in town, people did with him as they pleased. Store-keepers tried to sell him what he did not want; at the hotel they fed him with things he did not like. The banker with whom he had sought no interview dismissed him at his own imperious pleasure . . .

And the attitude of superiority everybody assumed . . . They were quicker at repartee--silly, stupid repartee: and they were quick at it because they did not do much else but practice it . . .
(SM, 132)

During another trip to town, Niels is with Hahn. The two men encounter three prostitutes "dressed in aggressively fashionable style" (SM, 177). Hahn describes them as being "from the city" and suggests that he and Niels "hook in" with them. Niels fails to recognize that the women are prostitutes until Hahn explains, and then replies that he has no intention of marrying a whore. The incident foreshadows his marriage to Clara, also an aggressively dressed prostitute from the city. Though Grove presents Niels' chastity as an admirable trait, it is this very innocence that leads to his essentially immoral marriage. Clara states the case clearly:

"At the time I thought you were really in love with me, you really wanted me, you really wanted me! Do you know what you did when you married me? You prostituted me if you know what that means. That's what you did. After having made a convenience of me. When you married me, you committed a crime!"
(SM, 236-37)

Clara is arguing from a more complex moral position than Niels's, and he pays dearly for the knowledge he gains. If Niels' innocence is not his undoing, his slow-wittedness is. It is the rigid nature of Niels' dream of love on the land which makes him incapable of understanding what Clara is and the milieu from which she comes.

Clara is presented as "a city woman, with the tastes and inclinations of such an one," who has been "banished to the farm" (SM, 313). She is

a former "sales-girl" in the city, first in the book, then in the "art" department of a large store. (Selling, as we know from Branden, is tainted.) She had married Mr. Vogel, a floorwalker with "nerves," who was advised to live in the country for his health. After two years Vogel died of heart failure, leaving insufficient money for his widow to live on. She had apparently survived by becoming the district prostitute. Eventually, she returns to the city. We are given to understand that she continued to live a sexually ambiguous life there. Her connection to the city continues after her marriage to Niels. Her three trips there are signals to Niels that he never understands, just as he never understands why she gives him Madame Bovary to read. Clara does not recognize the existence of Sigurdson, Niels' spiritual father. In describing the location of her farm to Niels, she tells him that she is his nearest neighbour, apart from Sigurdson, "who does not count" (SM, 73). When Niels first sees her, she presents "a rather striking contrast to all other women present" (SM, 35). She seems "peculiarly feminine" (SM, 35), and Mrs. Lund introduces her as "the gay widow of the settlement." Clara is always dressed in "the height of fashion" (SM, 127), and Grove goes to some trouble to describe her clothing. Awkwardly, Grove succeeds in suggesting that Clara's clothing is a sign of decadence: ". . . a long, narrow skirt enforcing a short, tripping step; a mannish summer coat of 'tango' colour; and a wide lace hat--bergère style . . ." (SM, 127). The sight of Clara in this outfit arouses Niels to "indignant aloofness." At the supper table, Clara wears an inappropriate silk dressing-gown which makes Bobby stare. When Bobby sees the contents of her suitcase, "the appurtenances of modern femininity," he blushes. The furniture Clara installs

in Niels' house is equally inappropriate; it includes a "monstrously wide, luxurious bed with box mattress and satin covers; a mahogany dressing table covered with brushes, combs, flasks, jars . . . ; cushions without number; and above all mirrors, mirrors" (SM, 193).

Clara is an indolent woman, totally unsuited for the work of farm life, whose indolence is exacerbated by the gulf between herself and her husband. From the very beginning of her marriage, Clara has Mrs. Schultze, "the frail little wife of the German neighbour," do the heavy work. During threshing, when the farm wife is expected to provide abundant meals for the threshers, Mrs. Lund has to be called in to take over while Clara sits in a corner of the kitchen and chats. Niels realizes that Clara's life is a "life in exile":

He realised the dreariness, the utter emptiness of her life. She got up in the morning to prepare breakfast and went to bed again. She rose to prepare dinner and to get some semblance of order into the house and went to bed again. She rose to get supper . . . (SM, 213)

When the relationship between husband and wife has completely deteriorated, even this activity ceases, and the only sign of life that Niels is aware of is that the food supply slowly dwindles by minute quantities, for example, "a little less water in the pail on the bench by the door" (SM, 250). Now and then Niels sees a light burning in her room, but only "very rarely." The one activity Clara maintains with vigour is her contact with persons in the city: her mail continues to arrive with "great regularity."

The antithesis between Clara and Ellen is set up early in the book --sin and defilement versus visionary glory:

But whenever he had been dreaming of her [Clara] and his thought then reverted to Ellen, he felt guilty; he felt defiled as if he had given in to sin. Her appeal was to something in him

which was lower, which was not worthy of the man who had seen Ellen. . . . he seemed to become conscious that in his thought of Mrs. Vogel there was nothing either of the dumb, passionate longing, nothing of the anger and resentment, nothing of the visionary glory which surrounded his thought of the other woman.
(SM, 63)

As time passes, Niels makes further comparisons: "One of these women had seemed to demand; the other, to give. Yet one was competent, the other, helpless. One was a mate; the other, a toy" (SM, 80). Niels see Clara as "a relic of ancient temptations" (SM, 135), and Ellen as a "virgin child" (SM, 330-31). The female mind and the female body are completely polarized--thus Clara's unsuitability as a mate has to be expressed by making her a prostitute rather than by presenting her as emotionally and spiritually out of tune with him. This polarization is extended to society at large, so that the body becomes linked to the city, to materialism, and to a parasitic life, and the mind and spirit become linked to the land, to nature, and to growth. Thus Grove sees nothing amiss in having Ellen announce at the end of the book that she knows it is her "destiny" and her "greatest need" to have "children, children" (SM, 340). The reader may be forgiven for having reservations about this announcement. One feels compelled in good, Grove style to append a Latin tag--reductio ad absurdum.

Our Daily Bread does not differ essentially in theme from Settlers of the Marsh. Through all of John Elliot's activities had run the single purpose of "honourably raising his family" (DB, 189). Elliot has taken the Biblical story of Abraham as a guide:

In blessing I will bless thee; and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea-shore. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

Elliot had seen these lines from the Bible as an "expression of the marvel of fruitful propagation." Thus his life had a "clear and unmistakable meaning," and he has seen his children's duty as essentially the same as his own: "To live honourably, to till the land, and to hand on life from generation to generation; that . . . meant serving God" (DB, 189). After visiting his daughter Cathleen in the city, Elliot is deeply antagonized:

. . . within his own seed, he had seen a departure from that great purpose. Because his own child and her chosen husband saw the end of their lives--if they saw any at all--in what he considered to be inessentials. What were politics, what were the acquisition of wealth, the striving after luxuries--what were even so-called science and civilization in comparison with that greater, nobler end: the handing on of life and the living of that life in the "service of God"?

Empires rose and fell: kings and high priests strove with each other: wars were fought: ripples on the sea of life. Underneath, deep down, that life itself went on as it had gone on in Abraham's time: the land was tilled to grow our daily bread. And this life, the life of the vast majority of men on earth; was the essential life of all mankind. The city with its multifarious activities was nothing but a bubble on that sea. (DB, 190)

Though Elliot has tilled the soil all his life, he believes that half the purpose of his whole existence is gone because his children have scattered and freed themselves of parental rule. Their aims are not what his aims had been: "Their lives were evil; their lives were chaos; and through their lives, his own was chaos" (DB, 191). Our Daily Bread describes the "evil" lives of Elliot's children, all of whom have been absorbed by "modern civilization." Only John Jr. reverts to the values of his father in mid-life.

Elliot's eldest child, Gladys, desired "comfort and luxury."

Henrietta describes her as living in a two-roomed shack "with a husband who had the soul of a trader and the body of a clerk and yet was condemned

to handle horses which he feared and implements which he hated" (DB, 48). With two children, Gladys is committed to her marriage to Frank Bramley, a former druggist. Frank Bramley lives on credit and eventually issues a bad cheque which John Elliot makes good on. Elliot's judgment of Frank is that the man who lives on credit is no better than the man who starves (DB, 234).

The next Elliot child, Henrietta, has a "domineering temper" (DB, 56). She marries a man, Pete Harrington, who does not "measure up to her preconceived ideas of a husband!" (DB, 57). Pete is a worthy man who literally works himself to death on his farm. Henrietta sees her marriage as a "business deal" and demands that Pete supply her with a car and twenty-five dollars a month spending money over and above her household allowance. A farmer does not always have cash, and Pete is hard put to it to pay Henrietta. On these occasions she leaves him. Pete's death from repeated bouts of pneumonia caused by overwork is both suicide and murder.

Mary, the third child, had married Fred Sately, "a merchant and a promoter" in the town of Sedgeby. When John Elliott advises Fred to be cautious, Fred replies: "This is a game which one must understand, the greatest game on earth, making money! This country has a future. I discount it" (DB, 17-18). Mary becomes "distant" to her sisters as Fred rises: ". . . when they worked with their hands and on their knees, she had sat in the parlour, giving orders to hired servants" (DB, 17). Fred embezzles money from a farmers' co-operative he has founded, and eventually burns the building down in order to collect the insurance money. Mary mocks the "unvarying simplicity" in the Elliot household, and does not

attend the quadruple wedding of her brother and sisters.

John Junior also makes an unsuitable marriage to a stenographer, Lillian Flaws, who is forced to accept the "solid comforts of farm-life in lieu of the dreamt-of luxuries of the city" (DB, 51). John Junior sees farming as a gamble: "If I win, the winnings are big. If I lose, I have credit to carry me. What we need, is a boom. In a boom I'd sell out" (DB, 79). John drives around the countryside trading horses, and is frequently to be found in the small nearby city buying trivia. However, by the end of the book he has been converted to his father's view of the land, partly through the help of Ormond, Cathleen's husband. John quotes Ormond to his father:

"You know, Ormond's quite a fellow. Much like yourself. When things came tough, a few years ago, I don't know what I'd have done if it hadn't been for him. What! he said, be a hired man in town when you can be your own boss in your fields? What's money, he says. Don't start out on the farm to make money. Never mind who owns the land so long as you've got the use of it. Have a garden. Make your living, the daily bread."

(DB, 309)

Elliot himself thinks Woodrow Ormond is "a sensible man, mature beyond his years" (DB, 77), but regrets that Ormond is "unanchored in the soil" (DB, 77). Ormond is a university professor who teaches economics, and he and Cathleen live in an expensive house in the city. The couple are presented as adhering intellectually to the principles of life that Elliot espouses, but in reality thriving on the luxury and artificial excitement of the city. Cathleen explains her life style to her father:

"I'd much rather have a cottage somewhere in the suburbs. But Woodrow would never be satisfied. He needs this continual bustle and excitement. Of course, we did not have this house when we first set up. We lived in a flat. But we began at once to work for a larger suite. Then for a house of our own; and then we bought this."

(DB, 171)

Later Ormond defensively says nearly the identical thing to Elliot:

"I am glad we have a moment alone. There is something I'd like to say to you. This is a crazy life to live, this city life of ours! Hurry and bustle all the time! If I followed my own inclination . . . A little cottage somewhere in the country, with a garden and trees all around; or better still, a field! But you know, Cathleen would never be satisfied. She needs this bustle and excitement." (DB, 178)

Ormond is a moralist: "The spirit of the time is commercial," he says, and "The spirit of the time is to hunt the most pleasure while dodging hard work" (DB, 177), but at his party he is "exaggeratedly gay, artificially witty," and he urges a dinner invitation on one of his guests through a combination of intellectual and sexual flattery.

Isabel and Norman also make unsuitable marriages and fail at farming, Norman after a brief stint in a garage. Margaret becomes a university professor, and her intellectual aspirations separate her completely from the family except for Cathleen and Ormond. This is true of Arthur as well, who dies "meddling," according to Elliot, in the war. Henry, who is mentally retarded, is put in an institution.

Thus the ten Elliot children, with the exception of John Jr. in mid-life, fail their father. Ormond describes Elliot as a "Lear of the prairies," but the analogy is inapt. Elliot lacks Lear's grandeur, and because he was created to exemplify an ideal, he also lacks a third dimension. "The spirit of the time" invades the Elliot family and colours their approach to farming. "Modern civilization" is everywhere, even on the land, and Elliot fights an inhumane, rearguard action against it. But Grove gives him little else to say or do, and he deteriorates into a mouthpiece for a very limited point of view. The two-dimensional John Elliot that Grove has created looks at two of his grandchildren, aged

eight or nine, and a little over a year old, and thinks, "Ah, these were no children!" (DB, 85), because the pair are solemn and still. Every reaction of Elliot's is filtered through the Grove thesis, and Elliot, who should carry the book, never comes alive. One must concur with Margaret Stobie's dismissal of the book as "not very good soap opera."⁷

The Yoke of Life (1930) had two earlier titles: Equal Opportunities, and then later, Adolescence.⁸ Len Sterner is a "genius" born on a pioneer homestead who, because of the taxing conditions of pioneering is thwarted in his intellectual ambitions; yet, despite the taxing conditions, of pioneering, he nearly manages to achieve his intellectual goals, but is thwarted by adolescent sex drives. In order to conclude the book, Grove removes the action from the land to the city and introduces yet a third theme--the failure of the city to provide the good life to a man of Len's capabilities. Grove's final title is an attempt to merge this diverse material, but the book remains unsatisfying no matter how it is viewed.

Initially, Len is presented as the protégé of John Adam Crawford, principal of Balfour High School in the city, and a noted ornithologist who had built himself a summer home in the wilderness where Len's mother and stepfather are homesteading. Mr. Crawford is an idealist who would prefer teaching in a country school to teaching in the city. He is supporting his sons at college but wants to teach boys like Len in the country, boys who would not otherwise have the opportunity. Mr. Crawford sees the conflict between Len's aspirations and Len's duty:

The man looked down on the boy with an expression of infinite sympathy. He knew the conditions in pioneer settlements of the bush where the labour of women and children was not only an

asset but an indispensable necessity; for, while the father created future wealth by clearing the land, the rest of the family had to make the living by selling butter and eggs, produced under circumstances which made mere trifles into hard tasks demanding patience and endurance worthy of better rewards. (YL, 6)

Len wants to be a teacher and a "great man," that is, someone "who has thought and known more and more deeply than others" (YL, 8). The first chapter of the book gives a very precise picture of the sort of drudgery essential to pioneer farming. For example, Len works steadily till midnight and then must rise at five to start work again, though he is only fourteen years old. Eventually, Mr. Crawford takes the local school: "Len knew with that certainty which comes only from revelation or intuition that this teacher had consented to take this school for his sake alone" (YL, 33). However, while Len's "reasoning powers flew ahead to explore the limits of the human mind in the conceptions of space and time, he was still troubled with the technical stumbling blocks of the mere arts" (YL, 32). Len's late start at education is against him. His failure to be given "equal opportunities" is part of what Mr. Pennycup calls "the rural problem" (YL, 239). Education on the land is controlled by urban administrators like Mr. Pennycup, who is termed a "fool" by Len (YL, 240). Pennycup is an administrator of one of the largest high schools in the west. He wonders what can be done about the "rural problem," and asks Len "Have you books there? A circulating library? Do lecturers come out in university extension work? Nothing, eh? Life must be dreary. The emptiness of it!" Pennycup suggests two solutions to Len, that the land be farmed by "gentlemen" farmers who hire people to do the actual labour, or instead that "a few hundred thousand coolies" be imported to cultivate the land while the white man manages it. Mr. Pennycup's total lack of understanding of the desire of

men like Kolm to own land, and of the pleasures of working the land that one owns, discredit his judgment of the "rural problem"; they also discredit him as an educator. Grove's introduction of Mr. Pennycup partly explains the failure of society to give Len the same chance at learning that city children have had and explains Len's disillusion with the city. Crawford sums up the unequal opportunities for rural and urban youngsters:

"What a shame! To think of the boys in towns or cities, sons of well-to-do merchants, lawyers, cabinet ministers, squandering in a month what would enable this child to get his start in life. What do they do at school? At best they are anxious to secure their 'standing' from year to year. But in a pioneer district genius is left to exhaust itself in the fight against adversity!"
(YL, 81)

Len is a special case, however, and he manages to overcome the shortcomings of society. According to Crawford, Len has "a deep, instinctive urgency . . . a striving after the highest to which he can never give scope without an education . . ." (YL, 42-43). Len is "a genius in his way." With the help of Mr. Crawford, Len manages to make up for lost time, and when he takes the high-school entrance examinations, he comes first in the province. In the city, Len completes the high-school work by studying on his own at night, and is on the verge of proving that he has university matriculation standing when he is deflected from his purpose. When Len looked back on his course of self study in the city, "it struck him how near he had been to his goal" (YL, 247). Grove shores up this view of Len by giving him a thin and fragile body unsuited to farm work. Crawford tells Kolm that Len's father died of consumption, and that Len probably has a "predisposition" to the disease. Len is also presented as too light for the physical labour of the lumber camp, and does kitchen

chores there.

On the other hand, Charlie is ideally suited for the land. He is robust where Len is fragile; though he is a good student, he does not have Len's genius. "Charlie was clean-limbed and strong; the beginning and starting-point of a race of farmers" (YL, 272). When Kolm declares bankruptcy, Charlie refuses to leave the farm. He lives there on marginal terms rather than desert the land to which he is tied. Len, who understands that Charlie is the natural heir to the farm, buys Kolm's "outfit" for him, and resigns his own interest in the farm to Charlie. In the city he works to pay off Charlie's horses and machinery. Charlie has chosen an ideal mate, Helen Dick. Helen is like her mother, and her mother was "a peerless mate for her husband: cool, chaste, competent in a limited sphere" (YL, 222). The Dicks had never made the mistake of "over-capitalising a pioneer homestead" as Len's father, the Hausmans, and so many others had done. Charlie and Helen will fulfill Grove's ideal of domestic happiness on the land.

Though Grove has Len remarking that if he had had a choice, he would have preferred to stay on the land, Grove really creates a character who is unsuited both temperamentally and physically for farming. Charlie is Len's alter-ego and is successful because Len is prepared to make sacrifices so that his younger brother may keep the farm. Grove nearly undercuts his own argument by having Len overcome the obstacles to Charlie's success as a farmer and his own success as a scholar. The development of the "equal opportunities" theme is not consistently worked out.

Grove links this line of development with the theme of "Adolescence" by stressing that not only has the period in Len's life most suitable for

the absorption of the fundamentals of learning been interfered with by pioneer conditions, but that Len's awakening sexual urges have further hampered his ability to concentrate on learning. Len is deflected from his scholarly pursuits by his desire for Lydia at two crucial points in his life. At the lumber camp, which is seen as a microcosm of the world, Len studies and reads the books Mr. Crawford has given him, and keeps himself apart from the life there. After Christmas, "men and their destinies began to absorb him. Real life pulsed all about him; and suddenly it took on a glowing, alluring appearance which it had never had" (YL, 115). Len becomes an admirer of Bill Faryon, a former university professor who had given up his job at "Queen's University" because "morally it's no better than this camp." Bill is scornful of "civilisation," which he equates with drink and women. The term "civilisation" is again an expletive. Len comes to believe that the men in the lumber camp are doing the "world's work" and that the general value placed on an education is "an imposition, a fraud" (YL, 120). In February, Len goes to town with Joseph and sees the man fondling a whore. As Len's knowledge of the world widens, he becomes aware of "a new, carnal, and jealous element" (YL, 140) in his relationship with Lydia. Instead of studying in the afternoon, Len spends his time overwhelmed by feelings of "impotent, helpless exasperation," and he becomes aware of his passion for her rather than his adoration of her. Later in the book, Len is in the city earning money to help Charlie and successfully pursuing his studies; again, he is "living like a hermit on a desert isle" (YL, 247), undefiled by the life of the city. Grove remarks, "He lived at last." Len's studies have given him "an enormous accession of power" (YL, 245). Again Joseph

proves to be Len's evil genius. Joseph has been presented as a man driven by physical passions. Though he had planned to bring wife and children from Russia, the war has intervened, and the strain has told on him--he spends his time gambling and whoring. Joseph takes Len, who is feverish, to a bordello. One of the prostitutes reminds Len of Lydia, and he escapes into the street, where he wanders for hours in a feverish state. He rejects both knowledge and the city which offers it:

Knowledge? Once before, in the camp, knowledge had seemed trivial; but never before had the futility of such a thing as learning been so convincingly clear to him. Life, life was everything. It seemed as though he knew very clearly just what he meant by the word "life". (YL, 254)

To Len those connected with learning seem parasites; he thinks of Pennycup, Greig, the registrar of the university, and the young lady at the public library. "Life" lies on his own homestead, and in the Hausman's and the Dick's home. "They were the ones that raised the food to feed the crowd of parasites" (YL, 254). At this moment, Len thinks of himself as a homesteader, and as he glances at the "huge, box-like buildings" of the city, he is thrown into a panic, and an "irresistible longing for the open country" comes over him. He feels that he will be well as soon as he breathes the open air of the woods. When Len's bout with pneumonia is over, he makes a brief visit to the farm and then starts his search through the streets of the city for Lydia. Thus Len is deflected from his studies by passion for the last time--his search for Lydia leads to their death as the result of a suicide pact.

The city is thus the burial-ground for all of Len's aspirations. After his experience with the whore who resembles Lydia, he sees the city entirely in sexual terms:

Prosperity seemed to have flooded the city like a tidal wave. It was the time of the first adjustments after the war, when prices and, therefore, profits and wages were highest. With this prosperity had come a fever of extravagance. Fur coats and fur trimmed wraps were in vogue; jewelry shops were disgorging their treasures. Even artisan's wives and daughters were flashing rings on their fingers, with diamonds set in gold or platinum. Paint and powder concealed every face. Fashion decreed skirts reaching scarcely below the knee. The world of women seemed to have gone mad with the ostentation of sex. In midwinter they wore almost transparent silk stockings; their busts rose like flowers from the calyxes of their furry wraps. Waists were of the filmiest kind, showing silk undergarments rather than concealing the breasts underneath. Shop-windows were gorgeous with silk and satins made up into drawers and vests. (YL, 280-81)

Len is shocked to find that when he looks at girls, he often sees the girl from the bordello in his mind. He curses himself when he finds his mind travelling along such lines, and he curses the world and "all the facts of sex" (YL, 281). When Len finally finds Lydia, she has become a prostitute "gaudily dressed in cheap finery, brutally painted in scarlet, white, and black" (YL, 284). Lydia is like Clara Vogel: "Her motions as well as her speech proclaimed her strangely mature, as though she were centuries old, contemporary with the sphinx and the women of Babylon" (YL, 284). Throughout the book, Lydia has been presented as a fallen Eve whom Len's imagination turns into a lamb set upon by wolves. The fallen Eve has found her natural element in the city, but Len undertakes to purify her and himself through a flight into the wilderness. As they row away from the town, a "towering peace" possesses Len: "After the fever of the city this was rest" (YL, 301). Len tells Lydia that there are two of her, one that has so far lived in his imagination and another who has "lived in a mistaken dream of the world" (YL, 312). It is the imaginary Lydia he means to create. And he does. Lydia's dress loses its starch, and Len remarks, "The vanity and pretence of the world: the starch from your dress. It is just as serviceable without

it" (YL, 312). Lydia loses her "mincing step, considered so feminine by those who lived in towns or cities" (YL, 315). She starts to walk in "big, frank strides." "She has dropped all the pretences of sex" (YL, 315). Though Lydia thinks Len means to kill her, she does not leave when she has the chance:

Death? Rather death than what she had lived through in the city! Nothing is as inhuman as humanity in the mass; humanity as embodied in its institutions. (YL, 318)

In a brief and final meeting with Crawford, Len is told that technology has created "pretty toys"--radio, telephone, telegraph, railways, airplanes, gramophones, cinema--but that to create them, half the world has been made into slaves, "slaves that till the field and slaves that fire the engines to turn the wheels" (YL, 321). Crawford maintains that the only condition of society which can dispense with slaves is one in which "all men are free because they live in voluntary poverty and simplicity. And that you find in the wilderness only" (YL, 321). And it is in a wilderness associated with the garden of Eden that Len and Lydia temporarily live. Like Richard II, to whom Grove links him in the lumber camp, Len can only be happy in the realm of the imagination, and when Lydia suggests that she and Len might elect "life," he rejects "life" as imperfect because of the "spectre of the past."

Len's decision to die lashed to Lydia in the bottom of a drifting boat was inevitable once he had rejected the opportunities for knowledge presented to him by the city. On the black-and-white level on which the character operates, Len had seen the city as presenting to him knowledge and opportunity or doom and death (YL, 226). Once he decides that education has come to him too late because of the "curse of sex," he anticipates his

own death in an image which links the city and the wilderness in which he does die:

Education must come at an earlier or later stage. Adolescence had interfered with its elementary phases: it had been wrecked on the turbid waters of the awakened instincts of sex. The city appeared to him like a maelstrom in which the skiff of his life was caught. He refused to adapt himself to its ways; he still wore sheep-skin and overalls; but it revenged itself by holding out his doom. (YL, 275)

Like A Search for America, The Yoke of Life is a mixture of dream-vision and realism. The reader finds a confusing lack of unity of tone. Len is an overworked farmer, but he is also Adam trying to reconstitute Eden. Len is a genius with enormous discipline capable of teaching himself anything, but he is also a naive and ignorant farm boy who does not know how to turn off the electric light. Too much is demanded of the reader because Grove loads too much upon the character. Our Daily Bread fails because its theme was never properly fleshed out. The Yoke of Life fails because the thematic material covers too great an area. Most of the minor characters are there to drive home Grove's opinions on homesteading, such as the prosperous Mr. Jackson, who buys a homestead on which others have failed, and thereby profits from their labour. He provides a contrast to the Hausmans, who are the first to break their soil and who have "overcapitalized" their farm. During the winter in which Lydia refuses to send home her wages, the Hausmans do not have enough to eat. Kolm is forced to sell his potatoes for ten cents a bushel in the fall, but in the spring potatoes are selling for \$2.25 in the city. The strength of the book lies in scenes such as the sale of the potatoes, but the spare realism of the potato scene lies uneasily next to the melodrama of the closing scenes in which a man commits suicide in a maelstrom because he is a prisoner of his imagination.

Though Grove was prepared to grapple with "modern civilization," he was prepared to do little else except attack it. He was only too ready to dismiss cities as poisonous flowers in the woods or bubbles on the sea. His work does not admit the possibility of a harmonious working relationship between city and country. Grove invariably presents the city as materialistic, vicious, depraved, and overly concerned with sex. The country, since it is concerned with that basic activity, the growth of food, is invariably connected with hard work, virtue, and marital love. This categorical, black-and-white presentation of city and country leaves much to be desired. Grove's position is sentimental, relying heavily on emotional reaction and little on serious thinking about urbanization.

Leo Marx opens The Machine in the Garden, by making a distinction between what he calls "popular and sentimental" pastoralism, and "imaginative and complex" pastoralism. He defines "pastoralism" in the following way:

What is attractive in pastoralism is the felicity represented by an image of a natural landscape, a terrain either unspoiled or, if cultivated, rural. Movement toward such a symbolic landscape also may be understood as movement away from an "artificial" world, a world identified with "art," using this word in its broadest sense to mean the disciplined habits of mind or arts developed by organized communities. In other words, this impulse gives rise to a symbolic motion away from centers of civilization toward their opposite, nature, away from sophistication toward simplicity, or, to introduce the cardinal metaphor of the literary mode, away from the city toward the country. When this impulse is unchecked, the result is a simple-minded wishfulness, a romantic perversion of thought and feeling [italics mine].

To use Marx's terms, Grove is unwilling to "check" his motion towards simplicity and rural felicity, and away from the artificial centres of civilization, and because of this lack of artistic control, he produces a body of work that perverts the thoughts and feelings of both his city and his country dwellers. The lack of qualification in Grove's vision strongly

discredits it (one recalls with relief that Branden found something appealing about Montreal). The lack of humour with which Grove attacks machine technology makes it hard to accept what might be valid objections to it. It is folly to observe that this nation's work cannot be done by a person who drives around in a car. The glorification of physical labour in a society which tends to deny it dignity is fine as far as it goes, but to reverse the coin entirely and suggest that the trained intellect is parasitic is a leap into the absurd.

Grove's books fall into a tradition that Leo Marx describes as the pastoral myth of America:

In its simplest, archetypal form, the myth affirms that Europeans experience a regeneration in the New World. They become new, better, happier men--they are reborn. In most versions the regenerative power is located in the natural terrain: access to undefiled, bountiful, sublime Nature is what accounts for the virtue and special good fortune of Americans. It enables them to design a community in the image of a garden, an ideal fusion of nature with art. The landscape thus becomes the symbolic repository of value of all kinds--economic, political, aesthetic, religious.¹⁰

Marx's general statements apply in the most specific fashion to Phil Branden and A Search for America. For mythic purposes, Branden is presented as a sophisticated European in contact with the new world, though Grove denies him his sophistication as soon as it is expedient to make him naively honest in the face of sharp urban practices. Branden's contact with undefiled, bountiful nature and its inhabitants is the cause of his rebirth, and he sees the American rural landscape as the repository of all value. The Swedish immigrant, Niels Lindstedt, also fits Marx's pattern. He comes from a rigid, structured society whose limitations will hold back his spiritual development, to a rebirth in a new world whose landscape acts as a never-failing yardstick of value for him.

Marx goes on to describe the appearance of the "machine in the garden." He points out that in Hawthorne, this becomes an awareness of industrialization as a counterforce to the rural myth. In Grove's novels of the twenties, industrialization is not really a counterforce because it has no authority, moral, aesthetic, or otherwise. Grove was moving towards a somewhat more complex conception of technology in The Master of the Mill, but there is little sign of it in the seven books published in the twenties. (See conclusion for discussion of this book.) By the time of the publication of Master, Grove had devoted more thought to technology, but he continued to be extremely negative about it. Marx closes his book with the statement that the entrance of the machine into the garden is a problem that is ultimately political, not artistic.¹¹ On a practical level, this is no doubt so, but the artist's role is to offer imaginative possibilities, not to abdicate into rhetoric, melodrama, and sentimentality.

Notes

¹ Desmond Pacey, ed., The Letters of Frederick Philip Grove
(Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), p. 217.

² Ibid., 218.

³ Ibid., 270.

⁴ The Graphic Publishers reprinted the first edition of A Search for America in June, 1928. The dustjacket included the following excerpts from reviews of the book:

"A Great Book, a vital and compelling one! Mr. Grove's narrative dramatizes the longings of the immigrant for realization of an ideal of fair play and opportunity and the spirit of brotherhood; his desire to be assimilated; his handicaps and his trials; and some suggestions for his betterment to the end of relieving the country from the dangers of a floating population."

William Arthur Deacon, Saturday Night

"Then I should like to call attention to the greatest book of the year so far as Canada is concerned. 'A Search for America', by Frederick Philip Grove, bristles with ideas. It is a blend of autobiography and fiction, like so many good novels--it possesses a bigness that I have never before found in a Canadian work of fiction. Of all the Canadian books that I have read, it is the only one that I should like to have written."

Fred Jacob, "Mail and Empire"

"Few have so sympathetically approached the question of the absorption of the immigrant into the life of a vast and half-organized democracy This, in very truth, is the breed of man Canada should take to her heart [Branden]. He visualizes the new world as the world of the future, a place where hope dwells and the clean breeze blows. He brings into our body politic and social, not only faith, but the wisdom and culture of an older civilization whose limitations he has seen--"

"M," The Ottawa "Evening Journal"

It is clear that Grove was received sympathetically by the literary community.

Wilfrid Eggleston points out in "F.P.G.: The Ottawa Interlude," his memoir on Grove in The Grove Symposium (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1974),

that Grove had attained an "enviable niche" in Canadian letters by 1930.

⁵ Margaret R. Stobie, Frederick Philip Grove, Twayne's World Authors Series 246 (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1973), 126.

⁶ All page and other references to Grove novels are to the following editions: (OPT) Over Prairie Trails (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1922); (TY) The Turn of the Year (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1923); (SM) Settlers of the Marsh (New York: George H. Doran, 1925); (SA) A Search for America (Ottawa: The Graphic Publishers, 1927); (DB) Our Daily Bread (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada, 1928); (NBS) It Needs to Be Said (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada, 1929); (YL) The Yolk of Life (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada, 1930); The Master of the Mill (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada, 1944); The Master Mason's House, trans. Paul P. Gubbins, ed. A. W. Riley and D. O. Spettigue (Ottawa: Oberon Press, 1976), originally published as Mauermeister Ihles Haus (Berlin: Karl Schnabel, 1906).

⁷ Stobie, Ibid., p. 104.

⁸ Stobie, Ibid., p. 84.

⁹ Leo Marx, The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Ideal in America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), 9-10.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 228.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 365.

Chapter III

The Returned Soldier and the New Front Line

Of all social phenomena, war is probably the most potent example of the mechanistic approach to human behaviour. The machine in the garden literally becomes a war machine, with tanks churning up farmland and artillery destroying plant as well as human life. Our image of World War I is of acres and acres of French and Belgian farmland denuded of foliage, patterned not by furrows but by trenches and ramparts designed for survival against machines. Had Grove chosen to depict these battlefields, he might have succeeded in converting the sentimental pastoralism of Our Daily Bread into an imaginative pastoralism which dealt with the negative political implications of industrialization. However, he was not alone in failing to do so. Though many novels appeared after the war which linked its causes to the excesses of industrial capitalism, some of these books also proposed a simple pastoralism as a solution to the situation. Many novels focus on the returned soldier who not only was disillusioned by the materialism that he saw as having caused the war, but who was also discontented at the failure of the so-called "new era" to come into existence after the war. Thus the general dissatisfaction with urbanization that writers were manifesting in the twenties when they dealt with other subject matter turned up in treatment of the war as well. Even Morley Callaghan, who can be said to have inaugurated the sympathetic treatment of the city in Canadian fiction, published It's Never Over in 1930. Though the book does not offer

a rural life as an alternative to the city, the title does refer to the far-reaching negative influences of the war on urban life.

The early literature about the war supported it unreservedly, however, offering readers a simple patriotism and large doses of ringing rhetoric. This is understandable when one considers the size of what was an unprecedented military and civilian war effort. Six hundred thousand Canadian soldiers took some part in the Great War, and fifty thousand died in the mud of the European battlefields. At home ten and a half billion dollars worth of munitions had been manufactured by 1919, enabling Canada to enter the ranks of the big, industrialized nations.¹ Large wartime profits were rationalized as patriotism by some segments of the population. Wheat acreage in the prairie provinces increased from 9.3 million acres in 1914 to 16.1 million in 1918 to help meet the Allied demand for food.² A war literature which supported mobilization of energy on such a scale was inevitable.

Not much time had gone by, however, before writers began to qualify their support of the war. As the wounded returned and the dead increased in number, big business and militarism on both sides of the conflict came in for their share of the blame. Even pacifism, though it was never a strong movement, gained literary supporters. Initially, the expectation of a "new era" in the post-war period helped maintain support for the war, among both the combatants and the general population. However, the immediate post-war period brought with it an economic recession and large-scale unemployment rather than a revitalized society. The Winnipeg Strike of 1919, though it had specific aims, reflected, in a larger sense, the disillusionment of labour with war profiteering, low wages, and the high

cost of living. Feelings that had been held in check by the necessity to win the war spilled over when the "new era" did not materialize. Returned soldiers with problems of post-war readjustment helped focus the discontent. (Winnipeg veterans, for example, largely supported the strike.) A literature based on the post-war mood of the returned soldier sprang up. This literature simply hooked onto an already strong cultural anti-urbanism which we have seen in Sinclair as a manifestation of the northern myth and in Grove as rural romanticism in the guise of realism. In Stead this anti-urbanism (if that is not too strong a word for it) is heavily qualified.

It is useful to look at some examples of the early patriotic literature in order to gauge more accurately the degree of the swing in the other direction. The most prominent of this group of writers was Ralph Connor, who published three books dealing with the war and its aftermath. These are The Major (1917), The Sky Pilot in No Man's Land (1919), and To Him That Hath (1921). The Major, which appeared during the war, is about a man, Larry Gwynne, who starts life as a pacifist and who ends up by being a "major" in the Canadian Expeditionary Force. When the war breaks out, all of Gwynne's convictions are tested. He is bewildered and miserable:

The thing which he had believed impossible had come. That great people upon whose generous ideals and liberal Christian culture he had grounded a sure hope of permanent peace had flung to the winds all the wisdom, and all justice, and all the humanity which the centuries had garnered for them, and, following the primal instinct of the brute, had hurled forth upon the world ruthless war . . . His whole thinking on the subject had been proved wrong. Passionately he had hoped against hope that Britain would not allow herself to enter the war, but apparently her struggle for peace had been in vain. (TM, 348)³

Larry is disappointed with the British for allowing themselves to become involved in a mid-European quarrel, but Sir Edward Grey's calm exposition

of the reasons cools his indignation; to Larry, the cynicism of the German explanation of the violation of Belgium's neutrality also justified Britain's involvement. Connor treats the Belgian atrocities as having been officially condoned by the German government: "The deliberate initiation of the policy of 'frightfulness' which had heaped such unspeakable horrors upon the Belgian people tore the veil from the face of German militarism and revealed in its sheer brutality the ruthlessness and lawlessness of that monstrous system" (TM, 348-49). Abandoning his anti-war convictions, Larry enlists, and it is the thought of the Belgian atrocities that throws him into "a fury of devotion to his duty" during his training. Concentrating the powers of his "body, mind and soul," he comes to stand "head and shoulders" above the other members of the Officers' Training Corps at Calgary. The nation is similarly aroused:

The tales of Belgian atrocities, at first rejected as impossible, but afterwards confirmed by the Bryce Commission and by many private letters, kindled in Canadian hearts a passion of furious longing to wipe from the face of the earth a system that produced such horrors. Women who, with instincts native of their kind, had at the first sought how they might with honour keep back their men from the perils of war, now in their compassion for women thus relentlessly outraged, and for their tender babes pitilessly mangled, consulted chiefly how they might best fit their men for the high and holy mission of justice for the wronged and protection for the helpless. (TM, 366)

The Belgian atrocities had a powerful hold on the imagination of Canadian war writers. They are mentioned as the reason for the enlistment of many of the soldiers in the war novels. Even the hero of Bertrand Sinclair's Burned Bridges (1919), who is skeptical of the war until late in 1916, finally enlists as the result of a chance conversation which convinces him that the atrocities actually took place. One novel, written in 1916, uses them as the background for a romantic search of hero and heroine

for each other on the Belgian battlefields. Written by Captain S. N. Dancey of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, the book is called The Faith of a Belgian, A Romance of the Great War. Dancey declares in his preface that his aim is to "awaken a deeper interest in our heroic Belgian allies." He tells the reader that he can never forget the picture of "suffering humanity" under the "iron heel" of the "Prussian brute." An account of the destruction of the university city of Louvain will give an idea of the novel's intent and quality. A "tall, stately" man of "striking intelligence," who turns out to be a former professor at the university, relates the tale:

Slowly and laboring under great effort, he told the tragic story of the destruction of Louvain. How the Germans indulged in the drunken orgy, how orders were issued to burn and sack the city, how the drunken brutes ran wildly into each home, carrying a lighted torch so as to fire the premises; how, when the frantic inhabitants fled from their homes, they were shot down at their very doorsteps I know of one instance where they buried twenty in a well. (FOAB, 139-40)

The Sky Pilot in No Man's Land (1919) is, in one sense, the major Canadian book about World War I. It deals with a young, handsome missionary named Barry Dunbar who enlists as a chaplain and becomes a tower of strength to his men. Barry dies a hero's death, his body spread over that of another man to keep off the shrapnel. Barry's endurance and courage are presented as typically Canadian, and the book becomes a tribute to the heroism of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Though Barry is a missionary, he is also a typical Canadian soldier who goes through military training, travels on a troopship to England, rides on a train through the English countryside to a military camp, and finally goes to France. At first he is behind the

front lines, and then he experiences trench warfare. The book appeared at precisely the right psychological moment--when the Canadian forces were being demobilized--and there must have been very few people in the country uninterested in reading a book that summed up in a positive way what all the sacrifice had been about. The tone of the book is apparent from the following quotation:

In the sorely tortured graveyard, beside the little shell-wrecked Zillebeck church, in a hole made by an empty shell, they laid McCuaig--a fitting resting place for one who had lived his days in the free wild spaces of the Canadian West, a fitting tomb for as gallant a soldier as Canada ever sent forth to war to make the world free.

That night the battalion was relieved. Worn, spent, but with spirit unbroken, they crawled out from under that matted mass of tangled trunks, sending out their wounded before them, and leaving their buried dead behind them, to hold with other Canadian dead the line which from St. Julien, by Hooge, Sanctuary Wood, and Maple Copse, and Mount Sorel, and Hill 60, and on to St. Eloi, guards the way to Ypres and to the sea. To Canada every foot of her great domain, from sea to sea, is dear, but while time shall last Canada will hold dear as her own that bloodsoaked sacred soil which her dead battalions hold for Honour, Faith and Freedom. (SPINML, 285-86)

The litany of place names and phrases such as "bloodsoaked sacred soil" holds off rational assessment of the war and helps place it in the realm of romance. Connor sums up God's position on the war through a last message from Barry to his men: "Tell the boys that God is good, and when they are afraid, to trust Him, and 'carry on.'" With God on the side of the Allies, the course of events in the war for Canadians was inevitable and right, at least according to Connor.

Writers other than Connor and Dancey produced patriotic literature which might even be described as propaganda. In 1917, Jessie G. Sime, a Scotswoman who had taken up residence in Canada (see Chapter V), published Canada Chaps, a series of character sketches designed to demonstrate the

stern stuff of the Canadian soldier. The following is from the first sketch entitled "Canada":

He was a typical Canadian--young, straight, strong, muscular, and clean. His eyes were clear. His mouth was firm. His mind was simple. He vexed his soul with no unnecessary questions. He took life as he found it, made the best of it, fought when he had to fight, took his luck quietly; whether it was good or bad, accepted it. That was the way he struck me anyway; that is the way that Canada strikes me. Large and simple.

(CC, 9)

The first contingent of "large and simple" Canadian soldiers arrives in England "to serve the country they had heard about from childhood." Sime finds it "queer" to think that Canadians with English forebears sent men back to England who were strange to it, and "yet deeply English in their blood and bone and sentiment" (CC, 19). Though the book is designed as a tribute to Canadians, a patronizing tone permeates it. Sime's later work is much less simplistic on the subject of Canada. Nonetheless, Canada Chaps expresses a pro-British attitude that was strong in at least part of the population. "Mrs. Jane Walters" (a pseudonym), quoted in a recent oral history of the war, sounds startlingly similar to Jessie Sime:

We didn't understand the causes of the war. We just knew England was in danger. We couldn't understand it, we hadn't time to think about it. It was only later as we got a little older and read more that we learned about all the underlying causes of war. But even if we had, what would that have mattered? England was in danger, Canadian men were going over, and if Canadian women got a chance to go, they should go and help.⁴

The patriotic books took many forms. Not all of them offered what the authors of the chapter on fiction (1880-1920) in The Literary History of Canada describe as the "British tribal" view of the war.⁵ Basil King in The City of Comrades (1919) is nationalistic rather than "British tribal." He describes a more individualistic Canada than Connor's and Sime's,

one that had made an independent choice to support Great Britain:

I had seen my own country--that baby giant, whose very existence as a country antedated but little the year when I was born--I had seen it pause in its work, in its play, in its task of self-development--listen--shiver--thrill--throw down the ax, the spade, the hammer, the pick--go up from the field, the factory, and the mine--and offer itself willingly.

I had seen that first flotilla of thirty-one ships sail down the St. Lawrence out into the ocean, and over to the shores of England, as the first great gift of men which the New World had ever made to the Old, as some return for all the old had poured out upon the New. (COC, 277-78)

King, whose book appeared in 1919, already must have experienced a reaction against the war. He has his hero, Melbury, foresee this reaction in 1916, although he does not comprehend it. Melbury, lame and blinded in one eye, having fought at Ypres, Vimy, and Lens, is returning to Canada on a troopship. He reads Sheering's Oxford lectures on "The War and World Repentance" but can make "little or no sense" of his reading. King includes part of the lectures in the text and suggests that it is merely a matter of time before Melbury (and the world) will come to the same conclusions:

"Human effort after human welfare is never drastic enough It is never sufficiently radical to accomplish the purpose it tries to carry out. Instead of laying its ax at the root of the tree of its ills it is content to hack off a few branches"

"So much, then, one can affirm of the dreams that are now being dreamed, in all probability to vanish with waking. They are better than nothing. Better than nothing are the aims held up before the Allied nations as the citadels they are to capture. The crushing of military despotism is better than nothing; the elimination of war is better than nothing; the establishment of universal democracy, the founding of a league of nations, the formation of a league to enforce peace, the dissemination of a world-wide entente, these are all of them better than nothing They are probably as effective as anything that man, with his reason, his wisdom, his science, his degree of self-control, and his pathetic persistence in believing in himself when that,

belief has so unfailingly been blasted, can ever attain to. But, oh, gentlemen, as the prophet said thirty centuries ago, 'This is not the way, neither is this the city.'

(COC, 264)

Nellie McClung's The Next of Kin (1917) bears some structural and thematic resemblances to Canada Chaps. However, it is the bravery of the women at home which is being lauded rather than that of the fighting men. McClung's character sketches stress the positive lessons to be learned from the war:

This reaching-out of feeble human hands, this new compelling force which is going to bind us all together; this deep desire for cohesion which swells in our hearts and casts out all smallness and all self-seeking--this is what we mean when we speak of the Next of Kin. It is not a physical relationship, but the great spiritual bond which unites all those whose hearts have grown more tender by sorrow, and whose spiritual eyes are not dimmed, but washed clearer by their tears! (NOK, 20)

McClung also differs from Sime in offering criticism of the domestic war effort and in linking the war with the values of a "masculine civilization." In both In Times Like These (1915) and in The Next of Kin, she talks about the "brutality of the military system"⁶ which placed so little value on human life. In the foreword to The Next of Kin, she remarks as follows: "War comes about because human life is the cheapest thing in the world; it has been taken at man's estimate, and that is entirely too low" (NOK, 9). Later in the text she refers to the German philosophers who worship force and deplore inefficiency:

Of course we know that the world did not suddenly go wrong. Its thought must have been wrong all the time, and the war is simply the manifestation of it; one of them at least We know that the people of Germany have been led away by their teachers, philosophers, writers; they worship the god of force; they recognize no sin but weakness and inefficiency

Wrong thinking has caused all our trouble, and the world cannot be saved by physical means, but only by the spiritual

forces which change the mental attitude. When the sword shall be beaten into the ploughshare and the spear into the pruning-hook, that will be the outward sign of the change of thought from destructive, competitive methods to constructive and cooperative regeneration of the world! (NOK, 212-13)

McClung's bias towards rural life is well known, and in the passage above she argues for regeneration through the soil and against the competition associated with "civilization." Though her argument is feminist in that the "wrong thinking" is all masculine, she does connect force and efficiency with a world dissociated from the plough and pruning-hook. In Painted Fires (1925) McClung depicts a recruiting officer, Major Dowsett, having no success with a speech that damns the Germans and exalts war and military life. He is addressing "men of the north" in Peace River, Alberta, men "who love the long trail, with its camp-fires and its peace; brave men, who do their duty from an inward sense, but to whom the thought of force brings not fear but rebellion" (PF, 244). Moreover, McClung's book does not stress the high rate of female employment in the munitions industry, a factor often cited as contributing to the achievement of women's rights in Canada. Rather, Painted Fires offers a detailed description of female unemployment in the city: "The war with all its dislocations had thrown many women out of employment, and on the faces of many, gaunt fear was plainly written" (PF, 233). Thus McClung's support of the war could hardly be said to be unreserved.

Just as patriotism had many shades, so too did dissent to the war. One of the most skeptical books about the war was written by a contemporary of Nellie McClung named Francis Marion Beynon. Beynon was a feminist who edited and wrote for the women's page of the Grain Grower's Guide in Winnipeg between 1912 and 1917. Because of her anti-war and anti-conscription

views, she left Winnipeg in 1917 for New York, where she lived most of the rest of her life. But she had the last word. In 1919 she published an autobiographical novel called Aleta Day whose heroine dies for her beliefs as the result of an attack by a returned soldier! Historian Ramsay Cook has investigated her columns in the Grain Growers' Guide and written about her.⁷ Cook points out that Beynon found it almost incomprehensible that such barbarism as the war could exist; she attributed the war to the "vested financial interests of manufacturers, especially the munitions makers" Beynon thought the argument that the war was being waged to defend democracy against autocracy was merely propaganda. She saw a connection between "patriotism promoters" and "defenders of the established order."⁸ Cook points out that by 1916 Beynon's greatest concern was the "conformist, nationalist mood" which the war spirit was stimulating in Canadian society, and her position became increasingly pacifist. She saw the demand for conformity as arising from nation-worship, and she welcomed the Russian Revolution as a movement of international solidarity. On April 4, 1917, she wrote in The Grain Growers' Guide:

In their belief in the efficiency of force, the glorifying of nationality, the rightness of things as they are, Lord Milner, Lord Curzon, the Kaiser, Bethman Hollweg, the late Czar of Russia, and Theodore Roosevelt would understand each other perfectly. None of them can understand the pacifist or the Socialist.⁹

Beynon did not base her opposition to conscription on her pacifist principles, but argued as did many radicals of the day, that the people should have been consulted before conscription was enacted; that married men should have been eligible for service; that wealth should have been expropriated; and that Britain should have been compelled to repudiate territorial aims before Canadians were conscripted.¹⁰ Aleta Day (1919)

presents many of these views in fictional form, but the book does not offer any "back to the land" solution to the militarism generated by industrialists and munitions manufacturers. In fact, it offers no solutions at all, except the vague one of "spiritual" conquest. Beynon even repudiates her earlier support of the Russian Revolution, having apparently watched with dismay the course it took after the early days:

. . . with the radicals in the saddle in several European countries, we see the sorry spectacle of history repeating itself and the oppressed becoming the oppressor. My mind refuses to make any distinction between the tyranny of radicals and the tyranny of conservatives.

But as I did not believe in war, and the anarchistic methods of war governments, neither do I believe in revolution and the oppressive measures of revolutionary governments.

(AD, 6-7)

Beynon was too much of an individualist ever to assume that any single group had the final answer to anything. Aleta Day, for example, cannot remember the time when she did not resent the "assumption of infallibility on the part of any individual or group of individuals" (AD, 56). She believes that God is a "democrat" who has "filled the world with human beings no two of whom are alike . . . and He meant them to be left free to develop their differences and to report of life as they saw it . . ." (AD, 147). Beynon introduces the war two-thirds of the way through the narrative; though Aleta initially supports the war, she soon changes her mind. Her lover is one of those who enlists early on, but she maintains her convictions despite her loyalty to him. She argues against war profiteers when she discovers that her friend, Pauline, has been investigating how the wives of soldiers spend their separation allowances. She argues against socialism with her friend, Ned, on the grounds that material success is

no panacea for human misery, and that socialism wants materialism for the many as surely as capitalism wants it for the few:

Greed and fear are the emotions out of which have grown the present social structure. Whatever social structure you may erect to-morrow will be dominated by those two emotions unless you substitute for them a new idealism of faith and service.

(AD, 192)

In style and sentiment these remarks parallel the close of Stead's The Cowpuncher; however, Beynon stops short of Stead's view of faith and service mediated through the land. Instead she offers the following speculation:

I am often overwhelmed by the idea that Nature has moved the western nations to self-destruction because these great materialistic imperialistic world powers stood in the way of a new idealism; that the militant powers of Europe will annihilate each other in this war, and in the next the United States and Japan will complete their self-destruction, and thus leave the stage clear for the middle east, the cradle of all the great religions, except materialism, to lead humanity up to something higher.

(AD, 192-93)

Elsewhere, Aleta wonders whether "Nature had not found it necessary to destroy the western half of the world in order to give the power to some more idealistic people?" (AD, 214). Whether the "new humanity" is to come about through the east or not, Aleta clearly sees that the "spirit of love and mercy and kindness" which are the "only irresistible forces in the world" must inform it (AD, 216). In a spirit antithetical to that of the "new humanity," society jails Aleta for distributing pamphlets demanding that freedom of speech and of the press be preserved. After her release, she chooses to go to an anti-conscription meeting rather than meet her lover who is returning from the battlefields and is struck by a returned soldier in the middle of a hostile crowd. Her injuries result in her death. As she dies she declares that "the only conquering force

in the world is love" (AD, 235) and forgives the soldier who struck her. Her funeral brings out hundreds of pacifists who previously have been unwilling to declare themselves.

Another writer of the twenties, Frank C. Davison, who published under the pseudonym "Pierre Coalfleet," takes an anti-war stand which is pacifist and internationalist, but not linked with objections to industrialization as Beynon's was. The hero of Davison's novel Solo (1924), a man named Paul Minas from Hale's Turning, Nova Scotia, believes that everything connected with war is a "misapplication of energy" (Solo, 265). Minas disdains patriotism and deplores the sentiment, "My country right or wrong." He makes the following observations to his solicitor:

"Christliness . . . the most civilizing of all attitudes, assumes that men are brothers. The War Office assumes that they are members of opposing camps, all but one of which contain 'bloody foreigners.' I feel no urge to assert the superlative virtues of my particular nation and kill a lot of foreigners to prove the fictitious assertion. Why should I accept the mob's version? . . . Forget 'honour' and 'righteousness.' Cut out the hypocrisy, the drooling jingoism and sentimentality, and call on Mars. He's your man--not God." (Solo, 270)

Minas refuses to enlist, becoming increasingly isolated in the small Nova Scotia town, and finally is summoned to appear before a special board in Halifax to explain alleged statements of a seditious character. As a result of his convictions, he is jailed for months. Davison depicts Minas as a man who believes that national barriers are a "heritage from barbarous days," and that the progress of civilization depends on a "pooling of human interests" (Solo, 336). He foresees a "new earth illuminated by a unified religion, impelled forward by the concerted energies of a unified race" (Solo, 337). Davison is arguing in the spirit that established the League of Nations after the war, but against the spirit that made Canada insist

on an independent national status in the League. Solo does not connect values with the land; failing a spiritual unity which can come only with political internationalism, art remains the only source of ultimate value in life. Writers of the twenties were not prepared to accord this high position to art, and Davison anticipates later writing in this respect.

Though Grove's position on the war can be deduced only from scattered references in his writing (especially in The Master of the Mill), one could assume its consistency with his view of the evil nature of modern civilization. Of Grove's early novels, only Our Daily Bread and The Yoke of Life cover a time period coincident with the war, and it is of practically no significance in the action of those two books. In The Yoke of Life, Grove indicates his disapproval of Canadians for their desire to enlist and suggests that their motives are ambiguous. He presents two fathers conversing, each of whom has two sons who have enlisted:

Mr. Crawford shrugged his shoulders. "There are many sides to that question. In a crisis, it is easy to offer one's life; especially when the chances are that you will not be killed. I fear the excitement of war was a welcome relief from the tedious, hard exactions of peace."

"Well," Mr. Jackson said, "my two good-for-nothing boys enlisted because they had never made so much money with so little work."

. . .

Mr. Crawford reached for his cane and rose. "The test will come when the war is over. (YL, 44)

John Elliot in Our Daily Bread dismisses as "maddling" his son's enlistment in the war. In The Fruits of the Earth (1933), whose time setting is 1899-1921, Grove's principal concern is the breakdown of traditional values after the war:

The war had unsettled men's minds. There was a tremendous new

urge towards immediacy of results; there was general dissatisfaction. Irrespective of their economic ability, people craved things which they had never craved before. Democracy was interpreted as the right of everybody to everything that the stimulated inventive power of mankind in the mass could furnish in the way of conveniences and luxuries. Amusements became a necessity of daily life. A tendency to spend recklessly and to use credit on a scale hitherto unknown was linked with a pronounced weakening of the moral fibre. (FE, 223)

The action of the last part of the book is designed to demonstrate this fragmentation of society. The returned men organize dances at the old school which become a source of "unbearable scandals." Abe's daughter is seduced by one of these men, McCrae. Thus Grove links the war with the materialistic ethics of an industrial civilization, but he never deals directly with the effects of the war on any single character in his early books. In The Master of the Mill (1944) Grove presents Edmund Clark as a returned man whose ideals are shattered by participation in World War I and who acts on his cynical understanding of the connection between war and industrialization. One can read The Master of the Mill as an anti-World War I novel at one level, but it was not until World War II that Grove was able to react in a piece of fiction to the Great War. Grove apparently viewed the causes of the two wars as the same (see the concluding chapter for further commentary).

In February, 1914, Grove wrote to Isaak J. Warkentin that if there was one thing he hated, it was "patriotism," which he associated with ignorance and "cornerdom" (probably narrow-mindedness). He observes that "German civilization is essentially a city civilization," and therefore it has "no aristocracy of the mind or of achievement."¹¹ Grove describes Germany's "mental achievement" as "Parvenutum," claiming to be an "American" who could no longer live in Germany. Thus, Grove stands apart from many

other Canadian writers in the degree of his opposition to nationalistic stances, in his lack of a feeling of solidarity with Great Britain, and in his attribution of frivolous or trivial motives to those who hastened to enlist. In the light of Grove's near-religious worship of the land, and his view that it was the values of a "city civilization" that nursed "patriotism" (and thus war), one might have expected him to combine thematic material on which he had strong views and write a book about a returned Canadian soldier and the land. Grove may have felt disqualified for such an undertaking by his German birth.

Another group of writers took a path midway between extreme patriotism and internationalism or total detachment from the conflict. These novels started to emerge as early as 1918 with Stead's The Cowpuncher and continued to appear throughout the decade. They have enough characteristics in common to warrant an identifying term. The "returned soldier" novels trace a process of disillusionment with the city because of its association with the militaristic values which caused the war and a return to the land because it is untainted and provides an opportunity to be free and individualistic. Stead developed this theme further in Dennison Grant (1920) and to some extent in Grain (1926). It is used by Bertrand Sinclair in Burned Bridges (1919), The Hidden Places (1922), and to some extent in The Inverted Pyramid (1924). The theme also appears in Douglas Durkin's The Maggie (1923), in Harwood Steele's I Shall Arise (1926), and in Hubert Evans' The New Front Line (1927). To some extent, these books depicted the failure of the "new era" mentality. The patriotism of the war period had developed into an idealistic nationalism that expected a "new era" to be inaugurated in Canada in the immediate post-war years. In fact, in 1917,

a collection of essays had appeared with the title The New Era in Canada.¹² The introduction to the book declared that its purpose was to awaken the interest of Canadians in problems confronting the country as it emerged into the "full manhood of national life," and to point out the necessity of "willing service to the state." The "New Era" was to find its "inspiration" and "impetus" in the "unselfish service and unstinted sacrifice" of Canada's "sons" on the battlefields of France and Flanders. The tone of some of the essays can be gathered from this sentence written by Sir Clifford Sifton: "The foundations of the New Era should be the best electorate that we can get, the cleanest elections that we can get, the best constitution that we can get, and the freest political thought that we can get."¹³ Ironically, Clifford Sifton, owner of the Manitoba Free Press, is cited by historian Norman Penner as a prime example of the economic and political elite that controlled Manitoba, and against whom the Winnipeg Strike of 1919 was directed.¹⁴ Through his newspaper, Sifton encouraged the anti-alien campaign during the strike. Other contributors to The New Era in Canada included Stephen Leacock; Sir Edmund Walker, the President of the Canadian Bank of Commerce; Neil McNeil, the Archbishop of Toronto; and J. O. Miller, the Principal of Ridley College. Miller edited the volume as well. The wealthy and powerful in Canadian life had thus declared that significant social changes were in the making.

The immediate post-war years brought economic recession, inflated prices, and unemployment rather than a "new era," to both the civilian population and former combatants. Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook in Canada 1896-1921 entitle their chapter on the immediate post-war years "O Brave New World . . ." The following chapter, which discusses the

disillusion of Canadians when the "new era" did not come to pass, is entitled ". . . That Has Such People In't." Brown and Cook point out that the war had become "the great patriotic challenge which would purge Canada of petty politics, materialism and corruption . . ." ¹⁵ Naturally, this purge did not occur. Disappointment with the new era merged with a war-connected revulsion against industrialization among those who had never believed in the new era to begin with. Historian Russell Hann, in the introduction to a recent volume of oral history on the war, remarks that interviews with members of the war generation did not confirm the current historical view that stresses the emergence of a mature industrial order by World War I:

Those Canadians who might seem the most fully incorporated by the sway of industrialism to the quantifier of acts of resistance proved quite independent when interviewed . . . For Canadian soldiers, who seemed the most completely accommodated to the status quo of 1914, the war was a deeply unsettling experience which led, not to a confirmation of the world as it was, but to a profound questioning of the worth of industrial civilization. ¹⁶

The novelists cited above reacted sharply to the disappointing state of Canadian society by urging a return to an earlier stage of development, that is, homesteading, or a simple return to the land and work with the hands rather than service to commerce and industry. Hann's interviews attest to the veracity of the spirit of these novels. Interestingly, his interviews also suggest a counter-movement from land to city.

The Canadian government did make an attempt to provide a "new era" for returned soldiers through the payment of a gratuity upon discharge, the setting up of a pension system for disabled veterans, and the provision of some job retraining. James Eayrs points out ¹⁷ that the most pressing issue of the politics of re-establishment was the soldiers' gratuity--

that is, the resolution of the Great War Veterans' Association that a cash payment ranging from \$1000. to \$2000. be paid to each member of the Canadian Expeditionary Force. Such a gratuity was never paid, but it was some years before the issue died down. The government also set up a Soldiers' Land Settlement scheme in 1917 which was to be administered by a Soldier's Settlement Board. This was a recognition of both the continuing need for colonization of the unsettled parts of Canada and of post-war discontent on the part of veterans. Free land was still available, and soldiers were eligible for the normal homestead grant, but in addition, they were entitled to claim an extra quarter section, and land that was still available within fifteen miles of any railway was reserved for veterans. The Soldiers' Settlement Board was empowered to buy agricultural land and issue loans for stock, equipment, and buildings. By 1921, the Board reported that 43,000 returned men had been settled; because of the men's inexperience and the unsuitability of some of the land for wheat-growing, this figure was reduced to 25,000.¹⁸

Contemporary intellectual opinion of the Soldiers' Settlement scheme was high. In an article in The Canadian Forum, C. R. Fay¹⁹ argued that the advantages of the scheme were not only that newcomers were being drawn into farming, but that many who had left farms when the war broke out had been enabled to go back to them. Though Fay said that the programme had been costly, he also pointed out that there had been very little waste, and that much of the money would be recovered as the loans were repaid. Fay was pleased that the "element of charity" in the scheme was reduced to a minimum, and that the staff of fieldmen were "inspired" by the ideal of service" and were therefore "trusted and welcomed by all but the few

cross-grained." Fay attributed the early failures to "weakness of character" or the soldier's having taken up a career that was "distasteful to him." Fay liked the idea that the Board trained a man to be "independent." He remarked, "Without doubt the scheme of Soldier Settlement is the greatest measure of post-war reconstruction that has yet been accomplished either in this country or in any other."

However, some of the actual soldier-settlers had experiences that were not so positive. "Jeremy Phelps" (a pseudonym), quoted in The Great War and Canadian Society, bought a farm through the soldiers' settlement plan and was sent to take a twelve-month training course for farmers. Because he had had some previous farming experience, he finished his course in six months. He received room, board, and wages while he was learning and then settled on a "good farm" in the Parry Sound district, but the local community was hostile:

They boycotted me from the time we went in there. They thought I was getting something when I got this farm through the settlement I foolishly went into purebred stock and that was a foolish move on my part. They wouldn't patronize me at all They boycotted our raising purebred stock and went about stealing some of the stock. I stayed for eight years and then I lost out.²⁰

"Mrs. Sally Hill," quoted in the same volume, describes the soldier settlement scheme as "the worst thing . . . the Canadian government ever did to their returned soldiers." She supports her statement by offering details of the kind of life the soldiers had to lead on the land. Her remarks are interesting because these same details are chosen by writers of the twenties to support their contention that life on the land offered possibilities for creativity and fulfillment that the city did not:

There was an awful lot of dissatisfaction. The government certainly didn't do justice to the soldiers. For one thing, the soldiers

that were taken out west and put on that land around Englehart . . . went through another war of poverty and hunger and cold, because the government put them out there with practically nothing but an axe, and very little provisions and everything. And they had to struggle from scratch with that new ground. It's a credit to them and their courage and perseverance that so many of them did come through . . . I remember the write-ups there used to be in the paper about the struggles those poor boys had out there: no water sometimes for miles, and nothing. Putting the returned soldiers on that absolutely virgin territory, with no arrangements made for provisions, for health, for care in the winter, not giving them even so much as a piece of lumber to make a house out of, just to build it out of sod--²¹

These passages from Hubert Evans' book, The New Front Line (1927), describe the early stages of homesteading in northern British Columbia by Hugh Henderson, a returned soldier:

Week after week he worked with quiet exultation; soon after dawn the smoke from his cooking fire idled above the trees around his camp, and every morning as he crossed the beach to fill his water pail he looked over the lake to see that no one in the settlement was astir before him . . . The brush was still drenched with dew when he left the little tent and went into the woods near the point to work with axe and saw. His brief dinner hour broke the day and then he started to work through the afternoon heat. (NFL, 239-40)

What Mrs. Hill calls "dissatisfaction" Evans calls "exultation." Evans stresses the contact with nature and the continual satisfaction of increasing control over the environment. When Henderson has raised the walls of his log house, he lies at night in a temporary bunk "lulled to sleep by the patter of drops from the eaves on the litter of chips outside the walls" (NFL, 245): Wood chips and rain, that is, work and nature, bring Hugh the peace he craves.

Historians Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook describe the Soldiers' Settlement scheme as one of the "successes" of the Union government's reconstruction programme, offering as evidence that the government had spent eighty million dollars on it, and had settled twenty-five thousand

soldiers by 1921.²² Historian Edgar McInnis' figures, which establish a failure rate of nearly twenty thousand out of forty-three thousand men who finally settled,²³ would suggest that in the long term the scheme was only a very qualified success. Nevertheless, the novels that represent the returned soldier as going back to the land as a result of disgust with the war and with industrialization do seem to represent the views of many veterans and are consistent with other fiction of the period which compared rural and urban values. Unfortunately, the experiences of the many soldiers who, in turn, became disillusioned with the land and left for the city have not been so well documented, though the statistics and the scant oral history suggest that there was such a flight from land to city.

None of Robert Stead's books shows a returned soldier on the land in connection with an official government scheme, but three of his post-war books suggest that the war and the land hold opposing symbolic values for the characters, and Dennison Grant shows the working out of a privately financed land scheme for returned soldiers. In The Cowpuncher (1918) Stead attacks urban land speculation through his main character, Dave Elden, and Elden's partner, Conway. Stead links Dave's "empty, flippant, selfish, irresponsible" life as an urban land speculator with the causes of the war, suggesting that Dave can atone for his own and Conway's materialism through Christian service. Service at that point in the action means serving Canada in the war. Thus the war is seen as a paradox: it is being fought as the result of large-scale greed and selfishness, but it also creates an opportunity to mitigate and destroy these aspects of the human psyche (see Chapter I). Stead takes a neutral attitude to Germany, spreading the blame for the war equally between both sides. The following speech is

Edith Duncan's:

"Of course, I know nothing about Germany. But I do know something about our own people. I know how selfish and individualistic and sordid and money-grabbing we have been; how slothful and incompetent and self-satisfied we have been, and I fear it will take a long war and sacrifices and tragedies altogether beyond our present imagination to make us unselfish and public-spirited and clean and generous; it will take the strain and emergency of war to make us vigorous and efficient; it will take the sting of many defeats to impose that humility which will be the beginning of our regeneration. I am not worrying about the defeat of Germany. If our civilization is better than that of Germany we shall win, ultimately, and if our civilization is worse than that of Germany we shall be defeated, ultimately,--and we shall deserve to be defeated. But I rather think that neither of these alternatives will be the result. I rather think that the test of war will show that there are elements in German civilization which are better than ours, and elements in our civilization which are better than theirs, and that the good elements will survive and form the basis of a new civilization better than either."

(CP, 318-319)

Edith argues that fighting is necessary because, if one is not prepared to fight for one's principles, the new civilization will discard them: "We must fight, not because we hate Germany, but because we love certain principles which Germany is endeavouring to overthrow. The impulse must be love, not hate" (CP, 320). Stead offers relatively little patriotic rhetoric, no British tribal fervour, and no references to the Hun. His response is balanced, Christian in tone, and looks forward optimistically to the "new era." Dave Elden is sacrificed to atone for his own and Conway's materialism, but he returns to the land in spirit. Before Dave goes to war, he dedicates Irene and his spiritual son Charlie to the raising of food on his old ranch. Dave tells Irene that the determining factor in winning the war will be food: "Think of every furrow as another trench in the defences which shall save your home from the fate of Belgium's homes" (CP, 337-38). The narrator meets Irene on the ranch three years after

Dave's death, still raising food. She tells him that "Individualism is gone. It's the community now; the state; mankind, if you like, above everything" (CP, 343). "Mankind" is seen as a vast and selfless rural community.

Dennison Grant (1920) shows the hero rededicating himself to values connected with the land which he had held before he had gone to war. Grant's experiences in the war only re-affirm what he already believes. His speech to his employees before he enlists does not analyze the war in the way that Edith Duncan's remarks do, but Grant makes it clear that Canada did not seek the war, does not approve of it, but has been thrust into it by "fate." The emphasis of the book is on suitable post-war reconstruction measures. When Grant returns from the war, he walks aimlessly through the streets of the Ontario city where he had had his pre-war business, and his reaction is that it is all "so unnecessary":

You see, when you get down to fundamentals there are only two things necessary--food and shelter. Everything else may be described as trimmings. We've been dealing with fundamentals so long--mighty bare fundamentals at that--that all these trimmings seem just a little irritating, don't you think?"

(DG, 250-51)

Since the city contains so much that is "unnecessary," it can offer nothing to the veteran who has been sensitized, as Grant has been, to the truly important in life. Thus Grant concocts and finances the idealistic land scheme which has been discussed extensively in Chapter I.

Grain (1926) emphasizes the importance of those who fought the war by raising food. Though Stead documents community disapproval of Gander Stake for not enlisting, Gander is presented as a hero of the soil. Gander's prowess as a farmer is stressed, and so is his unwillingness to take discipline. Thus he is presented as being in the right place at the right

time, that is, on the farm where his potential as a human being is fully realized, rather than on the battlefield where he might be a failure. Stead makes clear, through the threshing machine accident, that Gander's bravery is never in question. Gander's failure to enlist actually requires almost as much bravery as enlisting would, in view of community disapproval of him. Thus Gander's resistance to the war is in one sense a recognition of the ultimate value of the land, though, paradoxically, the war is not questioned. Stead shifts emphasis to the fact that the war was also won by wheat: "Growing wheat became a patriotic duty into which Gander fitted like a cylinder nut into a socket wrench" (G, 127). Though Tommy Burge died in the war and Dick Claus nearly dies as a result of it, these incidents are viewed as parts of a necessary sacrifice.

To some extent, Stead is making a case in Grain for the farmers who claimed that their war efforts were as significant as those of the fighting men. Farmers were among the most aggressive of the groups opposing conscription in 1917, and, in order to placate them, the government temporarily exempted farmers' sons from the draft. By early 1918, the government had to rescind this exemption. The farmers were bitter and contributed, in turn, to the feeling that the war was linked to big business and industrialism. The farmers who refused to enlist probably had a variety of motives. Stead presents this important segment of the non-combatant population as sympathetically as possible.

Unlike Stead's early heroes, the hero of Bertrand Sinclair's Burned Bridges (1919) does not immediately enlist at the outbreak of the war. He evinces a great deal of skepticism about fighting for a "political abstraction," in a war in which the common man is the victim of forces he

cannot control: "He [Wes Thompson] saw no mission to compel justice, to exact retribution, only a clash of Great Powers, in which the common man was fed to the roaring guns" (BB, 229). Similarly, "Michael Halton" (a pseudonym), quoted in The Great War and Canadian Society, remarks that ". . . it was an accepted fact that it was an imperialist war, that the working class had gained nothing from it and couldn't gain anything There was complete agreement that it was a capitalist war for trade and profit. The only thing the workers did was die in it."²⁴ Two years into the war, Thompson has a chance conversation with a returned soldier and begins to fear that if the Germans win, the Belgian atrocities will be repeated in Canada. A Nestor-like character named Sam Carr expresses Sinclair's (and the hero's) final sentiments:

"We have what we have in the way of government, economic practice, principles of justice, morality--so forth and so on. I'm opposed to a lot of it. Too much that's obsolete. A lot that's downright bad. But bad as it is in spots, it is not a circumstance to what we should have to endure if the Germans win this war. I believe in my people and my country. I don't believe in the German system of dominating by sheer force and planned terror. The militarists and the market hunters have brought us to this. But we have to destroy the bogey they have raised before we can deal with them. And a man can't escape nationalism. It's bred in us. What the tribe thinks, the individual thinks. This thing is in the air. We are getting unanimous. Whether or not we approve the cause, we are too proud to consider getting whipped in a war that was forced on us. One way and other, no matter what we privately think of our politicians and industrial barons and our institutions generally, it is becoming unthinkable to the Anglo-Saxon that the German shall stalk rough-shod over us." (BB, 260)

The fact that the hero arrives at the decision to fight after a long period of holding back gives his enlistment all the more force: even the skeptical are finally convinced.

Nonetheless, even at the point of Thompson's enlistment, the "militarists

and the market hunters" on both sides of the conflict are blamed for causing the war. Thompson's behaviour is compared throughout with that of another businessman, Tommy Ashe, who does not enlist, and who, in fact, turns into a war profiteer on a grand scale. Ashe, like many others, made huge, quick profits from ship-building. War profiteering is an important theme in much of this literature. Ralph Connor even lends moral credibility to one capitalist in To Him That Hath by presenting him as a man who turned over his war profits to the government. When Thompson returns from the war, he does not take up the life of a businessman again. Instead, he joins a timber and land undertaking for returned soldiers on the British Columbia coast near Toba Inlet.

The project has been organized by Thompson's prospective father-in-law, Sam Carr, who has used his own money to finance it. But Carr is not offering the returned soldier charity: He has formed a joint stock company which has secured timber limits, and the land is being logged off by returned men, some of whom own stock in the company. A self-supporting community has come into existence with houses and a school. The valley has room for five hundred families, and any returned man can find a place for himself. As Carr puts it, "There is room and work and security and ultimate independence here for any man willing to cooperate for the common welfare" (BB, 302). Carr argues that many returned men have been so altered by their war experiences that they cannot fit into civilian life, and that the problem will become more acute when the war ends. Carr sees his community as a pilot project which may spearhead a national undertaking. There are "valleys and valleys" in Canada with "endless room in them for people who want elbow-room, who want to live without riding on the other

fellow's back" (BB, 303). Sophie Carr sees her father's project as a going back to "first principles," and she quotes from "The Sons of Martha" lines about "simple service simply given." Wes's enlistment in the war had been an act of principle. Though he had won in the "fierce struggle of the marketplace, money had lost its high value for him" (BB, 272), and, surprisingly, he had not won Sophie through his success. Wes's dedication to principle earns him the woman he had wanted, and through her he is offered a life of fulfillment at Toba Inlet as a "pilot" and "leader" of the community--"simple service simply given." Thus Sinclair, like Stead, sees the war as a purifying process which has burned off the inauthentic and trivial from men's minds. The returned man wants the direct and honest connection with life which only the land can supply. As we have seen in Chapter I, Sinclair never argues for the city over the land, and Burned Bridges goes so far as to suggest that those who emerged from the war emotionally crippled can be healed by the land. In Big Timber (1922) even physical disfigurement caused by the war, though not actually healed in the wilderness, becomes insignificant in that environment. The hero's mutilated face, which would be a permanent obstacle to his development in the city, is one of the major reasons for his superb adjustment to the land. In The Inverted Pyramid (1924), the returned man's death wish (symbolized by the heart ailment with which he returns from the war) is converted to a desire to live as he works on his family's timber limits in the British Columbia wilderness.

In many ways Douglas Durkin's The Magpie (1923) sums up the themes of all these books. It deals with a returned soldier named Craig Forrester who is a trader on the Winnipeg Grain Exchange. The action of the book

takes place between July, 1919, and the fall of 1920, the period immediately following the Winnipeg General Strike, which lasted from May 15 to June 26, 1919. However, Durkin is interested in capturing the atmosphere of Winnipeg during the year preceding the strike as well. Therefore, some of the dialogue refers to the strike as if it were imminent, and some as if it were past. By compressing two years into one, Durkin is able to look forward at the strike and backwards at it. This device allows him considerable freedom in judging the events.

Craig ("The Magpie") is the son of a farmer who still owns his father's farm outside Winnipeg. We learn in the first few pages that Craig is waiting for a "new era" to begin in Canadian life, and that he connects this new era with the sacrifices that have been made during the war. He too sees the war as having had a purifying effect on society:

But I hold that somehow, somewhere, there is a Power in the world that works for good and that in the end the sacrifice will not have been made in vain. We are in a fog just now, a great fog that covers the western world and hides the sun from our eyes. But the light will break through--somewhere--somehow--and the new life will have begun. There are some who are already talking of getting back to normalcy, but those who have seen the light shining against the darkness that hung for four years over the fields of Flanders know that we cannot return to normalcy. We cannot return to the days when the people and even the parliaments knew nothing of what was going on behind their backs until they were asked to give their lives to vindicate the bad bargains of the diplomats. All that is past I am sure of it. If it were not for that faith (M, 2)

Craig's "new era" faith is contrasted with the pre-war rural values that formed him, and to which he eventually returns, cutting loose from his urban wife and urban job.

The Winnipeg Grain Exchange, at which Craig works, was seen in the years of the wheat boom, according to Ramsay Cook, as "something of a temple

for the wealth-worshipping, prosperous classes of Winnipeg."²⁵ Historian Ian MacPherson, in an article on the Co-operative Union of Canada, uses the word "nefarious" to describe the Grain Exchange.²⁶ Thus Craig is presented initially as one of the powerful and moneyed men who control Winnipeg financial life. However, we are informed that it is not the speculative aspect of his work that intrigues Craig, but the "romance" of it. Craig asks Marion Nason, whom he eventually marries, "To buy a bushel of wheat from a farmer in some little valley in northern Alberta and to carry it across a continent and across an ocean and sell it to some hungry man or woman waiting to receive it in a village in southeastern Europe--isn't there romance in that?" (M, 104). When Craig is inside the walls of the Grain Exchange, he feels himself a citizen of the world; he sees from afar "the hands of millions uplifted" and hears "the ceaseless cry for bread" (M, 45):

Craig, who trades for purposes of export, is contrasted with Charnley, who deals with "futures" on the Exchange on a purely speculative basis, that is, solely to make money. When Craig tries to explain to Martha, the childhood sweetheart who exemplifies the rural values in the book, the difference between his own work on the Exchange and Charnley's, Martha is unable to understand: "No amount of telling will ever make clear to me how a man can buy and sell what he hasn't got and never expects to have. It's as clear as mud" (M, 218). Durkin makes Charnley Marion's lover as well in order to thoroughly blacken his character, and to show that she shares the values of the speculator.

Craig's ties to nature are still very strong. Though Craig had enlisted in the war "with pride in the Great Adventure," his pride vanishes

when he comes upon trees denuded of their bark and left to die by the retreating Germans. When he hears of the death of his father on their farm outside Winnipeg, he links the two incidents as violations of the natural order. Craig is also inordinately attracted to Jimmie Dyer's garden: "The luxuriance of the growth was something good to look upon, and Craig felt himself yielding to the old desire to be back again to the soil and the rich, free, growing power of it" (M, 19). Craig tells Millie Dyer, "There's nothing in the world that's quite so good as making things grow" (M, 19). During the war, when Craig had remembered his past life, it was the "quiet purposefulness of the season's routine" (M, 8) that he recalled, rather than the days at college or the "hurry and confusion on the exchange." One day, on a visit to the Lane farm, Craig is deeply stirred by the following speech of Peter Lane:

I tell you, Craigie, we're never going to have anything but trouble into the world till men get back working with their hands. They've got to get closer to the soil. When a man gets afraid of his boots getting dirty and when he's careful about a little clay getting on his fingers, he's wrong, all wrong, no matter what there may be about him that looks right There's more to a drink of water than just something to take when you're thirsty, if you understand me. I made that hole in the ground, I threw out the clay and the gravel a spadeful at a time, and when I got down where I could look up and see the stars in the daytime I struck water. I watched it come out of the gravel and trickle down in the hollow at my feet and I knew it was good water, sweet and cool and pure, and it satisfied something else in me, something that was more than a dry tongue. And that's what your city water doesn't do for me. (M, 182-83)

Durkin then tells the reader that "From somewhere in Craig's heart rose a thirst like the one Peter Lane described" (M, 183). The ground has been laid for Craig's eventual return to his father's farm. The historical incident which gives the coup de grâce to Craig's faith in the establishment of a new society is the Winnipeg Strike and its aftermath. Craig rejects

his own class when he observes its repressive and authoritarian reaction to the labouring class.

Ramsay Cook sees Winnipeg as a city where, "more than anywhere else in the country,"²⁷ war rhetoric had raised expectations of the establishment of a post-war heaven on earth. The role of social gospel leaders such as William Ivens, Salem Bland, and J. S. Woodsworth in raising these expectations is described fully in Richard Allen's book The Social Passion.²⁸ Allen remarks that of the many activities of the social gossellers, William Ivens' "Labor church symbolized best what the radicals believed themselves to be about"²⁹ Ivens organized his Labor church in June, 1918, arguing that the progress of Christianity had by-passed the established church. Though the church's efforts were needed in the realm of "politics, commerce, industrialism, and internationalism," so long as the church was controlled by men of wealth, it would be "compelled to refrain from Christianizing the present civilization."³⁰ Allen observes that the message was clear: ". . . only through the common people, the world of labour, would the re-Christianization of the church and the Christianization of society take place."³¹ Allen describes the Winnipeg Strike as "the most dramatic event with which the social gospel was associated."³² Though Durkin could not and does not make a direct connection between the social gossellers and the strike, it is clear that a strike "which had begun with concrete goals had in fact become the testing-ground for the utopian visions of some Canadians at the end of the war."³³ The strike was the product of a "millennial mood," and when it failed "Reaction had won."³⁴

The best general description available of the history of the labour movement in Winnipeg before the strike is David Jay Bercuson's Confrontation

at Winnipeg.³⁵ The book surveys labour movement activity in Winnipeg from the late nineteenth century through the strike and makes clear that the roots of the strike date back to bitter animosity between labour and management from well before the war. By 1919 the labour movement had a long history of lost legal battles with management, and with each defeat the stakes grew higher. Thus the general strike became a matter of what Bercuson calls "total victory or total defeat." Bercuson also points out how determined the veterans were to force society to make good on its promises of a better postwar world, and thus their aims coincided with those of labour. He describes the strike as "a modern version of the Children's Crusade,"³⁶ citing as evidence the "unshakable belief in ultimate victory, the lack of thorough planning, the pacifism which marked the appeals of the strike leaders" In retrospect, the strike seems a manifestation of the continuing class division that has marked the history of the city until the present, but class polarization was a factor in society there from well before the strike, and even now Winnipeg society is divided into those whose forebears were strikers and those whose forebears were members of the Citizens' Committee.

In The Maggie, as in history, the forces of reaction win and in self-defence against the restoration of the order out of which the war grew, the hero returns to the land. Craig tells Mr. Nason that he had "gone to the front, to fight with the idea of bringing in a new order:

We regarded the German nation as the last word in the old order. She had progressed in one generation to a place among the leading nations of the world. She was the very symbol of Progress and Efficiency. We went out to defeat that--that machine. And we did defeat it--not by a machine of our own, but by something else--something that we knew only as the spirit that was in us The men who faced the German armies on the west front

died for something they were taught to call 'The Cause' . . .
 It was The Cause against the Machine. We were on crusade.
 The strange thing now is, that we hear nothing about The Cause
 for which we fought. (M, 141-42)

Craig points out that he hears nothing more about The Cause, but a great deal about "lost trade and reparations and new treaties and indemnities," and he wonders if The Cause has been won, and if it has, why has he come back to a world that is being pushed back into the old ruts?

The principal representatives of the old order are Nason, Blount, and Bentley. Nason is an industrialist with interests in pulp and paper, copper mining, shipping, and insurance, but his "pet enterprise" is the Adanac Metal Works. He prides himself on his "human attitude" towards the men on his payroll. He spends time in the shops getting to know his men. Durkin observes, "He went to unnecessary extremes to make them feel that he was one of them" and had come up from the lower levels of the social complex by just such honest effort and patient industry as he now expected of them" (M, 115). Though Nason employs the most ruthless methods in his other enterprises, he is paternalistic in dealing with the men at the Adanac Metal Works, at least according to Durkin. Nason seems to be a composite figure modelled on T. R. Deacon and the Barrett brothers, who ran Manitoba Bridge and Iron Works and Vulcan Iron Works respectively in Winnipeg. McNaught and Bercuson in The Winnipeg Strike: 1919 make the following assessments of Deacon and the Barretts:

The Barretts and Deacon were strong individualists, self-made men, who ran their companies as if they were feudal landlords. Deacon was a former engineer from Ontario who had worked his way from poverty to riches; in somewhat similar fashion, the Barrett brothers had built their father's small blacksmith operation into a relatively large and profitable corporation. The Barretts maintained that they had been divinely ordained to own a plant and would run it without the interference of any . . .

unions. Deacon, on the other hand, boasted that he knew all of 'his men' by name and, being a former worker himself, understood their motives and desires.³⁷

These descriptions, especially the one of Deacon, apply to Nason if one takes a somewhat less sympathetic view of the character than Durkin does. The struggle with his workers in which Nason becomes involved is a composite of one which actually took place in the late summer of 1918 and of the events immediately preceding the 1919 strike. The issue in both cases was collective bargaining. The Metal Trades Council wished to be recognized as the sole bargaining agent for both the machinists in the railway shops and in the contract shops. The owners of the contract shops, that is, Deacon's company, the Barrett brothers' firm, and a third called the Dominion Bridge Company, refused on the grounds that negotiations would amount to a de facto recognition of the union. Nason justifies his own position by arguing that "A contented workman wants no union to stand back of him":

We dealt with each other in the open and I never heard a kick from any of them. I only laid down one condition and that was that they should have no truck with unions. In fact, I didn't deny them the right to join a union if they wanted to, but I resolved that any differences between us should be settled without interference from the outside And all the unions in the world won't pay them wartime wages if there is no market for the product of their labour. You see, that's where these fellows get unreasonable. What good will it do them now to force union regulations on a business that has been going along for the past seven or eight years without a hitch?

(M, 193)

At one point Craig thinks that "accident and circumstance" had made Nason a businessman, but that in reality he was a "man of sentiment" (M, 203).

Labour today would describe this attitude as feudal landlordism, as McNaught and Bercuson do. Though Craig advises Nason to recognize the union, Durkin

does not give Craig any convincing speeches.

In James Gray's book The Roar of the Twenties, a chapter is devoted to the newly rich western millionaires, including those in Winnipeg. Historian D. C. Masters in his account of the strike remarks that both royal commissions which investigated the strike mentioned the "ostentatious display of wealth" in Winnipeg as a cause of the grievances.³⁸ Gray stresses that the "house and the neighbourhood in which he lived was the accepted measure of a man, once he had reached even a modest level of financial competence."³⁹ Gray describes in detail the neighbourhoods of the Winnipeg rich, pointing out how they congregated along the river banks, first along the north bank of the Assiniboine and Armstrong's Point, and by 1905-1910 on Wellington Crescent on the other side of the river from Armstrong's Point. The rich competed in the size and magnificence of their mansions. Gilbert Nason's house is "in that section of Winnipeg that lies to the south of the Assiniboine River and west of the point where the river describes a crescent before it joins the historic Red . . ." (M, 22). Thus it is located close to Wellington Crescent, possibly on the equally fashionable Roslyn Road. Durkin remarks that Nason's house is an "old" house as westerners reckon time, since he had bought the land before it was fashionable to live in that area:

Gilbert Nason had been one of the men whose belief in the future of the city was as firm as their belief in God, and ten times more profitable. In fact, while his faith in the Almighty had wavered more than once when he had had trouble with Labour unions, he could not recall one investment in real estate that had failed to vindicate his faith in the good sense and the vision that had prompted him to make it. (M, 22)

Nason's belief in the city has been rewarded with a house. Whenever Craig approaches the Nason mansion, he imagines that he smells lime in fresh

mortar. We have just been told how appealing Craig finds "the English manner of living" and "the English home" (M, 21). Durkin makes the traditional connection between the "English home" and non-material values, a connection which is questionable itself, but the point about Nason is clear--the newness of his house is meant to suggest a crude materialism.

Bentley represents the forces of reaction in the established church, the forces that Ivens was trying to counter with his Labor Church. He differs from Nason "only in the power of his voice and the extent of his worldly goods" (M, 28). Durkin tells us that the Reverend George Bentley is a Methodist and among those "who had made themselves heard at the recent conference that had considered the cases of certain recalcitrant brethren who had shown themselves somewhat too kindly disposed toward the cause of the labouring man" (M, 27). Durkin is probably referring to the Manitoba Conference of the Methodist Church held in June, 1919, which was being held when the strike leaders were arrested, and which had to consider Ivens' application for leave. The Reverend Dr. J. MacLean of one of the Methodist city missions took one of the most reactionary views of the strike, calling it "an attempted revolution perpetrated by radicals, aliens, and Bolsheviks."⁴⁰ Bentley declares that there is no hope for civilization unless its institutions are restored to "the days before the war" (M, 29). Jeannette Bawden regards Bentley as a representative of the class trying to bring on another war.

Blount is in Winnipeg "in response to an invitation on the part of the leading business men of the city" (M, 136). He is a troubleshooter, "the man who saved the day for the mine operators in the maritime provinces" (M, 136). The reference is to the methods the British Empire Steel Corporation used in the twenties to reduce the wages of the Cape Breton coal miners

and to attempt to destroy their union. Blount enunciates his philosophy:

The fact is, society--modern society--is divided into two camps. In the modern world there is only one ideal and that ideal is Progress. Civilization and Progress are one and the same thing. The men of the Middle Ages never heard of Progress. We never hear of anything else. Progress means control and efficient direction under settled conditions . . . There is only one cure for the condition in which we find the world to-day. Deal with these professional agitators as you would deal with enemy spies in camp. (M, 137-38)

Craig then argues lengthily against a world built on the idea of efficiency, pointing out that this eventually will lead to "another war--and another--and another--till the human race is wiped out" (M, 143). By contrast, the human race should have a chance "to work and love and make the world beautiful." Craig sees Blount's argument as "little more than a fatuous defence of an arrogant feudalism" (M, 206).

Desmond Pacey in The Literary History of Canada describes The Magpie as "strongly pro-communist in its sympathies."⁴¹ Though the book takes a stand against the inequitable distribution of wealth, it argues just as strongly against the excesses of revolutionary change in society. The radical characters are presented sympathetically (with the exception of Tuttle), but they are seen as fanatics. The book is not propagating the view that the proletariat should gain political power, or that the city with its emphasis on commerce can provide ultimately satisfying solutions to a variety of socio-economic problems. Instead, it is putting forth the notion that a polarization of society is dangerous, even if it is caused by well-intentioned idealists. The onus is on capital to accommodate labour. When the capitalists fail to budge from their position, the hero does not go over to the ranks of labour. He retreats from the arena of conflict entirely, back to a world he understands. The "ill-clad malcontents" in

Victoria Park represent something "more human, more idealistic" to Craig than those who go to hear "Blount cry his alarms," but he does not choose to make their aims his. He has a private solution in reserve.

One of the strike leaders in Victoria Park, Tuttle, is presented as "a mountebank, a demagogue, a cheap actor whose insincerity was stamped upon his very countenance" (M, 253):

He was speaking to "the people"--telling them "of the strength of the people"--calling upon them to uphold the "rights of the people". He directed their attention to the "bosses" of industry --proclaimed a "war to end wage slavery"--swept his hair back angrily and cursed "the system"! (M, 252)

Several of the most radical leaders were renowned for their eloquence, especially R. B. Russell, William Pritchard, and George Armstrong, who also were all members of the Socialist Party of Canada. Tuttle could be modelled on these men. Of these, Russell was especially active in collecting funds for strike leaders on trial. From the beginning of 1919, Russell had been in charge of a fund to pay for the trial of a Ukrainian socialist named Michael Charitinoff, who had been arrested in December, 1918, for possession of illegal literature.⁴² A Defence Fund had also been started later in 1919 to help pay for the trials of the strike leaders arrested in June, 1919. Durkin is clearly mocking Tuttle as he attempts to collect funds for the strikers' families. A book which attacks as demagogues major figures in western labour radicalism can hardly be said to be "pro-communist."

Amer is presented with sympathy. He has some characteristics of the "alien" strike leaders, and of some of the British radicals prominent in the strike. Like Charitinoff, Amer is arrested for the possession of seditious literature, but Charitinoff's appeal against deportation was

granted, and he was never deported as Amer is. Oscar Shoppelrie, another radical alien, was eventually deported. However, Amer is deported to England and has been in the army, which suggests that he is British. Durkin may have used these details to draw attention to the legislation hastily passed by the government to make it possible to deport, first aliens, then British strike leaders.⁴³ Amer is presented as an Old Testament prophet figure who has the last word about the course of events the world is taking. In view of the "wasteland" vision of society that Amer presents at Victoria Park, Craig does well to return to the land:

For fifteen minutes, Amer stood like a giant, swaying only a little as he spoke, his voice thundering across the crowded square, his stern face set like a mask of rage! He heaped scorn upon their petty squabble, he cursed their Tuttle for charlatans who offered cheap balm for their bruises, he unfolded a vision of a world in agony, of a civilization in the throes of death, of a humanity whom God had forsaken!

(M, 255)

How much support did the Winnipeg veterans actually give the strike? McNaught and Bercuson note that at a meeting of the three veterans' organizations on May 15, 1919, a pro-strike feeling was recorded,⁴⁴ and that the following day a delegation of veterans asked the premier to support compulsory bargaining legislation. The veterans also supported the right of the Winnipeg police to belong to a union. The veterans were led by Roger Bray, described in a RNWMP report as "the most dangerous person in the City, in view of the fact that he is a Returned Soldier and is using this to influence other Returned men."⁴⁵ McNaught and Bercuson remark that the veterans had expressed doubts all through the strike about "peaceful idleness" as a way of winning a confrontation, and Bray eventually was arrested. A group of anti-strike veterans led by Frederick G. Thompson also was formed. This group eventually was named the Returned Soldier's

Loyalist Association, and several clashes between pro-strike and anti-strike veterans nearly occurred. After the arrest of the strike leaders, the pro-strike veterans decided to hold a "silent parade" on June 21. As the parade was forming, the crowd set a trolley on fire, and the Mounties fired into the crowd. The only deaths that resulted from the strike, and in fact the only violence, occurred in connection with the "silent parade." Most of the veterans not only appear to have supported the strike, but to have taken a position, especially towards alien workers, somewhat more extreme than that of the labour leaders, which was perhaps a measure of their post-war disappointment in society. (By and large, aliens supported the strike.)

Craig, an ex-officer, does not support confrontation and sees Blount's persistent interpretation of the strikers' position as a nation-wide Bolshevik conspiracy as an untrue polarization of the situation. Craig also sees Tuttle's rhetoric as playing into Blount's hands. Craig does not represent Roger Bray and the men that supported him nor does he seem typical of Thompson's veterans. If anything, his position is closer to that taken by Ivens, that is, Christianity without the church, or as Francis Baynon and others described it, christianity [sic], not churchianity. Therefore, Craig, who does not identify himself with any of the shades of opinion on either side of the confrontation (except for Amer), has to disappear from the scene, just as Amer does.

The chief representative of pre-war values is Martha, whom Craig describes to Marion on several occasions as "not of our world," or not of "the new world where things are changing" (M, 84). The two women are compared. Marion, for example, wants Craig to get rid of his "odds and

ends" box, which she sees as creating clutter. Martha understands why Craig wants to save things for which there appear to be no immediate value, but which might have value in the future. Marion, therefore, represents the same efficiency Blount represents, which is linked throughout with the war. Marion is cool in manner compared to Martha, who is "the emotional type" (M, 176). Martha believes in the new era just as Craig does. Two of her sculptures are entitled "Chrysalis" and "Incarnation"; Durkin describes them as "tenuous, unfolding forms, arresting in their simplicity" (M, 180). They remind Craig of the night in France when "the hope had been born in him out of the darkness of the world and its sorrow" (M, 180). Martha has also created a "grotesque creature with innumerable hands and no head" which she calls "Reconstruction." Craig sees "Chrysalis" and "Incarnation" as the very antithesis of Blount and the "Machine." Martha's desire to have an exhibition of her sculpture is connected with the "new era" feeling:

". . . there has been an awakening . . . people who never saw anything in art before have found in it an expression of something within them . . . something that was born within them during those terrible days. I'm sure of it. Look at the new interest in poetry, for example, that sprang up almost at once. Men like to sing songs when they march to fight. I think the spirit has been carried over . . . I think it is there . . . waiting for new forms . . . and perhaps . . ." (M, 219)

Originally, Craig connects Marion with his "new era" feeling. He had wanted her "with all his life and all his strength and all his hope in the world that was to be" (M, 269). But he finds he has been deceived in his view of Marion. It is Martha who actually shares his ideals. When the two women are in Martha's studio, Marion touches one of Martha's clay figures. It feels soft and spongy, and Marion draws her finger away as if

it had been burnt. Marion is neither a believer in the new era, nor is she linked with the land in any way. The crucial test of the capitalists comes when Blount offers to buy Martha's sculpture for five thousand dollars, but also announces that he intends to have small replicas of the figure struck off for his customers to use as paperweights. When Martha hears how Blount is planning to desecrate her work, she becomes "too weak to stand alone," and Craig has to grab Blount's arm to stop him from giving further details of the plan. Amer moves on Blount "like a wrestler coming to meet his opponent" (M, 301). Blount is routed, but not before Craig announces, "We wouldn't wipe our feet on you." Martha and the anti-materialist faction achieve a moral victory in the art gallery, though Blount wins the day in the city.

Throughout the book, Craig is identified with order and symmetry:

While he listened to others talking, he fitted their opinions into a kind of geometric plan that rose instinctively in his mind every time he heard an argument. Logic for him was a kind of symmetry. Truth was a balance of form. He sensed an error in judgment as a carpenter might sense an error in length or breadth or height. His religion was a faith in the order of the world in which he lived. Friendship was an experiment in the harmony of human nature. (M, 5)

Once, while listening to Bentley, Craig waits for Bentley to shift his foot an inch to the right, which would create an equilateral triangle formed by the two feet of Bentley's chair and the heel of his left foot. Bentley does indeed shift his foot, but in the wrong direction. This type of imagery permeates the book. For example, when Craig looks out of his office window in the Grain Exchange, he sees the "grey buildings" of the city lying in "jagged, irregular" patterns, but he can look past the city to the "wide reaches of the prairie" (M, 52). Craig sees his life as a triangle. One side is his personal life since his marriage to Marion. He

mistakenly believes he has drawn that line straight. His father had helped him to draw the second line years before: "A man can't go far without faith in some kind of a god, if it's no more than a block of wood" (M, 112). Craig believes that there is something in the universe which helps to save life from futility and utter waste. The third line has caused him perplexity. This is the world which should bring God and man together and which is broken or has taken a wrong direction. Craig completes his triangle properly by substituting Martha for Marion and by returning to the farm, where he plows a "true and straight" furrow on his first attempt after many years. Craig renews himself through contact with the soil:

. . . as he lay with his body stretched at full length upon the earth, new strength seemed to come to him, the fresh new strength of the earth itself. And when the sun rose, he lifted himself from the ground and made his way still eastward with the new day on his face and brow. (M, 329)

The book takes the view that the "reconstructionists" have merely returned the world to the condition it was in when the war broke out, and that the rural values of the pre-1914 world have just as much validity in the post-war world as they had in the pre-war world. The book retreats from the idea of a potential amelioration of social problems through a large-scale social movement such as communism. Only individual salvation is possible, and it can be achieved through work on the land or through art whose purpose is to give concrete expression to ultimate values. Martha's clay and Craig's farmland are given a parallel value. Unlike Grove, Durkin admitted that art might have the same value in life as farming, though his view of the artist as a total non-materialist is rather naive. In fact, the sections of The Magpie that deal with art are among the most clumsily written parts of the book.

A strong contrast to Durkin's book is Ralph Connor's To Him That Hath, which appeared in 1921, two years before The Magpie. Connor's book, though it is set in a small town in Ontario whose major industries are pulp and paper mills, is also based on the Winnipeg strike. Connor's book offers the view that labour strife can be settled if businessmen are trained to be public-spirited, and if they can be taught to apply Christian principles in dealing with their men. The book is neither anti-church nor anti-materialist as Durkin's is. In fact, it argues that the application of Christian principles by businessmen will bring them material rewards.

The hero of the book is Jack Maitland, a returned soldier, who happens to be the son of the owner of Maitland Mills. Jack comes back to a world in which a "New Day" had dawned, and in which "war was no more, nor ever would be again" (THTH, 34). But, unlike Durkin, Connor deals summarily with the "new era" mentality:

While the "gratuity money" lasted life went merrily enough, but when the last cheque had been cashed, and the grim reality that rations had ceased . . . and when in experiencing in job hunting varying degrees of humiliation the veteran made the startling and painful discovery that for his wares of heroic self-immolation, of dogged endurance done up in khaki, there was no demand in the bloodless but none the less strenuous conflict of living; and that other discovery, more disconcerting, that he was not the man he had been in pre-war days and thought himself still to be, but quite another, then he was ready for one of two alternatives, to surrender to the inevitable dictum that after all life was really not worth a fight, more particularly if it could be sustained without one, or, to fling his hat into the Bolshevist ring, ready for the old thing, war--war against the enemies of civilisation and his own enemies, against those who possessed things which he very much desired but which for some inexplicable cause he was prevented from obtaining.

(THTH, 36-37)

Connor sees the "new era" mentality as necessarily being converted into

an "adjustment to the status quo"; otherwise, it becomes converted into an aggressive political-social position which will cause war. Elsewhere in the book, Connor describes the "returned soldiers who had failed to readjust" as falling "an easy prey to unscrupulous leaders" and as being "exploited in the interests of all sorts of fads and foolish movements" (THTH, 197). Though Connor supported post-war labour movements, he was by no means a radical. One of the "foolish movements" he attacks in To Him That Hath is the One Big Union. To present the radical western labour movements like the O.B.U. as "foolish," Connor introduces an American representative of the A.F. of L. to the book, who addresses the local Canadian union. This is Connor's description of the American's speech:

He made appeal for the closing up of the ranks of Labour in preparation for the big fight which was rapidly coming. They had just finished with Kaiserism in Europe but they were faced with only another form of the same spirit in their own land. They wanted no more fighting . . . but there were some things dearer than peace, and Labour was resolved to get and to hold those things which they had fought for We are making no threats, but we are not going to stand for tyranny at the hands of any man or any class of men in this country. Only one thing will defeat us, not the traditional enemies, of our class but disunion in our own ranks due to the fool tactics of a lot of disgruntled and discredited traitors (THTH, 119-20)

The radical left thus takes the brunt of Connor's attack, unlike Durkin's book, which attacks the extreme right. The "tyranny" that Connor stresses is the tyranny of the left, while Durkin stresses the tyranny of the right. Durkin places the blame for a possible other war on the very reconstitution of the status quo that Connor urges so strongly.

In order to cast a patina of virtue over the wealthy owner of Maitland Mills, Connor presents him as a man who turned his war profits over to the government, but whose post-war production is lower than ever in the history

of the company. Like Nason in The Magpie, Grant Maitland has taken a paternalistic attitude towards his workers and finds it hard to deal with the concept of collective bargaining. The elder Maitland delegates his son to deal with the labour troubles. Jack is so successful in gaining the confidence of the workers that he is appointed their representative to a committee of three which settles the strike "in less than an hour." The others on the committee are the Reverend Murdo Matheson, who had specialized in social and economic science at the university, and a representative of the employers who declares he has been a fighter too much of his life. The Reverend Matheson observes that "certain classes and individuals in this community" are not responsible for the "ills" of society. Rather, they "are the product of our civilisation" and everyone must accept responsibility for them. The committee not only settles the strike, but also creates a General Board of Industry "under whose guidance the whole question of the industrial life of the community" is "submitted to intelligent study and control" (THTH, 279).

Any notion that there might have been exploitation of the worker by the employer in Canada is disposed of in the following cavalier fashion by Connor:

"... this is nae land for yon nonsense. Gin we were in Rooshie, or in Germany whaur the people have lived in black slavery or even in the auld land whaur the fowk' are haudden doon wi' generations o' class bondage, there might be a chance for a revolutionary. But what can ye dae in a land whaur the fowk are aye climbin' through iither, noo up, noo down, noo maister, noo man? Ye canna make Canadians revolutionaries. They are a' on the road to be maisters." (THTH, 140)

The speech is given to the old Scottish mother of one of the radical socialist workers who eventually becomes completely disillusioned with Marxism. In effect, she says there are no social classes in Canada, and anyway those

people on the bottom are going up. The book supports the industrial fabric of society. The alternative to pure materialism is presented as Christian materialism. Connor, unwilling to show capitalists in a bad light, is forced to construct a Janus-faced character, Jack Maitland, who must function as both boss and worker. The committee that settles the strike does not have a genuine worker on it. The book could with justice be retitled "The Romance of the Winnipeg Strike."

Richard Allen points out, however, that there is some historical evidence to support the view Connor takes in To Him That Hath. For a few years after the war, the Methodist social service department received requests from businessmen for consultations on the relation of Christianity to industrial relations.⁴⁶ In fact, after the Winnipeg Strike a Council of Industry for Manitoba was created, whose chairman was none other than C. W. Gordon:

The formula on which Gordon operated as Chairman of the Council was typical of the progressive social gospel. Industry was a co-operative enterprise for the service of the whole community. In its functioning, four factors had to be considered: capital (whoever owned it), labour, management, and the community. Each of these had its rights and responsibilities. The rights were fundamentally simple and the same for all: security, freedom, a fair return, and growth. The responsibility of each was to see that the other was granted his rights. The denial of any part of this formula by any party meant a failure of industrial efficiency in fulfilling its purpose. Gordon believed that insistence on these factors would eliminate industrial strife and that what was needed was the development of the habit of utilizing the formula.⁴⁷

Gordon served four years in this job, dealt with one hundred and seven cases, and claimed to have settled all cases unanimously. Allen observes that Gordon had helped to "heal the wounds of a badly divided industrial community."⁴⁸ Nonetheless, To Him That Hath remains a simplistic reconstruction of the events of the Winnipeg strike. Gordon's success as

a labour mediator indicates that he applied a realism in life that escaped him in fiction.

Durkin's returned soldier rejects industrial capitalism for the land; Connor's returned soldier is converted into a socially conscious industrial capitalist. Yet a third view of the returned soldier is held by Dawn Fraser, a Cape Breton journalist who wrote narrative verse, now collected in a volume called Echoes from Labor's War. Fraser saw society as embarrassed by the returned soldier. In his poem "The Reward," written as early as 1917, Fraser presents a soldier entering a western saloon; the man has a "wasted arm" and "a look of despair." The soldier begs for "a coin for some food" claiming that he has been unable to find a job. He is treated roughly by the "boss" and the patrons of the saloon:

"As if I could afford to pay the board of every cripple from France."

And his prosperous patrons agreed with him--said something should be done--

That since the war these bums were a bore, a menace to everyone.
(ELW, 45)

In Fraser's poem "The Applicant," a returned soldier named Dan who has been gassed is called on by a social worker. Dan's mother tells the social worker how Dan has been unable to find work:

But Dan is only bad at times when the gas is in his head,
When he came in the other day I remember what he said;
It's only when he loses heart that the poor lad really grieves,
And then he will start all over, talking to the leaves.
About the last job he had, and how he done his best;
He has his recommend with him, the button on his breast.
Talks about the trenches, the cold and wounds and pain,
How he starved and waited; now must he starve again?
-He says how in the morning he must see another man--
It's very kind of you, Mum, to call to see my Dan. (ELW, 42-43)

Another poem called "The Widow in the Ward" tells of how a Cape Breton woman lost two sons; one died in the war, and the other was hanged because he shot

a policeman during "labor trouble." These poems represent a separate and distinct working-class view of industrial capitalism and of the returned soldier as yet another victim of the capitalist system. They must be seen against the long history of industrial strife in Cape Breton, which became particularly acute in the twenties. Labour is seen as the true source of value in the community, and there is no romantic liaison of interests between big business and the worker. Nor is there any romantic return to the land. Fraser wrote a preface to his poem "The Parasites," which reads as follows:

In every contest between Capital and Labor, I am with Labor and against Capital first, last, and all the time. And if you ask me what percentage of the actual product of labor capital should receive, I cry loudly, "None, damn it, none!" But be assured that I class all worthy productive or creative effort as labor, and summed up, my contention simply is that any person who does not work at all, should not eat at all, excepting of course invalids and children. (ELW, 86)

The worker is seen as a valuable producer of goods that society needs. Fraser would certainly not have seen the farmer as contributing more to society than the worker. The "parasites" are those who collect profits from the coal industry through their ownership of stocks and bonds, but who do not labour themselves. The coal miners advocated nationalization of the coal industry on the grounds that natural resources should not be a source of private profit. Thus Fraser argues for a better regulated industry, not the abolition of industry itself and a return to some form of pastoralism.

Another novel which deals with a returned soldier who has hopes of a "new era" is Harwood Steele's I Shall Arise (1926). Though the book takes a strong anti-leftist position, it has many elements in common with The

Magpie. The hero is swiftly disillusioned with post-war life but eventually finds contentment through a life on the land (he actually is part of the official government resettlement scheme).

The book opens with Chris Maynard's return to Canada from four years in France:

He was 'home--at last' to Canada, and all that Canada meant; to the peace and ordered ways, comfort and contentment of Canada, for which he had yearned, as all soldiers had yearned for home, with passionate intensity during those years of torment. He was 'home--at last' to what was to be--so the leaders of the world had promised him--a new era, something bordering on the millennium, wherein all the defects of the old pre-war state of things would be removed, wherein all men would have a square deal, wherein, especially, the men who had so nobly won the great struggle would be glorified and instantly re-established and given a country fit for heroes to live in while they enjoyed the fruits of victory. Chris, like every other Allied soldier, was 'home--at last' to that. (ISA, 10-11)

Not only does Chris expect a revitalized society, but he expects to resume his romantic relationship with Enid Blayne, and resume his job as an insurance agent with Jasper and Co. in Montreal. The dream of Enid has sustained him through the war. Steele stresses that Chris is "an average young soldier, of average attainments . . . one of thousands" (ISA, 21). Chris' first disappointment takes place when his ship docks at Montreal. The ship is one of the last of the transports, and there are no crowds to meet it. It seems unreasonable to expect that the interest of people should survive so long. The time is early 1919. Nor do Enid and his best friend appear. Eventually he discovers they have married each other. The night he learns of Enid's marriage, Chris has the first of a series of emotional experiences in which he sees society attacking him in much the way he was attacked by the Germans. Chris' successive disappointments throughout the book continue to be described in military imagery:

Two years before, Chris had gone through the Hill 70 'show' with his battalion. After they had taken their objectives, they had been subjected to a dreadful series of counter-attack upon counter-attack. In Chris' memory that series lived as a horror in which, apparently alone, he faced wave after wave of grey-clad enemies, wave after wave of armed and roaring beasts, faced the incessant fury of their small-arm fire, their pelting bombs, the thrust of their multitudinous bayonets and, over and over again, as each wave all but overwhelmed him, miraculously beat them back until another came up from that inexhaustible ocean to hurl itself upon him in its turn. Thus the Germans harried him that day. Thus the questions harried him now--advancing wave on wave, with storming rifles and machine-guns, leaping bayonets, crashing grenades, tireless, innumerable, and worse than Germans in that they were immortal. (ISA, 38-39)

Chris begins to suffer "the loneliness which many and many an ex-soldier like himself, the world over, was to know before many post-war months had passed" (ISA, 42). At the demobilization office, Chris wishes "the officer had shown more interest in him." He feels that he has been treated as a "returned empty."

Initially, Chris is re-hired at his old job. There are eight returned men on the staff and six "safety-firsts." The new general manager is a man named Bloor, who reminds Chris that he is not in the army now and that the war is over. Bloor's attitude towards the returned men is one of "nagging superiority," probably inspired by his "lamentable failure to play the part of a man when the great test came." He had married to avoid the pressure of the recruiting agencies on single men. Bloor is a stickler for efficiency. Eventually, the returned men are informed by Bloor that the firm is experiencing difficulties, and that it must cut down expenses. The reductions are to begin with the "dead wood," that is, the returned men who "through their long absence overseas and the strain they had suffered there, were the least efficient" (ISA, 80-81). Mr. Jasper confirms that none of the returned men is justifying his salary. Society has failed the

returned men by taking a purely dollars-and-cents approach to them. At the end of November (1919), Chris is "pitched out into the street." Chris and his friend Windemere try to find jobs and fail. There is "no room" for the returned men in the Montreal insurance business. They go into business for themselves, but the economic recession of the post-war years which caused big firms to cut out "dead wood" caused little firms to go under. Chris begins to sell his possessions:

Unbelievable it seemed; but true. Were others--men like himself, veterans of the War, heirs to the fruits of victory--also finding it unbelievable but true? There was little doubt of it. Over the whole country of late had been heard the growing murmur of a rising storm, raised by thousands upon thousands of returned soldiers. Moreover, that threatening tumult was not merely confined to Canada. Echoes of it drifted up from the United States, thunder-rolls of it from Europe. The papers were full of it--reporting meetings of protest, chronicling cases, hideous in their bitter irony, where returned soldiers like himself, seemed to have become the victims of neglect, of broken promises and callous indifference. (ISA, 96)

The public has forgotten. One of Chris' friends tells him to stop wearing his service button, because to the public that means "inefficiency." For business purposes, the button is a "dud." In a desperate attempt to get any sort of job at all, Chris writes to his old army buddies, many of whom do not even trouble to reply to his letters. Steele describes Chris' state as "spiritual strangulation." Chris begins to deteriorate physically as well.

Under the influence of a chance contact with a labour unionist, Chris goes to Winnipeg to find work. On the train he meets Dobbs, a returned man who has been brutalized by his post-war experiences, and who advises Chris to "take it by force." Chris is still capable of judging that surrender to such a philosophy would be to "deny" the Allied victory, and to suggest that they had fought for a delusion. Unemployment is worse

in Winnipeg than in Montreal: "The Labour Union enthusiast who had induced Chris to move had been either the victim of false reports or an agent employed by the Red Labour element, which was striving to control the situation in Winnipeg, to induce men to come there simply that they might swell the ranks of the city's unemployed . . ." (ISA, 121).

Chris attempts to join a veterans' organization which finds jobs for its members but is rejected in an ugly scene because he is an ex-officer. The organization is leftist and sees officers as representatives of the capitalists who made the war. Steele sees those who reject Chris as "parasites" who are using the veterans for their own purposes. Steele suggests that if the "competent pilotage" of those "who had led the men in war" were not thrust aside, the veterans might have more chance of bringing their hopes to fulfillment. Along with Durkin, Steele sees religion as bankrupt. Neither the Salvation Army nor the minister of a fashionable church can bring Chris religious solace, though he obtains a temporary job through the Salvation Army. While working, Chris faints and eventually sees a doctor at the Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment. Chris reports that he had concealed a heart problem during the war because he had wanted to remain with his battalion. He is informed that, since his record does not show that the illness is traceable to military service, he cannot obtain the medical care to which he is entitled.

As late as 1930, the issue of war-related sicknesses of which there was no military record was being debated in the Canadian press. Richard de Brisay reported in The Canadian Forum that pension legislation did not include provision for ex-soldiers who were suffering from a disability which they were unable to prove attributable to war service. De Brisay

said there were "numerous instances where the man has developed a disability owing to some whiff of gas he got in the trenches, yet because he carried on and did not report sick at the time no record exists on his medical history sheet of this primary cause of later trouble."⁴⁹ Durkin includes an instance of this sort in The Magpie. Jimmie Dyer has a weak heart as a result of being gassed and eventually dies a few years after the war.

Out of pride, Chris refuses civilian treatment in the free wards of the hospital. Chris views the S.C.R. regulation as a "particularly revolting example" of the "official neglect of the nation" (ISA, 138). Then Chris falls into the hands of a Red agitator whose beat is the S.C.R. building. The Bolshevist is presented negatively, but he attracts Chris even though Chris knows he is "handling dynamite and sinning mortally" (ISA, 141). For three days, Chris becomes part of the "Red machine," which consists of "crazy men," "dumb beasts," and a "leavening of fellows like himself, veterans driven to the movement by suffering and neglect" (ISA, 142). At a vast solidarity meeting of the Winnipeg communists whose motto is "the ballot or the bullet," Chris is awakened to "the full menace of this movement, the depth of its horror and its beastliness." When the speaker implies that the dead of the Great War had died for a rotten system not worth dying for, Chris realizes that the Reds have as their objective "not the improvement of that social system, that civilization for which the dead had sacrificed themselves, but rather its destruction and the setting up in its place, by methods against which the dead had risen originally in arms, a rule which, in its beastliness and terror, was the very opposite of all they had fought to save" (ISA, 148).

His Flirtation with socialism over, Chris tries door-to-door selling,

during which one woman tells him that the returned soldiers are a "lazy, good-for-nothing lot" who expect to be kept for the rest of their lives. He encounters a drug peddler whom he repulses. One day he is ejected from a church into which he had gone to keep warm. On Armistice Day, he attends the memorial service for the dead which is being held at the Winnipeg Cenotaph. It is a moving ceremony, and at first Chris envisions the legions of the dead marching along the Via Dolorosa into the Valley of the Shadow. But suddenly the vision changes to one of sombrely clad civilians, "most of them in rags," gaunt and haggard, with missing limbs. Among the men he recognizes himself. These are the "forgotten living, the living for whom those they had saved had no thought, by whom in comparison the Dead, so quietly laid in honoured graves . . . were to be envied. They were the men to whom had been promised the fruits of victory, who had asked for bread and had received a stone" (ISA, 171). Chris makes a scene, passionately crying out, "But what about the living--what about the living?" Weak and starving, Chris decides to commit suicide at the base of the cenotaph that night. His fingers are so cold that he drifts into unconsciousness before he can load his service revolver. He wakes up in a hospital.

The remainder of the book deals with his mental and physical recovery. Aided by his nurse, Daphne Hargraves, he begins to believe in life again. Daphne eventually goes to British Columbia and writes to Chris urging him to go there where there is no city life to "maul" him:

I am living . . . at Invictus, which is Toby's place, a farm in the making (very much in the making), held by Toby under the auspices of the Soldiers' Settlement Board, and in the course of being wrested by Toby's two strong hands and his really wonderful courage out of what, alas, is mainly virgin rock and forest We form part of the soldier settlement of Amiens,

which is a complete little community in itself, like those our forefathers established in Old Ontario There is a Colonel "in command," and a Doctor, a Nurse (which is me) and the finest lot of veterans imaginable--the Canadian Corps, or the British Army . . . in miniature, with all its heroism, its fortitude Just merit counts and there's no need to worry about climbing back to an old social standing, because we're all on that standing from the start--the top rung in a wild garden of flowers, soft winds, sea views, sunsets and giant trees The very place for you, Chris. (ISA, 215-16)

The Soldiers' Settlement "Invictus" is on Vancouver Island, which Steele describes as "as near a thing to Fairyland, as true a shrine of Beauty and Romance, as anything can be in this ramshackle old world" (ISA, 217). Chris goes to "Invictus," where he immediately finds companionship and release in sharing war memories with Toby. Toby has a five and a half acre homestead; two acres are cleared. Toby raises fruit, vegetables, and chickens, and has a ramshackle house which he has built himself. Toby also turns out to have artificial legs. It is Toby who restores Chris' faith in God. Toby sees the order in nature as a testament to the existence of a moral order in which both Chris and himself have been saved for "something great":

See everything working just like a clock--the sea, rolling in, rolling out--the sun rising, going down--spring coming, the leaves sprouting, summer, then fall, then winter, spring again--each in its turn, year after year Is it an accident?--Not on your life Some great hand put it together and keeps it going, too--God, Chris Why didn't we fall like the boys in France to-day? Because . . . our work's not finished. God has something for us yet to do . . . We've been saved for something great We don't know what it is yet; but some day we'll be told--God will tell us, Chris

(ISA, 242)

Chris is inspired by Toby's example. Having been dumped by the "Government" on a "ghastly jumble of rock and tree" and expected to make good, Toby has "made good!" When Toby hears the story of Chris' experiences since the war, his faith does not falter. He tells Chris that life is a great war that

never ends, and one often does not know why one should be asked to stand so much, but that, as in a war where the soldier may not understand what the commander-in-chief knows, God knows.

On Armistice Day, the "Colonel" of the Amiens community addresses the veterans and reminds them that though the world appears to be in the "same ruts of selfishness and folly" as it was in 1914, the war was still worth fighting. The returned soldiers have happiness and self-respect unlike those who stayed at home; they also have their memories of the war and clear consciences. The returned soldiers now have the possibility of "service" to others, without thought of gain, and in that "lies all that makes life worth while" (ISA, 273). Still Chris does not make a final commitment to the Soldiers' Settlement. It takes an encounter with Enid, who wishes to resume their relationship, and a fire at the Amiens Settlement, to make him realize that he belongs with Daphne and the returned soldiers in the British Columbia bush. Chris repeats his wartime heroism by saving Toby, Toby's wife, and Daphne from the fire. Though the Amiens Settlement is burned down, all the soldiers begin again.

This time Chris takes up land too. He and Daphne christen their home "Resurgam" ("I Shall Arise") as a tribute to Toby. These are the closing paragraphs of the book:

It did more than pay a tribute to Toby, that word 'Resurgam.' It symbolized the victory of all the immense army of ex-fighting men who had won through the war by peace, against their peace-time enemies, as through that other war, with the doctrine of Colonel Kent in their hearts at the last and spirits still unbeaten.

He is happy there, Chris Maynard, with his tried and trusted comrades; restored in mind, in body and in soul; happy, on that isle o' dreams; happy--and, henceforward, safe. (ISA, 320)

The "new era" has arrived, after all, for Chris. It turns out to be a

repetition of the experience of his forefathers in settling central Canada. The fortitude and courage in his character, honed to a fine point by four years in the war, are the very qualities that the maker of new land needs: The "great something" that he has been saved for is the development of the country. The special qualities of heart and mind developed by the war, though unsuited to the routines of a life in Montreal or Winnipeg, are perfectly suited to a life in the natural environment of northern British Columbia. Chris' spirit is supported by living amid the natural order of the "isle o' dreams" rather than "mauled" by city life.

The year following the publication of I Shall Arise, Hubert Evans published The New Front Line (1927), another novel about a returned soldier on the land. Evans' book makes an even clearer contrast than Steele's between city and wilderness. The book takes place in Vancouver where Hugh Henderson is living with his parents after having been demobilized, and the locale shifts to northern British Columbia where Hugh decides to homestead. Again the period is immediately after the war (spring, 1919) when the economy is in a state of recession and unemployment is high. Hugh's father is a successful salesman of plate glass, and he has been introducing Hugh to business people in the city in an attempt to help him find a job. We are given a brief glimpse of Canby, who is on a committee to help find work for returned soldiers. He believes that many of the returned soldiers do not want to work. Hugh thinks of Canby as "a man with one of those puzzle boxes, getting impatient with the pellets that wouldn't let themselves be rolled into place" (NFL, 9). As the book progresses, we realize Hugh is turning out to be one of these pellets, mainly because he dislikes the possibilities that are presented to him by city life. Early on we learn

that he finds "no inspiration in crowds":

Was it the dim fear of a searching stillness that made these people mill restlessly up and down the pavements? They seemed to have no objective, they walked singly, or in twos and threes, some chatting but most of them silent, not even seeming to notice what went on about them as they continued their monotonous patrol He saw a man . . . hurrying up, but when the man drew near there seemed to be little need for such haste.

(NFL, 8-9)

Through a chance meeting with an old platoon-mate, Sandy Biggs, Hugh learns about "Cedar City," a small wilderness community in the north where Sandy has a store and hauls shingle bolts for the mill. Sandy remarks that the type of people best suited for pioneering are those who are not "scared by hard work." Sandy himself has forty acres of uncleared land. Hugh remembers a day's leave he and Sandy had had together in France which they had spent on top of a hill which contained a plantation of trees:

There on that hill in France every tree had been no higher or shorter than those all about it. Was the fibre of such timber as tough, he wondered, as that of trees which reared themselves on untended ground and withstood the elements? He liked to think it was not.

(NFL, 21-22)

Thus, Hugh's impulse to the wilderness and to pioneering are built into the book fairly early on. We are told that he had once thought of being a civil engineer, but when he learned that a "life in the woods" was not necessarily connected with engineering, he had abandoned the idea. In fact, all of Hugh's pre-war indecisiveness about choosing a career is connected to his failure to realize the deep connection he has to nature. He had never wanted to enter the professions and, therefore, had not gone to university, which he saw as a "stepping-stone to a career."

While in Vancouver, Hugh is offered an opportunity to become a salesman for a line of confectionery and juvenile specialities. He is told that his service button would be a "wonderful asset," but he finds the "game

of business" confusing, and he does not want to "settle down" in Vancouver, though his father advises him to "stay in the city" because that is where "the big money" is. Another business opportunity Hugh evades is a job with the "hustler," D. K. Mogg, who has a hardware business and is on the lookout for a "live man" who can "stand the gaff."

Hugh goes north in response to a letter from Sandy Biggs, and figuratively never goes back to Vancouver. Cedar City is a twenty-one year old settlement which contains an Indian reserve, a small white settlement, a shingle mill, a hotel, and a store. The settlers clear land and work for the shingle mill. The cedar forest is slowly drawing back before "the assault of settlement." On his first night in Cedar City, Hugh meets Mary Rutherford, a teacher in the Indian reserve whose movements have an "easy vigour." An important theme in the book is the erosion of Indian culture by white civilization; Mary Rutherford, whom Hugh eventually marries, is dedicated to the preservation of Indian values. Thus Hugh's decision to homestead near Cedar City and marry Mary are both affirmations of non-urban values. Evans took a realistic attitude to the Indians in a period when writers either discounted them altogether (for example, Bertrand Sinclair) or romanticized them. Presenting the Indian as torn between two cultures was a radical view for twenties fiction, though nowadays such a view implies that the Indian might find his own culture lacking and Evans seems old-fashioned. Even Evans' Mist on the River (1954), discussed in the conclusion to this thesis, presents a picture of the Indian as happier if he can adapt to white culture. However, Evans was unusual for his time, and his view of the Indian probably stems from his belief that a life lived close to nature is more desirable than a life in the city, though he understood

Indian conflict on the issue.

Hugh's attraction to the northern British Columbia wilderness is detailed:

Silence in these mountain valleys had a different quality from the uneasy hush of sleeping cities, Hugh thought. Nor was it the silence of eastern countrysides or prairie wheatlands where crops stand expectant for the loitering sun. It was the silence of something towering and great and enigmatical, something wrapped in an impenetrable cloak, not kindly, not vindictive, but serene and indifferent to the little race of men. They might come and go but never conquer it. Hugh at his window felt that in the other valleys beyond, away to the North, this same strange, living silence stood and touched the stars. The army of men had reached the gateway of this, the first one, but through those others only trappers, prospectors, or land surveyors had passed like scouts. The slower main body of pioneers had not yet so much as attempted consolidation of positions there.

(NFL, 82-83)

Hugh believes that pioneering in British Columbia will not change the nature of the landscape as it had in western Ontario where his grandparents had pioneered. There the very character of the rivers had been altered. But in British Columbia there would always be a "no man's land" between the settlement and the country among the peaks. The "something towering and great and enigmatical" would remain:

What a challenge it was! To occupy these many valleys and maintain and strengthen positions beneath the fortresses of the peaks. To march round them, occupy them, and hold them for the generations of Canadians to come; to learn the ways of the land and take inspiration from the steadfastness of the mountain tops which not man, but only the slow hand of time could alter.

(NFL, 83-84)

Hugh is not only enamoured of the land, but he also quickly comes to admire the type of settler who lives in Cedar City. Mr. and Mrs. Rutherford, for example, are "friendly dependable people . . . who had always lived close to reality" (NFL, 104-5). The settlers live a "simplified and direct" life "freed from many of the complications of the city." Hugh remembers trying

to classify crowds of people in the city into those who made things and those who sold them. Though he sees the sellers as essential, he feels that selling has been "amplified" too much. People were "wheedled" and bullied into buying things. People of the "second order," that is, advertising agencies, pushed ideas like "The luxuries of yesterday are the necessities of to-day." Hugh asks himself, "Was it tending toward some perfect existence or would it keep pyramiding until the whole structure of living became top-heavy and crashed?" Hugh believes that growing and making things, and seeing they get to those who need them, are the necessary branches, but that there are many off-shoots which are hindering growth. Even Hugh's father sometimes seems unable to distinguish between the "business that was necessary and the business that was not." Totally missing from life in Cedar City is the consumerism that Hugh deplors. Instead, he finds there a "wholesome outlook on life" which is best exemplified by Mary Rutherford.

Hugh finds the ideal Homestead through the help of the first settler of Cedar City, Dad Walmer, whose dream is a "big development" of the timber, minerals, and mining in the area. He also envisages farms with "big barns and cattle." Hugh sees Walmer as a "solitary little dreamer," a type upon whose "trails" more than one city of the west had been built. Swan Bay, where Hugh files his pre-emption, is three miles from Cedar City. It is like a "small lake" since the channel between the extremities of land is only one hundred yards wide. The ground is wooded with alders, conifers, and maples, and a small creek flows into the bay. The place has an "intimate appeal, a friendly atmosphere":

It was not to be bought with money but with his own honest labour; he could see it growing, changing year after year under his hand;

that would be accomplishment*in a sense real to him
 Manipulation and talking, the finesse of salesmanship, all the
 specialized routine of business which to him seemed obscure and
 sometimes unnecessary had nothing to do with such an achievement.
 (NFL, 163)

Hugh's father makes a last-ditch attempt to dissuade him from taking up homesteading. Meeting Hugh half-way, Mr. Henderson offers to form a partnership with Hugh to acquire a good farm close to Vancouver. Hugh is to manage the place with "good help," and study agriculture at the university during the winters. Mr. Henderson clinches his argument by telling Hugh that if such a farm were properly handled, it "would be a real money-maker." "It is not civilization and security that Hugh wants, however, but wilderness and challenge, and he eventually rejects the proposition, considering it only briefly for Mary's sake. Hugh's father had himself left an Ontario farm for the town and had quarreled bitterly with his father. Mr. Henderson thinks that Hugh is declining to benefit from his father's gains and is starting almost where his grandfather had started.

The book is a success story. Its last chapters take place five years after Hugh and Mary have begun homesteading. They have two children who thrive on "clean milk, fresh vegetables, eggs from Mary's poultry house, pure spring water, sunlight and open air" We are given a picture of the cabin, the fields in crop, the stable for the Jerseys and the horse, the carpenter shop, the chicken house, the smokehouse, the floating landing stage, and the scow:

These were things he [Hugh] had made with his own hands, built with materials he had taken from the woods, designed, struggled with, worked hard to create. They were more his than if he had bought them or hired others to make them. He had come into this bay with his axe and saw and a few tools, and because he and Mary had worked, lived simply, found they could be happy without the material aids of a more complex method of existence, they had

been able to consolidate their outpost beyond the line of settlement. (NFL, 259)

One of the last things we see Hugh making with his own hands is a fireplace. To Hugh and Mary "that homely column of stone" is another victory, "a fresh success in winning for themselves the kind of life they wanted" (NFL, 271). Hugh thinks about what his life would have been like if he had gone into business in Vancouver. There would have been no clearing or buildings in Swan Bay. Now there would always be a home place for somebody. "Generation would follow generation and add to their work but Mary and he had been first. It was they who had treated; all the others would only improve" (NFL, 290). Hugh wonders about his children: "Would they choose the cities or would they push ahead of the crowds to some new front line of pioneering?"

The effects of the "Great War" are still being felt in Canadian literature. Some critics have greeted a recent novel by Timothy Findley, The Wars, as the definitive literary work on the subject, and yet sixty years have gone by since the end of the war. It was to be expected that the early literature of the war would be patriotic and fairly romantic, offering little analysis of its causes. Books like those written by Connor, Dancey, and Simé were designed to muster support for the conflict and concentrated on German militarism and the Belgian atrocities to make their point. These writers saw the Canadians as innocent supporters of the British motherland in her strife with the implacable Hun. The Allied cause was seen as the "cause of justice and humanity" (TM, 355). Germany's sacrifice of human values to efficiency was blamed for the war. McClung introduced a skeptical note into this political polarization by suggesting that militarism and efficiency were specifically male qualities which had been

allowed to become dominant in German society. Her bent to the rural permitted her to imagine a spiritual change in society which would take place when swords were turned into ploughshares. Her support of the war was based on conviction rather than drum-beating, which she rejected as foreign to the nature of those who lived close to the land. Basil King, who took a nationalistic rather than a colonial stance towards support of the Allied side, foresaw that both the war and post-war political and social reconstruction would come to be seen as half-measures which had not, after all, solved the problems of humanity.

The dissenters to the war were neither as loud nor as numerous as its supporters, but they can be found. A contemporary of McClung's, Francis Marion Beynon, saw munitions manufacturers and militarists on both sides as responsible for the war. She believed that "the impulse to kill the thing" we cannot dominate is what makes the human heart respond to "the roll call of force" (AD, 250), but if perfect freedom of speech were allowed, no "little group of men" would be able to keep a country at war for "purposes which the majority of the people disapproved" (AD, 250). Thus Beynon argued for pacifism but also for freedom of speech, which she felt would result in pacifism. Another pacifist of the day, Frank Davison, has affinities with contemporary world federalists who advocate international cooperation leading to world government. Davison saw nationalism as eventually leading to militarism and war, and internationalism as inevitably producing pacifism. Grove, too, was anti-war, arguing that nationalism led to militarism and that both were products of urban civilization. However, Grove did not thoroughly work out his ideas in a novel.

When the war was over, books emerged written by Europeans which

concentrated on the realistic details of the fighting, for example, Erich Maria Remarque's All Quiet on the Western Front. The Canadian books concentrated largely on the returned soldier and the role he was to play in post-war society. Writers of these books amalgamated love of country with resistance to the war by turning against industrialization and urbanization, which they felt had encouraged the growth of qualities in the human spirit which had led to the war. Stead attacked the greed and materialism that accompany industrialization. Sinclair attacked "obsolete" and "bad" principles of justice and morality in Canadian society as partly responsible for the war. He saw the "militarists" and "market hunters" on both sides of the conflict as having done their part to bring about the conflict. Nonetheless, he believed in the war because the peculiarly German policy of "sheer force and planned terror" had to be halted or Canada would be overrun as Belgium had been. Durkin also saw the blame as a matter of degree. Though the war had been fought to counter the German "machine" which valued "efficiency" and materialism above all else, those elements in Canadian society that were spiritually akin to the Germans were preventing the Canadian sacrifice from having any meaning. The idealism which had won the war for the Allies was being crushed in post-war Canada by Canadian materialism and efficiency. Steele felt that though the war had had to be fought, an inhuman, dollars-and-cents approach was being taken to the returned soldiers, who had become an embarrassment to a nation that wished to sweep the war under the carpet as rapidly as possible. Evans uses his returned soldier as the vehicle for an attack on urban life and the commercial spirit that pervades it. He defines the archetypal Canadian as the pioneer who breaks new ground, and lives in close contact with nature.

In so far as the returned soldier aspired to that condition, he was in harmony with the true spirit of the country.

These writers unite in stressing service to others as the answer to materialistic strivings and the desire for efficiency. That service is to be offered through work on the land. Farming and homesteading stand at opposite poles from the swift accumulation of property and money which foster a mechanistic attitude to the human. The heroes of these books reach this level of understanding through their experiences on the battlefield, which have taught them to distinguish things of fundamental importance from the peripheral and transitory in life. Each finds a woman who shares his values. Implied or stated in each book is the high value the author attaches to family life. Stead and Durkin stress service to humanity through the growing of food. Sinclair, Steele, and Evans stress service to the nation through the extension of Canadian civilization into wilderness areas. All the writers uphold work with the hands, physical labour, the production of one's own food, and contact with nature as preferable to selling, consumerism, and business. Durkin, in addition, suggests that art can offer a refuge from materialism. For the returned soldier in the twenties, the "new front line" was the land.

It is appropriate to close this chapter with a reference to Charles Yale Harrison's Generals Die in Bed (1930).⁵⁰ Though the book was written by an American, was first published in England, and is a novel only by courtesy, it deserves mention here because it certainly is one of the most trenchant accounts ever written of conditions on the French and Belgian battlefields of World War I. Harrison served with the Royal Montreal Regiment, his comrades were Canadians, and his experience was that of the

Canadian Expeditionary Force. The book is a crude but powerful autobiographical account of what the fighting was like. One example will suffice. Harrison tells of running down a trench looking for prisoners and suddenly in the corner of a bay, coming upon a German and bayoneting him in terror. However, though Harrison pulls and tugs, the bayonet does not come out of the German's body. The German, shrieking and frothing at the mouth, eyes distended, grasps the barrel of the rifle in a futile attempt to help withdraw the bayonet. Harrison repeatedly tries to kick off the body, but he is unnerved by the man's howls and finally runs. Immediately he realizes that he is unarmed. The account continues:

I am terrified.

If they come here and find me they will stab me just as I stabbed him--and maybe in the ribs, too.

I run back a few paces but I cannot bring myself to turn the corner of the bay in which he lies. I hear his calls for help. The other voices sound nearer.

I am back in the bay

My tugging and pulling works the blade in his insides.

Again those horrible shrieks!

I think: I can get it out if I unfasten the bayonet from the rifle. But I cannot go through with the plan, for the blade is in up to the hilt and the wound which I have been clumsily mauling is now a gaping hole. I cannot put my hand there.

Suddenly I remember what I must do

He stops his screaming. He looks at me, silently now.

He knows what I am going to do.⁵¹

Just before Harrison pulls the trigger a white Very light soars over their heads and the German's "boyish face" with its "white down" is exposed. Harrison shoots, the blade snaps, and he is "free" to continue the raid.

Harrison's book recounts instance after instance of similar episodes and also gives details about the filth, the rats, the lice, and the stench with which the men had to live.

Harrison describes his own and the other men's cynicism about the war profiteers who are making a "big hunk of swag" out of the "shoes, grub, uniforms, bully beef . . ." needed to fight the war. One man sums up the situation for all the others: "There's two kinds of people in this world--there's those that like wars and those that fight 'em" ⁵² This "them and us" attitude becomes perfectly comprehensible in the light of the fighting conditions described above. Understandable too are the resentment and anger that veterans felt after the war when they failed to achieve the recognition and rewards they thought they deserved. It is hardly surprising that many of them reacted against commerce and industrialization, and therefore against the city with which these are associated; the land and the wilderness seemed pure and untainted by the anonymous "them" who had kept the Canadian soldiers in the filth of foreign trenches committing atrocities in order to survive.

Notes

¹ Jack A. Blyth, The Canadian Social Inheritance (Toronto: The Copp Clark Publishing Company, 1972), p. 62.

² John Herd Thompson, The Harvests of War: The Prairie West, 1914-1918 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1978), p. 61.

³ All page and other references are to primary sources cited in the bibliography included in this chapter.

⁴ The Great War and Canadian Society, An Oral History, ed. Daphne Read (Toronto: New Hogtown Press, 1978), p. 98. See also the following unpublished doctoral dissertation documenting three stages in Canadian patriotic response to the war: Robert Matthew Bray, "The Canadian Patriotic Response to the Great War," Diss. York University 1977. Bray traces a progression from a totally voluntary to a completely compulsory war effort, popular attitudes having undergone a radical transformation. As he does not consider post-war attitudes, he tends to see conscription as the result of an intensification of patriotism rather than a disillusionment with the war, though he does point out that the outcry for compulsory military service was coming from patriotic organizations whose purposes were jingoistic and therefore, perhaps, not representative of grassroots sentiment.

⁵ Gordon Roper, Rupert Schieder and S. Ross Beharriell, "The Kinds of Fiction," in Literary History of Canada, ed. Carl F. Klinck, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), p. 311.

⁶ Nellie L. McClung, In Times Like These, intro. Veronica Strong-Boag (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), p. 25.

⁷ Ramsay Cook, "Francis Marion Beynon and the Crisis of Christian Reformism," in The West and the Nation, Essays in Honour of W. L. Morton, ed. Carl Berger and Ramsay Cook (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976), pp. 187-208.

⁸ Cook, p. 197.

⁹ F. M. Beynon quoted by Cook, p. 199.

¹⁰ Cook, p. 200.

¹¹ The Letters of Frederick Philip Grove, ed. Desmond Pacey (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), pp. 11-12.

¹² The New Era in Canada: Essays Dealing with the Upbuilding of the Canadian Commonwealth, ed. J. O. Miller (Toronto: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1917).

¹³ Sir Clifford Sifton, "The Foundations of the New Era," in New Era, p. 56.

¹⁴ Winnipeg 1919: The Strikers' Own History of the Winnipeg General Strike, ed. Norman Penner (Toronto: James Lewis & Samuel, 1973), p. xviii.

¹⁵ Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook, Canada: 1896-1921, A Nation Transformed (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1974), pp. 294-95.

¹⁶ Great War, p. 31.

¹⁷ James Eayrs, "The Politics of Re-establishment," in Vol. I of In Defence of Canada: From the Great War to the Great Depression (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, n.d.), pp. 41-61.

¹⁸ Edgar McInnis, Canada, A Political and Social History (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada, 1969), pp. 495-96.

¹⁹ C. R. Fay, "Land Settlement in the West," The Canadian Forum, III (Dec., 1922), 74-75.

²⁰ Great War, p. 203.

- 21 Great War, p. 204.
- 22 Brown/Cook, p. 326.
- 23 McInnis, p. 326.
- 24 Great War, p. 215.
- 25 Cook, Beynon, 188.
- 26 Ian MacPherson, "The Co-operative Union of Canada and the Prairies," in The Twenties in Western Canada, ed. S. M. Trofimenkoff (Ottawa: National Museum of Man, 1972), 55.
- 27 Brown/Cook, p. 312.
- 28 Richard Allen, The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada, 1914-28 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971).
- 29 Allen, p. 81.
- 30 Allen, p. 84.
- 31 Ibid.
- 32 Allen, p. 89.
- 33 Brown/Cook, p. 314.
- 34 Ibid.
- 35 David Jay Bercuson, Confrontation at Winnipeg (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1974).
- 36 Ibid., p. 188.
- 37 Kenneth McNaught and David J. Bercuson, The Winnipeg Strike: 1919 (Don Mills: Longman Canada, 1974), p. 9.
- 38 D. C. Masters, The Winnipeg General Strike (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1950), p. 128.
- 39 James H. Gray, The Roar of the Twenties (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1975), p. 76.

- 40 The Rev. Dr. J. MacLean, quoted by Allen, pp. 114-15.
- 41 Desmond Pacey, "Fiction 1920-1940," in Literary History of Canada, ed. Carl Klinck, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1973), p. 687.
- 42 Donald Avery, "The Radical Alien and the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919," in The West and the Nation, Essays in Honour of W. L. Morton, ed. Carl Berger and Ramsay Cook (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976), p. 217.
- 43 Discussion based on Avery, Radical Alien, pp. 221-22.
- 44 McNaught/Bercuson, p. 69.
- 45 RNWMP report quoted by Avery, Radical Alien, p. 221.
- 46 Allen, p. 141.
- 47 Allen, pp. 143-44.
- 48 Allen, p. 144.
- 49 Richard De Brisay, "Uncertainty at Ottawa," in The Canadian Forum, X (April, 1930), 231.
- 50 Charles Yale Harrison, Generals Die in Bed (Hamilton: Potlatch Publications, 1975). First published 1930.
- 51 Harrison, ibid., pp. 110-114, passim.
- 52 Harrison, ibid., p. 218.

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Chapter IV

National Greatness and the National Policy



Canadian national growth and development historically has been promoted through the implementation of the National Policy, which fostered central Canadian industrialization and western production of agricultural commodities. In 1879, when the National Policy came into effect, it was mainly the Maritimes and central Canada that were protected by a high tariff from American goods, but as the population of the west grew, and the wheat economy developed, western farmers found themselves paying high prices for protected domestic manufactured products, while at the same time they were selling their principal export, wheat, in competitive world markets. This imbalance angered the west and created a backlash against the cities of central Canada.

The literature of the twenties, even the realistic literature, continued to associate the good life with the rural life; writers ignored the urban present in favour of either nostalgia for the rural past or a concentration on the rural present. Thus we are presented with the curious situation of a national government promoting industrialization and urbanization to the detriment of agriculture, or, at least, asking agriculture to pay the price for what the federal government interprets as national greatness, and a literature which consistently argues that individual moral and spiritual development is possible only in contact with the land, and that national greatness consists of rural prosperity and contentment, rather than

industrialization and the growth of cities.

A recent book of essays called Canada and the Burden of Unity¹ raises interesting questions about nationalism in Canada. The editor of the book, David Jay Bercuson, describes it as going "against the grain" of Canadian history because it proffers the notion that regionalism, always dismissed as divisive, may not be as negative a force as it has been thought to be:

If Canadians were to finally accept regionalism as a fact of their national lives and use it as a foundation for the development of truly national policies and attitudes, it could well prove to be a blessing. Unfortunately, federal policies, the attitudes of Central Canadian governments, and the biases of so-called national institutions, such as the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, have painted regionalism with the brush of divisiveness, disunity, and even treason But this is true only if what is good for Central Canada is also good for Canada. The essays in this volume seriously question that assumption.²

Bercuson points out that the initiation of a protective tariff created more benefits for Central Canadians than for Maritimers or Westerners because there was no effective guardian of all regional interests within the federal structure.

The assumption that Bercuson questions, going, as he says, "against the grain" of Canadian history, was questioned constantly in the literature of the twenties. The essays in Canada and the Burden of Unity argue that "hinterlands have common problems and there is real value in exploring them on a comparative basis" ³ Though the writers to be discussed in this chapter are sometimes crude in their approach, almost without exception their approach is anti-national--that is, if nationalism is viewed as the federal priority which made industrialization of central Canada synonymous with patriotism, unity, and national greatness.

The most interesting treatment of the problem is in Augustus Bridle's Hansen (1924). Bridle explores the question of what constitutes the good

of the entire country. Therefore, he places his hero in different parts of Canada at different points in his career in order to make him representative of particular regional interests. As a result, the book does not take a definite stand on the tariff as a force which benefits all of Canada, though Bridle is more sympathetic to Canadian urbanization than many writers of the twenties, going so far as to equate Toronto with the "luminous courts of heaven." Since Bridle wants to be absolutely impartial--he comes as close as any writer of the period does--the most concrete thing he makes his hero, Hansen, say in support of the tariff is that he has "Liberalizing aspirations," as the Liberals, despite their traditional anti-protection position, were urging the tariff on the nation at this time. One might say that as well of Laurier, who appears in the book as a character.

The conflict between agriculture and industry figures to a lesser degree in other books of the period. Henry Moore in Polly Masson (1919) questions the protective tariff from the standpoint of nineteenth-century liberalism and the laissez-faire economics of Adam Smith. In The Land of Afternoon (1924), Madge Macbeth presents a would-be premier from the west who cannot hold national office and be true to his western constituents at the same time. Charles Peterson in The Fruits of the Earth (1928) offers a purely regional position on the tariff based on Progressive Party views. Only Alan Sullivan is prepared to present a central Canadian entrepreneur as a hero who is benefiting the entire country. In so far as writers of the twenties did not acknowledge the prominence of industrialization in Canadian society, they represented a cultural lag, but in so far as their views accord with some current radical thinking about the value of regionalism, they deserve re-evaluation.

Augustus Bridle, music and drama critic for the Toronto Star, published Hansen, A Novel of Canadianization in 1924. It is a fictional biography of a Norwegian immigrant to Canada and a picaresque survey of the experience of being a Canadian at the turn of the century. Thus Hansen is thrust into a variety of situations and his point of view shifts; what remains consistent is his patriotism. Bridle points out in the Preface to Hansen that "To the immigrant Canadian hereinafter known as Hansen, patriotism presented itself as the first privilege of a citizen in a strange land" (H, v).⁴ Hansen venerates both the Tory Macdonald and the Liberal Laurier because he sees true love of country as transcending political affiliation. He sees the making of Canada as "one of the great epics of the world," involving a "love of adventure deeper than making plausible orations without faith, and tremendous fortunes without hard work--and as great as the energies which created old Quebec and old Ontario, the Hudson's Bay Co. and the transcontinental railways" (H, v-vi).

Contemporary reviews frankly acknowledged the chauvinistic character of Hansen and heartily recommended it to the public. John W. Garvin remarked that Hansen was different from the "regulation type of novel, Canadian or otherwise. It is essentially of and for Canada" ⁵ A few months later, another reviewer remarked that Hansen "will surely aid materially in conserving true Canadianism among all Canada's sons and daughters."⁶ Another reviewer saw the novel as embodying "essentials of Canadian life that should give it a more lasting place than many, a story of more rounded construction."⁷ The advertisement of the Macmillan Company for the book simply quoted a review of it by Salem Bland that had appeared in the Toronto Star. The review begins with this strong

paragraph:

I confess that next to the message of Jesus, the original gospel of the Kingdom of God on the earth, and its progress, nothing is so near to my heart or so stirs my imagination as the possibilities that seem to be folded up in this as yet unformed Canadian nationality. Naturally, then, I was attracted by Augustus Bridle's maiden novel, "Hansen--A Novel of Canadianization," and was delighted to find that hosts of other people were likewise eager. The afternoon before Christmas I found two bookstores sold out and in the third I secured the last copy.⁸

The time-setting of the book is 1887-1905, a period during which the different stages of Canadian social development were visible simultaneously. Both big-city slums and primitive homesteading existed at the same time in Ontario. The plan of the book is to show how nationalism (interpreted by the federal government as the National Policy) affected the simple agricultural life, the more complex urban life lived in the older Canadian cities, and even existence in the new western cities just coming into being. Thus Bridle must grapple with the problem of the connection between the National Policy and the poverty and suffering attendant upon nineteenth-century industrialization and the social problems created by land speculation in the west. One answer Bridle offers is the moral and reforming power of the arts, especially music. The book makes hardly any references to the natural world--complexity of social structure and civilization are seen to be nearly synonymous.

The main character, Hansen, follows a pattern of development very similar to that of his surroundings. He begins as a seventeen-year-old immigrant farm labourer on a small Ontario farm. He passes through the school and university system of Ontario in record time, acquiring not only an education but a great degree of sophistication. After a period spent as a square-shooting journalist in the raw city of Edmonton, he is elected

to Parliament. Like his country, Hansen achieves national greatness. Hansen remains valuable as a commentator on his surroundings because he stays disengaged from them. His goals are education and experience of life rather than commitment to it. Thus he is able to gain knowledge and retain innocence, and his judgments continue to have not only honesty but also a certain naiveté right to the end of the book.

Hansen is presented as totally committed to Canada. He is a Norwegian brought up in London with his brother. The two have taken ship to Montreal, but Hansen has acquired a loyalty to the "old flag" that his brother has not. Hansen takes a job working as a hired hand in Jericho, Ontario, while his brother presumably goes to greener pastures in Minnesota. The opportunity to leave Canada is offered to Hansen again, and again he refuses. His friend in Jericho, Tode Beech, works on a Yankee schooner which collects lumber on the Canadian side of the Great Lakes. The work is profitable and easily obtainable, but Hansen rejects the easy money in favour of "home." With such devices Bridle authenticates Hansen, gives him the same loyalties that a British immigrant might be expected to have, and validates any negative judgments that Hansen may make of his surroundings.

Jericho, Ontario, the setting for Book I, is a saw-mill settlement on Canada Company land. Hansen works for the Flaters, a Methodist farm couple with seven children, who represent a theme which is developed throughout the book--that honesty and hard work are their own reward. (The Edmonton land speculators, for example, want money without labouring for it.) When the Flaters briefly lose sight of their own ethic and speculate in land, they lose their money to those who are craftier and

greedier than themselves. Like Hansen himself, the Flaters represent concepts and are not fully-realized characters. They drop out of the action after Book I, and re-appear only twice, once when Bridle needs to stress the sophistication of Toronto, and again when he needs dupes for the Edmonton land sharks. The treatment of the Flaters is characteristic of the book as a whole. Characters represent groups and classes of ideas, and the action is chosen for its typical nature rather than for development of plot. The Flaters have an Ontario farm, part of it still unbroken bush. Since Bridle's aim is to present an encyclopedic survey of the country, the Flaters are needed to show an early stage in Canadian development.

The town of Jericho also is used to present early commerce, trade, and manufacturing. In Jericho commerce revolves around Zachariah Peppercorn, "chief owner of the store, principal shareholder in the stove-mill and part proprietor of the cheese factory" (H, 10). Peppercorn is the first representative of a triumvirate of businessmen and entrepreneurs who appear virtuous, but who are actually exploiting others for the sake of personal gain. Morley Hackett, the entrepreneur, and Stewart Macklem, the Toronto industrialist, are the second and third men in the group. All present a respectable front and even appear to be working for the good of the country, but their real motive is self-interest. In Jericho, Peppercorn is bullying and tight-fisted but does little real harm. Later in the book (at a later stage of development in the country), he is a much uglier man.

In Book I Bridle also launches the first of several attacks on the insensitivity of religion to the economic life of a community. Hansen attends a revival meeting in Jericho at which he hears a Detroit evangelist and is surprised at the superstition and illogic of the preaching. Both the idea

of a personal devil and the suggestion that work is a punishment upset him:

The life of Jericho emerging from the forest to the farm was to him as yet a great epic, and most of its bushfaring, home-making folk a sort of heroes. The evangelist's devil began to upset all this. The "Curse of Labour" consequent upon sin angered him, since most of the men and women he knew loved work as much as life. The God of the evangelist was even less intelligible to him than such legendary Norse deities as Odin and Thor with all their semi-human satellites. He had read once a poem about a pagan Olaf who became a Christian, but not through fear of either a destructive Devil or of an implacable God who hated sin while he loved the sinner. (H, 21-22)

The theme is picked up in the section on Montreal when Hansen interviews the Archbishop who shows himself insensitive to the Jews, and later in the Edmonton section when the Methodist missionary, Bo Brown, helps the land speculators cheat his former fellow-townsmen from Jericho. Thus Bridle presents the influence of religion as more negative in larger urban settings than in rural life.

At the time of the opening of the book, 1887, the matter of Macdonald's National Policy (that is, the protective tariff) is being hotly debated. However, the phrase "national policy" (uncapitalized) has been given a larger meaning by historians. It has been defined by V. C. Fowke as "collectively that group of policies and instruments which were designed to transform the British North American territories of the mid-nineteenth century into a political and economic unit."⁹ The term "national policy" in its larger sense applies to Hansen's desire "not to be a partisan and to submit to no programme smaller than the interest of all Canada" (H, 205). Thus the protective tariff, viewed from all possible angles by Bridle, is a matter about which Hansen never makes a decision because "the interest of all Canada" is hard to determine. Whether the "National Policy" furthers

the "national policy" is a question the book continually raises but never settles.

As Bridle introduces the minor characters in Jericho, he slowly reveals how the population is being affected by the protective tariff. For example, Ben Briggs represents the one and a half million Canadians who emigrated to the United States at the end of the nineteenth century as a protest against a depressed economic cycle that lasted from roughly 1873 to the election of 1896. Michael Cross remarks that during this period the Canadian labour force voted against the working conditions of large-scale industrialization "with their feet":

Between 1871 and 1901, something in the order of 1,500,000 Canadians immigrated to the United States. There was, of course, flow the other way as Americans moved to the Canadian West. But the net population loss to Canada in these thirty years was 800,000 people.¹⁰

Briggs, now a "beaver-collared Clevelander," lights a cigar and makes the following speech to the loungers in Peppercorn's store:

I tell you, there aint much of anything in Canady except C.P.R. that Uncle Sam wunt get dividends on, and its wunt matter a hoop in Hades whether this country is high tariff or free trade, becuz he's got the world's greatest industrial system right now, and all Canady's smokestacks one on top o' the rest wouldn't be anything more to him than a totem-pole in British Columby. How do I know? Becuz I was born in Bruce county, Ont., starved out of it and hit the trail to prosperity. (H, 14)

Briggs, initially a victim of the National Policy, has voted against it "with his feet" because he lacks the national loyalty that Hansen, the immigrant, has after only a short time in Canada. In an amusing touch, Bridle has Briggs reappear later in the book, still prosperous, but now selling American plumbing to Canadians.¹¹

Tode Beech is another Canadian who works for an American company for

the high wages. He is a timberjack on an American schooner which collects lumber from Canadian ports and delivers it to Duluth, Chicago, Port Huron, Detroit, Sandusky, and Buffalo, all on the American side of the Great Lakes. Tode ruefully observes to Hansen that "the only city we've got on the lakes is T'ronta, about a hundred thousand" (H, 43). Tode, like Briggs, views urbanization as a sign of prosperity and national greatness. However, Tode intends to save his high and rapidly-earned wages and offer himself as a good marital prospect to Maggie Moss. Thus, he does not desert Canada, and eventually we learn that he and Maggie have settled in Jericho and are raising a large family.

A character named Eli Snell presents the other side of the coin. Eli, needless to say, is a Conservative who is against reciprocity and views Goldwin Smith as the devil incarnate:

Give the N.P. a chance. Maybe she's a humbug; but tryin' to build prosperity an' patriotism awn free trade 'cause they have it in England is a pure halloocination. Them Commercial Unionists think they're an asset to the Grits. I swan! Jawn A.'ll have all their hides awn the barn door this election an' the tightest stretched one o' the lot'll be Professor Goldwin Smith.

(H, 28)

Eli has read Smith's Canada and the Canadian Question (a chronological error on Bridle's part as the book was published in 1891, four years after Eli's remarks are made), and believes it to be a "slicker piece o' jugglin' than Progress and Poverty" (H, 28), which was first published in 1880. Eli Smith is contemptuous of both Goldwin Smith and Henry George, but we learn that he has lent his copy of Progress and Poverty to Hansen, who describes it as a book which shows "that in the civilization of money the rich become richer and the poor become poorer" (H, 17). This early reading of George continues to influence Hansen throughout the course of

his life, and in this respect he was similar to the political radicals of his time. Hansen must somehow square his Georgist sympathies with the paradoxical nature of his nationalism, which involves accepting urban poverty.

Henry George's Progress and Poverty is an attempt to explain "the persistence of poverty amid advancing wealth."¹² George argues that everywhere that "distress and destitution in the midst of wealth" are found, "you will find that the land is monopolized."¹³ Neither abundance of capital nor productiveness of labor make wages high or low, but the extent to which "the monopolizers of land can, in rent, levy tribute upon the earnings of labor."¹⁴ George pointed out that in new settlements where land was cheap, there were no beggars, but in "great cities, where land is so valuable that it is measured by the foot, you will find the extremes of poverty and luxury."¹⁵ Inequality in the ownership of land is the cause of inequality in the distribution of wealth. The way to assert and secure equal rights to land is not to confiscate it; "it is only necessary to confiscate rent."¹⁶ George sums up what came to be known as the "single tax" in the following words:

What I, therefore, propose, as the simple yet sovereign remedy, which will raise wages, increase the earnings of capital, extirpate pauperism, abolish poverty, give remunerative employment to whoever wishes it, afford free scope to human powers, lessen crime, elevate morals, and taste, and intelligence, purify government and carry civilization to yet nobler heights, is--
to appropriate rent by taxation.

In this way the State may become the universal landlord without calling herself so, and without assuming a single new function. In form, the ownership of land need not be dispossessed, and no restriction need be placed upon the amount of land any one could hold. For, rent being taken by the State in taxes, land, no matter in whose name it stood, or in what parcels it was held, would be really common property, and every member of

the community would participate in the advantages of its ownership.

Now, inasmuch as the taxation of rent, or land values, must necessarily be increased just as we abolish other taxes, we may put the proposition into practical form by proposing--

To abolish all taxation save that upon land values.¹⁷

When Hansen first sees the juxtaposition of wealth and poverty in Toronto, he is looking with Georgist eyes. Even his first view of Plainsville is a Georgist view, and the moral position he takes on the Edmonton land speculators is Georgist in nature.

Hansen has less of a problem dealing with Goldwin Smith. The long-term implications of Smith's argument for commercial reciprocity with the United States involved either annexation or political union, a position inconsistent with Hansen's nationalism, though Smith (not Hansen) sees no diminution of sovereignty for Canada in such an association:

Annexation is an ugly word; it seems to convey the idea of force or pressure applied to the smaller State, not of free, equal, and honourable union, like that between England and Scotland. Yet there is no reason why the union of the two sections of the English-speaking people on this Continent should not be as free, as equal, and as honourable as the union of England and Scotland It would give to the inhabitants of the whole Continent as complete a security for peace and immunity from war taxation as is likely to be attained by any community or group of communities on this side of the Millenium. Canadians almost with one voice say that it would greatly raise the value of property in Canada; in other words, that it would bring with it a great increase of prosperity.¹⁸

In addition, Smith demonstrated no particular sympathy for Henry George or the anti-poverty societies the single tax movement produced in Toronto. He saw these as "socialism," which he perceived negatively:

Toronto has her anti-poverty society, for the nationalisation of land. She has Socialism more or less pronounced. She has her Socialistic journalists instilling class hatreds into the heart of the working man, inciting the "toiler" to an attack on the

"spoiler," and blowing the trumpet of industrial war. The storm may be less violent in the bay than on the wide ocean, but it is part of the universal storm.¹⁹

In Book I the reader also is introduced to Dr. Strang,²⁰ the "noted Liberal orator" (H, 36), who gives a patriotic speech at a Dominion Day celebration. His "prophetic picture of the country" is very similar to one that Hansen himself paints at the close of the book: "a great bilingual Canada, loyal to Great Britain, friendly to the land of 'that great Englishman George Washington', and an example to the whole British Empire of a self-governing little people in a huge land whose Indians even . . . could loyally play The Maple Leaf and God Save the King" (H, 36-37). Dr. Strang, who becomes an M.P. when the Liberals come into power, exploits the proximity of the U.S. border and establishes a double medical practice in Windsor and Detroit. Bridle remarks that Strang's "philosophy of Canada" at that period "was epitomized in the fact that in Windsor he dealt mainly with prescriptions; in Detroit . . . his sign was 'Nerve Specialist'" (H, 140). However, in Parliament Strang, who has profited from his private venture into commercial reciprocity, attacks the Toronto industrialist Macklem (protected by the tariff) as a "sanctified skunk," and makes another speech against patronage. Thus, it is Strang's split political allegiance that is stressed. Hansen is surprised to meet Strang in Ottawa after the Laurier victory; Hansen had assumed Strang to be in the U.S. Congress. However, it is Dr. Strang who lends Hansen Edward Bellamy's Looking Backward (1888), a utopian novel which argues against industrialization and for a state-controlled capitalism. Like Progress and Poverty, it became part of the radical intellectual milieu of the period.

Bridle presents the Jericho Dominion Day celebrations followed by an

exciting "double-header," that is, the appearance of John A. Macdonald and Ned Hanlan, the Canadian rowing champion,²¹ in a contest against the American rowing champion. Not only does Hanlan win against the American, but Macdonald delivers a "Great Knockout to Commercial Reciprocity" (H, 47). His speech denouncing "fiscal traitors" is described as a "dry miracle of sagacious political wizardry." At this point Hansen is carried away with nationalist enthusiasm, drawing back only at Macdonald's references to political parties.

Bridle believed in the reforming power of the arts (it is one of the answers he offers to the dilemma in which he places Hansen), and thus Sadie Barlow is introduced in Book I. She plays the organ and sings, is the local schoolteacher, and persuades Hansen to get an education at the age of seventeen. Sadie is the first of a group of women in the book who disseminate truth to others through their knowledge of music. Macklem's daughter Dora, whom Hansen calls "Cecelia" after the patron saint of music, is the second. The third woman, Helen Thurston, eventually becomes Hansen's wife; she is part Indian, and it is her knowledge of Indian chanting that forms a parallel to Sadie's and Dora's music. Sadie and Dora re-appear in Edmonton, where they are sorely needed to counter the influence of the land speculators.

To indicate the success of the National Policy in encouraging the growth of cities, Bridle sets Book II in a market town named Plainsville, intermediate in size between Jericho and Toronto. Hansen studies for a teaching certificate at the Plainsville Collegiate. He has "his own peculiar regard for the town as a Henry George evolution of the village and the farm" (H, 103), believing that when Plainsville enters "its second phase of

development as a true Canadian town" it will lose its "higgledy-piggledy white shacks, swarming chickens, little churches," in other words, its picturesqueness. Bridle is preparing the reader for his depiction of the Toronto slums later in the book. It is passages like the following in Progress and Poverty to which Hansen must have been referring when he thought of "Henry George evolution":

But in the progress of new settlements to the conditions of older communities it may clearly be seen that material progress does not merely fail to relieve poverty--it actually produces it. In the United States it is clear that squalor and misery, and the vices and crimes that spring from them, everywhere increase as the village grows to the city, and the march of development brings the advantages of the improved methods of production and exchange.²²

Another problem connected with the National Policy that Bridle explores through his presentation of Plainsville is the erosion of British culture by both American culture and technology. In appearance, Plainsville is an "English enough" town, or so Burnham, a burnt-out Irishman living there, puts it:

"That clockhouse there--English as Bow Bells; that town hall--perfect replica of old English, facade, turret, belfry, market beneath and town hall above; little St. Jude's church down at the end of the market cobblestones--Anglican as the Book of Common Prayer; cabbies both Londoners; Hagarty--mayor by acclamation--English as Lord Mayor without the accent. All's English here except the mud-holes--" (H, 108)

All Hansen wishes to do is preserve the British and keep out the American. At this stage, Hansen's patriotism is political and economic rather than cultural, and he thinks solely in terms of preservation and retention of a British culture in Canada that is superior to a commercially-based American culture. He is not yet arguing for the development of a distinctively Canadian culture. He reads a paper on the subject one day and departs from

his prepared text to harangue the audience:

"This town, founded by Britishers in the forest, is in danger of becoming a distant suburb of Detroit. Sunday papers, American magazines and plays, smuggled goods, Fourth of July celebrations, American capital invested in our industries, American furniture, ready-made clothes, cart-wheel dollars and dimes, cigars, chewing-gum, slang, popular songs, shop fronts, architecture, arc lights, coal-oil, telegraph wires, big through trains short-cutted through Ontario--all these, ladies and gentlemen, are what we get from over there. Twenty years from now, unless we are careful, the only British things left in this town will be the old town hall, the home of Mayor Hagarty, the redcoat battalion, the choral society, the monogram E.R. on the mail bags, and a few old people smoking pipes and talking with accents as foreign to the rest of us as Siwash is to a Chinaman. That's commerce, and we can't help it. We get things cheaper and more of them from over there. But if we can't import most of our foreign-made goods from Britain, we can at least continue to import many of our ideas, our political practices, the best of our literature, and as many as possible of our songs and our immigrants from Britain--and we can do something to stop exporting our educated young men away from Canadian farms and villages to Detroit, Cleveland and Chicago." (H, 122)

Hansen tries hard to figure out how Plainsville can become "more Canadian and British without a tariff on American goods" (H, 124). He knows that culture follows hard on the heels of commerce, and he finds his "Liberalizing aspirations" (H, 124) at war with his desire to preserve British culture in Canada. The only thing he can think of is that with "more and bigger market towns, and with enough of these the farmers might sell more goods at home and therefore import less from abroad" (H, 124); in other words, at least another degree of urbanization is needed if Canada is to be saved from both Scylla and Charybdis.

Bridle next presents the reader with a view of four central Canadian cities, Toronto, Montreal, Quebec City, and Ottawa, devoting most of his attention to Toronto, which is presented mainly through its university and through its clothing industry. The National Policy, which has supported Tory industrialists, also has indirectly given them control over policy

at the University in Canada's second largest city. Bridle implies that the "Family Compact" controls not only politics and society in Ontario, but also the academic world, a point that another writer of the period, Beaumont Cornell, makes in Lantern Marsh (1923), a novel discussed in Appendix II. Control of the university by non-academics causes Hansen's troubles, which revolve around his never having taken Senior Matriculation examinations, though he has a First Class "C" certificate awarded him by the Department of Education, and the examinations for obtaining this certificate are identical with those for the Senior Matriculation examinations.

Hansen's cause is taken up by Henry Hooper, an undergraduate who edits the Varsity, the undergraduate newspaper. Hooper is a political Liberal engaged in a fight to "reform the University" because of its connection with the "Family Compact" (H, 173). By threatening to publicize Hansen's case in a Liberal newspaper called The Plaindealer under the title "Hansen Immigrant vs. Educational Tories," Hooper succeeds in obtaining a permit for Hansen for the first year. In the event, Hansen is graduated from the University without having to attend lectures. He simply appears three years in a row to write the examinations in the "extremely proper town" (H, 212).

Because of his outspoken fight for "intellectual freedom," Hooper is eventually expelled from the university, presumably under pressure from Macklem, the Tory industrialist to whom Hooper's reforms are abhorrent. Bridle's presentation of the University administration as repressive and reactionary is based on a series of incidents that occurred at the University in the early nineties. The character of Henry Hooper is based on that of

James A. Tucker, later editor of Saturday Night and a minor poet whose single volume of poetry appeared posthumously in 1904 with an introduction by Arthur Stringer, a classmate.²³ Tucker, like Hooper and Hansen, read in the Political Science "faculty," headed at the time by James Mavor. Tucker, T. Hamar Greenwood, and W. L. M. King led student opposition to the University administration on a number of counts. (Details of the controversy are available in Appendix I.) After Tucker's expulsion from the University of Toronto, he finished work for his degree at Leland Stanford in California. He died of tuberculosis in 1904 at the age of thirty-two. Bridle presents Henry Hooper, the Tucker character, as not completing his university course (he does not wish to complete it in the United States), and dying in 1897, the year of the Diamond Jubilee. These incidents also have been dramatized recently by James Reaney in a play called The Dismissal.

After Hansen's first stroll through the city of Toronto, he had remarked that it was no wonder that Toronto gave birth to the "National Policy and The Maple Leaf Forever, when it has little Great Britain on the waterfront and a slum in seven languages between the City Hall and the University" (H, 163). Bridle thus makes a direct cause-and-effect linkage between the National Policy and the slums. This walk is described in some detail. Front Street presents a "grim, thrifty perspective of wholesale fronts and warehouses" (H, 160). The Bank of Montreal is "dark-stoned, granite-pillared . . . with statuettes, caryatides and gargoyles" (H, 161). Hansen walks up "Yonge Street with its dingy little shops," and then goes west to University Avenue, which is "broad and sweeping under its elms," but whose east side contains "rows of rickety shacks which seemed popping

with queer people." The shacks turn out to lead to a "large slum" containing "tumbledown tenements," that is, the St. John's Ward.

In subsequent wanderings through the St. John's Ward, Hansen discovers that Macklem uses sweatshop labour to produce his tariff-protected Canadian textiles. Hansen becomes acquainted with the Hochstein family, father, mother, and seven children. The parents and children sew on an average fourteen hours a day for very low wages. They are sewing military uniforms to fulfill a Macklem-Hobbs government contract. Hansen writes an article (never published) about the "Tory sweatshop on government contracts protected by a tariff" (H, 182). Hochstein, who is Jewish, does not sew on Saturday, but he tells Hansen that he cannot work on Sunday either, because Macklem sends spies around to the Jewish sweatshops to make sure that the Christian sabbath is not being broken.

As industrialization in Canada proceeded under the protection of the National Policy, and workers became more vocal about industrial abuses, the Macdonald government initially responded with the establishment of investigatory commissions, one in 1882, another in 1885, and a Royal Commission on the Relations of Labor and Capital, which reported in 1889. The investigations unearthed shocking evidence of cheap child and female labour. For example, one Ontario factory inspector reported to the Royal Commission that he had found forty girls under fourteen, six boys of nine, and many of ten and eleven working in the factories of his district in 1887.²⁴ Appalling ventilation, sanitation, and safety conditions were revealed. Perhaps most shocking of all was the so-called "sweating system." Among the governmental sessional papers for 1896 can be found a "Report upon The Sweating System in Canada." Under this system, contractors obtained work

directly from the manufacturers, and, in turn, farmed it out to workers to do at home. The system depressed wages and kept them low as it discouraged comparisons of wages and union organizing, and encouraged the employment of children, long hours, and the playing off of one worker against another. The introduction of a contractor between the worker and the manufacturer meant that an additional profit had to be skimmed off the worker's wages. The Sessional Paper on the sweating system pointed out that if abuses were corrected, the tariff would have to be increased:

Should the Dominion Parliament enact legislation for the purposes indicated, both manufacturers and employees appear to fear that it would result in greater imports of ready-made clothing and a lessening of the quantity made in the Dominion, unless the import duties were raised sufficiently to cover the increased cost of manufacture.²⁵

The clothing industry was especially well suited for sweatshop work, as even children could do simple tasks on part of a garment, and clothing was easy to transport back and forth. Bridle's choice of a tailor to exemplify sweatshop labour is accurate.

The sessional paper includes a fair amount of testimony from a "Mr. Gurofsky," probably Louis Gurofsky, a member of the tailors' union, and a labour organizer and contractor. The Commissioner asked Gurofsky if wholesalers or manufacturers took any steps to keep themselves informed as to wages or prices. Gurofsky replied that "they do not know or care how he gets it done, or where, so long as he brings it back to them."²⁶ Gurofsky testified that Eaton's "have also gone into that kind of business They give their people piecework. They contract with the contractor, who gets the rake-off."²⁷ Gurofsky pointed out that there were "hundreds" of houses where clothing was being sewn which did not come under the provisions

of the Factories Act (passed in 1886, but still largely ineffective in 1893 when Hansen sees the sweatshops for the first time). Alfred Jury also testified that if one walked down Bay Street any day in the week, one would see "the great number of women staggering up and down with great bundles of clothing . . .,"²⁸ obviously transporting them from contractor to home and back. (See Appendix I for Jury's role in the student disturbances at the University of Toronto.) Gurofsky also testified that even in places where the Factory Act did apply, "the power is never turned off. The employees eat their dinner in five minutes, put the rest of the meal hour in at work."²⁹ Eaton's also is mentioned in this category since it had its own factories as well as contracting out piecework. In Hogtown: Working Class Toronto at the Turn of the Century, G. Kealey points out the "advantages for retailers like Eaton's" of the sweating system:

. . . it avoided the embarrassment of directly hiring and supervising cheap labour and diminished the potential for organized strikes and other methods of collective resistance. It allowed such firms, when challenged, to deny any knowledge of conditions in the shops they bought their work from Thus Eaton was not incriminated³⁰

The staff of The Last Post, the radical Canadian journal whose editorial policy was to "unearth and publish facts which are omitted, ignored or obscured by the commercial press," published an article about the Eaton family in 1970.³¹ The article points out that the Eaton family pioneered in the areas of shorter hours and pension schemes for employees, but consistently maintained low wages and poor working conditions. According to The Last Post staff, the company "possesses a terror and hatred of unionism and collective bargaining almost unmatched by any corporation in Canada."³² The article also quotes testimony from Eaton's factory employees given before the Royal Commission on Price Spreads (1935) which is very damaging

to the firm, as it indicates that Eaton's factories were still being run as sweatshops well past the time setting of Bridle's book, that is, about forty years later.

It is likely that Bridle had Timothy Eaton in mind when he drew Stewart Macklem, who, as well as using sweated labour, has his own factory, "Macklem-Hobbs, Clothiers."³³ The chapter on Toronto opens with the announcement by Thos. Pettigue that he is out of a job because Macklem-Hobbs has gone on "half time." Pettigue explains to his wife, "One government contract for uniforms finished; no more in sight. Yankee readymades glutting the market, one side; British woollens the other; and the boom's bust!" (H, 159). Pettigue is not the only character presented as unemployed, despite the protective tariff. Hansen also encounters a prostitute who appears to have taken to the streets after losing her job at Macklem-Hobbs, and some unemployed men who steal a half pig from a butcher shop to feed their families. Obviously, the further deterioration of economic conditions in 1893 which created even worse unemployment caused manufacturers to place even greater reliance on depressed sweatshop labour. Bridle singles out the Jewish sweatshops for mention, but Gentiles were exploited as effectively as Jews were.

Jewish sweatshops existed in Canada in the nineteenth and early twentieth century in the Ward in Toronto, along the Main in Montreal, and north of the CPR tracks in Winnipeg.³⁴ They gave rise to the Jewish labour movement in Canada, which has been described as the "conscience of the Canadian labour movement"³⁵ because of its concern for social justice for all Canadians rather than an acceptance of the simple trade unionism of the AFL or TLC.

Along with the bleak picture of Jewish sweatshops that Bridle presents, he also points out that the cities of Canada have provided a home for the Jews who are no longer "pastoral people," and who therefore need cities to survive economically. Bridle also has Hansen point out that a "synagogue" cannot be kept up on a "country road," and that the existence of cities is a factor in keeping the Jews together as a religious unit. Hansen is also careful to explain that the Jews who now work in sweatshops will become rich in shops of their own in the future. One night he takes a drunk to the police station, and eventually becomes friendly enough with the constables to go on their rounds with them. He observes that though the Jews live in shacks "that would have driven most Anglo-Saxons to drink" (H, 176), the Jews are seldom out of work and seldom drunk and disorderly. Bridle's presentation of the other side of the coin seems to stem from discomfort at the existence of the sweatshops.

The great value Bridle places on art is evident in his presentation of Dora Macklem as a musical saint in the slums. First she supports the university reforms by linking them to the "most human and simple and unsnobbish art in the world--," that is, music. She points out that Bach was a reformer, that Mozart detested princes, and that Beethoven despised Napoleon. Dora is unaware of the sweated labour at the foundation of her father's fortune, and she installs a piano in a shack in the St. John's Ward. When Dora starts a string orchestra there with talented slum children, she discovers Hochstein's son, Maxie, a gifted violinist, whom she helps to develop his talent. Macklem's daughter working in the sweatshop neighbourhood with the very people her father is exploiting draws forth the comment from Hochstein that she does it to "skvaire mit de low vaitches"

(H, 186). Bridle is implying that there is some sort of rough justice operating in the world.

Hansen observes that Toronto's social divisions are based on economics and he becomes conscious of "wealth, intellect, old families" that are "above" him. At the same time, he knows that some poverty "might be still more superior." The reference is probably to Hochstein's son. Hansen protests this division of Toronto society:

"Why should a city be regarded as a series of social preserves? . . . It's only the economic test that divides it into college halls, drawing-rooms, maids' bedrooms and back kitchens, tenements shacks, parsonages, police stations, political meetings. Why not regard it as a state of flux; a professor as a potential policeman, a criminal a suppressed prosperous citizen, a politician a pulpiteer gone wrong? . . . The ancients loved their cities; tried to make them beautiful like women--" (H, 172)

Hansen is arguing for urban social mobility and flexibility independent of economic considerations. He asks why squalor must necessarily be associated with a city, and sees a social contradiction in a city which contains "churches doing one thing and bar-rooms the opposite" (H, 174).

Toronto, however, does provide Hansen with the chance to hear Wagner played by the Theodore Thomas Orchestra from Chicago, although the concert is poorly attended by Torontonians. Also poorly attended is a lecture by Henry George, whose message about a "money civilization" can only fall on deaf ears. George invites the students in the cheap seats to come down and fill the dollar seats, which reminds Hansen of Hooper's radicalism.

Neither late nineteenth-century intellectual nor industrial Toronto are presented with much sympathy. The "hero" of the Toronto section is Henry Hooper, a political and intellectual radical, but Hooper's concern for freedom of speech, his championship of Henry George, and his anti-industrialism are all hinted at rather than drawn. With the vision of

hindsight, Bridle looks back at late nineteenth-century Toronto and anticipates what he saw as the success of the National Policy in uniting Canada. Thus he is unwilling to judge harshly its negative side.

In his picture of Montreal, Bridle stresses its combination of sophistication and poverty and the role of the city as a focus for Quebec nationalism. The city is in a paradoxical position vis-a-vis the National Policy. The industrialization that has been fostered by federal policy has created a gap between rich and poor similar to that in Toronto. Moreover, and perhaps more significant, nationalism on a provincial level is by definition in an antagonistic position to the National Policy which ostensibly is promoting national unity.

As he did in Toronto, Hansen takes a long walk through Montreal on his arrival there. His impression of Montreal at the turn of the century is that it is "The splndidest, laziest, dirtiest, most cosmopolitan city" (H, 196) he has seen since he left London. He walks seventeen miles through the city, counts fifty-four Catholic churches, sees baby coffins in windows, pokes into Notre Dame, the Bank of Montreal, the C.P.R. offices, and the University, and decides that the city feels like a "celestial slum" (H, 197).

Hansen's principal contacts are with the Marechal family. Louis Marechal is a "cold-eyed young avocat" who has the "forensic style, even in conversation, and who turns out to be a Quebec nationalist. His mother, Madame Marechal, has a "tact for simple talk on dignified subjects" (H, 198). On Sunday afternoons the Marechals have the Canadian equivalent of a salon. Intellectual groups made up of avocats, politicians, poets, painters, musicians, gather to talk in the Marechal drawing-room, where Hansen learns

that Laurier, Fr chet te, and Belcourt are the products of the culture the Montreal salon exemplifies. Marechal attacks Ontario on the ground that it is a Tory community, and therefore has a built-in predilection for authority:

All Tory communities are abject in adoration of something-- wealth, royalty, ancestry, political eminence . . . All authority tends to Toryism. Your Anglicans in Ontario make a fetish of the King . . . The King rules in Ontario. Your village curate is a hopeless Imperialist. (H, 198-99)

Marechal argues that because the French Canadian has no mother country, he therefore is purely Canadian. The sea-to-sea mentality implied by the National Policy can have no place in Marechal's thinking.

The section on Montreal closes with an interview Hansen has with Laurier, who speaks "guardedly" and says "little" about French-Canadianism. The topics Laurier discusses are British constitutional history, American democracy, and French-Canadian aspirations. Laurier never mentions Paris, but talks of London as if his "hair had blown out of a fog" (H, 206). He also talks with "passionate reverence" of Lincoln. In short, Hansen discovers that much of what he has imbibed from Marechal has no place in the "intellectualism or the patriotism" (H, 207) of the Liberal leader. Laurier remarks that the English know how to combine "practicalism with ideas," which is why they succeed where the French fail. Hansen conveniently forgets to ask Laurier about "a Liberal platform" for the whole of Canada. Thus Bridle avoids the vexed question of the tariff in presenting his fictional picture of Laurier. Above all else, Hansen wishes not to be partisan, and to submit to no programme smaller than the interest of all Canada. Once again, he admits to being perplexed about precisely what "the interest of all Canada" is.

During the period in which Hansen lives in Montreal, the middle of the last decade of the nineteenth century, industrialization of the city had already created slums of the sort Hansen had become familiar with in Toronto. Herbert Ames' City Below the Hill, a pioneer study of working-class conditions in Montreal during this period, details the inadequate sanitation and housing conditions, the exploitation of women and children by business, the low wages and the various other ills affecting the poor. Hansen sees so many baby coffins on display in Montreal because the infant mortality rate is high. Milk, for example, was not yet pasteurized. But Bridle is less concerned with this aspect of Montreal than he is with its culture and sophistication. Hansen may hear the Theodore Thomas orchestra in Toronto, but the music at Mme. Marechal's salons is a far more direct expression of Canadian culture than a poorly attended concert by a touring American orchestra.

Marechal may be modelled on the young nationalistes, perhaps even Henri Bourassa himself, who briefly considered founding an anti-imperialist political movement.³⁶ Bourassa was the principal force behind La Ligue Nationaliste Canadienne, an organization which sought to preserve Canadian autonomy within the British Empire, to maintain the rights of the province under the B.N.A. Act, and to uphold linguistic dualism and separate school rights. The nationalistes insisted that their perspective was Canadian, rather than French Canadian, just as Marechal insists that the true Canadian is only to be found in Quebec. Bourassa played a significant role in the overthrow of the Laurier government in 1911. When Hansen discovers that much of what he has learned from Marechal has no place in the intellectualism or patriotism of Laurier, he is shocked; in short, Hansen's introduction to

Montreal (and Quebec) is through the most radical of its political factions.

When Hansen goes to Quebec City he is anxious to avoid Heloise Laflamme, Marechal's fiancée, who lives in the city. By now, he does not want a French Canadian to mediate his impressions of Quebec for him, but he meets her at the door of the Basilica, and she tells him that Marechal is going to make a "Nationalist oration on the Terrace" in the evening (H, 214). Marechal on stage is "flamboyant and dramatic," and his voice is a "palpitation of passionate French" (H, 214). The Terrace, "which of all populous plazas in Quebec was the most picturesque, dominating a riverscape unrivalled in America" (H, 214), provides a perfect setting for the Nationalist orator. Afterwards, Hansen hears, for the first time in the book, "O Canada, terre de nos aieux" rather than "The Maple Leaf," and joins in the singing. He is startled when Heloise asks him if he loves "Canada first--whose soul is in Quebec" (H, 215).

Many of the details of Marechal's characterization seem based on an interview Bridle had with Bourassa, which is described in Bridle's book Sons of Canada, a collection of short, chatty biographies of Canadian public figures:

Henri Bourassa is an idealist who has become a fanatic; a reactionary who has developed into a radical Writing and speaking he was perpetually a forensic. Of the two he prefers speech . . . and when Bourassa gets up of a Sunday afternoon before a summer congress of habitants and villagers with long lines of horses tied on the outskirts of the campus he always becomes the flame of the French-Canadian fires He is a sort of Gabriel d'Annunzio as he yearns with blazing eyes and spiked-up, unpoetic hair over the great crowd to stir them to their depths, to play with them as the wind frolics with the forest trees, knowing that when he speaks to them he puts French Canada first in the imaginations of his hearers At the age of twenty he left Montreal and opened an office in a little town called Montebello . . . where he married the lady who has done much to keep Mr. Bourassa from being more violent than he is. The Nationalist leader's devotion to his wife is both an idyll and an ideal. At a huge Nationalist meeting in

Montreal some years ago he turned on the platform and publicly kissed Madame Bourassa.³⁷

The public kiss, the rhetorical power, the reactionary radicalism are all details associated with Marechal. Moreover, in the interview with Bourassa, Bridle stresses how far apart politically Laurier and Bourassa were, just as in Hansen he stresses the political distance between Laurier's sea-to-sea nationalism and Marechal's provincial "nationalism."

Through Marechal, Hansen obtains an interview with the Archbishop, not identified, but probably Archbishop Bruchesi, also the subject of a biography in Sons of Canada, where Bruchesi is described as a "casuist and apparent reactionary."³⁸ Bridle also is interested in the odd friendship between Bourassa and Bruchesi, who supported Bourassa's brand of nationalism, and in Bruchesi's anti-labour politics. Bridle claims that a prominent Montreal manufacturer cynically remarked that "The Roman Catholic bishop is the best strike-preventer in Canada."³⁹

When Laurier wins the election of 1896, Hansen and Hooper go to Ottawa, which proves a "glum disappointment" (H, 223) to Hansen. Only the river and the Parliament buildings impress him. Hansen finds the political scene oppressive:

At the grimy hotel in a rotunda under a Confederation dome with panels for all the Provinces, they smelled political whisky and saw millennialists, caballers, caucused and common inebriates wrangling hotly in a jubilant chorus of reformation. . . . Hansen saw and heard it only as a Dantesque pandemonium.

(H, 223)

Both Morley Hackett, the entrepreneur looking for business opportunities, and Dr. Strang, looking for political opportunities, surface at the Liberal celebrations in Ottawa. Hansen is disgusted and announces that he does not want to "know anything about the social show at Rideau Hall, or the

ambitions of members' wives, or the latest scandal in the parliamentary restaurant" (H, 225). He and Hooper leave on the Toronto train, where they discuss the Liberal platform--"transcontinentals, immigrants, new Provinces and entente cordiale" (H, 225). Hansen displays sympathy for the American populist William Jennings Bryan, then running for President on a free trade platform. Thus, Hansen's opinion of the National Policy shifts between one swing of the pendulum and the other.

After Henry Hooper's death, Hansen decides to go west to Edmonton, "The City of New Hope." Edmonton is the centre of land speculation schemes on a grand scale. Like Stead, Bridle is concerned to show how the innocent were duped out of both land and money. The train to Edmonton contains a motley collection of people:

The coach was a bedlam of uprooted people; men driven and drawn from cities and villages and farms and flags and distant rivers and hills of boyhood, and women they loved and homes they hoped to rebuild with gold. The train seemed to have scooped up specimens of mankind from half the world. One little fur-post town on the North Saskatchewan was to hold them for a few weeks, then fling them out over the trails into the ultimate North.

(H, 247-48)

The "fur-post village" itself has a near-hysterical atmosphere similar to the Alberta city described in Stead's The Homesteaders:

The fur-post village, swiftly transformed into an entrepôt for outfitters, was teeming with people who seemed not to know when they would be back to count their gold, if ever they got away. Whisky, love of gold, money burning holes in pockets, pack-heavy cayuses, brawling huskie dogs, optimistic humanity all swirled together there into a sublime chaos of the unknowable. The plank sidewalks were midways of creation. Stores hung their alluring signs over the walks like trunks of hungry elephants at a circus . . . he [Hansen] went into one of the newest of the many stores that had everything a Klondiker might need this side of heaven. He pawed over coats, caps, dunnage bags, boots, boxes, ropes, harness--even more mystified than he had been in the Jericho store when first he hauled logs. (H, 248-49)

Except for a brief period in the Klondike, Hansen remains in Edmonton until the end of the book, and presumably forever, as he becomes a member of Parliament for Alberta and marries an Edmonton woman. The period covered by this section of the book is approximately 1899-1905, that is, right after the discovery of gold in the Klondike and just before Alberta and Saskatchewan gained provincial status. This section of the book emphasizes the role of the National Policy in building the cities and provinces of the west.

Among the victims this time were the Métis. Extinguishing the Indian land title was a minor but important part of the National Policy as pockets of what amounted to foreign territory contradicted sea-to-sea nationalism. Under the terms of Treaty Eight negotiated in 1899 between the Canadian government and the Métis of the Territories, they were given a choice of accepting status as Indians (called taking "treaty") and being covered under the Indian Act, or accepting scrip which could be exchanged for homestead land. The scrip was worth \$240, and the Métis could turn in the scrip for cash if they chose. Those who took land or cash were excluded from the Indian Act.⁴⁰ The Indians included in Treaty Eight were the Cree, Beaver, and Chipewyan Nations, and some Slave, Dogrib, and Yellowknife people. At the time of the signing, the Chipewyan asked that a railway be built into their country. Since the Northern Indians were nomadic, most of the lands were regarded as trapping reserves rather than resident areas. The Manitoba Act of 1870 had allotted land in the Northwest Territories to Métis who had homesteads in the area that became the new province of Manitoba, but the Métis already in the Territories were not dealt with till nearly thirty years later.

Chester Martin, in "Dominion Lands" Policy, in referring to the first Métis grants in Manitoba, points out that "Speculators exploiting the improvidence of the Métis were soon doing a thriving business in half-breed scrip."⁴¹ Thus business in half-breed scrip, as documented by Bridle, was hardly new to the west. Martin points out that the process of "extinguishing the Indian title" involved ten treaties and took until 1921 to complete. There were 13,941 claims in Saskatchewan and Alberta alone before 1905. The Métis took money scrip in 9,101 cases and took land scrip in 4,840 cases, which represented 1,161,612 acres of land. Many of these acres went to land speculators who eventually sold them to the railways. The railways themselves also sold and re-sold land to speculators. Martin makes the following comments about northern traffic in land:

Several of the "colonization railway companies" were in reality land companies as well as railway companies, and their stockholders appear to have attached almost as much importance to the one as to the other in their effort to maintain their solvency. The Calgary and Edmonton line and the Qu'Appelle, Long Lake, and Saskatchewan both owed their general policy to the same financial interests; while the whole land policy of the Canadian Northern system was so resourceful and acquisitive that the gross average price per acre was the highest obtained under the railway land grant system. The Qu'Appelle, Long Lake, and Saskatchewan line and the Canadian Northern subsidiaries had one other ingredient in common. Their largest sales were made to land companies whose fabulous success became one of the landmarks of western Canadian development.⁴²

As background to the sitting of the Scrip Commission in the summer of 1899, Bridle presents a political meeting designed to get out the vote for Nat Turner, a "lean, grizzly trailsmen" running as a Liberal in the election scheduled for October, 1898. The "motley citizens" at the meeting are all present to get in on the main chance. For example, Peppercorn predicts that within "three years Edmonton would be thus and so on a main line to the Pacific" (H, 261). Tom Thurston, also eager for commercial opportunities,

talks about "York boats and Red River carts" (H, 261). Turner himself gives a "vibrating" address, which stimulates Hansen to speak about the methods Turner is using to gather votes among the "half-breeds up at Lac la Biche":

"They said they would all vote for Nat Turner, because a big fur trader in town here--I presume Mr. Thurston--told them Turner would see that the half-breeds got what was coming to them . . . land from scrip to all half-breeds on account of the Rebellion when the Indians went on Reservations and got five dollars a year treaty money. That was a perfectly honest admission of what citizenship as expressed by a vote means to the northern half-breeds. I suppose that if the original first citizens of this country can be rubber-stamped for an election, the 'sheepskins', as the Galicians are called, and all the other immigrants can be rubber-stamped too--" (H, 262)

In short; Turner, the Liberal candidate, is "buying" votes with the promise of scrip land that the Métis are entitled to anyway.

The actual trading of Métis scrip is being "financed by an eastern syndicate headed by Hackett" (H, 265), the entrepreneur who had turned up in Ottawa in 1896 to see what he could glean from the Liberal victory.

Hackett represents all those who used the holes in the National Policy to enrich themselves, while hypocritically posing as "nation-builders."

Hansen expresses in Edmonton the same distaste for Hackett that he had expressed in Ottawa:

"Railways and scrip lands are his present gamble . . . Hackett will have other gambles when the scrip is done. He is a colossal promoter. The more the country expands the better for Hackett, no matter which party is in power. Half-breeds and politicians, and railway-builders are all different-sized pawns to Hackett. He'll pose as a nation-builder or something like that--when the thing he builds is his own princely fortune, prestige, title--" (H, 265)

Hansen, angered by the thought of Hackett, chooses between the lesser of two evils and asks Thurston to try to beat the Peppercorn-Hackett.⁴³ liaison when the Scrip Court sits. Thurston admits that out of the scrip deal he

expects to educate his "large family in the best schools of the East, to have them learn music and art, travel in Europe" (H, 265). However, as the trade in scrip is going to be brisk, it is preferable for Thurston to profit than for an eastern syndicate to grab the takings.

Hackett arrives in Edmonton the day before the Scrip Commission sits, and announces to Peppercorn that he intends to get "fifty thousand acres out of this contingent," and that Peppercorn will get fifteen per cent of everything above fifty thousand. The Métis, having come from Athabasca, Loon Lake, and Red Deer, have established a big camp outside Edmonton. Bridle presents a colourful picture of the "jumbling kaleidoscopic drama of humanity" (H, 289). Hansen, on Thurston's behalf, buys as much as he can, sometimes only the "balance of a scrip already traded upon at the store by a power of attorney" (H, 290). Using his power over the half-breeds to lobby for Thurston against the unscrupulous Peppercorn and Hackett, Hansen buys and buys until it suddenly turns into a seller's market because the Indians' "early thirst" has been assuaged. Eventually, Hansen quits when Thurston has made a sizeable dent in Hackett's profits. Nonetheless, Hackett is the bigger winner because he has inside information about the route the railway will take, and thus he can make the Métis locate the land for him along the route. The government will be forced to buy the land from Hackett at his price in order to be able to supply land for the building of the railway. Despite Hansen's awareness of Hackett's duplicity, he has faith in the triumph of virtue and beauty:

"Boys, all the millions made by Hackett and the rest, and all the paystreaks in the Yukon, and all the debauchery of the half-breeds--are nothing to what this country and this town are to become if men and women give their love of beauty and their sense of the square deal a fighting chance. It's the same thing. A crooked deal is ugly. All true ethics is based upon ideas of

beauty. Art isn't one thing, and life another; they're both the same. A raw deal in business breaks the design of life, just as much as if you take a hammer and bung up a beautiful statue. This young city was meant to be beautiful like a woman." (H, 293)

Like the sweatshops in Toronto, the defrauding of the Métis in Edmonton is a break in the design of life, but the development of both cities is necessary to the development of Canada.

Just as "Cecelia" had started an orchestra in the Toronto slums and had given Max Hochstein (later Highstone) the training he needed to become a violinist, she is the means of bringing beauty and culture to Edmonton. Dora's arrival in Edmonton, that is, the arrival of culture, is linked with the railway:

Like thousands of others she was in the maelstrom of the railways; that cycle of colossal adventures which for a decade and a half eclipsed even the romance of the Hudson's Bay Company for sensational eldorados, and whose great objective was the unexploited valley of the Saskatchewan and its tributaries Not merely one great through line from Winnipeg to the Pacific via Edmonton, but another--to be built by an old historic company in league with the Government, which was Laurier. (H, 295)

Bridle sees Dora (and art) as having the power to restore the design of life and redress the balance which people like Hackett disturb. Initially, Dora sees the west as a "wall upon whose crude projections she might help to trace some patterns of classic beauty" (H, 322), but she eventually comes to think of all great music as "conservative." She starts to study the folk songs of the "new races" which are really "old races alive with traditions" (H, 322), and her musical aims shift. Hansen describes her as wanting to use music as a way of harmonizing races in the new country. Eventually, Dora starts a conservatory with young Highstone as teacher of violin, "a character transformation accomplished by the power of one universalizing art" (H, 350). Highstone is only the first of a long line

of "young foreigners" whom Dora starts in music. Bridle assigns a high place to the arts as a unifying force in Canadian life.

Meanwhile, Hansen has started a newspaper called The Square Deal, which acts as a moral force in Edmonton, castigating those who would take advantage of the new city for their own purposes. He editorializes that "it's an economic miracle for one transcontinental to strike up this valley but an economic tragedy to have two, building mushroom towns out of lumber-piles, to fill them with people who endorse all the lies sent out by Boards of Trade about population--" (H, 296-97). Accounts of the lack of wisdom in building a second and third transcontinental railway abound,⁴⁴ but a few of these points bear repeating. The second transcontinental line to which the Square Deal editorial refers was the Canadian Northern, built by railway entrepreneurs Donald Mann and William Mackenzie. The character of Morley Hackett has some similarities to that of William Mackenzie. Brown and Cook give the following account of Mackenzie and Mann:

Mackenzie and Mann were first into the race to build a second transcontinental. In a few short years these two skilful promoters had built up a railway empire in the west through the acquisition of near-defunct charters, which often included substantial land grants. Through clever financing and political influence, they were ready in 1901 to announce their intention to extend the Canadian Northern Railway across the continent by 1908 Their financial history was complicated, and their methods produced a ramshackle structure controlled personally by Mackenzie and Mann. They had a bond issue for every occasion And for all of their vaunted private enterprise and independence, Mackenzie and Mann collected some \$218,215,409 from the Canadian taxpayer and six hundred acres of land per mile of railway Their enterprise epitomized the reckless spirit of development that reigned over the Laurier years.⁴⁵

W. L. Morton describes the Canadian Northern as "Haphazardly financed, cheaply built and cheaply operated" ⁴⁶ Morton points out that Mackenzie and Mann were even linked at one point with a "conspiracy of Hugh

Graham of the Montreal Star with Andrew Blair, Minister of Railways, to force the Cabinet to support their plans."⁴⁷ Blair was forced to resign. Bridle's opinion of Mackenzie is expressed in the brief biography of him included in Sons of Canada:

Sir William Mackenzie is the psychic link between all governments, municipalities, and plain peoples. He is the new thought applied to public utilities, a cross between the man with a club and the hypnotist whose weapon is auto-suggestion. He is incalculable, baffling, uncorralable. If muckraking literature were in vogue in Canada he would be deified as the great optimistic octopus. But the muckraker never could prove that such an octopus was not somehow more benevolent than predatory.⁴⁸

Though Bridle appears to dislike Mackenzie, this feeling is mixed with grudging admiration, and the same equivocal attitude exists in Hansen towards Morley Hackett. Hansen has doubts about the wisdom of the second transcontinental, but the arrival of the first train from Winnipeg to Edmonton is presented as a gala occasion, and Mackenzie is referred to as "the master builder":

And amid a rousal of cheers the "special with all railway magnates on board came thundering in; and at length the master builder stepped out into a storm of cheers, into the high car of Peppercorn, who led the procession back to the hotel, with Jean Dubuc's big red car next, and all other cars, cabs, buses, conveyances whatsoever, in a caravan of which with its trails of hectic pedestrians, the most historic and poetic feature was an old Red River cart hauled by a team of oxen

(H, 315)

Like everyone else, Hansen embraces the railroad when it comes. He describes the "Hackett tribe" in a letter to Sadie Barlow as "men who value a government or a party only for what it puts into their pockets, or on to their wives' backs or for 'Sir' and 'Lady' as door-knobs to their names" (H, 299), but he also "worshipped the railway" itself. Every week he rides down to the "end of the steel that crawled a mile a day in good weather

up the valley" (H, 304). In The Square Deal he describes every detail of the construction: "steam shovel, graders, picks; flatcars of ties, rails, fishplates; spikes and ballast; tents, tarpaper shacks and navvies--and the track-laying machine that made possible a mile a day" (H, 304). And Hansen, the immigrant, is thrilled by the settlers who come in the wake of the railroad, speaking "half the languages of Europe," and settling in villages "exactly ten miles apart" (H, 304).

The "Hackett tribe" is also profiting from land speculation in and around Edmonton. They have snared James Hagarty from Plainsville, who sold his house to buy "subdivisions that for a decade would be nothing but cow pastures" (H, 306), and Sarah Shane and Hiram Flater, who have been lured into buying muskeg. Hansen flays Peppercorn and Hackett for their part in these deals:

"Thousands of dollars have been spent by Peppercorn--many thousands more by Hackett--that were taken by fraud from people such as James Hagarty, Sarah Shane, Hiram Flater On these prairies under the old unwritten law, a man who looted a cache could be legally shot. Peppercorn looted a money cache of Hiram Flater and even dragooned a minister of the gospel to help him do it. The looter of that cache, and of scores of others; rolls round in an automobile, shakes hands as a political organizer with the Premier of Canada, has endowed a chair in a college, and has paid for a set of chimes in a church organ to be played whenever he occupies his pew. The race for wealth without much work leaves more derelicts in its trail than all the bones that marked the trails of the Yukon." (H, 318-19)

Hansen goes on to state that he is not arguing against wealth. Honestly acquired wealth brings with it the right to luxuries, and beautiful homes are a credit to any city if they are built upon the square deal. In fulsome praise of Edmonton, Hansen writes that "The foundation of a city like this is more of a miracle than the building of a Taj Mahal temple" (H, 319).

We have been prepared for Bridle's picture of Hansen as a square-shooting.

journalist. In Toronto Hansen had written an article about the Macklem sweatshops which had never been published because of Hansen's delicacy about Hooper's relation to Dora Macklem. He had also had some of his Montreal interviews published in The Plaindealer, the Liberal Toronto newspaper. But Philo Sullivan, editor of The Plaindealer, had assured Hansen that he would never have the makings of an Ontario journalist, who had to be either "bigoted or psychic" to succeed:

"Loving a country, Hansen, is a bad substitute for hating the opposite party or ripping the veneer off society. You are incapable of hatred, and a dose of paint passes with you for a pretty face. Newspapering is war. If you can't find a row, start a dog fight. You're a feature artist. Your only hope is to go across the border where a third-rate divorce is worth a page of printer's ink--or hike to that new fools' paradise, the Klondike." (H, 243)

In Edmonton, where everything is new, and everything can be seen as contributing to the glory of Canada, Hansen's love of country and his ability as a "feature artist" combine easily enough to make him a successful journalist. Like Frank Oliver,⁴⁹ Hansen becomes known in Ottawa as a source of truth about the west.

Political allegiance in the new city of Edmonton is naturally Liberal (in the west business interests are for free trade), rather than Tory, but the western Liberals are no more attractive to Hansen than Ontario Liberals. The Party is already in the hands of the "Peppercorn machine and Ottawa" (H, 326). (In Ontario Peppercorn was a Tory.) The machine puts up as its candidate for the Alberta legislature a lawyer who "has the Laurier gift of making contrary ideas clap their hands and sing jubilates--leaving the misereres to the opposite party" (H, 326). The Liberals are also concerned to create an "Ontarioized West" (H, 310). During his visit to Edmonton, Laurier ignores the immigrant nature of the

west in order to stress the leavening nature of Ontarian--and also Quebec--influence there:

"For, after all, Hansen, it is chiefly Ontario that laid the foundations of social and political life here on these prairies; Ontario, with its mixture of peoples such as made England able to comprehend the world with Empire; men like yourself--ah! I have seen your paper. Make it broad, Hansen; Liberal, inclusive. Be practical. That is English. When we get into one ensemble on these prairies the conglomerate peoples of Europe and of the United States with the leaven of composite practical Ontario and intensely idealistic Quebec--what a nation we shall begin to have for Canada!" (H, 310-11)

When Hansen hears these words, the things he is burning to say to Laufier turn "as cold as ashes" (H, 311). The unique nature of western Canadian cities inevitably will be destroyed by the imposition of central Canadian political and social goals and central Canadian value systems. For example, Hansen believes that the census is "idiotic" to count only the third generation as Canadians. He himself is still counted as "Norwegian" despite his allegiances, and he points out that most people outside Quebec would not be considered "Canadian."

Hansen decides to run for office as an Independent Liberal in order to create a real alternative to the Tories for the Edmonton voters. At his own wedding, to which the entire town comes, he makes a speech about Canada which wins him the election. The speech is in Cree, English, and French and is a tribute to the multi-faceted nature of the Canadian people:

"What country so vast has so few people? What people so few has so many tongues--as many as those of the United States which has twelve times our population? With as many dialects of English alone as we have languages of the red man, we have as root languages in people and parliament the speech of the British cottager and of the French peasant, of London and of Paris."

(H, 358)

Suiting action to word, Hansen marries a woman who is part Indian (Cree),

part British (Scottish), and part French, thus an amalgam of Canada. Hansen envisages a bilingual Parliament with bilingual M.P.'s who understand the life behind each language. He believes that the nation will then become "thoroughly Canadian" and will no longer send its citizens to the United States in exchange for buying American goods, newspapers, music, movies, slang, and sports. He argues that Canada is still a baby that needs to grow up:

"But so long as each race in the country thinks its own ideas and customs and language greater than those of its great country of adoption, so long as most of Canada thinks itself only a vast juvenile imitation of the United States, we shall never be anything but a national kindergarten, unworthy of those two great national leaders, John A. Macdonald and Wilfrid Laurier; still more unworthy to remember the great French, English and Scotch men who first tracked our mighty rivers and built railways through the mountains." (H, 359)

A grown-up Canada would consist of another but separate "British Empire of many races in America, under that flag of freedom to all men, abroad as great as the liberty which Britishers enjoy at home!" (H, 359). In the last sentence of the book, Bridle makes clear that Hansen is going to require the "swing" of Helen's "sweep" in order to negotiate their scow over "the rapids"--that is, no single one of these national groups will make the difficult journey ahead alone.

At first glance Hansen seems dated. Published in 1924, only five years before the industrial collapse that accompanied the stock market crash, the book's vision of national greatness based on a simplistic patriotism, on industrialization, and on immigration seems like a nostalgic survival of nineteenth-century myths. However, in his essay on the 1920s, W. L. Morton points out that belief was still strong that there was "order in freedom; stability in progress; truth despite contradiction; hope against

despair."⁵⁰ These beliefs are at the foundation of Hansen and survive Hansen's contradictory perceptions of the cities of Canada. V. C. Fowke has written that "Economic and political historians may come to regard the century from 1825 to 1925 or 1930 as the era of the first Canadian national policy."⁵¹ Hansen possibly may be regarded as one of the last social documents written in support of that policy. It interprets the National Policy as ultimately the most satisfying for the nation at large, but Bridle points out that the effects of the policy will only be apparent in the long term, when the cities have achieved a high degree of culture and the unique nature of the many nationalities is accepted by the entire population. At the turn of the century, the time setting of Hansen, only the short-term effects of the National Policy were visible: unemployment, the growth of slums, political and social indifference of the strong to the weak, land speculation. National aims seemed to contradict regional aims, but the book offers an optimistic view of the future. Part of Bridle's optimism is based on the French fact: the French will not separate from, but will lead, the nation. Montreal is seen as a source of idealism and culture that can only be inspiring to the rest of the country. The national policy, that is, unity, was ultimately being furthered by the National Policy, despite its many faults.

Thus, Bridle's emphasis on the significance of the cities in Canada's greatness is comprehensible. Though the cities further a money civilization, Bridle still sees Toronto as the "luminous courts of heaven" and Edmonton as a "greater miracle than the building of a Taj Mahal temple." The money civilization springs out of a primitive acquisitive impulse and the stagnant character of privilege and hierarchical systems; however, this structuring

of urban life exists only prior to the spread of the arts which bring real civilization. The spread of culture is essential to the moral growth of cities. Thus Montreal appears a much more attractive place than Toronto to Bridle. In this acceptance that industrialism and urbanization are here to stay, and in the belief that time may bring positive alterations in their nature, Hansen seems to look forward into the future, rather than into the past.

The pre-war time setting of Hansen made it impossible for Bridle to deal with social problems of the twenties, but that period was deliberately chosen to serve as a touchstone of belief for the disillusion and despair of the post-war period which manifested itself in, for example, the returned soldier novels. These novels recognize that the nineteenth-century myths have lost their force, though none of them totally abandons a belief in progress, freedom, hope, and stability. What these works of fiction do is to present the veteran as transferring these beliefs from the city to rural or wilderness life. Hansen attacks the money-civilization just as the returned soldier novels do, but it never offers a return to the rural past as a panacea for the social problems of the cities at the turn of the century. The returned soldier novels, in their recognition of social change, appear realistic, but their conclusions still offer a romantic view of the land. Hansen's presentation of nineteenth-century beliefs in progress appears untenable in the context of post-war Canadian social problems, but Bridle's realistic presentation of the problems of urbanization still holds, though the enormous significance he gives to art in society is open to question.

The political struggle between country and city was intense throughout

the decade. W. L. Morton points out that the census of 1921 indicated that urban dwellers accounted for 49.52 percent of the population. Thus the population was approximately half urban and half rural:

The momentary equipoise indicated by the census meant that the fundamental struggle that had begun at least as early as the 1850s between the agricultural and the industrial interests of Canada, each seeking to ensure that national policy was in its favour, would only be intensified as the agricultural interest realized how formidable was the challenge to its place in the national life. For if Canada had always been mainly a rural and an agricultural country in population and in the nature of its economy, above all it was so still in sentiment and in morals. The twenties would witness a long battle between the two great interest groups of the country, the agricultural and the industrial.⁵²

Just as Bridle's Hansen seems the inevitable development in literature of this long battle between agriculture and industry, so too does a book which puts forth a strong case for the anti-protection interests. Immediately after the war, William Henry Moore published Polly Masson (1919), a novel which argues against the National Policy which had been cultivating the development of the cities at the expense of farmers for so many years. The book deals with the fortunes of William Larned, a Liberal-Conservative Member of Parliament from an Ontario riding called East Badmington. Larned starts out as a political climber who puts "party above principle," and who, therefore, supports the government tariff without giving it much thought. Larned rises through the ranks and eventually becomes Minister of Public Works. While in London at an imperial conference, he is approached by Lord Steelton on behalf of the Imperial Federationists, who headed a movement to consolidate the British colonies through a centralized federation. Those Canadians who saw the maintenance of the British connection as central to Canadian politics saw Imperial Federation as nationalist in character. Obviously, French Canadians would oppose such a movement. A backroom deal has been

arranged which will relieve Sir Henry Bateman of the prime ministership and transfer it to Larned in exchange for Larned's public support for imperial federation. To accomplish federation, Quebec must be isolated. The attraction of imperial federation for the ruling party is that it may provide a "radical measure in which the country's unfortunate economic and national differences will be submerged" (PM, 110), and enable the party to retain power. Sir Henry puts it in the following way:

"We are facing an appeal to the country in the midst of great unrest in town and country alike. You may remember, Larned, a few years ago having brought to my attention the feeling of the country in reference to an oleomargarine bill Since then we have met other difficulties, all involving the relations of country to town. By the nature of things in Canada, the farmer cannot be protected, while, little by little, the manufacturers' protection has grown until we have a very high tariff. Ah, those infant industries What appetites, what appetites--for infants! But the pith of the thing lies in this; we have to choose now between factory and field. The French-Canadian holds the balance of power, and they are our irreconcilable enemies." (PM, 110)

Larned decides to test the feeling of the country on the issue of imperial federation and takes a three-week tour through the west. He is already in the process of altering his stand and begins to think that "principle" and "party" may be thought of separately. He has not jumped eagerly at the possibility of displacing Bateman as prime minister:

"I have believed only in policy as a thing with which to win. It has seemed to me that free-trade and protection, federation and stand-pat-ism, and all the other things that divide men within our country, were mere cards in a game. But I have changed my mind." (PM, 119)

On the train going west, Larned finds himself present at a conversation about the tariff in which each person taking part presents a different aspect of the issue. An old farmer, a unionist, a manufacturer, and a poor travelling salesman take part. The salesman is presented as squeezed between

the farmer, the manufacturer, and the unionist:

"There is not much chance to save in the city By the time I've paid rent and found food and clothes for the missus and the kids, there is nothing left for the savings bank. It's close shaving all the time to make ends meet. Food is so high"

(PM, 136)

The unionist argues that "A man should take all he can get and spend all he can take. The money going round is what makes times good" (PM, 135-36). The old farmer argues that the high wages and short hours of the city are maintained by order of the government, and the government should not order for one what it cannot order for all--that is, labour's pay envelope comes from the pocket of the farmer as a result of protection.

The manufacturer argues that free trade will ruin the country. The manufacturers need to be protected because of the enormous number of their employees and the huge sums of money they distribute in wages, and because, in addition, the country needs diversified industries which make for national character. Moreover, the government derives taxes from the manufacturers and their employees. The old farmer responds with the following analogy:

"Sometimes we get confused when we talk of governments, and their taxes. Let us suppose that I have a number of sons and that we, as a family, have obligations to meet. All my sons are working, some in production which pays and others in production which does not pay. Necessarily, the latter must have assistance. Now, is the family, as a whole, more able or less able to meet its obligations because the unremunerative businesses have many employees and huge wage-bills? I should have thought it clear that the family's net income was reduced rather than increased by the drain of sons who could not pay their way. Nothing could make me believe otherwise."

(PM, 142)

The manufacturer argues that prices of staples in Canada are no higher than in the United States. The old farmer then asks why millions of dollars of goods are being lifted over the tariff wall between the two countries. He

continues his argument by pointing out that if living is made cheaper by free trade, the farms will re-gain some of the population they have lost to the cities. The manufacturer bursts out, "And become a nation of farmers." Despite the patronizing nature of the remark, the farmer holds himself in check, and merely comments that it is the usual remark of the city-man, and comes in bad grace from one who cannot make ends meet without taking money from the farmer to survive. He continues that the surprising aspect of free trade will be the increased prosperity of those manufacturers whose industries are really suited to the country.

In a subsequent conversation with the old farmer, Larned learns that at home he is known as "The Man with the Sponge" because he believes in wiping out legislation rather than making it. He believes that Canada's prime legislative need is repeal and more repeal until the restrictive measures of the past are wiped out. It is not wealth that disturbs the old farmer, but "forcible contribution for the benefit of others," that is, not only paying for the luxuries of the rich but also for the shortened day's work of the artisans. He sees this kind of social reform as the "thin edge of the Bolshevik wedge" (PM, 150). Larned argues that it is the duty of the state to legislate for the happiness and welfare of the community, and therefore, it might be necessary to take from one and give to another. The old man counters with "The State can do no more than put a man on the highway to happiness and well-being. Man must do the actual finding for himself" (PM, 151). The old man is an individualist who believes that neither the Church--"at least the Methodist Church, with its policy of Social Democracy" (PM, 153)--nor the state can "polish this old earth into a shining imitation of heaven." Regeneration must be voluntary and lies

solely with the individual. The group may not use its authority to deprive the individual of a natural endowment in order that another may benefit. The old man argues that if the individual is pulled down every time he climbs up, he will stop trying to climb up. The tariff, for example, limits rather than encourages competition. Larned makes a final, eloquent argument for the state:

". . . the State, as well as man, has a soul. It too has aspirations. It is necessary that provision be made for its continued existence and the realisation of those aspirations, and sometimes that need involves sacrifice on the part of the individual members of the group. Preferably, voluntary sacrifice; if the individual is unwilling, then--compulsory. I agree with you that one individual should not be sacrificed for the benefit of another. Sacrifice should be made only for all, and is justifiable only when made for all. I cannot agree with you that the individual has inviolable rights." (PM, 160-61)

The old farmer has the last word about the basic relation between city and country:

"You have taken from one and given to another, and you have done it in the name of the State. You have first wronged the man from whom you have taken, then you have undermined the independence of the man to whom you have given, and finally . . . the State! All has been done in the name of, and presumably for, the State! Yet the State is sick. It has become fatally sick under your inoculations of privilege. You are destroying the existence you would preserve." (PM, 161)

Larned's position does not coincide exactly with the old farmer's at this point in the novel; but as the book progresses Larned moves closer and closer to it till eventually he puts "principle" totally above party.

In the west, Larned finds that the farmers want "privilege" as well, that is, they want the government to spend a few millions to protect them just as it has been protecting the manufacturers. West coast labourers, having enjoyed the fruits of other men's labour, angrily insist to Larned that they want "more fruit." Larned finds no sentiment for imperial federation.

Westerners not descended from the British have no particular sympathy for or ties to the British Isles, which are seen as cramped, limited in resources, and having already attained their zenith. The westerner, industrious and utilitarian, is not ingrained with British traditions. By the end of the tour, Larned is convinced that "the future of any race" is measurable "not by numbers, nor by wealth, but by the arable acres under its cultivation" (PM, 194). Once he has really considered the issue on its merits, Larned links national greatness to the land rather than to industrialization. He tells Howell, the kingmaker of the party, that it has gone too far with the tariff. Howell states the party position very simply: "A country cannot be great without manufacturing, and Canada cannot have manufacturing without protection" (PM, 201). Howell points out that the free-trade school is confined to farmers and doctrinaires who have no substantial sums available for political contributions, whereas manufacturers have. Therefore, the political position of the party on the tariff is firmly linked with its desire to stay in power.

When a deputation of unionists arrives in Ottawa with demands for a forty-four hour work week, higher wages, and collective bargaining, we see Larned's new convictions being applied to labour. He argues that strikes should not be used against government, because defiance of the government constitutes a revolution rather than a strike. He does not accept the principle that all labourers have a common cause (the idea underlying the One Big Union), because that suggests the setting up of a new form of government acting in contravention of the national government. Larned denies the justice of the unionists' demands on the following grounds:

"Canada is only one of several countries . . . all in active competition . . . It is primarily an agricultural country;

it must compete with other countries in the world's agricultural markets What we, as workers in Canada, may have is to be determined not alone by what we want, but by what we can get through competing with the men of other lands. We are not a law unto ourselves. Only those countries are really free to do as they please who have shut themselves off from the outside world It is true there is a difference in the quality of the wheat produced by India and Canada, but the price of the cheaper regulates that of the dearer At present, fully thirty per cent of your wages is not earned out of your product; it is contributed by men engaged in unprotected industries under laws passed in the belief that diversified industry is in the general interest of the State. But is any government justified in compelling men who work ten hours and twelve hours a day to hand over a part of their earnings to men who refuse to work more than eight hours a day?" (PM, 285-86)

Larned, however, does not view the Industrial Revolution as "bad." He points out that the results of that revolution are viewed by some as "the foundation-stones of civilisation." Though the factory system swept away the artisan and the tool user stopped being the tool owner, the worker gained leisure for education and recreation. Nor is the capitalist's lot sweet--he must borrow millions of dollars from foreign investors in order to expand industry.

In a later discussion Sir Henry Bateman points out to Larned that England is a free-trade country, yet it is more urban than Canada, to which Larned replies that the "National Policy" (PM, 304) of English-speaking countries is everywhere the same whether it is free trade or protection--it is "to populate the urban Kingdom of Mammon."

"Comfort, an irresistible magnet for humanity, draws citywards. Crying out that it cannot live under protection in England or without protection in Canada, the city is all the while in possession of paved roadways, house-comforts, amusements, and a hundred other things which the country-side cannot afford."

(PM, 305)

Larned's views now prevent him from having even the limited sympathy he had had with imperial federation. Because of an attachment to a French-

Canadian woman called Polly Masson, he has developed a clear understanding of the Quebec position on the national scene and has no intention of lending his efforts to the isolation of Quebec. On the contrary, the implication of the close of the book is that he is going to attempt to bring English Canadians closer in spirit to the French. In order to act on his principles, Larned not only has to surrender any wish to be prime minister, but he also certainly will not be chosen as his party's candidate for his East Badmington riding. Mr. Rooks, who has been waiting hungrily in the wings for Larned's seat, and whose racism panders to the prejudices of the electorate, will be the more appropriate candidate.

Polly Masson is a novel only by courtesy. In 1918 Moore had published The Clash, a defence of the rights of French Canadians. In putting the argument of Polly Masson in fictional form, he may have felt that he would reach a larger audience. However, Moore's gifts were not for fiction. The characters are one-dimensional and the action is turgid; only the ideas have vigour. An anonymous contemporary review in The Canadian Bookman praised the work for dealing with "the really vital social and economic questions which give to Canadian life its real interest" ⁵³ This judgment of Polly Masson was made in the context of what the same reviewer saw as the more typical Canadian novel: ". . . a juvenile novel of romance and melodrama and sentiment." As the reviewer pointed out, the novel differs from the standard Canadian novel of the period in that it does deal with ideas, but he finds their presence enough--no critical approach to the book as literature is taken.

Moore is reverting to a traditional Liberal position in Canadian politics, that is, individualism, agrarianism, and laissez-faire economics. Larned's

resignation over principle may have been inspired by the resignation from government of the Liberal Edward Blake in 1865 and later in 1875. A. R. M. Lower argues that the traditional Liberal position was unable to deal with the politics of the nineteenth century:

Men of the Mackenzie school were honour personified compared with their opponents, but they were essentially timid, quailing before the immensity of the problems raised by nation building. They were men of intellect, but not men of vision. Like liberals everywhere, they were temperamentally antipathetic to grandiose schemes. Like 19th century Liberals, they over did the "practical" approach, were too much afraid of the impossible, too fond of casting up accounts and refusing to act if the monetary balance came out on the wrong side.⁵⁴

Traditional Canadian Liberalism was linked to free trade. Lower describes Alexander Mackenzie (Prime Minister from 1873 to 1878) as "doctrinaire" on the subject. Both he and Richard Cartwright, his minister of finance, were followers of Adam Smith and John Stuart Mill. In the novel, Larned even notes the resemblance between the ideas of the old farmer and the ideas of Adam Smith. Lower makes the following judgment of doctrinaire liberalism in the Canada of the 1870s:

Doctrinaire laissez-faire and the English type of individualism would not work in Canada, where strong individuals had to be linked with the state in a combination none too powerful for the projects that must be undertaken if Canada was to become a nation. Mackenzie and his men gave the country honest government, but uninspired, and with the exception of Blake's constitutional accomplishments, unconstructive. They were not in the main current of Canadian history; they were rapids in the stream and they had to be swept out of office before its majestic course could be resumed "from sea even unto the sea"--55

Whether one accepts his rhetoric about nationhood or not, Lower does make clear that, given the pattern Canadian history did take, ideas like Moore's were irrelevant in 1919 after forty years or more of protective tariffs, three national railroads, and especially World War I and the proliferation of socialist attitudes to the problems of industrialization and urbanization.

Moore seems reluctant to accept the fact that Canada had already chosen a path to nationhood that lay through industrialization and not through the protection of agricultural interests. If traditional Liberalism could not cope with national aims in the 1870s, it had even less of a chance of coping with the implementation of the policies that fulfilled national aims in post-war Canada. Moore's book, essentially an argument for economic continentalism and the notion that self-interest and the public welfare necessarily will coincide, was already an anachronism in 1919; today it is a curiosity. Thus even when novelists abandoned romance for ideas, the ideas sometimes dated from an agrarian past that could not be recaptured.

As far as imperial federation was concerned, Moore's book simply confirmed the death of the concept which had been at its zenith in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, but which truly can be said to have been a victim of the Great War. Isolation from British military concerns seemed more desirable than defence pacts, and a different brand of Canadian nationalism took precedence over consolidation of the British connection. From thinking of itself as assuming a more dominant role in the British Empire, post-war Canada moved to a conception of nationalism that saw independence and responsibility for its own affairs as major considerations. Imperial federationists had urged imperial preferential trade over a policy of continental free trade, but even in Ontario where imperial federation had strong support, industrialists were just as negative about reciprocity with Great Britain as they were with the United States. Thus, Moore's book, though it concurs with thought that resisted imperial federation, does so from a vantage point different from that endorsed by the political decisions of the period between Confederation and the Great

War. It is fascinating to consider as well that Polly Masson appeared just as farmers were making a major thrust toward political power in the first half of the decade.

Another book that makes clear that a representative of agricultural interests cannot lead the nation and still be true to his beliefs is Madge Macbeth's The Land of Afternoon (1924), probably written in collaboration with Major General Edson Louis Millard Burns. Burns wrote fiction as "A. B. Conway"⁵⁶ and books on military strategy and history under his own name, but when Burns and Macbeth collaborated to write The Land of Afternoon and its sequel The Kinder Bees (1935), they used the pseudonym "Gilbert Knox." Both books satirize political and social life in Ottawa, but the narratives are light-hearted compared to Polly Masson and the level of the political analysis, though more relevant to the period than that in Moore's book, is much less analytical. The author in the foreword to The Land of Afternoon cautions the reader that "all the characters upon his stage are purely imaginary" (LA, 9). Nonetheless, the events and some of the characters in the novel can be linked to the political scene in Ottawa between 1911 and 1920, the approximate period covered by the book. The novel deals with a "recently-elected Back-Bencher from an obscure little Western town" who rises in the political ranks till he is offered the premiership. To accept would be to compromise his principles. Thus, his rejection of Ottawa for Pinto Plains is seen as a return to a position from which it is still possible to act politically in an uncontaminated way. Raymond Dilling, the Back-Bencher from the west, is modelled freely on Arthur Meighen, a man who traditionally has been viewed as high-principled but misunderstood.⁵⁷ Macbeth's contemporaries must have

recognized his picture as well as those of other political figures at once. "H.L.S." (H. L. Stewart) in a review of the book in The Dalhousie Review, remarked that it seemed "unfair" that "this satirist should direct his (or her) shafts upon individual men and women who can be at once identified."⁵⁸ Though Stewart tactfully does not identify anyone he recognizes, Macbeth's "shafts" must have hit the target in a way we cannot appreciate today to have evoked the tone of moral indignation that permeates the review. Ottawa is presented as embodying all the social hypocrisy of the east, and Pinto Plains as embodying all the western virtues--directness, honesty, warm friendliness.

From the vantage point of Pinto Plains, Ottawa is the "land of afternoon," a phrase from "The Lotus Eaters." Marjorie Dilling had thought that merely to look at Ottawa "would produce an effect like that of entering some Holy Temple. Sin and sadness would disappear, and even the most degenerate must be led there to spiritual refreshment and transfiguration" (LA, 29). She discovers, however, that not only do the great and powerful not display goodness, but that their social and moral codes are "a hopeless enigma" to her. Since Marjorie does not understand the social code, her "frank and unquestioning impulse for friendliness" (LA, 58) is transformed to a nervousness that makes her feel unnatural and appear obsequious. However, she continues to see black as black and white as white: "No leopard ever possessed more changeless spots" (LA, 40).

Dilling, who has more mental resources than Marjorie, seems to adapt readily to the larger arena of national politics, but he remains faithful to his agrarian constituents. In his maiden speech he argues for a vigorous government policy on the construction of grain elevators and transportation.

of wheat, and he announces that he intends to be a "force for good" in Parliament. He sums up his creed by quoting Ruskin: "There is no wealth but life, and that nation is the richest that breeds the greatest number of noble and happy homes and beings" (LA, 49). His speech reveals that he is a considerable orator. But Dilling discovers friction rather than cooperation within the ranks of his party, and he becomes discouraged. His support of Eastlake and Donahue (modelled on Mackenzie and Mann), for example, is a matter of party principle, but part of the price he is asked to pay for getting the premiership is the removal of his support for extension of the railroads to the west in favour of support for St. Lawrence transportation, that is, support of the east against the west, or central Canadian manufacturing against western agriculture.

The touchstone in the book is Azalea Deane, an intelligent but plain woman on the fringes of Ottawa society. She "assists" aristocratic Ottawa at teas and parties without payment because she is a "lady," and she eventually is recommended to Marjorie, who badly needs valuable hints as to how to conduct herself socially in Ottawa. Azalea is profoundly touched by the Dillings' genuineness and simplicity. For the first time in her life she feels that she has come into contact with "people to whom friendship is dearer than the advantageous acquaintanceship that travesties it" (LA, 106). Dilling, "hard, undemonstrative, cold," respects Azalea's mind, but by the end of the book has fallen in love with her. When Dilling returns to Pinto Plains, he not only rejects the compromises of national politics, but also keeps the sanctity of his marriage vows intact. It is Azalea who makes the judgment that just as Marjorie will become the victim of the Ottawa "Social Juggernaut," Raymond will be crushed beneath the "wheels of

the political machine."

Rufus Sullivan, the Conservative party kingmaker, initially arranges for Dilling to take over a cabinet vacancy because he is "a good strong fellow" who cannot be defeated in argument. Sullivan's aim is retention of power for the party, and he cares little for Dilling's policies. While in power, Dilling refuses to compromise his views of the national welfare. He will not, for example, dispense patronage. Dilling regards public funds as sacred and will not allow them to be tapped for individual gain. He refuses to have a new post office built in Pinto Plains, nor will he pay off party hacks with government jobs. His position makes him "the most unpopular man in the House" (LA, 153), but he persists in his belief that a statesman should be "an ethical inspiration" (LA, 154). He also persists in his belief in the west. Dilling's secret ambition is to write a drama of the west which would tell the story of its development from a land of buffalo and Indians to a land full of towns with gigantic storehouses full of grain. He thinks of the west in the following, uncharacteristically emotional language:

And along the trails made by the thirsty buffalo; followed by wary Red Men, rediscovered by ambitious young surveyors . . . the railway flung its slender arms across an infant nation; and settlers came hard upon the heels of construction crews, a strange assortment who spoke their parts in the music of unfamiliar, polyglot tongues. (LA, 173)

Despite Dilling's emotional attachment to the west, he opposes reciprocity with the United States because of his strong attachment to Great Britain. Sullivan describes Dilling as one who believes, along with the younger Pitt, that the British Constitution "is equally free from the distractions of democracy and the tyranny of monarchy. It is the envy of the world" (LA, 235). Sullivan is himself in favour of reciprocity. He believes it will

be an effective antidote to the disintegration sentiment poisoning the country, but he has invested heavily in eastern industrial corporations and holds Grand Trunk Pacific bonds which would inevitably depreciate in value if north-south lines of communication were made easier. Thus Sullivan sees reciprocity as spelling financial obliteration to him, and he supports Dilling, whose stand against reciprocity is abstract, that is, based on principle, not on the ownership of stocks and bonds. Azalea believes that one of the chief elements of Britain's power is the moral weight behind it, as exemplified in her statesmen, who are "clean, straight-forward and honourable," (LA, 302), and Azalea views Dilling as a true British statesman.

When Dilling is offered an "option" on the premiership, Sullivan explains smoothly that Dilling must reverse his attitudes on the wheat and railway proposals, and Dilling is tempted because he himself realizes clearly that Canada's first post-war duty is to the returned soldiers and their re-establishment. Dilling knows that power will enable him to complete the "work of nation-building begun by--Macdonald, and Cartier and Tupper" (LA, 334), and, after all, had he not left the west in order to carry the "torch of constructive patriotism" which was burning low? But Sullivan asks total abandonment of the wheat and railway proposals, not temporary postponement. In order to achieve success, Dilling must sacrifice "Truth and Justice" (LA, 340). Dilling sees the futility of attempting to mould his own and Marjorie's simplicity to the form of conduct required in Ottawa politics, and so, without regret, the couple returns to "happy mediocrity" in the west:

He [Dilling] thought of the west--his West--of a rugged people who were still alive to the practical advancement of idealism, divorced from stultifying subservience to convention. He felt

an overpowering urge to return, to identify himself once again with those sturdy people, who, he believed, would answer the guidance of his hand. He was theirs. They were his. The West was his kingdom, and there he would be content to reign.

(LA, 351)

Despite any help Madge Macbeth may have had from "A. B. Conway," The Land of Afternoon is simplistic in its political analysis. Macbeth is concerned to establish the picture of an honest man fallen among thieves; she is not really concerned with what the honest man believes, and the descriptions of Dilling's principles seem more like obstacles the author must get past rather than integral parts of the action. Compared to Hansen, The Land of Afternoon is the work of a political amateur. However, the book is interesting because it depends on the belief of the reader that the small western town has a monopoly on decency, and that the eastern city is corrupt. The book implies that without duplicity, hypocrisy, and compromise of principle, it is not possible to survive in either Ottawa society or Ottawa politics. The Land of Afternoon is more effective when its aim is more modest. Macbeth's presentation of Ottawa teas and parties gives us a picture of the unique entanglement of society and politics characteristic of the capital. One of the liveliest scenes in the book presents a Saturday afternoon skating party at Government House:

A crowd larger than usual massed in the skating pavilion and fought politely for the mulled claret, tea, coffee, cake and sandwiches that were being served from long, narrow trestles. His Royal Highness, the Duke of Connaught, and the picturesque Princess Pat had come in from the open-air rink below, and without removing their skates, had led the way to the tea-room, whereupon several hundred people unleashed their appetites, sampled the various refreshments, and disposed of the vessels from which they had eaten on the floor, window-sills or chairs, if any, that had been vacated.

(LA, 60-61)

This kind of vivid descriptive writing may be found throughout the book

and is far more interesting from a literary viewpoint than Dilling's moral dilemma, which seems naive when one considers the sorts of pressures found in national politics. Naive as well is the contrast between small-town decency and big city corruption on which the narrative relies. One suspects that both Macbeth and Burns were taking advantage of their understanding of audience sentiments rather than making a genuine attempt to explore the issue.

It is clear that to present an industrialist as a hero, as Ralph Connor does in To Him That Hath, would be a tricky business at best in the twenties. A book that makes the attempt is The Rapids (1922), written by Alan Sullivan, author of Three Came to Valle Marie (1941). If Sullivan succeeds in making his industrialist sympathetic, it is because his business aims are linked with a religious attitude towards nature. Sullivan was a civil engineer before becoming a professional writer, and one of the jobs he held was as chief engineer of the iron and steel works at Sault Ste. Marie. The man for whom he worked, Francis H. Clergue, became a hero to Sullivan, who eventually published The Rapids based on Clergue's career. The book is a fulsome tribute to an entrepreneur, and incidentally to the capitalist system which gives him the freedom to operate. Clergue may be seen as a prototype for the many Canadian businessmen who helped turn Canada into an industrialized and urbanized nation at the turn of the century. Clergue was exactly the kind of man the National Policy was designed to nurture and protect from the United States. The irony in the situation is that Clergue was American and that his Canadian industrialization projects were so far in advance of his time, that even the National Policy was not able to offer him the tariff protection he needed. The Rapids has been

reprinted in the University of Toronto social history series with the phrase "The heroic age of 'Canadian' enterprise" on the dust jacket.

Michael Bliss, in his introduction to the book, makes the following comments about its importance as social history:

The Rapids recaptures the period in our national development when businessmen were the "national class," the men who were building a nation by driving steel through the wilderness, raising the tall chimneys of thriving manufactories, blasting metals out of the Canadian shield, unlocking the power of Niagara. It was the period when a writer could discuss the tasks facing the Canadian 'people' and define that group as 'the capitalists, the bankers, the businessmen,' and--as an afterthought . . . 'the other classes.' These were the years when men in business were building the Canadian nation, or were thought to be.

(R, vii)

Bliss is quoting from the Canadian Magazine (March, 1905, p. 487), a periodical that represented middle-class Canadian opinion for many years. It makes sense to look at The Rapids because Clergue established his industrial empire in Ontario between 1894 and 1903; this was a crucial period for Canadian industry because Canada pulled out of a long recession in the mid-nineties, and the National Policy finally seemed to be achieving its goals. This period coincides almost exactly with the time-setting of Hansen (1887-1905). Like Hansen, The Rapids links national greatness with industrialization, which is more of a clue, perhaps, to the state of mind of Canadians in the twenties than to their actual degree of self-awareness at the turn of the century.

While on a train journey, Robert Fisher Clark overhears a conversation about St. Marys, Ontario, a town in the Algoma that had attempted to develop water power from the nearby rapids, but had failed for lack of money and experience. Clark goes to St. Marys and assumes the one hundred and thirty thousand dollar liability for the uncompleted power works. He supplies the

town with power and begins to develop the natural resources of the area. Sullivan puts himself in the story in the character of Belding, a young and dedicated engineer who develops an enormous respect for Clark as they work together:

It became forced on him [Belding] that this hypnotic stranger had no desire except that of creation. It seemed that his supreme determination was to win from the earth that which he believed it offered, and express himself in steel and stone and concrete, in the construction of great buildings and in the impressive rumble of natural power under human control. There was talk of many things, colored by keen, incisive comments from this man of many parts, but never once did he put forward the subject of wealth or the means of its amassing. The possession, or at least the direction, of great sums was imperative to him, but he valued them only for what they could achieve

(R, 37-38)

Clark's aims, thus, have little or nothing to do with the accumulation of wealth. Instead, Clark is presented as a visionary who listens to the "voices" in the rapids and gains inspiration from them. The rapids are variously "querulous, angry, contented, pleading, defiant, threatening and triumphant" (R, 131), that is, they reflect changing human moods. One significant voice gives him a clear and unmistakable summons: "Use me while you may. I shall flow on forever, while you have but a moment in eternity" (R, 131). In subduing nature, Clark performs a service to all of mankind:

. . . into their very souls crept the voice of the rapids. Clark caught it, and perceived that the call was not for him alone but for thousands yet unborn, and there began to creep over him the ineffable unction of labor. He realized how large was the world, and how much work yet remained to be done. His spirit was not solitary, but linked forever with eternal realities, and through the cloud that obscured the present he could see his star of destiny shining undimmed. . . . (R, 255)

Clark is also seen as an instrument in the hand of God. Clark forms a friendship with the Bishop of Algoma, who blesses him with the following words:

Your Director is the same as mine, the great Force, call it what you will. It drove me into the church and drove you to what you are, and our first trust is to ourselves--you'll agree with me there--and with that undischarged nothing else can be carried out.
(R, 194)

Specifically, Clark set up a hydro-electric power plant, a pulp mill, a machine shop and foundry, a steel mill, and a railway. In the process he converts St. Marys from a village to a city.

The real Francis Hector Clergue arrived in Sault Ste. Marie in 1894, gained possession of the power company, and distributed water and light locally under the name of the Tagoona Water and Light Company. An article in Ontario History by Margaret Van Every supplies the following details of Clergue's life.⁵⁹ Clergue was impressed by the abundant spruce forests of the Lake Superior watershed and formed the Sault Ste. Marie Pulp and Paper company to process the spruce into wood pulp. In 1896 pulp was sold wet with the seller shouldering the freight charges for the water. Clergue invented a machine to dry the pulp before shipping. In order to improve the quality of the pulp, Clergue bought nickel deposits near Sudbury to secure a supply of sulphur (sulphurous acid is a waste product in nickel production). This eventually involved him in the production of nickel and steel alloy. Clergue then acquired an iron ore deposit meant to supplement the ferro-nickel works. This involved the building of a railway to transport the iron ore (the Algoma Central Railway Company). The town of Sault Ste. Marie became a small industrial city. In 1887 the population of the town was only 1,600, but by 1904 the availability of jobs had increased the population to 9,000. Many Italian immigrants were brought in by Clergue to work in the industrial complex. They lived adjacent to it in an area known as "Steelton" or popularly in Sault Ste. Marie as "Little Italy." The

two municipalities merged in 1917. Present-day Sault Ste. Marie houses the following companies: Algoma Steel Corporation, Abitibi Power and Paper Company, Algoma Central and Hudson Bay Railway, Great Lakes Power Company. The city also has an airport and a two-mile long bridge connecting it with the United States. These details of Clergue's life parallel the details of Clark's in The Rapids, even to the existence of a community like Steelton called Ironville. Sullivan also includes a love story of sorts involving renunciation of a woman by the ascetic Clark whose destiny does not lie in that direction.

The Clergue empire encountered financial difficulties and broke down in 1903. Clergue claimed that the main reason was lack of tariff protection from the Canadian government, though over-expansion was probably the root cause. Clergue had been unable to convince the government to protect steel rails, and Mackenzie and Mann had bought rails for the Canadian Northern Railway from Germany. Clergue's steel rail mill closed down in December, 1902, and did not re-open till June, 1904. Tariff duties were imposed in October, 1903 (\$7 a ton), but the Clergue mill already was closed and did not produce rails till almost a year later. The U.S. Steel Corporation was also trying to discourage American investment in the Sault. Mackenzie and Mann, who profited so extensively from government support themselves, were unwilling to help protect another native industry. Instead, they supported the German steel industry, thereby making a small contribution to the rise of German militarism.

The failure of the Clark empire, on the other hand, is caused by a group of stock market speculators headed by a man named Marsham. They use the closure of the rail mill as an excuse to dump shares, and three-quarters

of an hour after the opening of the stock exchange, the stock has declined from forty-eight to thirty-five with no bidders. The following day, his triumph complete, Marsham begins to buy again, and makes eighty thousand dollars on his first transaction. Thus Sullivan makes a clear distinction between two different types of entrepreneurship, the creative and the predatory. The distinction is made by Birch, a "financial surgeon" who would not have normally supported a man of Clark's type, but who had been taken in by Clark's "hypnotic personality";

Here was American credit and effort massacred by American ruthlessness and revenge. Marsham had pounced upon a weak point in the Consolidated's armor and pierced deep into the body corporate. He had struck to kill. (R, 213-14)

The language suggests a shark and its prey. Thus Sullivan creates a moral case for the capitalist entrepreneur in Canada, and inadvertently defends Canadian government protection of industrialization. It is interesting to note that the Liberal government in Ottawa, in fact and in fiction, intervened to put the Clergue/Clark industrial complex back in action. Clark points out to the member from Algoma that "setting the works in motion again will be the biggest advertising any government in Canada ever had. It will swing the labor vote . . . it will secure the merchants' support" (R, 231). Sullivan had put his finger on the matter--the real power in the country lay with commerce, trade, and labour rather than with the agrarians who consistently assume the position of the underdog in the literature of the twenties. However, agrarian interests are conspicuous by their absence in The Rapids. The moral conflict, such as it is, stems from an uncertainty Clark has about despoiling the wilderness, but the rapids dispel these doubts for him. The rightness of Clark's endeavours is assumed from the

beginning, and, unlike many other writers from this period, Sullivan does not explore the standard rural/urban conflict for his readers.

In this connection, it should be borne in mind that the twenties were the first period in Canadian history to give political expression on a national scale to rural discontent with the tariff. W. L. Morton sees the defeat of reciprocity in 1911 as the "first act in the agrarian revolt of Western Canada."⁶⁰ Both Liberals and Conservatives suffered in the west, and the farmers' movement began to be connected with agitation for independent political action. In November, 1918, the Canadian Council of Agriculture adopted a platform which was soon given the title of "The New National Policy." Morton sees the platform as a "flat challenge" to the National Policy in force since 1879. It called for immediate reciprocity in natural products with the United States, the extension of the British preference to fifty percent of current rates, and the introduction of free trade with Britain in five years.⁶¹ Thus it was a complete reversal of Macdonald's National Policy. Meanwhile, in 1919 the United Farmers of Ontario won the provincial elections and installed a farmers' government under E. C. Drury. Their platform called for economy in government, the abolition of patronage, limitation of government intervention in business coupled with aid to cooperative enterprises, equal educational opportunities for rural and urban children, good local roads, cheaper electric power, and proportional representation.⁶² Farmers in Ontario were concerned about rural depopulation, which they attributed to the tariff favouring industry at the expense of agriculture. With Ontario farmers agitating for tariff reduction, the conflict became polarized more significantly between agriculture and industry rather than between east and west.

The National Progressive Party was launched at a Canadian Council of Agriculture convention in Winnipeg in January, 1920, and it took as its platform the "New National Policy." The strength of the party rested on farmers in Ontario and in the three prairie provinces, and in the general election of 1921 it obtained sixty-five seats, thus making the Liberals, who had won 117 seats, dependent on it for support. The Liberals were short of a majority by one seat. Ontario, surprisingly, did not repudiate protection, despite the provincial victory of 1919. It divided its votes among the three parties. The Progressive Party, despite its sixty-five seats, started out as a regional rather than a national party (it carried only one seat east of Ottawa).⁶³ The history of the Progressive Party cannot be detailed here, but it is worthy of note that Morton entitles Chapter V of his book "The Political Failure of the Progressives, 1921-22" and Chapter VI "The Disintegration of the Federal Progressive Party, 1923-25."

The political activities of western farmers, however, were chronicled in the latter half of a novel published in 1928 by Charles Peterson called The Fruits of the Earth: A Story of the Canadian Prairies. The book is the story of a returned soldier who resumes work on his Alberta homestead after he is invalided home in 1917. He had been a recent immigrant from England before the war, and eventually his parents and sister join him in Alberta. This situation enables Peterson to make numerous comparisons between the restrictions of life in urban England and the freedom of life in rural Alberta. The returned soldier becomes active in the Progressive Party and runs for office. During his election campaign, he makes the following speech laying out the issues as the farmers saw them in 1921:

"The tariff question has been injected into this campaign. While it is a strictly Federal issue, it is a proper subject for debate because we farmers are waging war on the two existing political parties not alone in the provincial arena, but in the wider field as well. In the estimation of the farmer the old political parties to-day stand condemned on the tariff question. In spite of protestations to the contrary, they have nailed their colours to high protection. The Canadian farmer, representing, directly and indirectly, eighty per cent of the consumers, can reap little benefit from protection. His market is the wide world and he must face unrestricted competition from white, yellow and black races. He is heavily penalized on everything he purchases in order that industrial cities may be established east of Lake Superior, which can be of little or no economic benefit to the western farmer. We, rightly or wrongly, regard the high protective policy of Canada as the clearest evidence of the complete political bankruptcy of the old parties.

"Canada is overwhelmingly agricultural. Western Canada almost entirely so. Rural prosperity must be the very foundation of our national prosperity. The old school of statesmen completely ignores this obvious fact. As the farmer prospers industry will prosper. Wise statesmanship would remove all artificial handicaps from our basic pursuit. The creation of great industrial centres is not indispensable to the national welfare of the agricultural state. History teaches that lesson if it teaches anything. Denmark is a striking case in point. The industrial city the world over has become an abomination and a reproach to our boasted civilization. The tall chimney brings in its wake the slums and immorality of the congested city, unemployment, social strife and demands for class legislation. Many of us here to-night have taken up our abode in this great virgin country because we were driven forth, disgusted and weary with the social mess and vicious class warfare, from the over-crowded countries across the Atlantic. We had become victims of the modern worship of the industrial state. And now we find our public men deliberately attempting to duplicate in Canada the very abominations we fled from in horror and indignation."

(FE, 291-92)

The role of the tariff in the rural/urban conflict in Canada as seen by the farmer can hardly ever have been more clearly stated in fiction. The Fruits of the Earth links national greatness to agriculture and deplores the growth of the cities at the expense of the land; The Rapids links national greatness to industrialization and the domination of the wilderness. Agriculture is seen as only the handmaiden of industrialization. Peterson

laid out his position on the tariff and the farmer more completely in Wake Up, Canada: Reflections on Vital National Issues (1919), which he published right after World War I in order to encourage a "vigorous sense of nationality,"⁶⁴ which he believed to be the most pressing need of Canada in the immediate post-war period.

National political aims thus seem to be at variance with the ideals of writers of the period. A fairly astute journalist like Bridle, who probably prided himself on being able to see all sides of a question, could not settle on a consistent "national policy" for all of Canada, even in a work of fiction. His vision of Canada is perforce comprehensive, a bi-cultural and bi-lingual mixture of rural and urban life in which the arts play an important moral role. Bridle's book is important today because his views are similar to those held by large sections of the educated population. He seems to have been directly in the mainstream of social and political thought in the Canada of his day, which wanted industrialization and urbanization despite all their shortcomings, and which was aware of the problems of agriculture but unwilling to sacrifice national greatness to solve them. As V. C. Fowke put it in the conclusion to The National Policy and the Wheat Economy, "One of the most significant features of the national policy has been a persistent disregard of the competitive inferiority of agriculture within the price system."⁶⁵

On the other hand, writers such as Moore and Peterson argued for equal rights for agriculture and the west against industry and the east. Though they approached the issue from different political angles, they both believed that great nations are agricultural rather than industrial. Both felt a distaste for what they saw as the inevitable squalor of the cities.

Neither recognized the ameliorating influence of the arts, but in a relatively simplistic way connected the soil with the good life. Madge, Macbeth links moral decency with the soil as well, but mainly because she is interested in having a foil for her satirical scenes of urban life. The Land of Afternoon cannot be taken too seriously as political satire, but it is reasonably good social satire. It is The Rapids that takes a serious approach to urban capitalism and sees it as heroic, but, interestingly enough, the hero is seen as fulfilling the commands of nature and God as he creates a city out of the wilderness. The book is consistent with other literature of the period in that it attacks the profit motive. Urbanism is made acceptable by being separated from materialism.

The Canadian government chose the development of an industrial society over an agricultural one in the nineteenth century, but it was not until the twenties that large urban centres began to figure prominently in the literature of the country. A continuous literary evaluation has been going on almost since the inception of this developmental choice. Much of contemporary literature is now concerned with the urban experience; nonetheless, it is interesting to speculate how the literature would have developed had the "New National Policy" replaced the "National Policy." "The burden of unity" has been heavy indeed for many Canadians. E. C. Drury, leader of the United Farmers of Ontario, put the matter in the following way:

Thanksgiving Day, the farmers' own holiday has been stolen by the towns and put forward to the first week in October, for better weather, and is kept on Monday so that townsfolk can get another long weekend at their summer cottages. They go rushing out over the highways, on Friday afternoon, and Saturday morning, and rush back again on Monday evening, and in Ontario usually kill fifteen or twenty, and seriously injure as many more, "butchered

to make a Canadian holiday," and it is safe to say that no one in ten of them knows what to be thankful for or Who to. Farmers eat their Thanksgiving dinner on Sunday, and work on Monday.⁶⁶

Notes

¹ Canada and the Burden of Unity, ed. David Jay Bercuson (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1977).

² David Jay Bercuson, "Canada's Burden of Unity: An Introduction," ibid., p. 3.

³ David Jay Bercuson, "Preface," ibid., n.p.

⁴ All page references are to the following editions of primary sources: (H) August Bridle, Hansen (Toronto: Macmillan, 1924); (LA) Madge Macbeth and Major-General Eedson Louis Millard Burns ("Gilbert Knox"), The Land of Afternoon (Ottawa: The Graphic Publishers, 1924); (PM) William Henry Moore, Polly Masson (Toronto: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1919); (FE) Charles W. Peterson, The Fruits of the Earth (Ottawa: Ru-Mi-Lou Books, 1928); (R) Alan Sullivan, The Rapids, The Social History of Canada Series (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972). Originally published in 1922.

⁵ John W. Garvin, "Hansen," The Canadian Bookman, VII (Jan., 1925), 10.

⁶ Anonymous, "Prize Winning Review: Augustus Bridle's Hansen," The Canadian Bookman, VII (March, 1925), 49.

⁷ Anonymous, "Genesis of Four Canadian Novels," The Canadian Bookman, VIII (April, 1926), 114.

⁸ Advertisement, Canadian Bookman, VII (Feb., 1925), 37.

⁹ Vernon C. Fowke, The National Policy and the Wheat Economy (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1957), p. 8.

¹⁰ Michael Cross, "Introduction," The Workingman in the Nineteenth Century (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1974), p. 7.

¹¹ In an article reviewing the radical labour press in Canada in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, F. W. Watt notes growing labour opposition to the National Policy. ("The National Policy, the Workingman, and Proletarian Ideas in Victorian Canada," The Canadian Historical Review, XL [1959], 1-26.) Watt quotes what he describes as "the ultimate statement of the bitterness, disillusion, and despair" among the working class from a newspaper called the Labor Advocate (issue of September 4, 1891):

But the greatest and most stupendous blunder which underlies the whole system is the idea that it is necessary or desirable or possible to build up the scattered Provinces included within the Dominion into a separate nationality, distinct in traditions, ideals, interests, and institutions from the rest of this North American Continent, in sympathy with European notions and methods, and commercially isolated from our neighbours. To this end the late Sir John Macdonald devoted his life--to this end was the C.P.R. built, the protective tariff created, the North-West land monopolies endorsed, and the people's money squandered in immigration schemes. And the result of this costly and senseless struggle against nature and the plain obvious interests of the people is seen in the pitiful exhibit of the census of '91, the chronic stagnation of industry which is driving our people wholesale over the lines, and the utter demoralization of our political functions. The whole political fabric built upon a delusion and a fraud, is on the verge of overthrow

(Quoted in Watt, p. 15)

Though the Labor Advocate is in dead earnest, and Bridle's treatment of the subject appears almost frivolous in comparison, both are deploring one of the effects of the spread of industrial urbanism under the National Policy. Bridle returns to the subject of industrial unemployment in his section on Toronto sweatshop labour.

¹² Henry George, Progress and Poverty: An Inquiry into the Cause of Industrial Depressions and of Increase of Want with Increase of Wealth, The Remedy (New York: The Modern Library, 1929), p. 12.

¹³ Ibid., p. 283.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

16 Ibid., p. 405.

17 Ibid., pp. 405-406.

18 Goldwin Smith, Canada and the Canadian Question (Toronto: Hunter, Rose & Company, 1891), pp. 267-68.

19 Ibid., p. 45.

20 Bridle may have modelled Dr. Strang on several members of the Casgrain family, an old Quebec family prominent in Canadian political and literary life in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Henry Raymond Casgrain was an Ontario physician who actually carried on a joint practice in Windsor and Detroit (Henry James Morgan, The Canadian Men and Women of the Time [Toronto: Wm. Briggs, 1912], p. 209). His brother, Thomas Chase Casgrain, was attorney-general between 1891 and 1896 and succeeded in carrying "legislation for the prevention of corrupt practices at elections, which was declared to be the most advanced and thorough enactment of the kind ever adopted in Canada" (Morgan, p. 211). The Casgrains were connected by marriage to the Baby family, whose name Bridle gives to the two Plainsville seamstresses who occupy the lower floor in Hansen's house. Bridle must have been intrigued by Casgrain's double practice and adopted it for use in his book in order to indicate that it is possible to sup with the devil without using a long spoon.

21 In The Workingman in the Nineteenth Century, Michael Cross includes a Toronto Globe article (Oct. 4, 1878) which is headed "Ned Hanlan and National Pride." The article expresses considerable pride that a Canadian has managed to best an American in a sporting event, and the following passages

from it indicate that Bridle made a good choice in pairing Hanlan with Macdonald in his fictional attempt to show the strength of the feeling behind the National Policy. The emotion and patriotism that Hanlan's sporting feat engendered was easily transferred to Macdonald's political feat:

It would indeed have been strange if any sporting event that ever took place on this side of the Atlantic had ever aroused the enthusiasm that the present contest has. Hitherto anything in the way of an international contest between Canada and the United States has begun, and ended, with the odds largely in favour of the latter, and from the outset a large majority of the Canadian people have regarded a Canadian defeat as a foregone conclusion The great battle was fairly and squarely fought out from start to finish, and Hanlan has proved himself the better man. No one can now question either his technical or equitable right to the title and honour belonging to the championship of America, and there are very many who think that the modest young fisherman of two years and a half ago is now in a fair way to become the champion of the world.

22 George, ibid., p. 9.

23 James Alexander Tucker, Poems (Toronto: Wm. Briggs, 1904). The opening poem in the volume is "A Winter's Day in California, written while Tucker was finishing his university course in the U.S. Though the poem expresses an appreciation for the beauty of the country, the main emotion is a longing for home:

No, 'mid this lavish, rare display
Of Nature's bounties, rich and free,
My heart, dear country, turns to thee
In love this winter's day;
And would not give one foot of thy
Rude soil, one white December blast,
For all these valleys, verdant, vast,
For all this languid sky!

Tucker closes the poem with an appeal to Canadians to search out their men of principle:

O Canada, think not thy creed
Must rest on cities, factories, gold;

If rich in men of liberal mould
 Thou has no further need.
 Pray, therefore, for true men and strong--
 Men who would dare to die for right,
 Who love and court God's searching light
 Because they shield no wrong.

²⁴ Gregory S. Kealey, Hogtown: Working Class Toronto At the Turn of the Century (Toronto: New Hogtown Press, 1974), p. 5.

²⁵ Canada, Sessional Papers, 1896, Report Upon the Sweating System in Canada, by Commissioner Alexander Whyte Wright, and Supplementary Report Upon the Sweating System in Canada, being an Appendix to the Report, XXIX, 9.

²⁶ Ibid., 22.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., 23.

²⁹ Ibid., 24.

³⁰ Kealey, Hogtown, p. 12.

³¹ The Last Post Staff, "The Company," The Last Post, I (Feb., 1970), 10-22.

³² Ibid., 22.

³³ Macklem is presented as the "industrial creator of a small town," Northampton, Ontario, where he had headed Canada Woollens. During the "boom" of 1888, Macklem has moved to Toronto and within a few years "become president of a big city merger, bank director, trustee of a large church, prospective member of the University Board of Governors and a possible Senator" (H, 164). Timothy Eaton also made the jump from a small town in Ontario to the big city. The fictional Macklem and Eaton both had summer homes in Muskoka. The numerous similarities in the way they ran their businesses are discussed in the text. In any case, Macklem serves effectively

as the prototype for the large Toronto industrialist of the late nineteenth century. Like Eaton, McMaster, Flavelle, and others, Macklem is a pillar of society, but his fortune and respectability rest on the exploitation of the weak and poor.

³⁴ Irving Abella, "Portrait of a Jewish Professional Revolutionary," Labour: Journal of Canadian Labour Studies, 2 (1977), p. 185.

³⁵ Ibid., 188.

³⁶ Robert Craig Brown and Ramsay Cook, Canada 1896-1921: A Nation Transformed (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976), p. 137.

³⁷ Augustus Bridle, "Henri Bourassa, A Parochial Patriot," in Sons of Canada: Short Studies of Characteristic Canadians (Toronto: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1916), 95-106, passim.

³⁸ Augustus Bridle, "Archbishop Bruchesi, A Sociological Prelate," ibid., 113.

³⁹ The section of Bridle's interview with Bruchesi in Sons of Canada in which Bridle raises the matter of the Church's position on separate schools for Jews follows:

Those 40,000 Jews in the heart of Montreal--with their synagogues and sweatshops, their political meetings--and their clamour for racial schools--I must remember them

Perhaps some rabbi had quarrelled with the Archbishop who spoke almost with animosity against these pushful, modern people, to him far more of a menace than the Chinamen whose chop suey cafés were dotted red by night all over the part of Montreal threaded by St. Lawrence Main.

"But all they want is national existence," suggested the visitor. "Would you grant that to French Canadians and--"

He interrupted with a peremptory but quite genial gesture.

"There is a fundamental difference," he said. "The French were the forerunners here. The Jews are innovations."

(Bridle, Sons of Canada, p. 112)

In the equivalent passages in Hansen, the Archbishop replies when questioned that separate schools would be feasible if the discoverer of the Plains of Abraham were a descendant of Abraham. Not only does Bridle question the Catholic alliance with Quebec nationalism and the illogical Catholic position on separate schools for Jews, but he also questions the logic of simultaneous Catholic antagonism to organized labour and to the Jews who were themselves "against the labour unions," because they fostered simple trade unionism rather than social justice for all. Ibid., 112.

⁴⁰ Robert MacDonald, The Owners of Eden: The Life and Past of the Native People (Calgary: The Ballantrae Foundation, 1974), p. 182.

⁴¹ Chester Martin, "Dominion Lands" Policy, The Carleton Library, No. 69 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973), p. 22.

⁴² Ibid., p. 90.

⁴³ Peppercorn turns up in Edmonton overcharging gold-seekers for supplies. J. G. MacGregor in The Klondike Rush through Edmonton 1897-1898 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1970) points out that there were two routes through Edmonton to the Klondike, but that both involved the transport of two years' worth of supplies (p. 31). The trading posts along the route were geared to trade with the Indians and could not be depended on to supply the gold-seekers. Edmonton was the obvious place to purchase supplies, and MacGregor notes that the Edmonton outfitters McDougall and Secord recommended a thousand pounds of food for one man for one year. A two-year supply with clothing and hardware would weigh 2500 pounds. Even if McDougall and Secord were over-estimating, it is clear that there were huge profits to be made from outfitting Klondike gold hunters. Over thirteen hundred persons set out from Edmonton in 1898 alone. At one point an ad appeared

in the local newspaper which read as follows:

WAKE UP
Edmonton has a Klondike at home,
outfitting prospectors for the goldfields.
(MacGregor, p. 82)

In Edmonton Peppercorn also is involved in a far more dubious venture than over-charging for supplies. He acts as a front man for Morley Hackett, a land speculator gambling on the location of the railroad. He and Hackett go into a partnership to defraud the Métis of their land scrip. In Jericho, Peppercorn had had experience juggling the location of railway land for his own benefit, when he had obtained the exclusive rights to buy right of way through the village for a line linking it to Plainsville, the nearest market town.

⁴⁴ See, for example, Brown and Cook, ibid., pp. 149-51; V. C. Fowke, ibid., pp. 54-56; and W. L. Morton, The Kingdom of Canada, 2nd ed. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1972), pp. 400-402.

⁴⁵ Brown and Cook, ibid., pp. 150-51.

⁴⁶ W. L. Morton, Kingdom, p. 401.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Bridle, "Sir William Mackenzie, William the Conqueror," in Sons of Canada, p. 75.

⁴⁹ At this stage of the book, Hansen bears some similarity to Frank Oliver, an early settler in Edmonton who, like Hansen, ran for office as an Independent Liberal and won, and who had a newspaper very like Hansen's. Oliver had bought a miniature press in Winnipeg for twenty dollars, and on it he printed Alberta's first newspaper:

Soon his sound sense, his abiding faith in the new country, and his sometimes sharp but always pertinent editorials⁴ attracted country-wide attention. The fiery little Bulletin, always reflecting

his peppery personality and his Liberal political views, grew rapidly in stature. Its threefold policy, damning John A. Macdonald and the Conservatives, battling for the rights of settlers, and lauding the rich possibilities of the prairies, exerted a great influence. It always expressed the utmost confidence in the north-west, but while all pioneer papers considered it their purpose to "boom" the country, Frank Oliver never descended to careless reporting or to painting a "get-rich-quick" picture. His paper never promised the prospective immigrant an easy living in a land of milk and honey, but guaranteed that the land would repay any persevering person who worked hard. For the student of the early days, its unusual wealth of accurate reporting makes it a gold mine of information. (See note 43, MacGregor, p. 91)

Hansen and Oliver both started pioneer newspapers which were produced under conditions of stringent economy and had a reputation for being honest which spread beyond the west. Their politics and philosophy are also similar.

⁵⁰ W. L. Morton, "The 1920s," in Part One of the Canadians, 1867-1967, ed. J. M. S. Careless and R. Craig Brown (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1977), p. 205.

⁵¹ V. C. Fowke, "The National Policy--Old and New," The Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science, XVIII (Aug., 1952), 275.

⁵² Morton, The 1920s, 210.

⁵³ Anonymous, "'Polly Masson' and Our Polyglot Politics," Canadian Bookman, I (Oct., 1919), 43.

⁵⁴ A. R. M. Lower, Colony to Nation, A History of Canada (Toronto: Longmans Canada, 1961), p. 360.

⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 362-63.

⁵⁶ "A. B. Conway" probably wrote the political sections of The Land of Afternoon. For example, the style of Chapter XVII in which Rufus Sullivan's political views are laid out in great detail suggests that another hand than Macbeth's wrote it. The following sentences from that chapter will serve as illustration (pp. 233-34):

He [Sullivan] saw clearly the advantage that would accrue to the fishermen of British Columbia and the Maritime Provinces, were they able to dispose of their perishable merchandise quickly in the American market at a maximum price and a minimum cost for transportation. He saw also that the Quebec and Ontario farmers could sell to the Middle States at an advanced profit, while the grain speculators of the Prairies could offer their wheat in the Chicago pit before it was harvested and at the lowest possible figure for haulage.

57. Despite Macbeth's disclaimers in the Foreword, it is hard to believe that Dilling was not modelled on Arthur Meighen, who entered the House as a member from a small constituency in Manitoba called Portage la Prairie. Like Dilling, Meighen generally returned to Portage for the summer with his family. In his biography of Meighen, Roger Graham records Laurier's reaction to Meighen's first major speech in Parliament, which was given in support of an amendment to investigate the operations of the National Transcontinental Railway Commission (Arthur Meighen, 2 vols. [Toronto: Clarke, Irwin, 1960], p. 58). Laurier is said to have remarked that "Borden has found a man," and that Meighen's speech, for destructive power, matched those of Edward Blake and Sir Richard Cartwright. It is Dilling's oratorical powers that attract Sullivan's attention. Meighen appears to have combined Blake's intellectualism and Cartwright's talent for critical analysis. These characteristics are attributed to Dilling, and Macbeth makes much of Borden's dependence on Dilling. A touch of the gauche, a certain forgetfulness about trivia, and indifference to dress were characteristics of the real Meighen (Graham, p. 59), and of the fictional Dilling. Graham describes Meighen's support of a resolution for the lowering of farm implement duties. Meighen justified his proposal as being entirely consistent with the National Policy on the ground that as domestic industries flourished they should receive less in the way of protective tariffs (Graham, p. 63). This may parallel

Dilling's position which, while being against reciprocity, was in favour of government ownership of grain elevators. In the campaign of 1911, Meighen argued that reciprocity might upset the delicate balance between Great Britain and the U.S. and bring Canada into the American orbit. It was Meighen who is said to have remarked during the war that he was ready if necessary to bankrupt Canada to save the empire. (Edgar McInnis, Canada, A Political and Social History [Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada, 1969], p. 484). Dilling is an imperialist in politics. Dilling is also presented as a supporter of Eastlake and Donahue, railroad entrepreneurs. This seems to parallel Meighen's involvement with William Mackenzie and Donald Mann, who had asked the Borden government to aid them in the completion of the Canadian Northern Railway System. Borden, who wanted to make sure that the Canadian taxpayers got security for any assistance they gave the railroad, handed the problem over to Meighen, who was Solicitor-General. Graham's description of Meighen's handling of the matter follows:

Upon receiving his assignment Meighen plunged into the trackless jungle of Mackenzie and Mann's financial operations. After several weeks of intensive research he knew his way unerringly through it, could identify every species in its luxuriant, all-enveloping foliage, knew the whereabouts of every hidden pitfall, the source and direction of every stream. He knew what was perhaps unknown to all other human beings, save Sir William Mackenzie himself and his friend, solicitor and champion, Zebulon A. Lash: what the Canadian Northern Railway System was, how it operated and the true facts of its financial situation.

(Graham, p. 79)

As a result of his investigations, Meighen offered a set of resolutions to Parliament which Graham describes as "possibly the most complicated ever presented . . ." (p. 79). Meighen's role during the war was, like Dilling's, to be a "versatile extra minister of almost everything that mattered much: Railways, Trade and Commerce, Justice, Militia and Finance" (Graham, p. 88).

That Macbeth makes the fictional Dilling refuse power and retire from the national scene, whereas Meighen accepted the premiership "with alacrity" (Brown and Cook, Canada, p. 332), and remained on the national scene for many years does not disguise the numerous obvious connections between the fictional man and the real one.

⁵⁸ "H. L. S.," Review of The Land of Afternoon, The Dalhousie Review, V (Jan., 1926), 562.

⁵⁹ Margaret van Every, "Francis Hector Clergue and the Rise of Sault Ste. Marie as an Industrial Centre," Ontario History, LVI (Sept., 1964), 191-202. See also Donald Eldon, "The Career of Francis H. Clergue," Explorations in Entrepreneurial History, III (April 15, 1951), 254-68. Publication of Research Center in Entrepreneurial History, Harvard University.

⁶⁰ W. L. Morton, The Progressive Party in Canada (University of Toronto Press, 1967), p. 26.

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 62.

⁶² Ibid., p. 71.

⁶³ Ibid., p. 129.

⁶⁴ C. W. Peterson, Wake Up, Canada: Reflections on Vital National Issues (Toronto: Macmillan, 1919), p. 20.

⁶⁵ Fowke, Wheat Economy, p. 290.

⁶⁶ E. C. Drury, Farmer Premier (Toronto, 1966), pp. 27-28. Quoted in Russell Hann, Farmers Confront Industrialism: Some Historical Perspectives on Ontario Agrarian Movements (Toronto: New Hogtown Press, 1975), pp. 24-25.

Chapter V

The Artist and the City

If half the population of Canada could be classified as urban by 1921, the National Policy could be said to have succeeded in its aim of fostering industrialization in the cities. Bridle makes clear, however, that Canadian cities, at least at the turn of the century, were undesirable in many respects. At best, they were "celestial slums," places where the economic gap between rich and poor was wide and privilege and hierarchy reigned, but where variety, excitement, and some opportunity existed. Bridle found the arts and a strong indigenous cultural life flourishing only in Montreal and only among the French Canadians, although he was optimistic about cultural growth in other cities. He believed that it was inevitable that the monied classes would turn to the nurture and support of art and artists and that inevitably art would work as a moral force to temper and soften the materialism of its benefactors.

In the twenties, five realistic novels appeared which took as their protagonists artists living in Toronto and Montreal. These books start with the supposition that the city is essential to the development of the artist, and all of them explore the matter of whether the Canadian urban milieu was indeed nurturing the arts or whether, under the guise of supporting the arts, it actually was preventing art and culture from developing freely. In addition, Beaumont Cornell's Lantern Marsh (1923) was published, a novel which attacked the intellectual and cultural milieu in Toronto and Kingston,

although the protagonist is himself not an artist. (For discussion, see Appendix II.) Three of the group of five books deal with writers--Jessie Sime's Our Little Life (1921), Fred Jacob's Peevee (1928), and Raymond Knister's White Narcissus (1929); the fourth, Late Spring (1930, by Peter Donovan, deals with a painter, and the last, Morley Callaghan's It's Never Over (1930), with a singer. Except for Knister, these writers unite in presenting a picture of a striking provincialism and narrow-mindedness in urban cultural life which blocks critical judgment and daunts the artist.* Moreover, Sime, Jacob, and Callaghan stress, in varying degrees, how disheartening are the economics of being an artist in Canada. Sime even presents the death of her hero as partially caused by economic distress. Jacob's hero lacks a discerning audience and, refusing to shift arenas to the United States, dies after dissipating his talent for satire in third-rate journalism. Knister's writer is an exception among the group. He is not only a financial but a critical success and lacks neither audience nor money. In a true reflection of the state of painting in Canada in the twenties, the painter in Donovan's Late Spring exists in a relatively supportive artistic milieu compared to that in which the writers in Sime's and Jacob's books exist; however, he must also face philistinism and poverty, though his struggle is superficially presented. The most penetrating observation of an artist struggling to succeed from within the artistic circles of the period is It's Never Over. Callaghan explores the dubious connection between art and respectability, masquerading as morality.

The bleakest book of the group is Jessie Sime's Our Little Life, which offers little or no hope to the artist in Canadian society. The author was

* Cornell finds these characteristics typical of university life in Toronto.

a Scotswoman brought up in London who immigrated to Canada in 1907. She lived in Montreal during most of her Canadian years, returning to Great Britain after World War II. Sime came from a family that emphasized the importance of artistic composition. Her father, James Sime, was a journalist and critic who had published a two-volume biography of Lessing, and who was astute enough to encourage Yeats during a period when few would give the poet any serious attention.¹ Jessie Sime herself had been sent to Berlin to study singing at the age of seventeen, but eventually she settled into journalism and other writing as a career.¹ In a chap-book called Orpheus in Quebec (1942),² Sime laid out what she believed would emerge in the way of art from Quebec, where she had spent so many years. She saw three obvious themes in the province suitable for treatment: the life of the French-Canadian habitant; the life of the immigrants in the cities of Quebec and their interaction upon one another; and the "dark, dominating forces" of the land itself. The remainder of the work elaborates upon the first two themes, but Sime's heart is clearly fixed on what she calls the "city-theme"---in fact, the theme that dominates Our Little Life, which was published twenty-one years before Orpheus in Quebec. In her literary essay, Sime lets Montreal stand for her exemplar of city life in Quebec. She emphasizes the rapid tempo of transformation in the city, which she sees as necessary in order to weld the heterogeneous immigrant population, and suggests that this changing life might best be reflected in art by presenting a literary portrait of an immigrant. The immigrant embodies the opposing or contrasting forces of long-established tradition and materialism and therefore makes suitable subject matter for comparisons of the old world and the new in many areas. In fact, Sime places the growth of "Canadian art"

in the future when the people of Quebec are all "growing together out of a soil which seems natural to them." She then sees "a spontaneous folk-story-and-song epoch" as starting and a "great interpreter" as arising.³ The Canadian art of the future will not be "confused" by the imported influences of immigrants (like Sime herself), but will be entirely unlike any other art, European, Oriental, or American. She speculates that Canadian art will be "rough in conception and vigorous in expression," with perhaps a "mystical strain." She also muses about the possibility of the ideal artistic medium being music, rather than painting or literature.

In addition to Our Little Life, Sime wrote another book embodying her theories about the suitability of the "city-theme" in summing up the Canadian experience. A Tale of Two Worlds,⁴ published in collaboration with Frank Nicholson in 1953, deals with the life of a Viennese immigrant family in Montreal which keeps its ties to relatives in Vienna through the intercession of a family friend, a Canadian female writer whom Sime seems to have modelled on herself. This narrative device enables Sime to comment freely on the differences between the "two worlds." Sime's picture of the "artists" in the Canadian branch of the family generally is positive. She presents the two musicians of the family as achieving a moderate success, though one dies in the war and the other has to move to New York to achieve the degree of fame he wishes. A third "artist," a dress designer, finds scope for her talents among the upper middle class in Montreal. A Tale of Two Worlds forms a sharp contrast to the picture of the artist in Our Little Life,⁵ whose "lower depths" world is black indeed.

Set in Montreal in 1917-18, the book is unique for its time in that it presents a totally realistic picture of slum life in a big Canadian

city. In addition to comparing and contrasting the experiences of first-generation and second-generation immigrants in an urban setting, the book must be one of the earliest novels in Canada to explore feminism. Several "artists" are presented in the novel: a successful journalist and writer named Eileen Martyn, who appears to be the author herself; a seamstress, Miss McGee, who has a flair for clothing design, but who, unlike Elizabeth in The Viking Heart, never develops her gift because of lack of opportunity in her environment; and that ubiquitous figure in the Canadian novel, an Englishman who has come to the Dominion with money and lost it in bad investments. Unlike Susannah Moodie's husband, Robert Fulton does not have an enterprising wife to write to the Governor for him. Fulton dies in the influenza epidemic of 1918, but not before completing The Canada Book, a short account of his impressions of the Dominion. Though Fulton demonstrates that he has a talent for writing, he is a sensitive man for whom no place yet exists in Canadian society. Only the robust survive the slums of Montreal as they are presented in Sime's novel.

Robert and Miss McGee live in Penelope's Buildings, a cluster of run-down tenement houses near St. Patrick's Church. The Prologue to the book deals with the slow deterioration of the houses from "desirable residences" in the 1860s to the "sorry sight" they are during the action of the book. Sime gives the reader so much information about the location of the houses that it is possible to pin down the section of Montreal where they were located.⁶ During the day Robert works at the butter and cheese counter of Arundel's Market, which is the "best" food store in the city. The store is "all marble and glass and tiles and linen suits: and Robert and his fellow-salesmen and the young lady cashiers . . . were just pawns in the hands of

financiers 'playing the game' and making money out of them" (125). Robert knows of and resents this exploitation. In the evening he writes, not spontaneously but slowly after much consideration. His only joy is in his writing, but as he knows that anything he writes would be unsaleable, he sticks to butter and cheese. He never thinks of the writing as a commercial asset, but as a means of forgetting himself (54):

Sometimes when he had managed to transmit to paper, in such a way that he thought it might be understood, the deep underworld of his own thought, he felt dimly as if he had perhaps touched a spot where . . . he met humanity's thought. He felt, always dimly, that if you get down deep enough into your own underworld, you come also to the underworld of other people. That there is a communal region where we all feel--and that if we feel must we not in time think--much alike; and that, in having cleared the way an inch or two towards that kingdom of satisfaction--contentment--peace, that core of life where sympathy and understanding are--he had done something worth doing There was a deep satisfaction in leaning an elbow on the table and looking up into the sapphire night-sky and trying to find the word he wanted there To Robert, to whom the world was a slippery place, a missing word was a foothold where he could perch for a moment and find satisfaction. (5-6)

Robert was made for a quiet and orderly life. He had sometimes thought that if he had been a fifteenth-century monk busy over a manuscript he would have been happy. He often imagines to himself "an old monastery, gray and enduring and beautiful . . . and the cloistered peacefulness of working there" (61), and in his imaginings or in his search for the right word, he is often interrupted by the toot of a motor-horn. Robert's love for clarity and beauty finds little outlet in the life he leads. One day while reading the Odyssey, he muses that the slaves then were better off than he is now because they lived in a civilization far more beautiful than anything we have to show today (99).

Robert's subject is Canada itself. Six years before he had come to the Dominion with "wares to sell," wares that had been "inside his head,

and without being unduly proud of them, he had felt that they ought to be saleable They hadn't been" (6). Robert had come to Canada to teach and had disliked the profession. He writes at one point that cultured people have been at some pains to lay hold of higher education, and what they need is to bring that education into some relation with life. To that end they must come back to the ordinary things of life and realize how intimately these are connected with the knowledge they have stuck on from the outside. Though Robert has this insight about teaching during the writing of the Canada Book, his failure at it clearly has contributed to his sense of injustice, and though he does not realize it, his sense of injustice shows itself in the book. Sime points out that Robert is the type of the unsuccessful immigrant, because in the "New World" the "mirror" in which one looks at things is money, and "in the new countries there is nothing that can be had without money--things unbuyable and unsaleable don't exist there" (8). She says further that "It is a nice question just how comfortable we need to be for the artist in us to exert himself. Can you be artistic when the thermometer is 24 below and an icy wind is blowing and you haven't a fur coat?" (8). Robert, doing uncongenial work, not getting enough to eat, and living in Penelope's Buildings, sees the world as an "ugly place, an unworthy place--an odious slatternly wicked place" (8). Sime's long authorial introduction to Robert's monograph on Canada enables her to be negative about the experience of the Canadian immigrant while at the same time discounting many of Robert's feelings. The reader becomes acquainted with the contents of the monograph through the device of having Robert read it aloud to Miss McGee. Sime remarks that Robert has the "unlucky artistic streak that demands sympathy" (11), and Miss McGee is sure to shower "warm

human sympathy" on him.

The first section of Robert's book notes Canada's atmosphere, what he calls the "spirit of aroused egoism" walking abroad; he notes that those who like the country come to it in "something of a kindred spirit" (34). What he sees as lacking in Canada in spite of her youthfulness is "the spirit of fertility--fertility of brain and imagination, without which the fertility of field and forest and stream are of little profit" (36). The country is still in the early "spoilt-child stage, the stage of noise and grab and acquisitiveness and intense appetite for the material things of life" (38).

Robert's ostensible reason for writing his Canada Book is to show the effect of Canada on her in-coming population, principally from England, Scotland, and Ireland. He also wished to show the effect of these immigrants on the land they came to. But he makes certain assumptions that distort his observations. He thinks that the Canadian manual worker is the British manual worker enriched, and mistakenly he also thinks of himself as a manual worker because of his labour at Arundel's Market. He also makes the assumption that England is the only possible place the immigrant can set out from or go back to. Thus the opening of the book suggests that democracy is the rule of the unfit, and as he comes to see, his facts are "set forth in an aristocratic atmosphere" (109). Miss McGee makes him see that the advantage of a money standard is that one is not categorized from birth as belonging to a definite class. Miss McGee, who has no money, feels herself "the beat of Mrs. Glassridge" any day. Though Mrs. Glassridge has money, there is no distinction of class between her and Miss McGee.

Robert's views of "Cultured People" is that they will learn a harsh

lesson from contact with Canada, but on the whole he believes that lesson to be necessary and salutary, that is, that education and ordinary life are intimately connected. Ironically, at the time Robert is writing this section of the Canada Book, he himself has not yet learned the lesson, though he certainly fits his own category of "Cultured People," but by the time he completes the Canada Book, he has learned this lesson all too well.

In addition to manual workers and "Cultured People" (a category which includes teachers), Robert assesses a third class of immigrants--clerks and stenographers, three-fourths of whom are women. He talks of them as professional entities with careers of their own, and does not assess them in terms of marriage and husbands. This attitude is a revelation to Miss McGee, as women did not generally have "careers" up to the time of the Great War. In 1917 women's issues would not yet have reached someone like Miss McGee. Robert points out that women who go out to Canada accustom the country to the "idea of women occupying themselves with something else than the domesticities" (115). Thus Robert is presented by Sime as taking for granted feminist views of work that had not yet taken hold in Canada. McGee wonders: "Could women be things that had work to do much as men had? Could they make that work their life--as men mostly did? And if this was possible, were they entitled to the same amount of space in the world as men normally took up? And if so, would the world be big enough for them both?" (116). McGee reconsiders her own work and wonders whether she too "molds the Dominion" as the female clerks and stenographers from Britain do? Section II of Robert's book establishes in Miss McGee's mind the gender of work: it is neuter.

Robert begins Section III of the Canada Book with some prefatory remarks about the want of leisure which breeds a certain callousness in Canadian

life: "Leisure to grow is to the mind what good air is to the body; and mental life is deformed no less surely than the physical body when such elementary needs are denied" (179). He then moves on to a discussion of the "lack of interest in things artistic" that the immigrant to Canada brings with him from England. Miss McGee realizes that his essay represents an attack on her "inartistic" pleasures, and she thinks of Old Nancy, her mother's friend, dancing an Irish jig. As Sime remarks, ". . . class wrote his essay and showed in every line of it" (182). However, he proceeds to argue that though a period of personal ambition, self-assertion, and acquisitiveness is ahead of the immigrant, it may prove to be only a stage on the way to something better.

Section IV of the Canada Book deals with what Robert calls "the romance of the immigrant" (194), that is, the forcing of the immigrant to self-consciousness: "What they confusedly felt at home--that they are not getting their due and that the powerful classes are somehow taking an unfair advantage over them--develops into a conscious and definite thought" (194). The worker at "home" is publicly articulate through trade unions; in Canada he becomes articulate as an individual. He enters the "individualistic stage with its commercial views and aims" (195). By slow degrees the worker learns what disenchantment means, and therein is the romance of the situation. The worker determines to prove himself equal to the best, and a sense of self-respect is awakened in him.

After writing Section IV of the book, Robert becomes discouraged because he feels that the book is not "real", it seems an odd book to be writing in the midst of a war-ridden world, but even more, the antagonism in Miss McGee's eyes when he reads certain sections of it has begun to make

him skeptical of the entire enterprise. Some time lapses before he is able to write the fifth section. In the interim he has reached a "midway" state: "His desire was to be heart and soul with the worker and yet he was uneasily conscious of being driven away from him both by the fastidiousness of his senses and by the convolutions of his brain" (250). The fifth section deals with the relationship between Canada and the artist. Robert writes that the newer worlds crush out the artist in the man, except in the rare cases of an artist of unusual ability and strength. The artist will have to take his pleasure in feeling that he has attained the power of looking things straight in the face, that is, he has become an "artist in life" (256). This principle applies to both the specialized artist and the humblest craftsman. Though this process may be viewed as negative, it has its positive side. The artist and craftsman cast away many of their preconceived ideas in Canada; they cease to be one of a class and become distinctive human beings. The long road that passes through egoism and acquisitiveness leads slowly to knowledge and mastery. The worker is born again--out of a class and as an individual, and what we call art is bound to suffer. In the birth of self-consciousness, art must go for a time. Robert perceives that the worker is not likely to be happy in Canada, but wonders whether anyone can be happy if self-consciousness is being used only to further one's own interests. However, in escaping from tradition and a narrow groove, he acquires resourcefulness and adaptability.

The sixth and final section of the Canada Book is written a few weeks before Robert dies. Robert writes this last section with ease. He feels that he has never been so close to life before. Partly he is inspired by the sight of a circulatory Mass that the Church has sent round the streets

of Regalia to comfort the populace during the influenza epidemic. He has felt united to his fellows by seeing their faces full of belief and hope, and he feels for the final section of the book "some of the affection the monk Robert would have felt for the missal he decorated with leaves and flowers" (358-59). He writes that, in spite of the apparent prerogatives which the immigrants have secured, they miss the traditions they have left behind them, the courtesy, the reticence, the refinement of many generations; in short, they miss the aristocratic view of life, and no amount of mere material prosperity can make up for it. The immigrants who come to Canada in childhood will become Canadians pure and simple, adapting themselves to the inferior grade of workmanship that Canada demands. Viewed materially, the workers do improve their condition. They live in greater comfort after being down-trodden and poverty-stricken, but deep down in them will go on the more-or-less unconscious conflict of the spirit of the New World against the tradition of the old. It is the combination of these divergent strains that makes Canada such a confusing place. "The immigrants want on the one hand the old monarchical form of government, with leaders to look up to and obey, and on the other hand they want absolute freedom of action and speech, the most pronounced individualism imaginable, and the lack of manners that goes with such an ideal. Canada is pulled two ways at once" (366). Robert argues that titles and ribbons still exercise a fascination on the stone-breaker and the tradesman. If Canadians had had the courage to reject these unsuitable and irrelevant symbols of something they are not, how the world would have admired them:

If they would leave aristocracy alone, if they would not attempt to found a noblesse of silver plate and pinchbeck; if they would acknowledge themselves for what they are--the descendants of the

Workers of the world, those very workers upon whom the world has been dependent for so many centuries and by whose aid the great power over nature, which the world is so busy wasting to-day, has been obtained--who would be found to criticize or slight them? Who would not rather join the company of emigrants and make with all speed for such a land of Promise and Performance?

We must wait yet awhile . . . before such a scheme of things as that can find acceptance: the time of chaos is upon us and will stay with us many a weary day. Yet so many things--bad as well as good--are being shattered to bits around us now that it is not unreasonable to hope perhaps, that some time they will be remolded nearer the heart's desire. (368)

With this section of the Canada Book, Miss McGee feels totally in accord. She realizes that both she and Robert resent Mrs. Glassridge's way of life for the same reason: both believe she has no right to such a life. She has no right to her "Louis SEXTORZE drawing-room--because she could not appreciate it, and therefore could not really possess it" (367). Miss McGee realizes that in order to possess things one must really be possessed by them: "you must know enough to be able to enjoy what they can give you--otherwise you hold a dead songster in your hand" (367).

Thus not only does Our Little Life as a whole prove the unsuitability of Robert to life in Canada and particularly life in the slums of a Canadian city, but Robert's own Canada Book reinforces the point. Robert is one of the "Cultured People" he describes whose education has left them unsuited for the realities of everyday life. Canada's cultural life is at a fairly uncomplicated stage, and someone suited to be a fifteenth-century monk busy at a manuscript cannot be absorbed into a culture which is still at a fairly early stage of development, as evidenced by its concern with the acquisition of material things and its failure to place an appropriate value on art. Robert is simply out of his element, despite his final comprehension of the worth and dignity of Miss McGee's friends and family:

Robert Fulton would have been well content to have been . . . a quiet monk of the fourteenth or fifteenth century, happily settled in his monastery, a digger in the earth there, a peaceful cultivator of herbs or fruits or flowers; possibly the illuminator of a script; never a St. Augustine, a great sinner and a great repentor, one of those who, for the relief of his own mind and body, must be doing--either right or wrong. Robert was one of those calmer souls who are content to be. Willingly would he have passed his days noting, but only mentally . . . the things of this world as they went by him: for his active pursuits he might have made a small accurate drawing, of a tree-branch, perhaps, or he might have made a study of a flower

He had no chance of developing this type of being. Robert Fulton was one of the many people of our day who are being hurried more rapidly than was good for him--as he himself in his Canada Book declared the immigrants to have been--into a further stage of evolution. The experiment the modern world (in conjunction with his own folly) was trying on Robert Fulton was undue poverty and a long grind of uncongenial toil. (302)

After Robert's death, which seems inevitable from the beginning, Eileen

Martyn reads the following passage from the Canada Book to Miss McGee:

A human being, like a bulb, ought to pass a certain period in the cool darkness and give his roots time to get strength and penetrate downwards. After he is rooted let him spread by all means; but until he has the power of growth in him let him be kept comfortably in his cellar and watered punctually and tended with all due care; and let those premature leaves which will prevent the healthy formation of the latter blossom be judiciously repressed. (383)

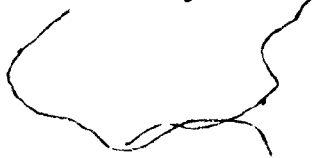
The passage is almost like an epitaph for Robert, the artist. Because of the brutal circumstances under which he has lived, he only has managed sheer survival for a brief time. His artistic gift, and his gift for a special kind of life, have never been nurtured. As Sime remarks, "Robert Fulton was built for a temperate zone, and the arctic winters and torrid summers of Canada were not for him" (60). Robert's analysis of Canadian society is almost congruent with Sime's. Miss McGee is Sime's corrective to the Canada Book, but by making Robert slowly come to comprehend the wealth of Miss McGee's heart and mind, Sime's and Robert's views of Canada coalesce at the end.

Miss McGee is herself an artist who has deserved but never received nurture. She lives under the same brutal circumstances as Robert, but survives because she is inured to deprivation and bears it with more fortitude and resiliency. Miss McGee sews for the miserable wage of a dollar and a half per day. To keep her customers, she needs the "address and the balance of a ballet-dancer and the astuteness and slippery eloquence of a diplomatist" (15). "The sword of Damocles hung over her head every minute of every working day" (17). Forty-six year old Miss McGee has been a seamstress for over thirty years. She is herself an immigrant, having come from Ireland as a baby with her mother and six-year-old sister. Across the hall from Miss McGee in Penelope's Buildings live at various times dope pushers and prostitutes. She is herself a respectable spinster who faithfully nursed her mother through cancer and thereby missed an opportunity to marry. Another suitor had been declared unsuitable by her mother. By and large, Miss McGee sees her own life as one of petty, futile failure.

One of Miss McGee's customers is Mrs. Glassridge, a former manicurist who had become the second wife of a wealthy man. Miss McGee sews at the Glassridge household more out of tradition than need, as Mrs. Glassridge buys all her gowns in Paris. However, it is in this household that Miss McGee feels happy when working. Though she only puts on little velvet collars or replaces some tulle or lisse "where a capable French hand had put it in," she loves the "feeling" of the clothing, and the totally unexpected little bits of artistry and cleverness she comes across. While fixing a cuff where a stitch has come undone, she is cognisant of "what a different ideal exists on the French side of the Atlantic, what finish is put into the work there, what brain there is behind those elaborately simply little gowns" (83).

Miss McGee actually does not care for dressmaking. What she has is a flair for clothes. She can predict trends in fashion, what will and will not be in style. She can point out where a given finished article can be altered to give a desired effect. With the proper training, she could have been an "artist in clothes," what today we would call a designer. If she had emerged from a Paris atelier instead of a "two-penny-halfpenny dressmaking stunt in Regalia city" (231), she would have liked dressmaking. As it is, her repeated failure in embodying her ideal has gradually undermined her interest in her profession. She wanted to produce on her own the beautiful simple lines of the best French frocks, but she lacks the knowledge and training. Early in her career, she had detested the everlasting "making over" of frocks with hardly ever an opportunity to cut into a new piece of material. In recent years, with the realization that she does not know how to "create," she has been relieved when her customers have turned over to her last year's gown to be remodelled. She can at least gain a feeling of solid satisfaction in work well done.

Time makes clear that, although Miss McGee's love of beauty would have manifested itself in the design of clothing, her interest in art would have extended itself to other areas under other circumstances. Miss McGee is presented as demonstrating an untutored but genuinely appreciative response at a piano recital, a poetry lecture and reading, and a band concert. On these occasions she is with Robert, who takes them as a matter of course. For Miss McGee, Robert is "connected in some inscrutable way with her desire to make beautiful gowns" (233), but he is also connected "with her desire for beauty--for the lovely in life" (233). On the night



of the concert, she is ecstatic when the pianist plays, but she feels that the beauty is unbearable because it is transitory, and her soul is yearning to keep something she cannot have. She has felt the same sensation at the poet's lecture and even during the reading of the Canada Book. Despite her disagreement with parts of it, she is aware of the education and training that have contributed to the writing of each sentence. Sime points out that Miss McGee's mind is "made of some elastic material, and the more you had given her to put into it, the more it would have stretched" (237). In fact, Sime notes that despite Robert's education, he had not "half as big a mind as Miss McGee" (237). Nonetheless, Miss McGee is presented as an example of the worker described in the Canada Book who is being born again out of a class and as an individual, and, as Robert argues, art must take a temporary back seat during this process.

Unlike Robert, Miss McGee "liked her fellow-mortals" (306). It would have been difficult for her to do without them, and she would have chosen disagreeable people as friends rather than none at all. Moreover, unlike Robert, "she was so rootedly city-bred too that her heart always gave a bound in her when she saw the unkempt side-walks and the flashing electric lights of Regalia city once more. She didn't really like country life. It was "noice" but it was dull. After a bit the cows got on her nerves and she began to wish the trees would talk" (306). The contemplative life for which Robert was eminently suited would have bored and irritated her, and part of her antagonism towards the Canada Book is based on her understanding that it is an indictment of modern life, and modern life, as Miss McGee lives it in Regalia city, is full of variety and interest for her. Strolling along St. Hubert's Boulevard, catching sight of a suit

in a shop window, and asking the young lady to take the suit off the mannequin for examination is, for her, having a grand time and using the opportunities that the city affords to learn some more tricks of her trade. A picnic with Robert up on Regalia hill (Mount Royal) is not less attractive because she is not actually out in the country. In fact, one can see the "world" from Regalia hill, and the sky is "great" and "grand" from there.

In the trolley-car ride out to Summer Park that Robert and Miss McGee take, Robert is miserable but Miss McGee is "entirely and absolutely happy" (317). The ride takes the pair through the French-Canadian part of Regalia which has "the look, the air, above all, the smell of the French suburb or the small provincial French town" (317). They ride through the Jewish section, and then a polyglot assortment of tongues reaches their ears: Yiddish, German, Russian, Polish, Montenegrin, and others. There are Japanese too on the trolley, and it strikes Robert suddenly "what a cosmopolitan city, after all, he and Miss McGee lived in" (318). In the end Robert's sophistication comes to the fore, and it is he who sees the Japanese as having faces that look like old ivory with the sun on it, and Miss McGee whose parochialism makes her think of them as "dagoes" and "chinks." What also passes through Robert's mind at that moment is that Japan is just on the verge of being "daubed over" by the civilization of the west, so eventually his glimpse of the cosmopolitan nature of the city becomes another indictment of modern society.

It is left to Miss McGee to become the "artist in life" that Robert describes in the fifth section of the Canada Book. Her love of Robert,

her kindness and generosity to Mrs. Morphy and Cassie Healy, her nursing of the helpless influenza epidemic victims in Penelope's Buildings at the end of the book, and her endurance of her lot show beauty in living that perhaps far surpasses in value anything she might have achieved through conventional development of her artistic talent.

The third artist in the book is Eileen Martyn, journalist and writer, who supports herself by writing. She also falls into one of Robert's Canada Book categories, women who mould the Dominion. She is interested in politics, the obligations of the municipality, housing problems, the life of the poor. Her attitude to Canada is presented as "half-respectful, half-patronizing" (143). It is Eileen Martyn who sends Miss McGee the two tickets to the lecture of the Irish poet (probably Yeats), thereby recognizing something in her that is usually not apparent to the world. Eileen Martyn lives in a flat which contains an end room looking straight into a tree, and beyond the tree one can see the whole hill of Regalia rising up and forming a background. Eileen Martyn tells Robert and Miss McGee that, though the flat has many disadvantages, the view from this room keeps her there. Her credentials as a lover of beauty are further established by the rich blue colour of her blouse, her big copper tray, and her discernment in making coffee. Robert's past surges up in him as a result of contact with Eileen Martyn. She tells Robert that he should never have come to Canada because his temperament is unsuited to it, thereby implying that hers is. She reminds him that he is a lover of ideas, and that "Canada hasn't any ideas . . . except about gasoline tanks from one end of it to the other" (291). When Robert meets her, she is about to leave on a job to "write up that everlasting West" (292), and she is just back from the south

where she has been writing about the rice fields of Arkansas. Her view of Canada is that it is not going to be half so good as England for a long, long time, though "there's something there" (294). She suggests that he write about Canada, which she sees as a "man's subject" that she has tackled without success. After Robert's death, Miss McGee entrusts the Canada Book to Eileen Martyn. As Miss Martyn turns the pages of Robert's book, she gradually becomes interested in what it has to say, and it is clear that she is favourably impressed. We are left with the impression that though Robert failed as an artist in life, Miss Martyn will see to it that he gets a hearing in death. Because Sime has presented Eileen Martyn as a successful professional, Robert is thus authenticated as a writer. As Eileen Martyn appears to be a self-portrait, one must ultimately see the Canada Book as a record of Sime's change of heart towards the Dominion, with the proviso that Sime's view of the Dominion includes Miss McGee and her social class from the beginning and Robert's does not. Sime was a success in the Dominion because she had the adaptability and temperament that Robert did not, but so too did Eileen Martyn, with her willingness to supply the demand for articles about the everlasting West. Eileen Martyn appears to have been at work on a novel as well, a novel in which Miss McGee may have been a character (143). Sime may have found it amusing to write about herself writing about Miss McGee. In a larger sense, the entire novel is a comment on itself, as many of the immigrants described in the Canada Book appear in the novel directly as characters or indirectly through Miss McGee's reminiscences. If Sime had laboriously learned the lesson of how to succeed as an artist in the Dominion, she cannot be faulted for wanting to record

that experience. Though Our Little Life is not a first novel it has that freshness of apprehension that first novels often have, and, in one sense, it is a first novel in that it deals with starting fresh in a new land. So considered, Our Little Life has certain qualities of a bildungsroman.

Though it would appear at first that the picture of the artist presented in Our Little Life is bleak indeed, on closer examination, and despite the gasoline tanks, Sime offers hope for the future of art in Canada. Much of what was predicted in the Canada Book has come to pass in the last sixty years. Fred Jacob, pointing out five years after the publication of Our Little Life⁷ that painting had come much further than writing in Canada, would have been pleased to observe the relatively flourishing state of literature in Canada today, and Sime herself might have conceded that people like Robert could conceivably find a resting-place in contemporary Canadian society. However, during the post-war period Sime is writing about, Robert is doomed; not by being tempted by money as Daragon in Late Spring is, not by a willingness to settle for mediocrity as Fred Jacob's Peevee is, and not by the narrow respectability that John Hughes of It's Never Over faces, but by the simple struggle for survival that any slum dweller must make. Our Little Life touches an area of Canadian urban life that largely had been ignored in literature. (Ralph Connor's The Foreigner is concerned with slum life, but not in relation to the artist.)

Sime describes a limited area of Montreal with great precision in order to make clear Robert's negative aesthetic perception of it. Except for his friendship with Miss McGee, Robert is alienated and alone against the ugliness of urban life. His Canada Book is not only social commentary; it is also his attempt to handle his feelings of dissociation from the society

in which he lives. The book is a psychological defence mechanism, an externalization of his feeling that he is trapped in a hostile environment. In revealing the disorder around him, Robert attempts to impose order even if he has to do it imaginatively by projecting the future of Canada. Nonetheless, the book is a record of his failure to link himself to his environment, and Sime lays the blame for this failure on the primitive state of the country which has not developed to the point where Robert could fit in.

Sime presents Miss McGee as a counterpoise to Robert. She is less conscious of the ugliness of her surroundings than he is, though in her own way she is a person equally sensitive to beauty. Robert lacks a sense of community, but Miss McGee would prefer unpleasant people to none at all, and though they become the chief source of community for each other in the course of the book, she continues to have meaningful relationships with others. He does not. Far from being alienated from her environment, she is stimulated by it and thrives on its vitality and variety. McGee lives in an orderly world in which Robert, her family, her customers, and her religion all have a place. The misery around her arouses her compassion, and unlike Robert, she does not draw back out of fastidiousness from the slatte~~n~~ly, though she herself is as tidy and clean as the miserable circumstances in Penelope's Buildings will permit. It is clear that Miss McGee would be unhappy outside the city. Though Robert is defeated by the city, Miss McGee survives, and even gains new courage after her brush with death.

Though neither Robert nor Miss McGee can be said to be artists, at least unless one extends the definition of the term to its outermost limits,

one survives as a person and the other does not, though neither becomes the artist he is capable of being. Sime's book cannot be seen solely as a presentation of the "lower depths" of Canadian society. It looks forward to later realistic novels of urban life, but it also looks ahead to the city novel which takes the urban setting so completely for granted that the hero's desires are not shaped by the setting, which becomes incidental to other conflicts. Sime's approach to the problems of the artist in the city of 1917-18 is thus subsumed in the larger issue of sheer survival. The artist is seen as coming into his own some time in the future when Canadian culture is at a more developed state, and not in the embryonic form it is in in *Regalia* in 1917-18. Thus, though Robert's book may be published through Eileen Martyn's efforts, he never becomes a Canadian author, nor does McGee become a Canadian clothing designer. Though Eileen Martyn is a "Canadian author," she has almost no dramatic impact on the narrative, and her appearance seems almost pure self-indulgence on Sime's part.

Sime has done something in *Our Little Life*, however, which very few novels about artists do--she has not only shown us the artist creating, but the creation itself (as in *The Diviners*). The text of the *Canada Book* would indicate that Robert had some talent as a writer, something Sime clearly wanted the reader to see for himself. Normally the reader is asked to accept the writer's talent on faith, as in *White Narcissus*. Thus, the loss of Robert to Canadian letters is made doubly evident: we are told that it is a pity, and we can see for ourselves that it is.

A native writer who also believed that Canada was not yet ready to support a genuine literary culture was the drama critic, Fred Jacob, who satirizes the so-called "Canadian Renaissance of the Arts" in *Peevee* (1928).

Like Sime, Jacob thought that the aims of Canadian culture were still materialistic and that it was business rather than literature which was deserving of respect, that is, when commerce was linked to sound ethics. Jacob was dead by the time A. J. M. Smith published "Wanted--Canadian Criticism"⁸ in The Canadian Forum in 1928 (Peevee was published posthumously), but the critic of drama would have agreed with the poet about "Canada-consciousness." Smith remarked that its most characteristic form of expression was a "mixture of blind optimism and materialistic patriotism," which operated most efficiently in "the world of affairs" and found its ideal action summarized in the slogan "Buy Made in Canada Goods." Smith saw the problem as one of a confusion of values between commerce and art, stemming from the fact that a small population had been engaged in subduing a large new country and, perforce, had had to develop an exaggerated opinion of the value of material things. The point of view of Smith's essay is almost identical to that of Jacob in Peevee. Both men viewed Canadian writers as a "leaderless army" (Smith's phrase) attempting to survive in an atmosphere of materialism only too ready to seduce them from their allegiance to art, and catering to an audience that only wished to be flattered. The view that Smith and Jacob take of the literary milieu differs from Sime's only in that the two men stand inside the culture and Sime observes it from a distance. Sime is, as she says of Eileen Martyn, "half-respectful, half-patronizing." Jacob does not patronize; he laments and finally presents his hero as despairing.

Jacob planned to write four novels about social changes in Canada from the early post-Confederation period until his own time. He completed only the first two, Day Before Yesterday (1925), which ends at the turn of

the century, and Peevee, which is set in the first decade of this century and attacks the cultural pretensions of both Toronto and other, smaller Ontario cities.⁹ The third and fourth novels would have covered the period from just before the war to Jacob's own time and would have depicted "the replacement of the so-called ruling classes by the descendants of what were the lower classes among the pioneers" (viii).¹⁰ Like Sime, Jacob thought the immigrant would play an important role in the new culture. It is to be regretted that he did not complete the cycle, as the two books we have contain much perceptive social commentary.

In his Foreword to Peevee, Jacob states that he wishes to give a picture of "the rise to domination of the Middle Classes . . .", and to depict the period when "Canada was growing self-conscious in the arts" (vii), indeed; the "Canadian Renaissance," as it is labelled, is one of the main themes of the book. Those who patronize the arts are seen as pretentious and unable to distinguish between what is false or derivative and what is genuine and indigenous. When real talents surface, it must be recognized outside the country before Torontonians will acknowledge it. When the talented stay in Canada, they become bogged down in the mediocrity around them. A sense of inferiority in relation to Europe and the United States plagues both artist and audience and prevents the development of a reasonable critical standard. This point of view, though it refers to the pre-war period, is consistent with the view of cultural life in the twenties presented in the other books under discussion. Callaghan's view of culture, if compared point by point with Jacob's, would show it to be in a more advanced state of development, but allowances must be made for the fact that Jacob is writing satire and Callaghan is a pioneer realist.

To illustrate the decline of a Loyalist family, Jacob presents the Hortops, who have lived in Toronto since the time of the American Revolution and who stopped thriving with "the rise of responsible government in Canada" (10). The current head of the family, Simpson Hortop, spent two years at Oxford "so that he would not sound altogether Canadian when he spoke" (11). He and his cronies spend their time talking about the "domination of the plebian" (22). Mrs. Hortop is concerned that new standards are superseding the old ones and that vulgarity is flaunting itself in "high places." The Hortop daughters, with the exception of Bess, all have had "to go into offices" but spend "all their spare time finding eligible men to invite to the house" (17).

Bess represents the revitalization of the family. She not only educates herself differently from her sisters by choosing to go to university, but she views being independent as a desirable aim in itself, and opens a teashop on Yonge Street. She shows considerable business acumen, the shop prospers, and her customers start buying her sweets to eat at home. By the end of the book a chain of "Spinster Bess" candy shops is to be found in Toronto. Not only is Bess presented as an excellent businesswoman who manufactures an honestly made product, but she also turns out to be a twenties feminist. She remarks to Peevee that "no woman would ever accept a husband if she looked into the marriages of the majority of her friends to find encouragement," and that she herself does not have the "courage to risk getting settled permanently in futile and dispiriting surroundings" (381). Unlike other "independent" women in twenties novels, Bess does not marry. Compare, for example, Ellen in Settlers of the Marsh and the woman forest ranger in The Patterson Limit (discussed in Chapter VI). Among the books

under discussion, in Late Spring, Katherine Ryder, an interior designer, settles for another man when she cannot get the hero, and Frieda in Lantern Marsh (See Appendix II) marries a rich man and gives up both the hero and her career. Only Eileen Martyn in Our Little Life is presented, like Bess, without male attachments. In addition, Jacob's attitude towards Bess's business venture is refreshingly respectful. A character who makes a profit from selling something is treated with the same esteem usually reserved for the creative artist.

Jacob's attitude towards David MacLean is similar. MacLean played rugby, hockey, and lacrosse at university, and is still actively involved in amateur sports. He is part owner of a men's clothing shop known as "The Two Macs." The other "Mac" is Ted MacHenry, a boyhood friend of MacLean's. Though the book presents David more as a sportsman than as a businessman, nonetheless he does not suffer as a character because he derives his income from a shop. In fact, if the book can be said to present a picture of the ideal Canadian man, that man is David. David is the star player for the General Wolfes, a Toronto hockey team, whose nearest rivals for the Ontario championships are the Milltown team. The Milltown star is Slim Miller. On the night of the decisive game, Miller tosses away the championship for his team in order to assault David on the ice. Miller is charged with aggravated assault, but in the courtroom David achieves his finest hour by giving as little damaging evidence against Miller as possible. The magistrate maintains that David's attitude is "the only manly and proper one" (164). David's character is summed up by a former teacher of his named St. Quinton:

"An old teacher knows that you can meet a great many more healthy and hearty young men like McLean than sophisticated people

are willing to allow. I am not certain that it isn't wiser to bank on them than on the adolescent geniuses, or the niggling young fellows who mistake selfishness for ambition." (163)

A hero who is both a business man and a hockey player is unusual, but it is clear that Jacob is using the character to present what he sees as the cultural level achieved by Canadian society in the first decade of this century.

The other two businessmen in the book compare unfavourably to David. His partner, Ted MacHenry, after becoming successful as the result of the patronage of David's sporting friends, decides that the shop needs a better tone than the sporting crowd can give, and manages to ease David out of the business. Ted is described as having a "nasty, scheming mind" (179) by Laura Bateman, and indeed turns out to be the kind of man who forms friendships solely among the prominent and those who might be of use to him: ". . . every friend that MacHenry acknowledged was the manager of something if only the shoe-lace counter in a departmental store" (338). Stan Spencer similarly cultivates friendships with the rich and powerful, but unlike MacHenry, Spencer's prosperity is apparent, not real. Peevee describes Spencer's method of succeeding in business as a "get-rich-by-bluff" philosophy (218) constantly described in all the popular magazines. Even after his business ventures fail (they are financed by money virtually extorted from two old aunts), Spencer sees himself as the victim of a cruel fate because his methods have not worked, rather than as the crook he is. David remarks that he has a notion that "this country is filled with men who see things just that way" (249). Thus, though Jacob depicts two unsavoury businessmen, only Stan is actually dishonest and his dishonesty results in failure. The picture of these two men is overshadowed by the portrait of Bess, who

gives value for money and who represents a new and vital force in Canadian society.

In assessing the positive attitude Jacob takes to both sports and business in Canadian society, it is instructive to look at the attitude of the Hortops to these two subjects. Simpson Hortop is presented as an older, less crude version of Stan Spencer. He takes no pleasure in "regular hours devoted to working for an employer" (17), and had attempted to make money through speculation on land outside the city limits. Lacking business acumen, he had lost everything in the crash of 1894. He has spent the rest of his life in a sinecure at the civil service complaining about "the abominable salaries paid by the Government" (13). The implication is that Hortop expects a reward from society for being a member of one of the old Ontario families which "retired from public life" when Lord Durham upset things for the Family Compact" (10). That society is now rewarding the display of energy, initiative, and ability rather than birth is seen as an improvement in Canadian life. The Hortops also consider "all sports, especially the professionals, as vulgar" (56). Their objections are based on class. Just as Ted MacHenry feels that the patronage of the sporting crowd lowers the tone of his shop, the Hortops regard with disdain an activity taken part in by persons drawn from the lower classes.

However, it is the Toronto cultural establishment which draws Jacob's heaviest fire:

In small but aggressive circles, they claimed that the century would see the arts come into their own in Canada. To them, national consciousness meant patronage of the country's painting and literature. One earnest professor travelled from Halifax to Victoria lecturing on "The Canadian Renaissance." In every educational centre, little groups of men and women sought diligently for signs of genius in their midst, and cackled happily when they

thought they had found them. Canadian painters and writers would no longer have to go abroad for recognition and reward, they said. A renaissance indeed! (22)

The book satirizes two of these "small but aggressive circles." The first of these is headed by Mrs. Pentley Dickenson, whose "ambition" is that her "home should be regarded as the centre of the artistic and intellectual life of the city" (40). As for Professor Goldwin Smith and The Grange, she hints that he is himself "nothing more than a tradition, musty and out of place in a new century." Moreover, Mrs. Dickenson is prepared to leave those with an established reputation to Smith; she prefers to foster "youthful talent, the notable men and women of to-morrow" (41), and take the resultant credit for perspicacity. Mrs. Dickenson believes art in its highest form to be an amateur undertaking to be practised by amateurs. If an artistic production does not possess loose ends, she suspects commercialism. Her "mission" is to encourage promise and keep it unspotted from the influences that are to be found in the arts of other countries. She has battled admiration for Beardsley, Mrs. Humphrey Ward, Thomas Hardy, and Oscar Wilde. Though she would be annoyed at being accused of "anti-Bohemianism, in her set a "rigid, evangelical tone" is preserved: "It was a matter of pride with her that she never extended an invitation to a celebrity whose personal reputation was not a sweet odour in the fetid atmosphere of the arts" (43). We are told, for example, that while Beside the Bonnie Briar Bush and For Auld Lang Syne were still the novels of the hour, she had invited the author to stay at her house. As well, Mrs. Dickenson extends her patronage to a painter from Montreal who puts his sketches on view at a party she holds:

The mantel was cleared, and the artist placed his pictures in a careful row. For about ten minutes everybody stood silent, in

attitudes that suggested intense interest Then Mrs. Pentley Dickenson told them which sketch she liked, and the bolder spirits responded by pointing out to her the ones they preferred. The room was filled with cries of "That sky moves me deeply" and "I can just smell the woods".

An elderly gentleman who was known to buy pictures, which gave him the right to assert his preferences . . . pointed out his favourite . . . "This one is quite remarkable for its luminosity." . . . He casually dropped into his talk the names of several European painters, and if one of them happened to be a Spanish dramatist it did not greatly matter. He finished by saying:

"I must congratulate the man who gave this picture to the world. I voice Toronto's envy of his home city, Montreal."
(103-104)

Mrs. Dickenson caps this scene by giving a speech about the Canadian renaissance and kissing the artist's hand (that had held the brush). She concludes with the following words:

"And, in the name of Canada, I want to salute the man who has given us the right to feel that our art is the equal of any art in the world." (104)

At another reception, Mrs. Dickenson entertains Peevee and a woman novelist. Her work, which is very popular, consists of variations on a single theme:

She wrote about the maidenhood of girls, who, having been reared in a frozen environment, melted it completely by an unbroken cheerfulness. When they had transformed a group of cross-grained relatives into radiant saints, they achieved marriage as a reward and as a sign that the novel need not be continued any longer.
(125-26)

The novelist, like Mrs. Dickenson's other celebrities, prides herself on never having put into her books "a single line that could offend a person of refined sensibilities" (126). When the conversation turns towards literature, Mrs. Dickenson observes that art has nothing to do with morality, and that they "might meet without clashing but there was no relationship between them" (128). The novelist demurs, knowing full well that morality had done more

than art for the sale of her books. Though Mrs. Dickenson is parroting an English lecturer who has just been addressing women's clubs in the city, the position is consistent with the one she professes to hold on the divorce of art and morality. It is enough to recognize the principle--its implementation is another matter altogether. At one point Mrs. Dickenson manages to snare someone who actually has talent. He is an unpleasant young man who reads his verses even when not invited. He has been published in the leading American magazines, but speaks bitterly about Canadian editors who are willing to print his poems only if he does not expect payment.

Using Mrs. Dickenson Jacob gives us an earlier and cruder version of the "moral" control of the arts that Callaghan describes in It's Never Over. The main difference, and it is a significant one, is that the patrons of the artistic community in the Callaghan novel can identify merit, although it has to be allied to acceptable moral behaviour in order to be rewarded. The Dickenson set takes up anybody calling himself a Canadian artist, and so long as he does not offend morally, heaps on him uncritical praise. Thus Peevee becomes a favourite of the Dickenson coterie though he has taken only the most faltering steps along the road to being a writer. Peevee's sister Medora, who has been studying singing in Italy and is so bad a singer that she was hissed in a small Italian opera house, returns to Canada with a "European reputation" as "Mme. Medora Macready," and Jacob comments that "she was bound to be accepted in Toronto as a very great artist indeed" (302). Mrs. Dickenson arranges "a party to enable the local musicians to meet Medora, and everybody made a great deal of her . . ." (362).

Another patron of the arts in Toronto is Mrs. Decasser-Hunter, who has devoted a wealthy widowhood to entertaining actors and actresses. Except

for choral concerts, which she abhors, she attends everything deemed cultural. Mrs. Decasser-Hunter cultivates exactly the sort of Canadian artist that Mrs. Dickenson makes a point of avoiding, that is, the one who deliberately offends Toronto moral codes. Mrs. Decasser-Hunter holds a party for ex-Canadian author Tom Jack Mellin, who lives in New York:

He aimed to write of the realities of life, and years of laborious effort to free himself from all sentimentality had left him with the vocabulary of a wharf rat. He claimed that in style he was ahead of his time, even in a metropolitan city. Peevee could not remember having seen one of his books, though he had frequently read accounts of his activities in the literary pages of the local newspapers. These notes about his doings were the only output that Tom Jack Mellin got published with anything like regularity.

Peevee found Tom Jack Mellin a prim little man with the self-consciousness of a Y.M.C.A. secretary. He boasted about his affairs with women, and about his purpose in life, which was to tear away all that had been prettified in human nature and show the scabs beneath. (130)

Like Mrs. Dickenson and her set, the Decasser-Hunter set has no ability to judge the merit of the writer. Mellin is interesting to them because he deliberately offends the moral tone exemplified by Mrs. Dickenson. Both groups of people are prepared to pay homage to Canadian artists who can most charitably be described as having good intentions rather than a recognizably good body of work.

Dr. Newlin Jenkins, part of the Decasser-Hunter set, will acknowledge no Torontonians at all as having any merit. He has a degree from Harvard and wants it to be understood that, though he is from Toronto, he is not "of it." Though he dines regularly with prominent Toronto families, he speaks afterwards of the houses of the wealthy as "vulgar and unsightly" and of the owners as "upstarts, still reeking with the odour of the shops they had outgrown." He is fond of informing strangers from other cities that

some Toronto citizens are civilized in spite of their surroundings: "Will you let it be known in Montreal that we are not all pious hypocrites?" (133). The tone at Mrs. Dickenson's is unabated enthusiasm for the morally upright artist; at Mrs. Decasser-Hunter's the scoffing never ends. In both cliques, however, writers reap credit for things they intend to do, and many of them see no reason for going beyond the stage of announcing their plans. The Canadian "renaissance" in the arts is more fantasy than reality.

The Canadian renaissance also flourishes in Milltown, where Peevee eventually goes to live. There the principal patron of the arts is Mrs. Chapman, who conducts the women's page in the Gazette and is an admirer of Mrs. Dickenson. At a meeting of Mrs. Chapman's group, an agreement is reached that women who write verses should be known as poets rather than poetesses, as there is a degrading suggestion of inferiority in the latter term. Mrs. Chapman is thought of as a "whimsical" writer by her friends. Once, chiding the citizens of Milltown for not attending a performance by a touring ballet company, she had written ". . . why should I be annoyed about the vacant seats last night? . . . it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, as the dago poet, Mr. Odyssey Homer once remarked" (201).

Milltown also boasts a chapter of the Canadian Club, which Peevee is invited to address. His speech on the drama is scholarly and includes a section on Ibsen. The reaction is tolerantly friendly rather than cordial. Afterwards, Peevee is told by the Reverend Roddy Cochrane that Ibsen's "plays are too disturbing for Canadians." Further, Cochrane confides that he is "opposed to all translated dramas" (205). As an oblique object lesson, Peevee is taken to hear Gay Adams of Cleveland speak on "Western Civilization in the Orient": "Somehow, he made everybody feel how many blessings they

possessed in Milltown that were lacking in China and Japan" (207). Peevee learns his lesson, and when he speaks on "Canadian Literature" at the Canadian Club, Milltown is in the foreground of his address, which now includes the statement that in recent years "Toronto and Montreal had grown complacent and unless they mended their ways would cease to be in the intellectual centres of the Dominion" (208). His popularity makes Peevee recall a remark of Professor St. Quinton: "Ignorance need never be a handicap to a public speaker who possesses sufficient fluency" (208).

The editor of the Milltown paper, Humphery Cronk, believes that there are too many spineless citizens in the country: "Once he had made up his mind to think a thing, nothing could shake him" (195). Cronk believes that all French people are immoral, and that all impressionistic painting is a sign of a diseased mind. Cronk cannot understand why any Canadian should write a novel, "except on the off-chance of making a little money" (195), when the lists of literature are completely filled with the work of competent dead men. When Cronk hands Peevee a novel to review, the editor's intent is to curry favour with the author's father, who is one of Milltown's leading citizens. Peevee's review is pronounced "pernickety," though the glaring defects of the book are mentioned only briefly and what is commendable is enlarged upon. Peevee avoids confronting the book by talking generally about the folly of boosting mediocre novels simply because the author happens to live in the Dominion. In such a climate, there seems little future for either Canadian literature or criticism.

Peevee learns that, as a general rule, he cannot be critical of local practices. A baseball team made up of foreigners is to be established in Milltown and is to be known as the Milltown Union Jacks. As the city's

favourite motto is "Canada for the Canadians," Peevee is amused and writes a satirical article about the situation. A reprimand follows. Initially, Peevee feels that he owes it to his self-respect to resign, but eventually he concludes that satire can most safely be levelled at "the social peculiarities of the United States or the political blunders of the British Government" (224). In this instance, as in many others, Peevee dithers and takes the line of least resistance. In fact, Peevee's lacklustre performance is presented by Jacob as characteristic of Canadian culture in general.

According to Laura Bateman, Peevee, David, and MacHenry form the complete Canadian man:

"I know why you three go together You make one complete man--body, mind and spirit. David is the body,--a lovely attractive body; Ted is the mind,--a nasty, scheming mind; and you, Peevee, are the spirit,--whatever that may be. Something indefinable that never gets anywhere." (179)

David the sportsman and MacHenry the businessman, though they live by different codes, have in common energy, determination, and a willingness to take on responsibility. Peevee, who represents culture and the spirit, drifts and takes the line of least resistance. He is unable to marshal the energy required for excellence, though he is presented as talented and with a gift for satire. Jacob gives Peevee a physical disability to explain his willingness to drift eternally with the current--he has a heart defect, the nature of which is unspecified. Thus his "lack of heart" is both physical and mental.

From childhood on, Peevee has been viewed by his friends and family as one of the new breed of young Canadians who will "take a prominent place in any renaissance that happened to be on the way" (22). His schoolmasters

had predicted he would be heard from some day. In his third year as an undergraduate, Peevee had won a prize for a poem which was published in the Christmas number of a Toronto weekly paper. The poem, a satire of late nineteenth-century aestheticism, is taken at face value by Torontonians interested in the arts:

She sees the morning's baleful gleam;
 She sees the noon-day's fiery rays;
 She sees the sun's descending beam
 Cut like a sword athwart the haze;
 At night, low in the leaden sky,
 The moon a molten scar appears;
 Splashes of lightning gleam and die;
 Her eyes are blurred with unshed tears.
 The fetid breezes fan her brow;
 The purple curtains slowly wave;
 The pungent flowers in shadow bow,
 Like brooding mourners at a grave.
 At times, the night-bat sweeping by
 Brushes against her marble cheek;
 No tremor wakes her staring eye;
 Her bloodless lips ne'er move to speak. (92-93)

Peevee eventually destroys his copy of the poem, but after his death it is included in his memorial volume. A one-act play by Peevee called Dierdre, the Keeper of a Bee is similarly misunderstood. Peevee intends it as "a sort of travesty, with a flavouring of Maeterlinck and that fellow, Yeats" (93-94). When the Garrison Dramatic Club performs the play, the audience laughs appreciatively. At a supper party after the play, Peevee's friends toast him: "They sang about his being a jolly good fellow and about seeing him smiling. They told him that he had been born lucky; where but in Toronto could a man attempt to write like Maeterlinck and be mistaken for a humourist?" (119). When Peevee tells his friends that he had intended the play to be funny, they hoot and claim again that he has been lucky. The successful novelist who is a part of Mrs. Dickenson's circle writes a rave review in Once A Week, though she has missed the performance and bases her

opinion on a reading of the manuscript. Jacob sums up her review as follows:

She reproved the local dramatic writers for permitting themselves to be blinded to spiritual subtleties by the tinkling bells of laughter. She quoted lines that contained depths of poignant meaning and interpreted a number of symbols, all of which were new to the author. She would always remember her visit to Toronto because it had stored in her mind "a little bit of the infinite beauty".
(134-35)

Jacob's attack is hard: even simple, superficial parody is beyond the comprehension of the reviewer.

Peevee writes two other comedies which he sends to a play agent in New York. The agent returns one and pronounces the second "unconventional and amusing," but suggests that it be re-written by someone "with a better understanding of the requirements of Broadway. A Canadian background without 'mounties', or French patois was quite impossible" (185). Peevee tears up both manuscripts rather than meet the requirements of Broadway. He declares that he has been a fool to let his head be turned away by the "gush" over Dierdre. Neither Toronto nor New York seems ready for Canadian art, even if it is only superficial parody, but there is a hint in the episode that Peevee's unwillingness to rewrite is just lack of staying power.

When the novel opens, Peevee is working "contentedly" in a trust company, where his mother believes him to be stagnating, but after Dierdre, the Keeper of A Bee is performed, the editor of Once A Week, who finds the title of Peevee's play funny because he understands it, hires him to do a weekly article for the magazine. Peevee is to replace "Top Lofty," who is going to the States because he needs more "scope." Peevee visits his old mentor, Professor St. Quinton, with the news, and is asked whether he is a "smart young man on his way to New York" (109), but Peevee's commitment is to his own country; in fact, his first article is entitled "A City in Search of a

Legend." Journalism in Canada provided the perfect outlet for Peevee's talent for facile humour. After his crucial decision to abandon play-writing, he is offered a permanent job as a writer for Humphery Cronk's Milltown

Gazette:

Here was a way out. The burnt scraps of his plays were still lying on the hearth. He now realized that he had felt all along, even when sending them to the agent, that they were not good enough. What folly it would be to start doing the same thing again! Worse still, he might continue to drift round Mrs. Pentley Dickenson's home, where they seemed willing to treat him as if Dierdre, The Keeper of A Bee were sufficient for any man's life work. (187)

In Milltown, Peevee quickly learns that he possesses "no heroic prejudice against compromise" (224). He learns to attack the Czar of Russia but to go easy on the boys at home: "His work called for little effort, and the more his articles became a matter of routine, filled with jibes at foreigners, the better his employer liked them" (300).

The years pass quietly, and in an occasional short-lived burst of energy he works at a novel, but once he has learned from Gay Adams the technique of delivering addresses, he finds that activity so much easier that he is content to let his novel remain a "legend" among the Dickenson/Decasser-Hunter set. Originally Peevee begins his novel because comparative strangers entertain no doubt of his ability to write one. The passages he most enjoys writing satirize his friends. No matter how carefully he writes, they saunter into the narrative--Cronk, thundering ludicrously wrong opinions; Mrs. Decasser-Hunter, "a flamboyant disciple of clothes, dollars, and smartness" (293); Mrs. Dickenson, "earnest and rhapsodical" (293); and Professor St. Quinton, "an academic bird with a long bill, pecking at the world outside his cage" (293). Peevee is never able to reconcile the problems of satirizing his friends and finding an appropriate subject matter. In any

case, he continues to garner a reputation by making hardly any effort at all. Just before Peevee's death, Bess describes him as a fritterer who does things too easily and who goes "half-way" in many directions (381). His memorial volume includes only a fragmentary chapter for the novel. The volume does not include much else: Dierdre, the Keeper of a Bee, the prize poem, two short stories, a few newspaper articles, and several scraps of verse.

Peevee also has had a short-lived career as a politician. During his campaign he had spent a considerable amount of time preparing his addresses, but he discovers that the same technique that worked with the Business Men's Club of Milltown works with the voters. Jacob describes Peevee on the hustings:

Instinctively, he resorted to his best Gay Adams manner. He was right there to tell them it was a great thing to be a native son of Petersville, no matter where you happened to live. In fact, he found eminent men everywhere, given to the world by the town of Petersville . . . The audience liked the idea that Petersville was a sort of hotbed of high citizenship, and each new name won fresh applause. (311-12)

Peevee also discovers that his audience expect him to make them laugh. They detect jokes where he does not intend them. He falls back on stories that he had despised when he had heard them related by Gay Adams. Among the country people, Peevee earns the reputation of being able to "make a horse laugh" (316). Towards the end of his campaign, Peevee rescues a boy from drowning, and between his act of heroism and his sense of humour, he wins the seat. Peevee's weak heart is strained by his plunge into the icy current and eventually he dies. Even his death can be described as a petering out. Just before he dies, Peevee thinks that friends and admirers made life a weariness to the flesh when they kept on demanding "another step,

and another step, and another step towards some vague goal" (386). Peevee has never been able to muster up the energy required to develop his art, but then neither has the society in which he lives provided him with a congenial climate in which he could develop. The relatively immature state of the Canadian arts at the beginning of the century is the result of a failure of purpose by the artist and a failure of discernment by the community.

Of Peevee's set, one person does succeed in the arts, and that is Laura Bateman,¹¹ who scores a success in New York on the vaudeville stage. Jacob describes her as taking to New York "a self-confidence which carried her along with a velocity that less fortunate stage-struck girls would have attributed to luck" (276). For example, though she does not like the manager of a leading vaudeville theatre, she does not "shrink from declaring her belief in herself" (277) to him. Unlike Peevee, who retreats at the first sign of a setback, Laura perseveres and finally even Canadians must recognize her success. Laura, seen in Toronto before and after her departure as a "fallen woman" and a prodigal daughter, must now be measured by standards other than those of Mrs. Bateman's whist club. When Laura returns to Toronto as a vaudeville headliner, her native city finally exhibits a flattering degree of interest in her:

In many a drawing-room and at still more tea-tables, Laura the child, Laura the girl, and Laura the young woman were discussed, and people who had no first-hand knowledge of her escapades invented a few. Thousands of men and women had recognized her talent as an entertainer when she was a prattling infant. In the line-up at the box office could be found ticket-purchasers who never attended the theatre except to see stars of recognized social standing, and they were rubbing shoulders with common young persons who mirthfully remembered Laura Bateman's performances on skates at the Moss Park Rink. (282-83)

When Laura returns, she suggests to Peevee that he, like everyone else in

Toronto, had thought her destined for harlotry. Mildred MacHenry uses the occasion to push Ted into dissociating himself from Peevee and David. Thus, though Laura wins over some Torontonians by her fame, many pious and respectable citizens of the city continue to disapprove of her, and it is clear that the atmosphere of the city is not congenial to her free spirit and sense of fun. She needs another arena.

As Jacob presents it, the Canadian "renaissance" of the arts exists in name only. Though the idea that a new era had been ushered in existed in Canada at the turn of the century, Jacob scoffs at those who talk about national consciousness. National self-consciousness more accurately describes the state of things. Art is still too often seen as "an amateur undertaking to be practised by amateurs" (41), and artists are still required to conform in all respects to standards of personal respectability which have no connection with their ability as artists. The reverse is true as well, and the mere flouting of middle-class moral standards is mistaken for artistic integrity. Anyone who has made a success abroad is immediately feted in Toronto, which allows charlatans who have merely been abroad to return home in triumph and trade on their foreign success for the rest of their lives. Those who achieve success abroad stay there, as the apparatus does not exist in Canada for continuing a successful career begun elsewhere. Peevee as a type of the Canadian artist lacks the self-confidence and drive which distinguish Laura Bateman and send her into an arena which will nurture her talent. Laura's self-confidence and ability are similar to those qualities exhibited by Bess Hortop in business, where Jacob believed Canadians were beginning to excel. David too exemplifies Canadians at their best--he is an excellent sportsman with a well-developed sense of fair play.

But the book is the story of Peevee's failure and of how his society fails to support him as an artist. What he can do is not properly understood, and the praise he receives is both misdirected and over-enthusiastic. Being unable to develop the faculty of self-criticism, he allows himself to drift into mediocrity; indeed, mediocrity is what is demanded of him, and it is all too easy to supply. Writing in 1926, approximately twenty years after the time setting of Peevee, Jacob was still able to say, "As a man whose profession is the pen, not the brush, I hate to admit that painting has traveled much further in Canada than either literature or music, but that is the fact."¹⁴

Day Before Yesterday (1925),¹² the first novel of Jacob's projected quartet, takes place in 1887, but it includes a prologue which takes place "thirty-five, nearer forty" years later, that is, in the year the novel was written. A group of Torontonians visit the village outside Toronto where one of them was born. Fischer, one of the group, but born in Montreal, demonstrates an "air of superiority when speaking of any village" (9), but Timothy Loftus, who had lived in the town until he was twelve, regrets the "improvements" and sentimentalizes over the past. The prologue is followed by an account of the Loftus family's last year in the town before their move to Toronto. A way of life is presented that is full of grace, order, and standards of honour and decency that Jacob believed were no longer understood in the twenties. Here is Timothy's final comment on the family's move to Toronto, which Jacob viewed as representative of the breakdown of nineteenth-century small-town patterns of life for twentieth-century urbanization:

So we tore the leaf from our calendar prematurely, and left behind us the day before yesterday, when the older towns of Ontario were self-contained social entities, loosely connected with the

world outside their walls. Maybe they were narrow and ingrown; maybe they imitated too many of the bad old habits of their ancestors in caste and customs; maybe their prejudices and principles were what we, who are their children and grand-children, would call reactionary. They were petty, doubtless, but they were mellow. In many ways they were indefensible, but they were picturesque. They danced stiffly, but with dignity. Now they are gone, and who is so foolish as to grow lyric over the things that have passed because the new age out-grew them? We have been ironed out, and standardized, and knit more closely together, town to town, and so on. For what? We shall see. (319)

What we see in Peevee, the successor to Day Before Yesterday, is the beginnings of the development of a national consciousness about art in the city, but unfortunately a consciousness whose main characteristics are pretentiousness and ignorance combined with an insistence on a narrow respectability. The move from small town to the city also changes the nature of commerce, with men like Ted emerging into prominence. However, the urban approach to commerce also makes it possible for enterprising women like Bess to move into spheres that would have been closed to them in small towns; thus the size and variety of city life are positive forces which also make it possible for sheer merit, considered independently of sex, to force its way into a commercial structure that would otherwise be too rigid to contain it. The character in Peevee who most nearly embodies the values of Day Before Yesterday is David MacLean; for example, his insistence on assuming the burden of re-payment of Stan's debt to the old aunts represents a standard more characteristic of the earlier book than of Peevee. Stan's spending of money he does not have, the "get-rich-by-bluff" philosophy, foreshadows the large-scale consumer spending on credit that comes with widespread industrialization as the century progresses.

Jacob also published a collection of five one-act plays called One Third of a Bill (1925).¹³ In The Clever One Jacob satirizes a young woman

named Sadie who thinks of herself as a painter and as a "clever" woman. "She used the patter of the schools,/She learned tneir words by heart;/ And called all men and women fools/Who were not mixed in art."¹⁴ Through these methods, Sadie manages to snare an arty fellow named Orlando who is presented as inferior in character to Jack, the man she is engaged to, a practical and reliable man interested in sports rather than art. A self-conscious but uninformed interest in art also is satirized in Man's World.¹⁵ The play, set in a small Ontario town, refers to a "Culture Club" whose members are women. Very like Mrs. Chapman's club in Peevee, the "Culture Club" also holds monthly meetings at which there is more gossip than culture.

Jacob's early death at the age of forty-six was a great loss to Canadian letters. (Both of his novels deserve re-printing.) In a memorial article about him in the Canadian Forum, "J. E. H. M." (probably J. E. H. MacDonald) writes of Jacob as a man who saw life as a "give and take" of gay comedy."¹⁶ Jacob is remembered as a man who was willing, at a Jamboree night of the Arts and Letters Club, to dress up as "a lady from Bullock's Corners, eager for Art Culture, and dragging a bored husband round an imaginary O.S.A. picture exhibition."¹⁷ That seems a fitting image for the man who satirized the Canadian Renaissance with such verve in Peevee.

The two Jacob novels we have offer only a partial view of the shift in social patterns from small town to city. In Peevee, the development of cities has altered and, in some aspects, matured commerce into something more than pure materialism, but the arts are still infantile and so is the audience for them. One assumes that Jacob's later books would have shown how the infusion of new blood from immigration would have brought the arts

in Toronto, at least, to a state of adolescence, and perhaps even maturity in the case of painting. Therefore, Raymond Knister's White Narcissus (1929),¹⁸ which does not recognize that the city can and does continually fail the artist, stands by itself in its positive presentation of a successful linkage between city and writer. Although Knister often is seen as a rural writer--and works such as Corncob Corner and Other Places fit that description --it probably would be more accurate to say that he was a writer with a strong consciousness of the interconnected nature of rural and urban life. Knister's "rural" life, incidentally, is that of southwestern Ontario in the post-war period, a place which hardly can be described as "the new front line," to use Hubert Evans' phrase (see Chapter III). (In his poem "Wind's Way,"¹⁹ Knister gives almost equal weight to "the way of the wind with city smoke" as he gives to its "way with field scent," though he sees the city wind as "dark care" and the country wind as urging his heart to song.)

In White Narcissus, Knister presents the divided sensibility of a successful writer, Richard Milne. Brought up in Lower Warming, a rural community two hours away from Toronto, Milne has never been able to put the town behind him. Though he is totally committed to his life in Toronto, he has been drawn back repeatedly to the farming community by his love for Ada Lethen. She is a childhood sweetheart whose parents have not spoken to each other in twenty years. Her role in their lives is to protect them from each other and from the world. Just as Milne had aspired to write, she had aspired to compose music, but unlike Milne she had put aside her desire to go to the city in order to guard her parents. Mrs. Lethen raises white narcissus, which Knister awkwardly uses as a symbol for the emotional atmosphere in the Lethen house. Milne is presented as having achieved his

goal in leaving Lower Warring. He holds down a job in a Toronto advertising agency writing copy, and he also has published three books, "good work, creative books" (30). Milne views Ada as his inspiration, believing that her presence is essential to his continued creativity, and therefore makes repeated attempts to extricate her from her environment.

When Milne arrives in Lower Warring, he is very much the writer from Toronto. He finds the familiar road "incredibly foreign" (9) and feels lost. As he walks along, he projects his feelings of alienation upon nature; the very fields seem to question him. However, he slowly stops considering the landscape as scenery and starts to look at it "from its utilitarian aspect" (12)--that is, like a farmer considering the crops. This shift has the effect of bringing back his early hatred of the place and its inhabitants. His youthful desire to write had been blocked by the monotony of the seasons, by inertia, and by feelings of uncertainty. Though eventually he had started to write, he had not left the community until after his youth.

Milne soon stops feeling strange in the country and starts to think of his life in the city as strange. He can hardly believe in the existence of railway yards, factories, and suburbs. However, the more at home he feels, the more futile and uncertain he becomes. He decides to do some farm labour, since he has allowed himself a two-month "holiday" and there is little else to do. Caught up in the work, Milne scarcely remembers "the city, his books, his dealings with editors, and publishers, film companies . . ." (125). A return to the city seems inconceivable.

In an awkward paragraph, Knister presents Milne's confusion about the shift in sensibility he undergoes as the summer advances:

Where was his appreciated success, his poise between introspection and enterprise, which had made him the poetical

novelist and one of the most adept writers of mail-order advertising matter of his generation? The years which had laid the foundation of that surety, in health and resolute patience with hard circumstance, had returned upon him, and he seemed a callow youth daunted by a now unapproachable ideal, eating his heart out unwittingly before the suddenly comprehended difficulty of life. He felt that he had never worn anything but the overalls and shirt in which he was cultivating corn.

(131-32)

Milne becomes so uncertain about his identity as a writer that he secretly almost concurs in a neighbour's appraisal of him as having gone back to the land because poetry is "played out." Milne imagines a conversation in which he boasts of his income for the previous year and thereby defeats his neighbour, but he realizes that the man would not have believed him.

It is not only Milne's re-establishment of a childhood relation to the landscape that brings back his sense of futility and uncertainty, but it is also Ada's continued resistance to him. His love again proves incapable of dislodging her from her guardianship of her parents. Like the sleeping beauty, she lives in a house enveloped in protective vegetation, and Milne's repeated attempts to break the spell and carry her away all have failed:

The house was old, its narrow windows peered dark from drapery of Virginia Creeper, only the gables showing the weathered brick expanse which towered remote as though to scan the oblivious invader below. There was something secret but secure about the air of the house, like an awareness of its life indecipherable in dark hiding of the vines. (36)

Milne attempts to persuade Ada to leave through his presentation of the life she would have in the city: "I see you in exquisite gowns, radiant, differently beautiful, flattered by the lights of famous restaurants, of ballrooms I know" (243). He speaks enthusiastically of the life he leads in the city, "of his haunts . . . and of his friends . . ." He speaks with "humour, emotion, automatically rising spirits . . ." (243). However, the accident that breaks the spell for both of them has nothing to do with

his eloquence. His picture of an alternative life never sways her. He is linked to her so closely that we must assume his identity as a writer is restored to him at the moment Ada feels free to leave.

Ada's past as a young artist parallels Milne's. Like him, she had had a talent which needed a different environment if it were to be developed fully. As a girl she had been a pianist and composer. She had been taught by local girls returned from the Toronto Conservatory who had "insisted that Ada must 'go on' with her 'wonderful touch.'" Music had been "the impelling passion of her life, by which she existed" (98). As a budding composer, she had reached an impasse which could be resolved only by a departure from home:

She began to be haunted by the strange tantalizings which are known to the genius of expression. She would be in despair or dullness. Or a muted ecstasy came over her, in which, so high was her vision of the beauty she wanted to embody, she did not dare attempt composition. Everything was hard for her. It was unbearable to remain silent, chilling the music from her heart with duties of the household day; and unbearable to yearn for composition, filled with ineffable impulses which she knew from old would not flower into the singing perfection of art.
(98)

At the age of nineteen, Ada had decided not to leave home to further her art, but because "the music affected her too strongly," the piano, "looking like a giant black bier," had been stored and never opened again. This decision had resulted in a "nervous breakdown" from which she had recovered. Thereafter, a "nihilism of the emotions" protected her from "new courses" (99).

Since Ada chooses to remain in the farming community, she channels her love of beauty into literature and into what is even nearer at hand, nature. Milne sees the world Ada explores through her reading as a city which poses a riddle: ". . . you see the minarets of your city, lost in vapour, and you pause; and its riddle, while you rest, calls again" (39). He also

thinks that her wide reading has enabled her to look at nature "with the insight lent by the seers and poets of the ages" (244). Thus Ada does not see nature with the practical eye of the farmer's daughter but with the analytical eye of the artist: she is thus made to seem foreign to her surroundings, a shift that is necessary if Milne's purpose is to seem credible to the reader.

The reader also must infer that because of this cultivated opulence of spirit, Ada is as much an artist as Milne is, but she seems to be presented as an artist only to make her appear as a fitting partner for Milne. Kaister never presents Milne as suggesting that Ada should go to the city with him because she could develop a career as a composer there." Instead, Milne sees her richness of spirit as a necessary adjunct to his art:

Her part in his life, he looked back and saw, had been of a strong growth with his ambition and his bent for expression. And when those had taken him to the city against his will, where he had slaved and managed until his first books came out, and at the same time he had obtained a foothold in the advertising field, he still thought of no other woman She had become the core of his life, of all his intimate work, the concern of his hours, so that he could not write an eloquent sentence, see a fair morning, or step aside from danger, without her face.

(125-26)

Thus Ada's continued resistance to him reinforces Milne's sense of futility while at the same time it attaches him more firmly to his surroundings, though it is clear to him that he should leave. Ada represents completion for Milne, but it is a completion that is possible only in the nourishing atmosphere of the city. He knows he can never work at writing in that rural setting, and he also knows that his writing, first inspired by Ada, "would never loosen its hold upon him" (246). Ada must leave. When she is suddenly freed (and it is a weakness of the book that this is by accident rather than choice), the temporary hold of the rural setting on Milne is loosened.

The implication is that he returns to the self that is wholly artist.

Of course the artist in Milne never has been totally buried. Knister presents him as responding in a "literary" way to situations he encounters in his daily life in the rural community. After a conversation with Mr. Lethen which makes Richard realize how deep-seated differences between people can be, he realizes that he has glossed over these differences in a romantic manner in his writing. Milne seems to be consciously turning himself into a realistic writer. On being told by Arvin that his father's behaviour as an adult is the result of being picked on as a child, Milne's "never remote literary interest" comes to the surface (165). He responds to Arvin by describing his father as a "well-known psychological type" (165). It is hard to know what Knister had in mind (paranoid schizophrenic?), but more important is the assumption that an understanding of the young science of psychology would be standard equipment for a writer. Knister proves Milne's "literary interest" by having him make a remark that a psychologist of the twenties might have made. Thus Knister makes clear that Milne is in the literary avant-garde. In another passage, Milne berates himself for idealizing rural life. He realizes that nostalgia for his past rather than realism has determined his roseate pictures of the countryside. He has used standards different from those he would have applied in depicting the city:

In his writing, Richard Milne had concerned himself with such people as these, typical farm characters. But while he had blinked none of their littlenesses, critics had claimed that his novels presented too roseate a picture of rural life. The reason was that he had seemed to find these temporal idiosyncracies set off in due proportion against the elemental materials of life. But, he reflected now, that attitude was part of the nostalgia he experienced from his own past in such scenes; and it was a form of idealism which he saw as applicable no more to this milieu than

to any province of life more or less open to primal forces. He would not have idealized these in a setting of commerce or of society, and he had been wrong to blur them in a scene which his boyhood had known. (199-200)

Thus Milne's summer holiday starts a "further development in his own art"; he describes this development as an "increasing surface hardness," which he views as the "inevitable accompaniment to the progress of the significant novelists of his and an earlier day." It is clear that when Milne is restored to himself he will be able to use his rural experience as raw material for artistic creation. Though the author wishes to validate Milne as a writer through these passages, and also make clear that the writer Milne has not been overcome by the farmer Milne, the character only succeeds in sounding self-consciously didactic. Milne appears to be a stalking-horse for Knister, who elsewhere argues for early realists such as Grove and Merrill Denison.²⁰ If we are to see these passages as contributing to characterization, we must assume Milne to be unbearably pompous.

Despite Milne's view of realism, Knister offers the same romantic conception of the city that other writers offer of rural life. Once, in an effort to convince Ada that she must grasp the happiness he is offering, Milne argues for materialism, which he says is "based on the reality which is foundation to material things. People get it reversed and think that material things are the only basis of reality" (59). Milne argues that "things" must be subdued, and that people must take from life the emotions, experience, and fulfillment they need. However, when he is through he feels that he has given a "sales-talk," one that a "go-getter" of his city might give. The city seems like an "enthusiastic nightmare of another planet" (60). Aside from this negative presentation, the city is viewed with unthinking acceptance.

Knister does not present a conflict between Milne's role as a writer of advertising copy and his role as a "poetical novelist." When Milne describes himself as "one of the most adept writers of mail-order advertising matter of his generation," he is not being ironic. Despite Milne's scorn of "sales talks," he surprisingly exhibits no critical attitude towards writing advertising copy. Rather he sees himself as poised between "introspection" (presumably his creative work) and "enterprise" (his advertising copy). The problem the young writer has of supporting himself through his writing (which Knister was acutely aware of in his personal life) has hardly existed for Milne. In fact, his career seems like a fairy story. Once having extricated himself from the oppressive atmosphere of rural Ontario, he had "slaved and managed" (125) until his first books came out, but then had gone from one success to another. We are expected to believe, for example, that Milne has so large an annual income that his rural neighbour would not have credited the figure.

The details of Milne's social life in the city are equally romantic. The exquisite gowns, famous restaurants, and ballrooms of which Milne speaks to Ada seem to be objects drawn from a fantasy about the city on a level with Len's imaginings in Knister's short story "Mist Green Oats." However, while Len's fantasies strengthen him as a character, Milne's remarks are not of a piece with the person for whom Ada is a touchstone for true worthiness.²¹ There is also a hint in the text that sexual adventures take place in the city which do not occur elsewhere: ". . . he was prepared to allow himself a latitude which he saw in the lives of people around him . . ." (126). However, the reader is given to understand that Milne's attachment to Ada prevents him from becoming "engrossed," and that "freedom" is impossible

for him. Exactly what Milne means by "freedom" is not specified.

The principal problem in the depiction of Milne, however, is the pomposity of his language. Knister wishes to set Milne apart and stress the change in him since his departure from Lower Wapping. The author does this by giving Milne a stiff and unnatural diction which seems no more characteristic of the city and writers than it would be of the country and farmers:

"Mrs. Lethen . . . don't you find something more beautiful in the souls of people about you than in these flowers? Something warmer at least, that concerns you, your own fate and your happiness, rather than a momentary pleasure of the eyes. Are you sure you have not raised up an idol?" (111)

or

"Well . . . that is not as it may be assumed now. It would not appear safe to generalize until after the event." (148)

Milne occasionally exhibits a certain self-consciousness about his own speech --for example, when he thinks of himself as a "prig" (112) or when he realizes that his comments about materialism sound like a "sales talk," but this self-awareness hinges on content rather than form. Language that is meant to lend Milne dignity makes him sound like a puppet.

Our glimpses of Milne's writing career and of his daily life in Toronto give so romantic a picture of the position of the artist in the twenties that it verges on fantasy. Where Knister is strongest as a realist is when he depicts Milne surrendering to the rural life, but doing so self-consciously. The changes in his sensibility are suggested rather than broadly described. For example, in a conversation with Hymerson, Richard compliments him on Arvin's acuteness as a cattle-buyer. Richard mollifies Hymerson, which is his intent, by reverting to the "attitude and locutions of a former time" (70). The implication is that the knowledge of exactly what tone to take

and exactly what to say has lain dormant in him. He knows, for example, that he must delay raising the question of how long he is going to stay with Mrs. Hymerson or he will offend her. The terms of intercourse in the country include being able to "give as good as was sent," something Milne feels he cannot do, but which is necessary if he is to be treated with respect.

Milne's self-awareness sets him apart from a character such as Mr. Nance in "the Return of the Nances."²² That story deals with a couple, the Nances, who have spent two years in the city. They have just returned to live in the village where Nance had edited a weekly newspaper for many years. In various subtle ways Nance has lost his sensitivity to small-town life and the story deals with the trouble he gets into as a result of his lack of awareness of the changes in himself. Once he recovers his judgment, the town recognizes his worth again. Throughout, Nance remains unaware of the alterations in his sensibility. The story is effective partly because it suggests rather than describes the wide gap between rural and urban ways of dealing. Not only does Milne have an awareness that Nance lacks, but the writer comes as a visitor to the rural world, prepared to plunder it of what he sees as its main resource in order to complete an identity established elsewhere, whereas Nance is seeking to re-establish himself in rural surroundings. However, both short story and novel benefit from their setting in the rural world with which Knister is familiar rather than the urban world with which he seems uneasy. One thinks with skepticism of how Knister would have dealt with Milne in urban settings--for example, writing the copy at the advertising agency he works for, or attending one of the balls to which he refers.²³

Thus, Knister's nearly wholehearted acceptance of the city in White

Narcissus is questionable. It conflicts with the view of the artist and city presented in other realistic novels of the period and, more important, does not actually present a successful artist in an urban setting. The reader is asked to accept on faith action which is never shown through narrative. The protagonist presented in the rural setting is intended to testify to the authenticity of the writer in Toronto that we never see, but the protagonist's rhetoric, his philosophy, his theories of art, his stance to his rural neighbours are so awkwardly drawn that the reader remains skeptical about the accuracy of Milne's description of his life in an urban setting.

The clash between art and materialism, however, is reiterated in Peter Donovan's Late Spring (1930),²⁴ a novel which has far fewer pretensions than White Narcissus. Like Jacob, Donovan satirizes fashionable patronage of the arts in Toronto, but the clash he presents between the aims of materialism and the aims of art is balder and more superficial than the one in Jacob's book. Donovan eschews the bleakness of Sime's vision only to settle for an unsatisfactory and rather silly romantic close to a book which has patches of strong realistic writing. The chief protagonist is a would-be painter named Jack Daragon who also has a gift for salesmanship. Daragon had first been introduced to art at school by a German immigrant, Herr Deigel. Deigel, the foreigner, is presented as having an appreciation of the Canadian landscape that native Canadians lack, and eventually he manages to steer Daragon into art despite Daragon's awareness of the general conviction that painting is not respectable in a Canadian small town, ". . . all those genial, joking, mercilessly critical people of a Canadian small town, to whom art was impressive only as interpreted in terms of cash" (15).²¹

As a journalist, Donovan was aware of the backgrounds of the Group of Seven and Tom Thomson, and it is this biographical material that he draws on to characterize Daragon. For example, Donovan presents Daragon as working for "Palmer," a photographer who requires someone to touch up photographs and who does Christmas cards and calendars. When Daragon eventually goes to Toronto ("Yorkton"), he is advised to try to break into art through employment with Acme Engraving, a firm which does advertising and line engraving. The engraving firm which actually employed several members of the Group of Seven was Grip Limited of Toronto. J. E. H. MacDonald worked for Grip from 1884 to 1903 and then resumed work with them in 1907 when Tom Thomson joined Grip in order to do hand lettering and shading. Shortly after Lismer arrived in Canada, he joined the staff at Grip, and both Frank Johnston and Frank Carmichael worked there at one time or another. Thus, Donovan's placing of Daragon at a fictional firm similar to Grip would have identified him to readers as at least peripherally connected with the Group of Seven. However, Donovan presents Daragon as a man who has a talent for selling as well as art, and when Daragon tries to get a job at Acme, he gets taken on as a salesman rather than as an artist.

In addition, Donovan connects Daragon with the Group of Seven by presenting him as a frequenter of the Crafts Club, which is modelled on the Arts and Letters Club of Toronto. This Club, still in existence, acted as a meeting-place for artists and patrons of the arts. Augustus Bridle, a member of the Club, mentions the involvement of members of the Group in his monograph on the beginnings of the Arts and Letters Club.²⁵ Here is Donovan's description of the Crafts Club:

The way to the Crafts Club lay through a series of tortuous side streets in the older part of the city, and led finally to

a narrow crescent of lane which slipped stealthily around the sides and rear of a huge police-station The entrance to the Club was exactly opposite (33)

Donovan goes on to describe the antique iron lantern over the door and the huge brass plate with the name of the club engraved on it. The purpose of the club is seen as "nothing less than the leavening of the coarse but vigorous substance of Canadian life with the graces and spiritual influence of art. And the art was to be Canadian art, not borrowed from older and more sophisticated races, but new-born and indigenous, and miraculously fostered by many lunches" (32). These details are consistent with the physical appearance and purpose of the Arts and Letters Club, especially during its chronological co-existence with the "Canadian Renaissance." Some of the painters Daragon meets at the Crafts Club bear resemblances to members of the Group, for example, "Jennings," whose father is "worth about a million" and who paints "miners," might be modelled on the early Lawren Harris. Donovan's attitude towards the Crafts Club veers between veneration and satire, though he presents Daragon as being totally respectful of all he sees there. A famous violinist plays for the members and the "Painters' Table," at which Daragon sits, reacts in the following way:

Daragon found himself clapping violently and assuring his neighbours that this was "some artist." Becoming conscious of the vulgar inadequacy of the phrase, he stopped in confusion, but no one noticed. It would have made no difference if they had. The members of the Crafts Club were accustomed to disguise their emotional response to art in the phrases of the vernacular. It was bad form to be technical about any art but one's own. This was the Painters' Table, and they made no attempt to talk like musicians (44)

During his first months in Toronto, however, Daragon puts art aside and succeeds at selling. He manages to sell \$1000 worth of advertising to a notoriously recalcitrant Scot who first throws him down the stairs. Daragon

also sells an advertising scheme to Sir William Morland, the soap king. Daragon's sample drawings give Morland's soap factory the appearance of a cathedral, with "... tall chimneys piercing the epic sky like the spires of an industrial cathedral" (103). It is Daragon's aesthetic sense that makes him genuinely see beauty in the works, "the red mass of the clustered buildings, the myriad activities of the yard, the tall, black chimneys and the drifting lines of smoke etched against the grey, wintry sky, and farther off the Company's wharf and the ice-covered bay" (97), but it is his talent for selling that makes Sir William buy the idea, and thus fortify Daragon's position at Acme. When Daragon delivers the drawings to Sir William Morland's residence, Donovan takes the opportunity to describe what he calls "the new and strange constructions; borrowed from the architecture of almost every land under the sun" which have sprung up as Toronto has grown from a "straggling village on Lake Ontario to the chief city of the Province" (98). Morland's Georgian house in Rosemount has tall white pillars and a red brick facade. A massive fountain of Italian design stands in the centre of the lawn. The entrance gates are of iron "wrought elaborately into patterns of twining arabesques." Donovan comments that the "whole place was one which obviously cost what it cost . . ." (99). It is Sir William's daughter, Joan, whom Daragon eventually marries. Money and art are polarized in the novel to the point where credibility falters.

Art and wealthy art patrons meet at a dinner party that could have fit into Jacob's Peevee as easily as into Late Spring. Mrs. Bowden turns out to be a somewhat more sophisticated version of Mrs. Dickenson in Peevee. The guest of honour is the painter Robbie Robertson (modelled very loosely on Tom Thomson), who has a reputation for daring experimentation with colour,

for disappearing into the wilderness alone for months at a stretch, for taciturnity and dour humour, for being a woodsman, and most important for Mrs. Bowden's dinner party, for being pugnacious in his cups.

Robertson turns up drunk and inexcusably late and insults "Phillips," the art critic of The Beacon (probably Hector Charlesworth, art critic for Saturday Night), by referring to his habit of acquiring Canadian paintings by "Paragraph Purchase," that is, by praising the painter in print. Robertson's condition makes it impossible for him to play the part of social lion for which he has been destined by Mrs. Bowden, and the dinner party limps along. There is a second altercation between Phillips and Robertson when Phillips declares Canadian art to be too self-centred, as Canadians will not bother to find out what is being done in other countries. Robertson accuses Phillips of not knowing any more about painting than a wood louse. Daragon is torn between his feeling that Phillips is a "pompous little four-flusher" and that Robertson is an "offensive drunk" (120), but soon the artists become involved in a conversation together. As Robertson confides that he has nearly frozen to death out on the ice of a lake trying to get the colours of a hill in the sunset, "red and green snow," and that fellows like Phillips talk about Impressionism and Japanese pattern and "hell knows what," the source of the enmity between Robertson and Phillips becomes clear. Though Robertson cannot provide the entertainment Mrs. Bowden had hoped for, her other guests do not disappoint her. "Miss Ingalls" recites Rupert Brooke while "staring tragically over the heads of her audience" and twisting her hands together into a hard knot. Then the wife of one of the artists sings a number of French "Bergeronnettes" in a twittering voice while Miss Ingalls accompanies loudly. The entertainment is brought to a close by

Robertson's steady hiccuping. Thus Donovan manages simultaneously to satirize fashionable Toronto and the boorishness of both artists and art critics. On the whole, Mrs. Bowden, a bit of a Boadicea, emerges most creditably from her own dinner party.

The encounter between Robertson and Daragon also makes clear the latter's continuing interest in art. Daragon continues to think of painting as something "spacious and dignified" to which he can turn his energies later on. He joins a painting class which the younger artist members of the Crafts Club have formed. He enjoys the feel of brushes, the sight of a painting growing under his hand, and the society of painters. He also goes on the weekend sketching parties organized by one of the members of the art staff of the Acme. Donovan uses these details to continue to connect Daragon with the Group.

One day while on a sketching expedition, Daragon has a conversation with Katherine Ryder in which she talks about people who tinker with art, never get anywhere with it, and spoil themselves for the work they ought to be doing. Daragon takes the remarks as meant for him, but he is not to be left on his own to take any crucial decisions. Through a ruse of Joan Morland's, Daragon is maneuvered into proposing marriage to her and becomes subject to her sentimental and romantic views of art. During their honeymoon at Niagara Falls, Joan sees to it that Daragon takes his sketching box wherever they go, and she provides a fascinated audience for his monologues about art. Partly because of Joan's encouragement and partly because his business affairs are in a tangle as a result of his marriage (Joan's father has removed his account from Acme), Daragon is drawn more and more to a group of younger painters at the Crafts Club known as the "Clan":

There were about ten of them, who worked variously as commercial designers, poster men, and illustrators. They wore their hair short and their clothes in the mode favoured by young bankers and bond-salesmen, and it was their pose to talk of art as a trade and a picture as a "job." But underneath the ostentatious commercialism of their attitude towards painting they hid a romantic enthusiasm which to outsiders they would have vehemently and profanely denied

Their own chief concern was to preserve unpolluted the sources of their inspiration. For the modern art of other lands, they had a profound distrust English art in the main they dismissed as insipid and derivative. The work of the French painters of the day fared no better--"slick and slimy" was their verdict on most of it. But their sternest condemnation was reserved for their own elders, the established painters of Canada and especially of Yorkton. They regarded them, with few exceptions, as feeble dawdlers in the gateway of the temple, or astutely and deliberately engaged in money-changing within its sacred precincts. (194-95)

Robertson is the only one of the older painters for whom the "Clan" has any enthusiasm. Robertson's pictures are described as "stern evocations of the spirit of the northern wilderness--wind-tortured pines clinging to rocky headlands against the sunset sky, marshes and islands and tumbled waters, nature isolated, ferocious, and resplendent, as it might have been seen and painted by a caveman of genius" (197). Daragon is both thrilled and repelled by them, and though he returns to them again and again, he is never sure which feeling predominates. Donovan's presentation of Daragon's feelings probably reflected public opinion of Thomson and the Group by the late twenties. They had achieved both fame and notoriety with essentially the same audience, but whether one's view was perjorative or not, the paintings were viewed as realistic rather than romantic.

At this time, Daragon also sets up a commercial design business with an Englishman named Richard Mayfield. Daragon is unaware that the money for the business has come from his wife, but he is smart enough to be skeptical that Mayfield would choose him as a partner. Initially the company prospers,

as it is set up in the crest of the boom period which follows the war. Most of the commissions are strictly commercial, but Daragon is happy and throws himself into the work. The men even do well enough to hire Katherine Ryder as an interior decorator. Life is pleasant for Daragon in the borderland between art and commerce. But suddenly the post-war financial depression sets in:

The new boom that began with the Declaration of Peace had been one of those miracles of delayed concussion of which surgeons tell. The world after its brief recovery seemed suddenly to realize that it had been terribly injured, that something dreadful and irremediable had been done to it, and collapsed in panic. Stocks and bonds went tumbling, and speculators, in Gadarene fashion, filling the air with squeals of terror, slid after them down steep places into the sea of insolvency. Everywhere factories were closing their doors, and armies of sullen and frightened men being turned out to look hopelessly for work. (228)

Under these economic conditions, the business failed. The immediate cause of the collapse of the enterprise is Joan's jealousy of Katherine Ryder, whom Joan catches posing for Daragon as he sketches a poster depicting the fertility and beauty of the west, which is symbolized by an opulent, scantily draped female figure. Because of the collapse of his business and the collapse of his marriage, Daragon decides to go to an 'artists' colony in the United States to find out, once and for all, if he can paint. Daragon points out to Joan that he has been trying to mix "art and business," and as the mix does not work for him, he is going where he will have nothing to do "but paint and paint--real paintings, not just pot-boilers" (245).

Karl Van Zant, the unofficial head of the art colony, welcomes Daragon with the following words:

"There's no one more welcome here than you fellows from up North. You bring us something different--you are keener about doing your stuff and less about selling it than most of the local lads of the village. We need more of that spirit." (252)

Donovan presents the two Canadians who hear this remark as being amused by it, but it appeared then and it appears now to be a view that Canadians and Americans hold about each other.

Daragon gets to work and begins to paint the "Old Town" in Winona. Over and over again with "a loving concentration, an intense sympathy" that he has never felt for a subject before, he paints the dilapidated streets, buildings, and inhabitants of the sleazy part of town. Like Lawren Harris in Toronto, Daragon is interested mostly in the houses, "dismal little houses in rows, larger houses which had once been handsome and now stood in their littered gardens like dishonoured patriarchs, houses in the relentless glare of the sunshine, houses huddled under the rain" (256). At the Colony's monthly exhibition, Daragon displays one of his paintings, and Van Zant announces that though it is a good painting, Daragon will never get very far with the "modest violet" approach. Van Zant's mistress comforts Daragon with the judgment that his painting (like Harris's Toronto paintings) is "much prettier and kind of sadder" than the original scene. Van Zant, she announces, is "showing off," but Daragon is shaken.

In a search for subject matter, Daragon starts travelling through the hills of Vermont and New Hampshire and eventually finds an old stone quarry in Vermont so primitive that horses are still used for hauling from it. In his sketches of the horses, Daragon attempts to convey a sense of "the beauty and pathos of their toil, so immense and patient, so soon to be superseded by hideous mechanical contrivance" (267). He begins to make etchings of the quarry scenes and is berated by Katherine, who tells him that everyone knows there is no money in etchings. However, a print dealer in New York praises the etchings for their honesty and feeling, though he

points out that Daragon is still thinking in tone and colour. In short, it appears that Daragon is achieving what he had set out to do by going to Winona. Daragon also uses the quarry scenes as the subject for some oil paintings in which he uses strong colour and emphasizes the lines of his composition. These paintings draw Van Zant's approval, who points out that a good subject is handled with sincerity and power. Daragon sends three of the pictures to an exhibition in Philadelphia where two are sold and where he gets a good review. At this juncture Daragon realizes how lonely he is and how much of his emotional life he has sacrificed to succeed at his art. He is at a turning point: it is clear he can succeed at art, that is, he can create something of aesthetic value and perhaps even of commercial value, but he must continue painting. The plot twists when Sir William appears and offers Daragon a chance to enter the soap business and eventually take control of it. It is clear that acceptance of the offer will mean reconciliation with Joan. Initially, Daragon has a sense of ironic detachment and even feels "vague repugnance" at the thought of how "absorbed in making and gaining" Sir William is. He sees the offer for what it is, an "enormous bribe" (316), but as the days and weeks pass, he gradually comes to feel that giving up painting is the price he must pay to be reconciled with Joan:

It was his ambition to be an artist, he told himself, which had been the rock on which their happiness had foundered. And the very efforts which she had made to assist him had only helped to drive them upon it. The result had been to place him in a position of intolerable dependence. Even now he could not consent to that--not because of his pride, he told himself, but because it would be a fatal bar to their happiness together There were moods in which he felt that he should forego his happiness with Joan, and should devote himself to art with a concentrated ardour But these moods soon passed--he had too little belief in his own powers, and life without Joan was a prospect too bleak for him to face. The only alternative was to give up

painting altogether and to take up the burden which Fate and his father-in-law were preparing for his shoulders. (341).

Though the prospect of the soap business fills him with a "weary loathing," Daragon accepts Sir William's offer. In what must be one of the most romantic endings of the novel of the twenties, Joan appears in person to claim Daragon, having put all her money in a trust for their son. Her sacrifice has made it possible for him to turn down her father's offer. His work lies before him like a "straight road," and his destiny is clear: ". . . to try to put into colour and pattern the thrilled response of his spirit to the beauty of the world" (352). Daragon's struggle between art and commerce is over.

Donovan takes for granted that if Daragon is to become an artist, he must go to the city, but in Late Spring even the second biggest Canadian city, where there is a flourishing art movement, is not big enough if one is to seriously learn anything about art. Like Laura Bateman in Peevee and John Hughes in It's Never Over, Daragon must go abroad for training. John Hughes goes to Italy (where singers still go), but Laura and Daragon need only go as far as the United States. The actual members of the Group of Seven adapted Impressionist techniques and some were influenced by an exhibition of Scandinavian paintings shown in Buffalo, New York, in 1912.

The premises of the "conflict" presented in the book between art and money are romantic in the extreme--that art is grand and exhilarating, and money is vulgar and boring. The conclusion of the book, which sees no possible reconciliation between what are presented as polar opposites, is simplistic. Because the main character has both a talent for making money and a talent for making pictures, the book has to present a plausible picture of the same man coping with mutually exclusive goals. Donovan handles this

difficulty by presenting Daragon either as a successful businessman or as an artist. The character seems split into self-contained parts with little or no psychological infiltration from one part to another. (There is even a third part, Daragon the husband and lover.)

The principal value of the book lies in its picture of the way art and artists were viewed in the Toronto of the twenties. Despite opposition from formalist art critics and a public hostile to impressionistic rather than realistic painting techniques, a self-contained and uniquely Canadian school of painting eventually managed to obtain and hold the approval of Toronto art patrons. Drawing freely on facts about Tom Thomson, the Group of Seven, and the Arts and Letters Club, Donovan creates a sense of what it was like for the artist to be part of the Toronto artistic milieu of the time. Despite Donovan's satire of Toronto art patrons, he manages to generate a sense of excitement about the Canadian art scene in the twenties that suggests the experimental painting was in a more advanced state of acceptance by the public than literature was. As Fred Jacob had pointed out four years before Donovan's book was published, painting had travelled much further in Canada by the twenties than had music and literature. Donovan's satire of the art-buying public reinforces for the reader what Jacob has to say about the sanitized state in which art patrons wanted their culture, though Donovan's approach is not subtle, and his book is much more useful as a social document than as a work of literature. This is not the case with Jacob, who deserves attention on both grounds.

Callaghan's It's Never Over (1930) also stresses the social prestige acquired by patrons of the arts in the city of Toronto, though his presentation of the artist and the moral demands made on him by his audience is the most

complex statement of the issue in the books under discussion. Callaghan assumes a far more developed artistic culture than does Sime, Jacob, or Donovan. Critical discernment is hard to find among the art patrons described by the last three writers, but Callaghan's public has taste and standards in art. The problem arises when it insists that its artists meet its standards for respectability as well. This time musical life is the subject matter, and Callaghan anticipates the remark that Peter makes in A Broken Journey (1932), that "whatever is to be done culturally, creatively, economically will all be done in the city."²⁷ Callaghan's awareness of the musical culture of Toronto is part of his larger recognition that the city and the artist must inevitably be linked together (see Chapter VI), but that this relationship may often be a frustrating one for the artist.

It's Never Over was Callaghan's second novel (Strange Fugitive had appeared in 1928). The title refers to the effects of the hanging of an ex-soldier called Fred Thompson on his friends and relatives. Among them is John Hughes, a bass who had been a high-school friend of Thompson and, up until six months before the execution, the lover of Isabelle Thompson, Fred's sister. Isabelle had broken off the relationship because she "thought she ought to lose everything" (11). At the beginning of the book, Hughes is in love with Isabelle's friend, Lillian, a pianist, who had "walked in the evenings with Fred" before she had come to love John Hughes. As a result of Fred's death, Isabelle believes she has to degrade herself and everyone around her. She achieves her ends by ruining John's career, wrecking the relationship between John and Lillian, and neglecting herself to the point where she becomes ill and dies. The book examines the provincial nature of the post-war artistic climate in Toronto which makes it possible for Isabelle

to destroy John's career there.

Hughes is at the early stages of a professional singing career. He is bass soloist at St. Mark's, a wealthy Protestant congregation which spends a lot of money on church music. As there are only a few church soloist jobs in the city with decent salaries attached, he considers himself fortunate. As a professional, Hughes believes that he is "entitled to be paid as highly as possible for his work" (23). This attitude has aroused antagonism among some other members of the choir and some of the other soloists who sing at St. Mark's out of religious conviction. In addition, Hughes is a Catholic, though a lapsed one.

The choirmaster is Henry Stanton, a man influential among music critics in the city, who mention him in their columns. Stanton thinks highly of Hughes' voice but eventually fires him for offending the narrow moral and social codes of the city. Stanton's power in musical circles extends beyond the city. Small towns around Toronto often ask him to recommend a singer for concert dates, and it is Stanton who arranges this sort of work for Hughes at one point in the novel. Hughes, who wishes to remain in Stanton's favour, is circumspect on these out-of-town engagements. Though he and Lillian would like to take the opportunity to spend the night together, they dare not for fear the engagements will cease. John's job at St. Mark's is dependant on his being in Stanton's good graces. If Stanton were to develop a "personal antipathy" to John, his job at St. Mark's would be endangered, and also his chances of finding a job at any of the other good churches in the city: "It was hardly any use trying to be a good singer in the city if you did not have the approval of the influential people, who all worked together as though belonging to the same lodge It was

like losing a membership in a socially important club" (127-28).

At St. Mark's the ultimate authority is Dr. Ellwood, the minister, at whose behest John eventually is fired. However, Stanton and Ellwood are part of a circle of rich and well-known people in the city whose names attached to a musical event will ensure the presence of music critics pressured by their editors into treating the musical event as an occasion of social importance. For example, Hughes plans a Hart House recital at one point in the novel. It is clear that its success will be assured through the patronage of this group of people. When John realizes that he cannot count on the support of Stanton, Ellwood, or any other church people, he cancels his recital. John is particularly vulnerable because he also is not part of the Toronto conservatory network of students, which is described as having a "monopoly" of music in the city.

John is studying music privately in the evening with a teacher of oratorio called Hobson. The limitations of Toronto musical life are such that further training of John's voice will have to be done in Europe. Hobson is urging him to go to England to study oratorio, but John is unsure about whether he wants a career in church music or in opera. He and Lillian have pinned their hopes on European training and development of his voice, and plan to delay their marriage until after his return from study.

John has been saving money by holding down a second job in a department store. However, unlike Richard Milne, who sees no conflict between writing poetry and writing advertising copy, Hughes intends to leave the department store because he believes that the work is damaging him as an artist. Although worried about losing the money, he also hopes Stanton will get him concert dates out of town. Hughes' real attitude towards this job becomes clear a

few hours after Fred's execution. A group of "bargain-hunters" rush into the store, and though Hughes is leaving soon, the sight of their faces makes him "first uneasy, then ready to vomit, and severely critical of any plan that had ever induced him to work in the store . . ." (18).

John lives "with a respectable family," the Erringtons, on a "street not far away from the park" (12); he sees the street as a "small, simple, orderly world" (54), and his room as a "fine, sunlit room in the north side of the house" (128). Mrs Errington is accommodating and allows him to have a late breakfast, even sitting down to have a cup of tea with him, and he is able to practice the piano in the living-room. Errington himself is a "social democrat" who claims not to believe in capital punishment because he thinks the state should not "expose itself to the feeling of degradation" (17). He also is described as an "advanced liberal," but his behaviour eventually shows him to be a "hard puritan" who derives a "vicarious excitement" out of liberal political notions (119).

Hughes' precarious foothold in the Toronto musical world clearly is dependent on his preservation of an impeccable facade of respectability. Isabelle suggests to him that if he wants to get on in the city, he cannot associate with her, and though John's reservations barely surface in the beginning, there are some hints early on in the novel that he would rather not have been associated with the Thompson family. For example, in a conversation with Lillian before the funeral, John talks about his job so that he will not have to talk about Fred (14). He does not wish to associate Lillian or himself with Isabelle "in the bitterness of her thoughts" (19). At the requiem mass John tries to "avoid dealing with the notion making him restless and excited, the feeling that he ought not to sing at all or

become part of the ceremony or have a part in the sorrow and all the consequences of the death" (21). Eventually he decides that it is better to be in the gallery, standing apart as an artist, than to be at the altar of the church with Isabelle, her mother, and Lillian. Isabelle's opinion that John keeps "apart from it" (109) because of his success with music is accurate.

At first Isabelle attempts to get at Lillian and John by convincing Lillian to get an apartment of her own so that she and John can have a sexual relationship. The two have avoided a physical relationship because Lillian's family "had been religiously sober and most of her own emotions were always restrained and expressed conventionally" (65). Even after she gets the apartment, she has uneasy feelings about her family in the country and the values she always has thought important. John rarely spends the night because he and Lillian do not wish to give the caretaker the impression that she is a "loose" woman. Lillian's convictions are so open to Isabelle that she knows that Lillian eventually will feel degraded by having the apartment. Isabelle also drives a wedge between the couple by attempting to convince Lillian that she had really loved Fred. When John loses his job, Lillian assumes that some of the church people had learned of the apartment. Though this is not the case, it is plausible enough in the context of the society presented in the book.

What does occur is even more damaging than Lillian's supposition. Isabelle watches the Errington house until they leave, then visits John and traps him into making love to her. When the couple hear the Erringtons returning, Isabelle times her departure so that she can introduce herself, fully aware of the scandal value of her name. What else she says is not

specified, but it is enough to make Mr. Errington sure that John has been "carrying on" with her, and a telephone call to Dr. Ellwood suffices to make John lose his job at St. Mark's church. Stanton actually fires John, at the same time apologizing for Dr. Ellwood, who is described as being "intolerant" in his "moral sermons" on Sunday. Stanton also attempts to get John to concede that he is being treated handsomely by being given a month's pay. Stanton is presented as feeling guilty about the situation, especially as he believes in John's voice, but as seeing no way out of the moral straitjacket in which he himself has been placed by Dr. Ellwood. The last thing he does is urge John to leave Toronto for either another city or for Europe in order to further his career. The Erringtons' puritanism also causes them to ask John to leave their house on the morning following the incident with Isabelle. They never even ask for an explanation.

Musically, John's career is finished in Toronto. He cancels his Hart House recital, aware that it can no longer succeed. There are no more concert dates available through Stanton. The other churches in the city are closed to him, and he does not want to sing in the popular theatres. The radio stations promise him work after Christmas, but there is nothing immediately forthcoming. He even tries the department store where he had once worked, but their employment office is not hiring. He broods over the situation in his three-dollar-a-week room, trying to decide what to do.

John had always believed that his passionate nature had been repressed by the view of singers that the Toronto public held:

People suspect a singer and take everything he says with a grain of salt. It's not necessary that he have any sense, imagination or vitality. Often it's better if he's a bit queer, because he's invariably treated as though he were entirely effeminate. Most of the ones around here are, anyway. Nothing is expected of me

except that I sing well enough. Few of my musical acquaintances are interested in anything but their particular kind of music-making. They don't even get drunk. (57-58)

John, for example, reads and appreciates Marlowe:

. . . he liked Marlowe and had reached the second part of "Tamburlaine," getting excited inside a little when there was a rush and flow of words. The excitement in the characters and in the author was in John because of the swing and rush of the words. Sometimes the characters in the book hardly seemed important as long as he caught some of the author's feeling of exultation in the splendor of his own images. (105)

Even Isabelle, despite her knowledge of John, is surprised to discover his interest in the Elizabethans. The "sense, imagination or vitality" in John that draws him to Marlowe have yet to be demonstrated in his actions by the point in the book at which he loses his job and his room. Resent it as he might, Isabelle's action shakes him out of the complacent and rigid world to which he has painfully accommodated himself.

John winds up living in a cheap boarding-house where he has to put up with bed-bugs and a smell of gas. It is there he meets the communist Gibbons, who remarks in passing that though "Thompson was of no importance," the communists ought to have been able to take advantage of the disturbance the night before his hanging. Though John himself has been attempting to deny the significance of Thompson's death, Gibbon's adoption of this position throws John into a fury, and he winds up slapping Gibbons across the face. The violence of his reaction links him even more closely with the dead man.

Earlier in the book, in a conversation with John, Paul Ross had recounted the circumstances under which Fred had joined the army, and had suggested that John lacked some vital understanding of the war, and therefore of Fred's nature. "It's my world, I tell you," says John, and Paul replies, "Maybe" (60). Paul had pointed out that Fred had insisted on punching the

recruiting sergeant in the face as his price for joining the army, and then remarks that if Fred had not been in the war, he would not have hit the cop: "The cop was hurting him and it seemed reasonable to kill him" (61). On another occasion Paul had recounted how during the war Fred had cold-bloodedly killed an old bewildered German who was erratically firing a rifle. Though Paul at first remarks that he probably would have done the same thing himself, later he says that Fred ought not to have done it. The violence in Fred's personality had been legitimized by the war, but society had been ruthless when he had asserted his instincts in the wrong context.

When John sees Isabelle and Lillian at the cemetery, it becomes clear that Isabelle has totally alienated Lillian from him. His sense of injury brings him to the point where he thinks of murdering Isabelle, and it is only the imminence of her death from pneumonia that halts him. Thus John is pushed into experiencing Fred's rage and anger. Paul Ross's skepticism about whether John really understands Fred's world of war and violence seems more comprehensible when we hear John planning murder, but justifying it to himself as a rational act:

He liked to think himself a cool, reasonable man, who never found it necessary to move hurriedly, so looking at himself in the glass, feeling the slight growth of beard, he smiled, pleased by his calmness. It was, first of all, with him a matter of strong emotion, but just as essentially an ethical matter, for he was an educated man who had been taught for years that passions should be governed by reason: one ought to consider, then have a judgment and a conclusion, just as they used to in college in the first classes in logic. In this way of being reasonable he was different from the man in the street who, having sudden notions and a strong passion, always acted blindly. (186)

As part of his rational approach to murder, John consults Mrs. Stanley, "the man on the street," and an old priest in the confessional who will expose

him to "orthodox ethics" (220), but John has moved out of the realm of the rational. Though the priest explains that "nothing can destroy the fundamental dignity of the human spirit," John is incapable of following the priest's argument. John thinks he has been told that his own importance has been destroyed. He is totally given over to his rage. As Isabelle puts it later, there is now a bond between the living and the dead. John has experienced the "shadowy places" in existence, and if his own life is to have significance for him, he must view Fred's life as significant. John's shift in attitude is signalled by his beginning to swim every day, and he is finally able to make the decision about his artistic life that he has been putting off. He decides to go to Maestro Cavalcanti, "the most expensive teacher of opera in the city, who was well known in the old countries and pay him to arrange for a year of training in Italy" (222). Though he knows nothing may come of it, he is now prepared to risk all his savings to study opera, towards which he has been drawn from the beginning of his career. This decision is linked as well with his recognition that he had never stopped loving Isabelle, the woman with the spirit of a Marlovian character. Thus, though ostensibly John has been ruined by Isabelle, he has actually been freed. He is no longer the victim of a stultifying conventionality which inhibits experimentation and strangles artistic growth. What seemed to John a necessary linkage between exemplary moral behaviour and artistic success no longer seems inevitable or desirable. He is free to become the man of "sense, imagination or vitality" that he always has imagined himself to be. The experience that fragmented his world has provided an entry to a new world, one with which he always has identified his inner self.

Thus, though the book presents a negative picture of musical life in Toronto in the twenties, the individual artist is presented as escaping the life there, at least temporarily. Other countries offer what Canada is still too provincial to provide. Stanton, part of the system and yet aware of its shortcomings, can only advise departure, and his suggestion is acted on. The book provides a sharp contrast with Knister's view that Toronto is the best of all possible artistic worlds. The equivalent of the figure of Milne cogitating on new developments in his art is absent from the Callaghan novel. Instead we have a man temperamentally suited to develop an operatic voice being forced by his mentors in the wrong direction. Hobson's lack of professionalism and Stanton's interest in power and prestige combine to force John along a path which does not suit him and which is tied up with a code of behaviour which treats morality and a narrow respectability as if they were the same thing.

Nonetheless, Callaghan holds to his view of the permanence of the city, flawed as it is, as the background for human intercourse. It's Never Over contains a passage which parallels in significance Peter's speech in A Broken Journey about the city being the only viable medium in the future for the development of Canadian society "culturally, creatively, economically." The exchange, reminiscent of Lorenzo and Jessica's in Act V of The Merchant of Venice, takes place between John and Lillian, who are looking out her apartment window at the city as if it were a canvas on which had been painted all human possibilities:

"You come over here by the window."

"Here I am then, now what?"

"See how clear the night air is out over the city and the houses, and the hill and the lights slope down-town, and the pink

and yellow lights on the high sign-boards are reflected so brilliantly there seem to be no stars in the sky."

"Our city, I suppose. Sometimes it's bright and sometimes it's shoddy but . . ."

"A bright and shoddy city where John, the troubadour, was often discouraged because the Conservatory of Music had a monopoly in the city."

"A bright city where Lillian lost her heart but not her head to a sullen young singer."

"A shoddy city where Lillian lost her virginity to the same sullen fellow."

"A bright city, where the sullen young man and the hapless virgin, now despoiled, stood at the window looking out over the city and finally kissed each other." (76-77)

The "pink and yellow" city lights are so brilliant they have obscured the lights of nature. Callaghan always appreciates intensely not so much nature's challenge to man but man's challenge to nature. In another passage, John draws Lillian to the window and urges her to look at the dawn, but the car and street lamps are as significant in the picture he sees as the light and star, and both the natural and artificial light are presented in an harmonious relationship:

"... look out the window and see how light it's getting over the housetops in the east; look down the street when the car turns a corner, and still I can see one faint star and the street lamps are still lit!" (162-63)

Callaghan never ignores nature; he just reverses our perceptions of it. The city is the larger framework and the glimpses of nature that we are given are framed by apartment houses, cars, and other urban objects. Thus, in the following passage, the birds darting at the hedge, as natural in the urban setting as they would be in a rural one, provide a useful metaphor for the beginning of John's and Lillian's physical relationship. Their

love-making immediately follows her observation that the birds are beautiful:

The hedges were turning brown, and two small birds were darting at them, rising and darting farther along. A little sunlight glinted on the humming birds' small bodies, brilliant-breasted, as they pivoted in the air, almost hovering in one spot, tumbling and darting into the hedge again. The air was still and quiet in the afternoon sunlight and the small wings whirred but could hardly be seen: then they were out of sight, but the wings whirred farther along the hedge, and they balanced and ducked and the sunlight glinted again.

"How beautiful," she said. (68-69)

There is no sense that nature has been despoiled or forced into unnatural channels, or that it has a false or contrived quality. All is in harmony and balance. We are told that Fred Thompson, in one sense the most important character in the book, had read about the Middle Ages and "thought it a beautiful time when all the people and scholars were part of a cultural plan giving a shape to the life around them" (79). Fred had "liked to think it might some day be that way in his own country" (79). Though the picture of Toronto presented in the book does not yet conform to Fred's vision in any sense, there is a suggestion that the stagnancy of the culture is only a stage in an on-going developmental process.

Thus, Callaghan would seem to be in agreement with Sime in looking towards the future for a more balanced and vital artistic climate, though the future he projects does not seem nearly as remote as the one she perceives. Despite Sime's presentation of Robert Fulton's death, the two writers also agree that whatever is to be done "culturally, creatively, economically will all be done in the city." Callaghan's artist, John Hughes, is simply made of more resilient stuff than Robert Fulton. When Toronto itself becomes the major obstacle to Hughes' development, he goes elsewhere. Robert Fulton dies in Montreal because he is not only a failed artist, but also a failed

immigrant. Sime's presentation of Robert's and Miss McGee's picnic on Mount Royal is similar to Callaghan's presentation of nature in the city. Neither author implies that the characters' enjoyment of the natural world is less because nature is contained within an artificial frame. Sime would find unwarranted Knister's assumption that Toronto had a sufficiently developed cultural life to sustain a writer like Richard Milne. In the cultural world she presents, only the very strong survive, and her successful writer, Eileen Martyn, has been born and presumably trained abroad. Like Beaumont Cornell in Lantern Marsh, Sime does question the value of learning that is not firmly linked to the real world, but unlike Cornell, she does not move towards a polarization of city and country on the issue. Miss McGee is as ardent a city dweller as one could find. Though the pretentiousness of Montreal cultural life is not Sime's main subject, she hints at what Fred Jacob depicts broadly in Peevee--that Canadians are cultural upstarts who cannot yet distinguish between the genuine and the false in art. The art versus money clash presented humourously by Peter Donovan is inconceivable in connection with the ascetic Robert.

Among the group of writers treated in this chapter, Sime stands alone as the only one not born in Canada. She is also the writer who places the full development of the Canadian artist furthest into the future. Among the native group, Callaghan presents the most rounded picture of an artist and art patrons, and Knister the most romanticized and false. Donovan, like Callaghan, assumes a world where art is flourishing, but his artist must still leave Canada to learn his skills, just as Callaghan's singer must. Jacob satirizes a Canadian "renaissance" of the arts which had never existed in the first place. In the background of every book is either Toronto

or Montreal, though Toronto is not the actual setting of Knister's book. Except for Knister, and regardless of the area of culture examined, these writers agree that Canadian cultural development in the city is not strong enough to support the growth of the young artist. In fact, two of the five books end in the death of the hero, and two in the departure of the hero for another country, though both of these men clearly are destined to return. Knister provides the exception, as his hero departs in triumph for the city bearing a human prize, but White Narcissus has many fairy-tale elements in it. No doubt Knister wanted the Toronto cultural scene to be what his hero, Richard Milne, claims it is, but the evidence of other writers contradicts Knister's book.

Notes

¹ Georgina Sime and Frank Nicholson, "A Triple View of W. B. Yeats," Brave Spirits (Great Britain: Privately Printed, Distributed by Simpkin Marshall, n.d.), pp. 60-61.

² Jessie G. Sime, Orpheus in Quebec, P.E.N. Books (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1942).

³ Sime, Quebec, p. 44.

⁴ Georgina Sime and Frank Nicholson, A Tale of Two Worlds (London: Chapman & Hall, 1953).

⁵ Jessie G. Sime, Our Little Life: A Novel of To-Day (New York: Frederick A. Stokes, 1921). All page references to this book are to this edition.

⁶ The buildings probably were located on Victoria Square, which in 1897 had "a large handsome block" on the corner at St. James Street West. (J? Douglas Borthwick, History of Montreal including The Streets of Montreal: Their Origin and History [Montreal: D. Gallagher, 1897], 128). Sime describes these buildings as in decay by the time of the setting of the book, 1917-18, partly because of the building of a set of railway yards and two sets of parallel car lines. In 1913 an electric car line, running from St. Antoine to Craig St. East, ran through the middle of the square, and the nearest parallel line was north of it on St. Catherine St. (probably what Sime calls St. Hubert Boulevard--"the main street of Regalia"). By 1913, Canadian Northern also had built a railway yard facing LaGauchetière on the south and Dorchester on the north. (See Official Guide to Montreal, Prepared

for the Meetings of the Twelfth International Geological Congress, Montreal, 1913 [Montreal: F. E. Grafton, 1913].) Sime also mentions that from the windows of the square it was possible to see "the tall slender spire of St. Patrick's church." This church, still standing, is located on the corner of St. Alexander and LaGauchetière Street. According to the 1913 guide cited above, the church was identified with the worshippers of Irish descent in Montreal, and was the centre of the religious life of English-speaking Catholics there (p. 137). Miss McGee is an Irish Catholic who lives at Drayton Place partly because of the inspiration the continual sight of St. Patrick's spire offers to her. An interesting collection of photos of nineteenth-century Montreal, including many of Victoria Square, exists in Luc D'Iberville-Moreau's Lost Montreal (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1975). The text to these photos indicates that the "block" referred to is an office block, but in other respects the buildings meet Sime's description. Sime also may have had in mind "The Ferrier Block," located on Beaver Hall Hill which led to Beaver Hall Square, destroyed in the 1950s when Dorchester Street was enlarged. St. Patrick's church is closer to the old Beaver Hall Square than it is to Victoria Square, and in some respects Beaver Hall Square is a better candidate for the location of Penelope's Buildings. Sime simply may have combined details from the geography of both areas.

It is likely that the hotel at which Mrs. Glassridge and Miss McGee have tea is the Windsor. D'Iberville-Moreau describes it as follows:

"Splendour and elegance were the words used to describe the Windsor Hotel on Dominion Square. . . . it was the largest and most lavish hotel in Montreal. Its decoration varied from one salon to another and from one suite to another, for it included 'totally' Egyptian and Turkish salons" (p. 170). The old

Windsor was demolished around 1960 when the Bank of Montreal was erected. It should also be borne in mind that the present Ritz-Carleton was opened in 1913.

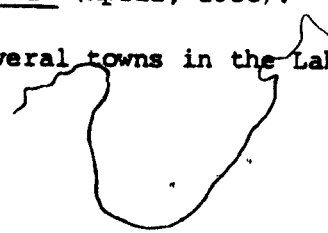
Robert's and Miss McGee's evening excursion to a park was likely to have been to LaFontaine Park in what was then the northeastern portion of Montreal. According to the Guide prepared for the Geological Congress, the park was resorted to by thousands in the summer (p. 156). The characters take a streetcar through the eastern portion of the city, most likely the St. Catherine's street line, from which they eventually would have had to transfer to a northerly line. Massonville, the suburb where the munitions factories were and where Miss McGee's sister lived, is probably Cartierville, located close to LaFontaine Park.

The lecture which Robert and Miss McGee attend given by the Irish poet (probably Yeats) most likely took place at what is now the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. In 1913 the building was the new gallery of the Art Association of Montreal. The Association sponsored a series of lectures by specialists in various artistic subjects every winter (Guide, pp. 109-110). The building was located on Sherbrooke West and Ontario Street, and approaching it from Victoria Square or Ball Hall Hill Square, as Miss McGee and Robert did, one would likely walk past the grounds of McGill University, which is the route the characters take.

⁷ Fred Jacob, "Books," The Canadian Bookman, VIII (July, 1926), 221.

⁸ A. J. M. Smith, "Wanted--Canadian Criticism," Towards a View of Canadian Letters (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1973), pp. 167-69. Originally published in The Canadian Forum (April, 1928).

⁹ The book is set in Toronto, and actually several towns in the Lake



Ontario region east of Toronto are depicted. Belleville or Port Hope is probably the original of "Petersville," one of several communities described as located "between two undulating plateaux of rich farm land." The original of Milltown, where most of the action occurs, is probably Cobourg or even Peterborough. By the turn of the century, Peterborough had become an industrial centre of eighteen thousand people, and in many respects fits the description of Milltown in the book.

¹⁰ Fred Jacob, Peevee (Toronto: Macmillan, 1928). All page references to this book are to this edition.

¹¹ Laura Bateman may have been modelled on Bea Lillie, many of whose mannerisms and routines Jacob used in his characterization of Laura. Bea Lillie was born in Toronto in 1894 and, like Laura, was well known for such "Lillieisms" as whirling a long string of pearls in a revolving loop around her neck. Though Bea Lillie had started her career in London, she first became well known in North America when she appeared in New York City in André Charlot's Revue of 1924 in which she did a routine called "Tea-Shop Tattle." She played a supercilious waitress named Gwladys (sic); the character, Laura, works as a waitress in Bess Hortop's teashop for a while. Lillie also was known for her comedy routines on roller-skates (again, this is attributed to Laura Bateman). The women in Charlot's revue were known as "Charlot's harlots," which fits a plot detail in Peevee. The show had a run in Toronto which Jacob must have seen, as he was drama critic for The Mail and Empire at the time, and Lillie, as hometown girl made good, was feted by Torontonians, just as Laura Bateman is. It should also be borne in mind that "America's Sweetheart," Mary Pickford, was a Canadian, born in Toronto in 1893. She first achieved fame in the United States (as

Laura does), but as an actress rather than as a comedienne and musical comedy star. Details of Bea Lillie's life are available (so to speak) in her comic autobiography Every Other Inch a Lady (New York: Doubleday, 1972). See especially pp. 34-35, 149-50, 161 for details of the points noted above.

¹² Fred Jacob, Day Before Yesterday (Toronto: Macmillan, 1925).

¹³ Fred Jacob, One Third of A Bill: Five Short Canadian Plays (Toronto: Macmillan, 1925).

¹⁴ Ibid., 55.

¹⁵ Ibid., 79-115.

¹⁶ "J. E. H. M.," "In Memoriam-Fred Jacob," The Canadian Forum VIII (July, 1928), 705.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Raymond Knister, White Narcissus (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1929).

All page references are to this edition.

¹⁹ Collected Poems of Raymond Knister, ed. Dorothy Livesay (Toronto: Ryerson, 1949), pp. 28-29.

²⁰ In an essay entitled "Canadian Letter" available in The First Day of Spring: Stories and Other Prose, ed. Peter Stevens (Toronto, 1976), Knister refers to Settlers of the Marsh as "crude and needlessly 'powerful' in the Scandinavian mode, but honest and vital," and to Denison's play Marsh Hay as "the only long Canadian play of excellence." The author also may be referring to French realists like Zola, and American realists with whom he certainly was familiar.

²¹ In the short story "Mist Green Oats," a young farmer, Len Brinder, sees the city as a paradise. He believes everyone there is full of "active keenness, a beauty," and no one appears to work. He also finds it hard to

believe that the city, with its ice cream parlours and movie theatres, is as hot as the country. Len is anxious to leave the farm, where the work is hard and unending, and go to the city and enter on "some transcendently congenial and remunerative occupation". (The First Day of Spring: Stories and Other Prose, ed. Peter Stevens [Toronto, 1976], p. 67). Len becomes convinced that his father has betrayed his own early aims and desires, and that he is now overworking his son. The story concludes with Len on the verge of departure for the city. In this case Len's adolescent rebelliousness has given him a distorted view of the city and of his father.

²² Raymond Knister, "The Return of the Nances," First Day, pp. 137-151.

²³ Several other Knister stories explore the difference between the rural and urban mentality. All are set in rural surroundings. The city man in "Horace the Haymow" is insensitive to nuance in his environment and consequently is tricked into a struggle with a draft horse when he has expected to impress a country girl with his handling of a car. The young farmer who tricks the city man succeeds because he is on his own territory. Similarly, "The Fate of Mrs. Lucier" is successful as a story because it is Mrs. Lucier's idea of the city that is depicted rather than the city itself. We are told that Mrs. Lucier has gone to live in the city after a life spent on a farm, where her daughter now lives. After an extended visit to her daughter, Mrs. Lucier starts for home, but is unable to complete her journey because she fears the city so much ("In the city you could not forget, ever, all the desperate things, men and machines ready always to maim or rob, kill, and disfigure." [First Day, p. 182]). "Mist Green Oats" (see note 5) is set entirely on an Ontario farm, though the fulcrum of the action, as in "The Fate of Mrs. Lucier," is an unrealistic

fantasy the main character has about the city.

²⁴ Peter Donovan, Late Spring (Toronto: Macmillan, 1930). All page references to this book are to this edition.

²⁵ Augustus Bridle, The Story of the Club (Toronto: The Arts and Letters Club, 1945). Bridle mentions on pp. 13-14 that Donovan himself was a Club member and describes him as the "custos of evening dinners." The incident in Late Spring when the famous violinist passing through Toronto plays for Club members is described in Bridle's section on "Early Eminent Visitors." The violinist is identified there as Mischa Elman. In a section called "Enter Group of Seven" (pp. 19-21), Bridle mentions the membership of Jackson, Harris, Varley, Lismer, Johnston, Garmichael, and MacDonald as well as other painters such as Fred Brigden and Curtis Williamson. MacDonald was the only member of the Group to serve as president of the Club (1928-30), and as such he has a section of Bridle's book to himself (pp. 59-60).

²⁶ Morley Callaghan, It's Never Over (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1930). All page references to this book are to this edition.

²⁷ Morley Callaghan, A Broken Journey (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), p. 195.

Chapter VI

The Northern Myth and the City--Painting and Fiction

With some sorrow at the fact, Fred Jacob had pointed out in 1926 that music and literature had lagged behind painting in their development in Canada. His remarks were occasioned by contemporary excitement about the Group of Seven. F. B. Housser's book on the Group, A Canadian Art Movement, was published the same year as Jacob's remarks, and the appearance of Housser's book, perhaps more than any other single event, legitimized Group work and even suggested that Canada finally had produced work of genius in the creative arts, although heretofore the country had had to look to Europe for inspiration in all areas of the arts. Peter Donovan's presentation in Late Spring of the Toronto art scene of the twenties in all its excitement provides a reinforcement of Jacob's view of where in the arts the most original work was being done.

To some extent, the art movement that culminated in the formation of the "Group of Seven" was a reaction to urban industrialization, but it was also the latest expression of a long-standing myth in Canadian cultural life--that in the "north" or in the wilderness lay the real heart of Canada. When Canadian landscape painters realized that they were looking at Canada and painting pastoral England, they turned their attention to landscape which seemed authentically Canadian. A ready-to-hand myth about the north was available which could be used to express nationalistic feelings, negative reactions to the city, and excitement about the beauty and freedom to be

found in nature. Painting Toronto street scenes or the rural Ontario countryside would not have satisfied this complex of aims, but painting the unpeopled Ontario bush did. After initial skepticism, not so much towards the subject matter as towards the technique, the public accepted these paintings of northern Ontario as an expression of the national sensibility. Despite the eminence of Emily Carr, she is still seen as a British Columbia rather than as a "national" painter. One may well ask why the Pre-Cambrian Shield exerted this kind of hold on the imagination.

By the end of the twenties, one writer, at least, was expressing some skepticism about the cultural value of the northern Ontario wilderness. Just as the Group of Seven was transforming itself into the Canadian Group of Painters in 1932, a move that indicated a self-conscious realization that an era was ended, Morley Callaghan was publishing two works set in northern Ontario that argued that the landscape, instead of nurturing the mind and spirit, actually worked against them. No Man's Meat (1931) and A Broken Journey (1932) are about urban dwellers who cannot make the necessary accommodation to the wilderness. They are forced out, and accommodation is viewed as a dead end. One must assume that these two books by Callaghan were a reaction, conscious or not, to the view of Algoma being urged on the national consciousness by the Group of Seven and their critics in the twenties.

Historian Carl Berger, in an article which he calls "The True North Strong and Free,"¹ traces the northern theme in Canadian nationalist thought from the time of the French explorers to Diefenbaker's remarks in 1958 about the country's northern destiny.² Berger describes the northern theme as "the idea that Canada's unique character derived from her northern location, her severe winters and her heritage of 'northern races.'" The severe climate

has been seen as fostering a sturdy, hard, and self-reliant people and as maintaining physical health and robustness. The climate also provided a basis for racial unity, as the French had survived it side by side with the Anglo-Saxons. The rigour of the northern climate also provided a rationale for anti-Americanism: the warmer southern climate was causing a deterioration of the races that made up the population of the United States. The most significant constituent of the northern theme, however, was its identification with liberty. It was held that the institutions of liberty originated among northern peoples, who were accustomed to being self-reliant and independent as a result of their struggles with the climate. The identification of liberty with northernness gave force to the notion that British liberty was superior to American democracy. Berger offers a number of examples of the northern theme in pre-World War I literature--for example, Agnes Laut's Lords of the North (1900) and Ralph Connor's Corporal Cameron (1912)--and he points out the pre-war origins of the Group of Seven. Berger regards the northern theme as a "myth" because of its suspect intellectual assumptions; that is, it disregards the variety of climatic regions within Canada, and it identifies the whole country with the region which contains the fewest of Canada's people. It is also racist--the capacity for freedom and progress are not inherently northern. Berger compares the idea of the north in Canada with the idea of the west in the United States: both provided convenient symbols around which to cluster a variety of beliefs about national character.

It should be said early on that the term "north" is a concept rather than a place with strictly defined geographical limits. Most of the time Berger refers to the Arctic, but his references to the Group of Seven are

about the Pre-Cambrian Shield area. When the Group talk about themselves, or when art critics refer to them, the word "north" may mean Algonquin Park, or Algoma, or the Northwest Territories. For example, in her book on Tom Thomson, Joan Murray remarks that Thomson painted the "spiritual heartland" of Canada, and she is talking exclusively about Algonquin Park when she notes that through "some strange chemistry" the "North" has come to be seen as the "symbolic image of the nation."³ The term is sometimes used to refer to all of Canada except the populated southern strip which borders on the United States. When Thomas Costain and George E. Nelson put together an anthology of Canadian writing for American readers, they called it Cavalcade of the North,⁴ and in this sense the word refers to all of Canada.

Historian Cole Harris is slightly less skeptical than Berger about the concept of the northern character and destiny of Canada.⁵ He sees "north" as bound up with the Pre-Cambrian Shield and points out that Harold Innis probably argued correctly that the boundaries of the Canadian state were laid in the fur trade, that present communications networks can be said to have inherited the route of the fur trade, and that the Shield therefore is responsible for any sense of sea-to-sea territoriality that Canadians have. The resources of the Shield, its size, and its proximity to settled Canada have forced it on the Canadian consciousness. Harris incorrectly points out that "No one objected that the Group of Seven should be considered the most Canadian of our painters because they painted a part of the country with which few Canadians were familiar."⁶ Many commentators certainly view the Group as regionalists, among them being A. G. Bailey.

The myth of the north is adopted wholeheartedly by historian W. L.

Morton in his book The Canadian Identity. Morton argues that "The Canadian . . . Shield is as central in Canadian history as it is to Canadian geography, and to all understanding of Canada":

In Canadian history the St. Lawrence valley, the Ontario peninsula, and the western prairies have been the regions of settlement which have furnished and fed the men, the fur traders, the lumberjacks, the prospectors, and the miners who have traversed the Shield and wrested from it the staples by which Canada has lived. And this alternate penetration of the wilderness and return to civilization is the basic rhythm of Canadian life, and forms the basic elements of Canadian character whether French or English, the violence necessary to contend with the wilderness, the restraint necessary to preserve civilization from the wilderness violence, and the puritanism which is the offspring of the wedding of violence to restraint. Even in an industrial and urban society, the old rhythm continues, for the typical Canadian holiday is a wilderness holiday, whether among the lakes of the Shield or the peaks of the Rockies.⁸

Morton believes that in arts and letters the northern outlook leads to a tendency to the "heroic and the epic, to the art which deals with violence" Pratt, Fr chet te, Heavyside, and William Wilfred Campbell are offered as examples, as are the paintings of Lawren Harris and Emily Carr. In his description of the "character" of Canadian nationality, Morton stresses the desire to maintain Canadian political allegiance with Britain with its rejection of republicanism, the dual culture with its common experience of the land and history, a psychology of endurance and survival, and a common affirmation of moral purpose.⁹ It is clear that Morton's view of the Canadian identity presupposes the northern myth as described by Berger.

The most important cultural expression of the northern myth in the twenties was the Group of Seven. Though one can find the northern theme in the literature of the decade, none of the literary works compares in significance with the major Group paintings. The Group did for painting in the twenties what the Confederation poets had done for literature at

the end of the nineteenth century. Any discussion of the Group must begin with Thomson, who would have been part of it had he lived. Not a particularly articulate man, Thomson probably never would have written much about the fascination that Algonquin Park had for him. Fortunately, we have a long memoir by Dr. J. M. MacCallum which he published shortly after Thomson's death.¹⁰ MacCallum saw him as a man compelled to paint because the "north country" had "enthralled him, body and soul." Thomson wanted to express the emotions that the country inspired in him: ". . . all the moods and passions, all the sombreness and all the glory of colour, were so felt that they demanded from him pictorial expression." MacCallum also saw Thomson's sketches as having historical as well as artistic merit. To MacCallum, the works were faithful representations of reality, a "complete encyclopaedia of all the phenomena of Algonquin Park" MacCallum defensively states that Thomson "never painted anything that he had not seen." From the doctor's account of the man, it is clear that Thomson did not believe himself to be engaged in painting the national spirit and character. These claims were made for him later by other people, including members of the Group. Thomson simply loved the woods and painted what he loved. MacCallum relates how loath Thomson was to return to Toronto in the autumn, lingering in the wild until the forming ice warned him he might be shut in for the winter.¹¹ Peter Mellen reports that Thomson appeared oblivious to the city and lived there as if he were in the woods. Not only did he cook food in his shack behind "The Studio" in Toronto as if he were outdoors, but he roamed around the Rosedale Ravine on snowshoes.¹²

Mellen, in a general discussion of the Group, links up the northern theme with a reaction against the city:

It was clear to them that "Canada" was not to be found in the cities, where the pursuit of materialism was the highest ideal. Behind the optimism associated with Toronto's tremendous commercial growth in the early twentieth century, the artists saw another side to city life--the coldness, the impersonality, and the materialism. The American artists of the Ash Can School perceived the same elements in the city and focused on them as unique aspects of American life to be portrayed in a realistic way. The more romantic Canadian group reacted against the city altogether and turned instead to the pure, untamed North. Instead of facing the realities of city life and its people, for the most part they eliminated people from their work and sought landscapes where no humans had ever set foot.¹³

The strongest reaction against the city was Thomson's but it cannot be said of Thomson that his feeling for nature was nationalist in character. J. E. H. MacDonald was responsible for the language of the memorial cairn to Thomson, and MacDonald, like MacCallum, chose to concentrate on Thomson's relationship to nature even more than on his art. Thomson is described as an "ARTIST/ WOODSMAN/AND GUIDE":

HE LIVED HUMBLLY BUT PASSIONATELY WITH THE WILD. IT MADE HIM BROTHER TO ALL UNTAMED THINGS OF NATURE. IT DREW HIM APART AND REVEALED ITSELF WONDERFULLY TO HIM. IT SENT HIM OUT FROM THE WOODS ONLY TO SHOW THESE REVELATIONS THROUGH HIS ART, AND IT TOOK HIM TO ITSELF AT LAST.¹⁴

It was Lismer, who arrived in Canada when he was twenty-six, who was the most self-conscious nationalist of the Group. He did much to establish the view that Thomson, more than anybody else, had painted the national spirit and character. Joan Murray quotes Lismer as describing "The West Wind" (1917) as "the spirit of Canada made manifest in a picture."¹⁵ In 1947, Lismer, in a tribute to Thomson, made a clear connection between, on the one side, Thomson's work, the land and nationalism, and on the other, materialism and the city:

Thomson's great contribution to art in Canada lies in the fact that he aided those forces which at the close of World War I were at work reshaping the national character. His revelations of a

background of beauty and significance of form and design were part of the essential need to know ourselves in time and space as the land of a nation which has more than industrial and possessive aspirations. These are the more sustaining qualities of mood and colour, vistas of unsurpassing beauty, and a background of ever changing pattern against which to set our growth in drama, song, story, music and architecture.¹⁶

Lismer never deviated from the view that the spiritual heartland of Canada was in the north. John A. B. McLeish, in his study of Lismer, September Gale, notes that Lismer always insisted that the Canadians among the Group were less aware of the extent to which nationalism moved them than he was.

McLeish quotes from Lismer's journal:

Harris once asked, 'I don't know what moved us.' He meant, I think, that he couldn't put his finger on the last indefinable something. I said, 'Something in the air moved us. The artist just up and does something about it without knowing what it was exactly about. It was a genuinely Canadian thing. The Group of Seven caught and reflected the nationalism in the air.' I said further to Harris, 'It's a northern people with a northern country and we had to come to terms with it.' [Italics are Lismer's] Harris said, 'I didn't see it that way.' And I remarked, 'No-- you're a Canadian.'¹⁷

McLeish recounts how Lismer was put off by the "stodgy materialism and really bourgeois spirit" of the people he saw in the Canadian cities, and what a relief it was to him to be able to identify spiritually with his new country after visiting what was then the Ontario hinterland with Thomson.¹⁸ Lismer was looking for what he called "the romantic spirit, the philosophic spirit" in Canada, and initially he was distressed at not finding it. Before seeing Algonquin Park, Lismer wrote to a friend that if the country were as "stirring" as Thomson's sketches indicated, he wondered why Canadians were always talking about their "stomachs, their money" McLeish remarks that "Lismer burned to explore the wilderness regions for himself, sensing that the narrowness and dullness of the bourgeois types of Canadian

were only a part of the story--that out on the canoeing and camping trails, in the settlements and around the fires of the 'undeveloped' country, would be found what he called 'a continuation of the pioneer spirit.'¹⁹ After Lismer's trips north with Thomson, he found the spiritual identification with Canada which he had been seeking. There seemed no inconsistency to Lismer in his discovery of the "romantic spirit," the "pioneer spirit" of Canada in a place where few, if any, Canadians lived. Lismer believed that the human spirit could be expressed by painting nature in her different forms and moods, that all the rapture and the anguish of men were somehow included in nature.²⁰

Lismer had fallen into the romantic fallacy of interpreting nature in human terms. The turbulent water in "September Gale" has no necessary connection with human turbulence, nor does the stillness of "October on the North Shore, Lake Superior" have a connection with human calm. It is useless to defend landscape painting of this sort (not cultivated countryside) on the grounds that it encompasses the human. The only human thing about "September Gale" is that it is a single person's vision of a natural occurrence, and as such is already a selection and ordering in human terms of a non-human phenomenon. Man is a part of nature, not the pivot around which nature revolves; man's emotions are one aspect of the natural world, but they do not exist in the natural world independent of him. If man is not depicted in nature, neither are his emotions. Wilderness landscape painting has a legitimacy of its own, and need not be justified on the ground that in some mystical fashion it encompasses the human spirit. The romantic strain in Lismer found ready expression in the northern theme, and much of Lismer's theorizing about national landscape was a simple distaste for

urban materialism.

Northrop Frye takes Lismer's view of Thomson one step further. Inspired by a showing of Tom Thomson and Horatio Walker at the Art Gallery of Toronto, Frye entitled a commentary on the two painters "Canadian and Colonial Painting." Thomson is thus seen as the representative of an independent Canadian society, but independence is linked to a fear of the landscape. Frye sees as the essential element in Thomson an "imaginative instability, the emotional unrest and dissatisfaction one feels about a country which has not been lived in: the tension between the mind and a surrounding not integrated with it."²¹ Frye argues on the ground that Thomson's use of colour is not a "concord but a minor ninth," and that his design stresses linear distance rather than foreground. Therefore what is furthest away is most intense. In reality, Thomson's colours are so harmonious because of their fidelity to nature, and his composition proved to be so successful in uniting the elements of a landscape painting that it was adopted by the Group and became the trademark of their paintings.²² Thomson used the foreground area and vertical trees to set off and unite the water, mountains, and sky beyond. As he was a man whose imagination was stabilized by nature rather than the opposite, his paintings aimed at harmonizing colour and line. Thomson achieved emotional rest and satisfaction from contact with the un-lived-in spaces. The tensions in "The West Wind" are not human in any sense; they are the tensions of nature. Frye views even the prominent foreground tree in this painting as a "green blob to be looked past, not at."²³ Implicit in his view of Thomson is the northern theme--like the Canadian spirit, the foreground tree in "The West Wind" lives a tenuous existence. It is in constant danger from the persistent

assaults of the climate, and the wind is particularly dangerous because it can be seen only through its effects. Frye sees Thomson as having painted both national landscape and national fear of the landscape. In another essay, Frye talks generally about the characteristics of the Group's paintings:

One notices in these paintings how the perspective is so frequently a twisting and scanning perspective, a canoe man's eye peering around the corner to see what comes next There is an immense difference in feeling between north and south Canada, but as north Canada is practically uninhabited, it exists in Canadian painting only through southern eyes. In those eyes it is a "solemn land" as frightening and fantastic as the moon.²⁴

For Frye, Thomson is only the most striking example of a tense and anxious relation to landscape that is characteristic of all Group paintings.

A highly charged, romantic identification of nature is far more characteristic of Group paintings than the tension Frye describes. MacDonald's collection of poetry, West by East (1933), includes two poems which describe the relation of city to wilderness in nostalgic terms. "Shade Trees" concentrates on the trees on the city streets which may help provide a mystical connection with the wilderness of pioneer days:

Our fathers toiled with axe and plough,
 Into the bush, to clear the land;
 But on their captive acres now
 The crowding cities stand.

And hearts of provident estate,
 Who wish the older gods to please,
 Would guard the bush inviolate
 And plant again the trees.

Now June makes all the street a wood
 And under maple boughs we go,
 In a like shade with him who stood
 To watch the bounding doe.

The benison of branch and leaf
 Makes greenery of summer fire,

And garlands all the city's grief
Shut in her own desire.

And here the soul may chance upon,--
In leafy whisperings of the street,--
The voices of the forest gone,
The wisdom of the wheat.²⁵

A longer poem called "Back Yards" concentrates on the egalitarian relationship between the most settled and the least settled parts of Canada, and the fact that the north (defined as northern Québec and the Arctic) is an important aspect of the Canadian consciousness:

Snow gardens,
Roofs all white,
A grey-white sky.
Fences all topped with snow
White door-steps,
Tufted trees, and washing white
Swayed in the windy flow.
And everywhere
From street to farm,
From farm to bush,
From bush to wild
The all-uniting snow.

Northward it draws a dream
. . . Of drifted cabins in the solitudes
Of wigwams smoking in Ungava woods . . .
And on to the darkened blue
Of Arctic wastes where the gaunt caribou
Walk to the wind . . .
Widens the dream . . .
To the broad yards of Eskimo . . .
So runs our dreaming span
From yard to yard Canadian.
.
Blessed our land, that cannot lack
Backyards to run so deeply back.²⁶

The wilderness, which is seen as a huge backyard, thus becomes a comforting presence in the consciousness; space, far from being frightening, suggests the possibility of release and freedom. A backyard, after all, can be kept under control. What all Group paintings have in common is their control of

design and sense of symmetry. It is significant that MacDonald painted only one industrial landscape, "Tracks and Traffic" (1912), which depicted gas tanks and railroad tracks in Toronto. It was painted under Harris's influence. "The Solemn Land" (1921), a view of the Montreal River, takes the eye past the cliffs in the foreground to the mountains in the distance. Absolute harmony reigns; the mood is contemplative, even dreamy, very similar to the mood of "Back Yards." MacDonald conveys the feeling that the solemn land is a blessed land.

Unlike Thomson, Lismer, and MacDonald, Harris painted the city. He also wrote about it. In 1922 Harris published a book of verse called Contrasts which he divided into five sections--descriptive, emotional, people, definitions, and spiritual. The nine descriptive poems all deal with the city, and many of them concentrate on how visually unappealing it is: "In a part of the city that is ever shrouded in sooty smoke, and amid huge, hard buildings, hides a gloomy house of broken grey rough-cast, like a sickly sin in a callous soul."²⁷ The poem closes with the comment that someone has painted the door of the gloomy house a "bright gay red." Another poem compares the earth to "old, stale, picnic grounds" with "Scraps of greasy, jammy paper about." In a poem called "City Heat," Harris refers to the "undulating coarse stench/From hot meals, dead meats,/ Stinking steam, sour milk/And sour sweat"²⁹ In the "People" section of the volume, Harris entitles one poem "A Question":

Are you like that?
 Are you sad walking down streets,
 Streets hard as steel; cold, repellent, cruel?
 Are you sad seeing people there,
 Outcast from beauty,
 Even afraid of beauty,
 Not knowing?

Are you sad when you look down city lanes,
 Lanes littered with ashes, boxes, cans, old rags:
 Dirty, musty, garbage-reeking lanes
 Behind the soot-dripped backs of blunt houses,
 Sour yards and slack-sagging fences?

When you see great cities,
 Jagged squares of baked clay, and steel and stone,
 Canals of filth under every street,
 Smoke-breathed, din-shrouded,
 Seething with blind, driven people--
 Seeing pilgrims settling down in the earth's scum,
 In mud,
 Feeding swine,
 Are you sad?
 Are you like that?³⁰

Despite the sentiments about the city that Harris expresses in these poems, he can in no sense be said to be painting urban scenes which document urban ugliness or carry a social message. Jeremy Adamson had discussed Harris's urban scenes in the catalogue for what is probably the most important exhibition of Harris's work held in Canada.³¹ Adamson points out that the earliest downtown Toronto scenes are essentially descriptive and show Harris as having been most interested in "the picturesque variety of the architectural motifs."³² For example, Harris said of his first major oil painting, "Old Houses, Wellington Street" (1910), that his aim was to depict the clarity and sharpness of winter sunlight. Harris painted other old houses in the St. John's Ward, and though at the time critics could not understand why he did not want to paint the houses in Rosedale,³³ at this distance in time it is hard to realize that these houses were in a city slum. Even "The Gas Works" in muted grays (1911-12) indicates that Harris was more interested in design than in industrialism. Had Harris been interested in social commentary, he certainly would have had to place people against his urban settings. Harris's Ontario house paintings mainly indicated his interest in form.

In 1921, however, Harris made a sketching trip to Nova Scotia. The poverty that had not stirred him in Ontario stirred him in Cape Breton. Perhaps it was the extremity of the destitution among the Glace Bay miners. "Miners' Houses, Glace Bay" (1921), though it does not contain figures, is a dramatic statement of the bleakness of the miner's life and future. It has been said that the miners' houses are like pithead sheds;³⁴ they are even more like tombstones. A desperate woman and her family appear in the foreground of "Glace Bay" (1921), and children are frozen in static attitudes around the houses of "Black Court, Halifax" (1921). However, Harris's concern with form is still very strong. In "Elevator Court, Halifax" (1921), Harris is interested in the spatial recessions of the tenement buildings and little else.

Adamsen observes that just prior to Harris's Nova Scotia trip there had been a "reassessment of the urban theme" by the painter.³⁵ "Shacks" (1919) and "A House in the Slums" (1920) date from this period. The degree of their realism actually suggests the poverty within the houses, unlike many of the earlier slum scenes. Adamsen goes so far as to state that "Harris raises moral questions about the human condition"³⁶ in the urban scenes from this period. This statement can refer, at the most, to one or two of the Nova Scotia paintings, and thus it appears too extreme. One has only to look at Miller Brittain's paintings of Maritime slums with their focus on human suffering to understand how limited Harris's vision was.

Barker Fairley, in reviewing Harris's Contrasts, made some acute statements about Harris's paintings:

In his writing, Mr. Harris seems to be preoccupied to an almost monotonous extent with vague, transcendental reflections on life and humanity. He shows no interest in or feeling for Nature and

no interest in particularized, individualized human life. His mind runs to humanity in the abstract and the aggregate. For this shadowy Leviathan he entertains a mixture of affection and irony which seems to be personal to him. This is as much as we can get from his cloudy pages. But it is something. It helps to explain the coldness and lack of intimacy in his landscapes and his preference among city subjects for houses and streets with no people in them. The shacks bring him closer to humanity in the abstract than the human individual does, and yet holds him in the visual world which he wishes to paint. And so his best work has lain in that field.³⁷

Fairley is suggestive, but holds back from making the blunt statement that the primary appeal of slum housing for Harris remained an aesthetic one. The variety of shape and colour in slum housing attracted him at first; eventually its bleakness caught his attention. One cannot say that he focussed on the implications of his observations. His "Question" in the poem by that name is "Are you sad?"; it is not "Why?" or "Are you going to act as a result of what you see?" Adamson records that Harris was attacked for painting social propaganda.³⁸ This is more of a clue to the state of art criticism in Canada at the time than it is to Harris's paintings. Even the poor versé in Contrasts is closer to social propaganda than the painting.

Throughout the twenties and early thirties, Harris moved away completely from urban themes. He painted the north shore of Lake Superior, the Rockies, and the Arctic. These paintings of the monumental and architectonic in landscape do not actually represent a departure from previous painting. As Adamson points out, "Harris rejects a multi-form approach to creativity and commits himself to a single and unique vision."³⁹ However, the "vision" or the subject is perfectly suited to the abiding interest Harris had had in form. In an article about Harris called "The Pursuit of Form," Northrop Frye explains Harris's development as a painter in terms of the attempt to impose mental forms on the material world:

It is the peculiar quality of Lawren Harris's painting that it is partly an act of will. He does not surrender to nature and let it grow organically through his mind into art; he has a strongly intellectual mind which imposes pictorial form on nature. He explores and abandons one genre after another in a drive to articulate, not the pictorial genius of a subject, but the pictorial forms of his own mind which are projected on the subject.⁴⁰

Frye points out that "in the gauntness of the dead trees, the staring inhumanity of the lonely mountain peaks, in the lowering mists along the sky-line and the brooding confusions of colour in the foreground, one can see what Coleridge meant when he spoke of the poet as the tamer of chaos."⁴¹ Rarely has landscape seemed so empty as in Harris, and rarely has it seemed so loaded with significance.

In 1926, the year in which Harris painted "North Shore, Lake Superior" (foreground centre, old tree stump; background, lake, bands of light radiating stump and water), one of his most important paintings, he also published an article in The Canadian Theosophist outlining his views of the purpose of art, particularly Canadian art.⁴² Harris begins by pointing out that any change of outlook in a people will show itself through art. Since painting "is the only art that so far has achieved a clear, native expression," any distinctive attitudes will be detected in it. A "new vision" has come into Canadian art, and "at its best it participates in a new rhythm of light, a swift ecstasy, a blessed severity, that leaves behind the heavy drag of alien possessions and thus attains moments of release from transitory earthly bonds." Thus, Harris's anti-materialism was not directed against anything so specific as industrialization or the pursuit of money. Instead, it was abstract in nature, and tended to see this world only as material from which to pierce through to a higher, finer world of the spirit. Because of their proximity to the north, Canadians were provided with a superior form

of the material world from which they could pierce through to the spiritual. Canadians thus had a psychic advantage over Americans, who were further from this source of "cleansing rhythms":

We in Canada are in different circumstances than the people in the United States. Our population is sparse, the psychic atmosphere comparatively clean, whereas the States fill up and the masses crowd a heavy psychic blanket over nearly all the land. We are in the fringe of the great North and its living whiteness, its loneliness and replenishment, its resignations, and release, its call and answer--its cleansing rhythms. It seems that the top of the continent is a source of spiritual flow that will ever shed clarity into the growing race of America, and we Canadians being closest to this source seem destined to produce an art somewhat different from our Southern fellows--an art more spacious, of a greater living quiet, perhaps of a more certain conviction of eternal values. We were not placed between the Southern teeming of man and the ample replenishing North for nothing.⁴³

Harris's belief in the presence or absence of psychic blankets might simply be regarded as personal quirkiness if it were not that his beliefs helped teach Canadians to see the north as the source of their national strength and honour. Harris's version of the northern theme, with its stress on the invigorating effect of the climate, its emphasis on Canadian values, and its identification of Canadians as racially superior to Americans, offers a classic example of Berger's thesis. The distinctive feature in it is its use of theosophical principles as underpinning. Harris offers a detailed description of the process by which the north creates the spirit of Canadians:

Thus the North will give him [Canadian man] a different outlook from man in other lands. It gives him a difference in emphasis from the bodily effect of the very coolness and clarity of the air, the feel of soil and rocks, the rhythm of its hills and the roll of its valleys, from its clear skies, great waters, endless little lakes, streams and forests, from snows and horizons of swift silver. These move into a man's whole nature and evolve a growing, living response that melts his personal barriers, intensifies his awareness, and projects his vision through appearances to the underlying hidden reality. This in time, in and through

many men creates a persisting, cumulating mood that pervades a land, colouring the life of its people and increasing with every response of those people. It is called the spirit of a people. Spirit, I suppose, because it is felt but not seen. In reality it is the forming, self-created, emotional body of those people. ⁴⁴

This process sounds very like the transcendental experience as described by Emerson (union with an oversoul), and it is true that transcendentalism as well as theosophy contributed to the formulation of Harris's philosophy.

For purposes of this discussion, however, the influences on Harris are less significant than his influence on his society. It is true that the rays of light in "North Shore, Lake Superior" probably represent the

"life-essence" described by Mme. Blavatsky, that is, the inner life of the spirit perceivable only by the most elevated levels of consciousness. ⁴⁵

However, if Harris's painting is admired, it is not because of its theosophical content but because the viewer begins with a tree stump dramatically flooded with sunlight. He has been taught by Harris and others to regard the scene as an expression of the national spirit, so he may go further and interpret the tree stump as the north itself, a tough survivor of adversity, and the light as truth or the divine making itself known. He may even think of the Canadian pioneer spirit;

Our life of manners, thought and feeling is a native creation to the extent that pioneering struggles in a virgin country, under great skies altered the European outlook. Our atmosphere is more stimulating to the boldness necessary to question established ways, all institutions and attitudes of the past and other peoples. We are somewhat free from the weariness and consequent doubts and melancholy of Europe, and if we seek first the growing immense zest of this country and continent we will find our own soul and our own unique gift for men. ⁴⁶

The grandeur and monumentality of the Lake Superior landscape are sources of national pride to the viewer. (Or the painting may appear facile or banal, as it did to some of the other artists. A. Y. Jackson reports that

it was known as "The Grand Trunk.")⁴⁷

Ten years after Harris wrote this essay for The Canadian Theosophist, Stephen Leacock wrote the following about Canada:

It's the great spaces that appeal. To all of us here, the vast unknown country of the North, reaching away to the polar seas, supplies a peculiar mental background. I like to think that in a few short hours in a train or car I can be in the primeval wilderness of the North; that if I like, from my summer home, an hour or two of flight will take me over the divide and down to the mournful shores of the James Bay, untenanted till yesterday, now haunted with its flocks of airplanes hunting gold in the wilderness. I never have gone to the James Bay; I never go to it; I never shall. But somehow I'd feel lonely without it.

No, I don't think I can leave this country. There is something in its distances and its isolation and its climate that appeal forever. Outside my window as I write in the dark of early morning . . . the rotary snow ploughs . . . are whirling in the air the great blanket of snow that buried Montreal last night. To the north, behind the mountain, the Northern lights blink on a thousand miles of snow-covered forest and frozen rivers.⁴⁸

Leacock did not have a painting before him. Sitting in comfort in a house on the Côte des Neiges Road in Montreal, Leacock responds to a landscape he has never seen, and offers his response as the primary reason he is not returning "home" to England now that his McGill period is over. Leacock writes as if he is the product of the process Harris described by which the north creates the spirit of Canadians. Surely exposure to the northern theme in writing such as Harris's and Group paintings have given Leacock the material for this imaginative identification with the north rather than "the bodily effect of the very coolness and clarity of the air"

Therefore, though Harris's whole career indicates that his primary concern in painting was form, his search for form led him through both city and wilderness in search of a subject matter. Though he identified his preference for northern landscape with nationalism, it was the simplicity of the forms he found there that attracted him. His interest in the city

represented a search for form; his rejection of the city as a subject came when he found form objectified in a more direct way. Frye sees Harris as having achieved his apogee with the abstract painting of his last period.⁴⁹

In "An Essay on Abstract Painting" written in 1949, Harris talks about the arts as embodying "an immense range of experiences, many new expressions without imitating anything in nature."⁵⁰ He explains that architecture and music do not imitate nature, yet "we respond to them quite naturally with no thought of questioning the suitability of their expressive means."

Similarly, poetry evokes "moods, ideas, intimations, rhythmic nuances of fine and subtle meanings," but in it "there is no imitation of nature."

Harris makes the following remarks about painting:

Also in actuality the art of painting in all ages "begins where imitation ends." It may be an equivalent, a recreation of the experience of things seen in nature but there has always been inherent in it throughout the centuries the possibility of an art independent of representing things seen in nature. Anyone who has truly experienced the great masterpieces of the past in the light of present-day creations in the art of painting cannot fail to see the inevitable attempt to extricate the art from imitation or representation of nature.⁵¹

These remarks explain not only Harris's late abstract paintings, but most of the rest of his work. The same silence and absence of movement informs "Miner's Houses, Glace Bay," "Elevator Court, Halifax," "North Shore, Lake Superior," and "Lighthouse, Father Point" (1930). It is even present in the portraits of Thoreau MacDonald (1927) and Dr. Salem Bland (1926). In Harris's attempts to capture form in nature, he ignored movement and sound. It was abstract painting that freed him to include these natural manifestations, and in this sense Frye's judgment of his late paintings may be accurate. Harris points out that the purpose of abstract painting is different from that of landscape painting: "it has to do with movements, processes, and

cycles in nature" However, there are "no final forms nor objects, no central point, no one place of focus." Partial forms and shapes can be found in the movement, but "The form is the totality of the movement."⁵² Harris's view of abstract art negates the notion that there is any final temporal significance in a particular natural setting. Harris's static approach to the north shore of Lake Superior is totally valid, but in both a larger and a more limited sense than he claimed. It can in no sense be deemed the ultimate expression of either Canadian landscape or the Canadian spirit. His late abstract paintings were certainly an attempt to communicate a message about what is universally human. Thus Harris implicitly recognized the limitations of his claims for his earlier work. However, if one puts aside Harris's verbalizing and just looks at the paintings, one is left with the fact that the Lake Superior paintings communicate universal human awe at the magnificence and grandeur of nature which is not specifically Canadian, even though the Canadian landscape inspires the feeling. The static local landscape, frozen in time, becomes a stylized aspect of the entire natural creation; its validity partly lies in its suggestion of a larger universe.

Harris's art and his statements on art are crucial to an understanding of the Group because, philosophically, he was its most important member. It was he who most encouraged the other painters to see themselves as part of a national movement. Moreover, he provided most of the financing for the studio building in Toronto, and it was he who introduced MacDonald to Dr. MacCallum. Harris and MacDonald went to Buffalo together to see the famous Scandinavian exhibition which so influenced the group, and at Harris's request, MacDonald wrote to A. Y. Jackson to ask if he still possessed "Edge

of the Maple Wood" (1910), as Harris had seen it in an exhibition and wanted to buy it. Jackson dates his association with the Group from the receipt of that letter: "The immediate result was that Harris bought my canvas A second result was that I began my association with the artists responsible for changing the course of Canadian art for many years to come."⁵³ It was Harris who organized the Algoma box car trips. One could continue to cite examples of Harris's influence, but they have been well documented. If Harris's theories about the specifically "national" spirit of his paintings detach so easily from the work itself, the "national spirit" of the rest of the Group paintings becomes questionable as well.

A. G. Bailey has remarked that Canada, considered in a non-political sense, is an aggregation of dependent regions, "and in consequence the most salient features of its culture have more closely represented a reflection of the existent modes of the metropolitan areas than a growth of that problematical internal soul for which Canadians have come to search, with a view to calling it their own."⁵⁴ Even if one grants that the natural environment has been a more potent cultural influence than the metropolitan centre, a claim which is dubious, no claim can be made for the extension of an environmental consciousness derived from a particular region to the nation as a whole. Mass communications can contribute to the development of such a consciousness, but their development is recent. Until Emily Carr met the Group she had not thought in terms of national landscape. As we move further away from The Group in time, their paintings are treated more and more as three-dimensional myths. Claims made for them that seem intellectually suspect now may be seen as "truth" as time passes. On the other hand, the adoption of the central Canadian consciousness of the environment may continue

to seem to the Prairies and the Maritimes like the taking of a colonial stance. The value of the Group, from a national cultural point of view, may be that they contributed to the establishment of a Canadian identity rather than that they identified something that existed already. Seen from a broader point of view, the Group recorded a variety of human observations of the wilderness, selecting and ordering the natural world for the viewer and offering him a method for visual control of it. Their visions are separate and distinct, Harris offering a concern with inner form and drama, Thomson offering accuracy of colour and an imposed design, and Lismer strong, highly defined shapes, and bold foreground and colour. That their statements about the wilderness embody statements about a sea-to-sea Canadian mentality suggests a desire on their part that such a thing exist rather than proof that it does.

Bailey points out that the definition of national character has been difficult even with the relatively integrated nationalities of western Europe:

The growth of a discrete and pervasive character in a country divided, as Canada is, by geographic barriers and distances, conflicting economic interests, political particularism, diversity of religious beliefs and practices, language and cultural traditions, has been slow and tenuous; and the number of crucial traits which it has shared with kindred nations has been so great that the isolation and definition of distinctive characteristics have been fraught with the greatest difficulty, and have indeed only recently been attempted by Canadian students of their country's art and literature.⁵⁵

He adds that concomitant with post-World War I political autonomy, vocal groups of artists and writers promoted the idea of a distinctive Canadian culture "which would be worthy of Canada's international status" However, cultural distinctiveness has too often tended to be equated with "such purely objective content as local names and events in the country's

history, and with physiographic data" [*italics mine*].

Peter Mellen, who has written the major book on the Group, describes as "questionable" the nationalist argument.⁵⁶ He sees them as having relied heavily on late nineteenth-century European techniques, for example, those of the French post-Impressionists (late Cézanne, Gauguin, Matisse). Cézanne has hypothesized that all of nature could be analyzed into the elements of formal geometry, cones, cylinders, and spheres,⁵⁷ and the Group was heavily oriented in the direction of design and symbol. Mellen is also dubious of the claim that the Pre-Cambrian Shield can represent all of Canada. Casson and Carmichael did not paint outside Ontario during the Group years, and though the others painted in other parts of Canada, Jackson was the only one who tried to paint Canada from sea to sea. The Group was also a Toronto-based movement. All the exhibitions opened in Toronto, and nearly all the artists lived there, at least till the Group disbanded. Mellen sees their contribution as an "attempt to convince Canadians that they need to have an art of their own if Canada were to be a great country."⁵⁸ That their art is now seen as distinctively Canadian is proof of Canadian desire to possess a national identity. It may be that the desire for a shared sensibility is a national characteristic. Recent political developments in Quebec, of course, would indicate a continued resistance to the idea of a national sensibility, a fact which puts Jackson's Quebec paintings in an ambiguous position.

In a far less ambitious fashion, the northern theme manifested itself in the literature of the twenties as well. Lionel Stevenson's Appraisals of Canadian Literature (1926) includes a chapter on northern literature called

"North of Fifty-Three." Stevenson does not identify north with Algoma. Instead he points out that for a long time the word simply meant Hudson's Bay Territory: ". . . a northern story was not complete without an isolated trading fort in charge of a humorous Scottish factor, to which the French and half-breed trappers came with their furs."⁵⁹ However, first-hand records of adventure and exploration in the north such as Vilhajalmur Stefansson's My Life Among the Esquimaux (1913) proved to be more compelling than the fiction. After the Klondike gold rush, north came to mean the Yukon rather than Hudson Bay, and Robert Service became the principal literary interpreter of the area. To Stevenson, who was writing in the mid-twenties, north in literature meant a Hudson's Bay Post or Dawson City. He differentiated wilderness literature set in British Columbia by discussing it in a separate chapter called "Mountains and Ocean." Prairie literature is included in a chapter entitled "The Land of Open Spaces." It is interesting to note that Ralph Connor's Corporal Cameron, considered "northern" literature by Carl Berger, was considered "prairie" literature by Lionel Stevenson.⁶⁰ The three writers of the chapter on fiction from 1880 to 1920 in the Literary History of Canada point out that "the Canadian Northwest familiar to a world-wide audience in the 1910's and the 1920's was not primarily the Yukon, the Rockies, or the Coast; it was the Peace, Athabaska, and the Mackenzie country."⁶¹ They mention, among others, Hiram Cody and James Oliver Curwood as the principal writers of northern romances. Corporal Cameron they describe as a "western" book.⁶²

Writers of the twenties do not appear to have regarded the northern Ontario painting country as promising literary material. Alan Sullivan's The Rapids (1920) is set in Algoma, but it seems to be an exception. More

typical is Sullivan's book Under the Northern Lights (1926), a collection of short stories set in the Northwest Territories. For the most part the stories deal with native peoples, though "The Eyes of Sabastien" is set in northern Quebec and deals with descendants of French settlers. "The Spirit of the North" is typical of the collection. It includes most of the elements of the northern myth. There are three similar narrative lines which converge at the end. Each deals with a man who nearly dies as the result of being caught in a blizzard. Each man is saved as the result of his own pluck and the help the others give him. The three of them eventually reach a cabin with warmth and food. The landscape is seen as magnificent but merciless to those who underestimate it:

There was no sound save the steady drone from the North--a potent voice that through the winter months holds its interminable pitch. In this abode of solitude, peopled by fur and feather wise in the law of the wilderness and waging the endless war for existence, man survives only by the stoutness of his heart and the strength of his body. The battle is to the strong. The wind bites, the cold pierces, the way of the trail is arduous, and he who falters is doomed. It is a stark country, grim and unforgiving, merciless in its mandates and swift to punish.⁶³

The peoples of the north are seen as dignified, proud, and anti-materialistic. The main character of another story called "Trade" is Ajidamo, an Indian described as a man "for whom time and space and riches and the world in general"⁶⁴ do not exist. Ajidamo finds a piece of gold and eventually pitches it into the lake rather than turn it over to a white man with whom he cannot establish a relationship of "mutual civility."⁶⁵ That the northern climate is the principal element in the formation of northern character is made even more clear in "The Passing of Chantie, the Curlew":

The North is a stern mother to the tribes that tenant her silent places. She feeds them for a time, then, perchance, starves them. She bakes them under a torrid sun and, in a little while,

strikes them with killing winds. She smiles across leagues of sunny waters that soon are hidden beneath endless fields of grinding ice. She dangles her purple Aurora in the zenith that all may see and marvel, but out of her unknown regions come roaring the storms that no man may face and live. So beneath her threats and caresses the brown people are what they are: brave, simple and uncomplaining; wistful, because they know not when the end may come; loving the slant-eyed children for whose safety they are ready to die; generous, because hunger is brother to all, and, when old age comes, facing the final great adventure with unquestioning fortitude and faith.⁶⁶

Landscape and people are linked with the purity, faith, and love of the Christian vision of the universe in the closing story of the volume, "The Salving of Pyack." Near death from starvation, a Coast Eskimo family travels inland in a southerly direction in search of food and eventually encounters a government official sent to make records of temperature and snowfall. He feeds them and they listen to the Christmas story on his radio:

Thus sang the voice, and sang on, telling of a star that men followed while the world was young. Peeguk and Oomgah did not understand a word except about the star. That was natural enough. Macgregor's eyes were fixed on these children of Time. They too had followed a star. There came to him the vision of a Woman on an ass, a Babe at her bosom, and it seemed that between that Woman and Oomgah, between the Judaeen Child and the Late Comer with his small, pinched, copper-coloured face and strands of coal-black hair, was every tie of kinship. And the arms of Mary, Mother of God, in which Divinity rested on a Galilean hillside, why did they differ from those of Oomgah behind whose dark, low-lidded gaze moved a thousand questions that would never be answered?⁶⁷

The myth as described by Berger is thus implicit throughout this collection of stories. Sullivan's particular variation is that the northern character formed by the northern country and climate is really the Christian character. The book cannot be said to offer evidence that man stands in a continually tense relation to nature; what it stresses, in fact, is the superb adaptation of the natives to their environment. The characters do not fear the landscape, and the writer expresses admiration for their fearlessness.

Harwood Steele also wrote a book set in the Arctic. The Ninth Circle (1927)⁶⁸ deals with the exploits of a Mountie named Fate Westward, in charge of an R.C.M.P. detachment at Last Haven. The author presents the Polar regions in Dantesque terms:

In many ways, the North Spirit reminded Fate of another woman, not treacherous or cruel, perhaps, but beautiful, chaste, aloof, austere. This woman had helped to drive him, an exile, into the Arctic Circle, the Ninth Circle of the Inferno, the deepest frozen circle, wherein the North Spirit, a feminine Satan, had her throne and damned souls, like himself, wandered forever through cold and changeless night.⁶⁹

The "North Spirit" is also seen as "some hideous monster of the old Norse legends, whimpering, scrabbling, leaping in her untiring eagerness to shatter that poor refuge [Fate Westward's house] and devour her victim."⁷⁰ The beauty of the landscape which the "North Spirit" creates is deceptive. It is meant to impress Fate with his helplessness in the face of nature. During a boat patrol of the area, Fate at first thinks of icebergs in celestial terms but soon sees them as inimical to him:

In some uncanny way they seemed brimful of life--bowing gravely to the little boat, as seraphim might do, packed tight with staring men, as towers and skyscrapers or battleships and yachts might be, stopping now and then to rest The majesty of their beauty, the stateliness of their concerted movement, was spiritually overwhelming. And behind them Fate could sense the presence of the North Spirit, whose aim it was to stagger him with such supreme displays.⁷¹

Steele's personification of the Spirit of the North and his likening of it to the ninth circle weaken the book considerably. However, these devices help polarize Mountie and climate. Fate must show truly heroic endurance and courage to win over the climate. He must also adhere to the highest standards of R.C.M.P. discipline to survive. The book has no literary value, but it indicates clearly the kind of relation between climate and people.

that popular romantic literature of the period was propagating.

Madge Macbeth's Kleath (1917) is also popular literature, this time set in Dawson City. The climate is far less significant in the plot than the untraditional atmosphere of the new city. Dawson is a place where a man can "break new ground and strike out for himself" and which does not adhere to rusty and worn-out traditions.⁷² The characters include Cavendish, the younger son of a noble British family; he is escaping from the gardens, parks, moors, and streams that his family owns. Kleath himself has a secret, a wife who is a thief and a drunkard, and he has tried to start a new life in Dawson. However, the climate does kill two of the characters; two women die of exposure, one because she has never been willing to adjust her clothing and habits to its requirements, and the other because illness and a heightened emotional state make her careless of the cold. The home of the former woman is an incongruous mixture of the simple and sophisticated, and one gets the impression that Macbeth never entirely made up her mind about whether Dawson City was superior to more southern cities or not:

The room contained an amazing assortment of picturesque crudities offset by equally amazing evidences of effete civilization --bibelots, which would have interested a visitor to Fifth Avenue or Berkeley Square, but which looked as humorously incongruous in the mining camp as a Vernis-Martin cabinet would look in a kitchen

Over the rough pine floors unable to deny their lowly origin in spite of paint and varnish, glowed two excellent examples of Persian industry. On the walls were several bits of tapestry appearing very much as a velvet portière might have looked against an iceberg. Offsetting a rough, home-made table, was an exquisite ivory miniature of the Taj Mahal; . . . Kleath was conscious of a bewildering medley of odors--food in the process of cooking, a faint suggestion of disinfectant mingled with tobacco, a strong exotic scent which reminded him of tropical flowers⁷³

No consistent point of view towards the north emerges in the book. Macbeth simply seemed to be taking advantage of the current popular interest in the

locale and set a romantic adventure story there that could have taken place almost as easily anywhere else.

Macbeth's The Patterson Limit (1923) is set in northern Quebec; it is concerned largely with feminism and conservation. The book takes the stand that a life lived close to nature brings self-realization and union with a cosmic oversoul. A female forest ranger, Ann Crump, proves her worth and prevents the Patterson timber limit from burning down. In the process she and Arthur Patterson discover they love each other, though they had separated earlier in the book because of a disparity in values:

For his idea was to take all he could from life, while hers was to put something into it. His standards were those set up by man and money; hers, by Nature and God. She strove for truth; he, for brilliance. She tried to live for humanity, and he hoped to make humanity live for him. They looked upon the world from opposite poles.⁷⁴

Ann's view of nature is that it is not man's to abuse or wreck, but that each generation stands in the position of tenants in a rented house, tenants who hold the country in trust for posterity. She argues that conserving a country's resources and repairing the waste of former years is doing nature justice. She bases her view of justice on Ruskin's position that "though absolute justice be unobtainable, as much justice as we need for all practical use is attainable by all those who make it their aim."⁷⁵ Thus the moral life is seen as one devoted to the just treatment of nature. Ray, a sturdy, independent woman who lives on the Limit does not desire the luxuries money can buy; she is compared to the "money-made woman," an "exotic, artificial, over-cultivated creature, subsisting on extravagance."⁷⁶ When Ann is in contact with nature, she loses her "sense of individualism, of separateness, that is at the root of all life's terrible inharmonies."⁷⁷ United to the natural universe, she feels part "of the Universal Spirit from

which in bygone days the water, trees, and wild things had separated."

Macbeth editorializes about this experience, which she calls coming "face to face" with "Cosmic Consciousness":

How few of us know the joy of forgetting the individual within our earthly shell and linking ourselves with the Universe. True, to some there occur illuminating moments; moments, when the burst of music, the contemplation of a picture or a statue, the contact with Nature takes us out of ourselves and lifts us to the threshold of God's temple. But for the most part we are not conscious of the miracle that is occurring; and much of the value of a miracle is lost by unrealizations of its power.⁷⁸

Macbeth thus believes this transcendental experience to be obtainable through art as well as through a union with nature, but life in the city is inimical to this experience:

". . . he [Ann's dog] probably feels as I do when I leave the city behind . . . a burden lifted from the shoulders, leaden weights from the feet, depression from the heart; . . . Why, after breathing for a few weeks of the vitiated air of cities, the first whiff of the forest intoxicates me, makes me positively drunk."⁷⁹

Though the Patterson limit is located near Lac St. Dennis in Quebec, and though Ann Crump and Archer Patterson are Americans, there is little or no sense of national boundaries or a Canadian national consciousness in the book. Ann Crump's view of nature seems to be borrowed freely from the New England transcendentalists, but it is just as freely applied to the Canadian landscape without reference to a specifically Canadian spirituality. The book begins in a New England town, and the main office of the Patterson Pulp and Paper Company is in Washington. Though there is a reference to forestry being a factor in "national economics,"⁸⁰ the reference is to the United States. In short, there is no sense of Canadian political nationalism in the book. The Quebec wilderness is treated as if it were the outermost reaches of the United States. Macbeth, of course, was born in the United

States, though she lived in Ottawa, but her obliviousness to the link between the Quebec landscape and Canadian nationalism indicates that the connection between landscape and nationalism was not as widespread as might be assumed from the writings of the Group.

A startling contrast to Macbeth's book is a non-fictional account of the "new north" written by an American journalist and prospector, Courtney Ryley Cooper. Go North, Young Man was written in 1926, and a second edition appeared three years later. Cooper writes an exciting, vigorous narrative about what he calls the "Eastern North,"⁸¹ He describes the geological formation of Pre-Cambrian rock and then bluntly states, "This Pre-Cambrian was money rock."⁸² He offers a brief account of the settlement of the "Gray Clay Belt," the discovery of silver at Cobalt, and the development of the Rouyn District. He then describes what he sees as a change of attitude on the part of Canadians towards their own country. Whereas formerly there existed a "stand-offish, let-me-alone attitude" and a feeling that Canada was a "bloody tough job to see through,"⁸³ he now sees exuberance about the country's future:

There must be a reason for such a change in attitude. There is, and it does not lie in that comparatively narrow fringe of populous areas which most persons know as Canada.

The reason is the New North, crammed with minerals, thundering with possibilities for hydro-electric development, sufficiently tillable at remote spots to give small fortunes to hard-working pioneers. And everywhere it bristles with the spires of softwoods which return almost ton for ton in newsprint and sulphide papers, to say nothing of the developments of cellulose fiber which produces the silky rayon and kindred products. This is the land which once belonged only to the Indian trapper and the dog-sled driver, to the wandering factor of the Hudson's Bay Company and the French Canadian pioneer, content if he could find a living in the clay revealed by the hacking of a hole in the stubborn, tangled bush

And as men pour in, so pour the millions of dollars, hundreds

upon hundreds of them, money from the United States, from Canada, from England; one hears lump sums discussed in the Northland to-day that would have been jeered at as the ravings of a crazed person a decade ago. Twenty-five millions for this, a hundred millions for something else; twenty millions more for a year's railroad-building program, ten millions for the development of a single mine, another million for prospecting--just to find out if a piece of ground is worth spending a real sum of money upon! This is the land that a few years ago was called the "land of the stunted poplar" . . . a hopeless drag upon a Dominion which felt itself doomed to exist upon a comparatively narrow strip of agricultural country along its southern border.⁸⁴

Cooper sounds light-headed or intoxicated as he gushes out figure after figure. Though some Canadians may not have felt themselves "doomed" to their "narrow strip" of ground, Cooper clearly thought that a sense of doom had existed in Canada before the material possibilities of the north had become apparent. A few pages later, he points out to the reader that it is now better etiquette to refer to the north as the "Golden North" rather than the "Frozen North."⁸⁵ In a broader view of the north, he locates it as stretching from Labrador across the Ungava country into northern Quebec, across the new north of Ontario, through the Patricia district, into Manitoba and north into the Barren Land across Saskatchewan and Alberta and British Columbia and into the Yukon; he points out that the westward flow of empire in the United States was "puny" compared to this northward push, which will include not only the quest for gold and other minerals, but agriculture, railroad building, manufacturing, water power, smelters, steamship lanes, and cities. Diefenbaker's view of Canada has at least one precedent!

Cooper points out that the settlement of the north is dangerous, but he supports the tough, casual approach to life that he claims is characteristic of those who are "cracking open the North":

. . . A man dies, Well, he is gone, and another takes his place. A group of engineers, lost, half-starved, staggers into camp.

They're there, why waste conversation on talking about what's already happened? A prospector disappears. Maybe he'll show up again. Maybe he won't. There is a far bigger thing than individual loss or individual suffering; it is aggregate success and national well-being.⁸⁶

Cooper's revelation of his materialist ethic is naked and unabashed. It forms a startling contrast to Alan Sullivan's ideas of northern exploitation in The Rapids (1920), where the hero who tames the wilderness is presented as operating under a divine mandate, and nature is actually in collusion with the hero as he imposes a man-made order on it. How characteristic of Canadian thinking Cooper's ethic was is hard to determine.

Cooper is attracted to the "New North" for other reasons as well. The hardship and mystery of the wilderness have their own romantic allure which cannot be understood by the city dweller. The "New North" settler wants to beat the wilderness:

. . . The New North is a rather inexplicable thing. The lure of it, yet the somber fierceness of it, the mysticism of the bush, stretching on for miles as though daring one to attempt to conquer it, such pioneer country is an enigma to the ordinary person. The cruelty of the bush, the sweep of the winter winds, the threat of forest fire, the long waiting until land can be reclaimed from so much brush and tree growth; one thinks of these things first, because they are the self-evident things; these and the mosquitoes and the black flies waiting to harass the new-comer, the danger of illness, the distance from civilization. What may come later is not taken into consideration. To-day the New North stands defiant, black-bushed, wild, untrammled; the average person, accustomed to city conveniences, sees no more. But the pioneer has other ideas; that's what makes him a pioneer.⁸⁷

Cooper says that the "true invader" of the wilderness is actuated by a "forgetfulness of to-day in the glories of tomorrow,"⁸⁸ that is, he sees himself as building for future generations. He has the spirit of creation in him.

The book is laced with entertaining anecdotes about tough, crusty men and their adventures in the bush. It is shot through with optimism and

energy, and there is no indication anywhere in the book of a fear of landscape so overwhelming that it will halt what Cooper sees as the "funeral of another frontier."⁸⁹ As Cooper says in his introduction, "For the weakling, this book has nothing"⁹⁰--that is, he who prefers city comforts to the lure of the wilderness.

This view of the Canadian national well-being, though it is based on the new north just as decisively as Lismer's and Harris's views were, completely contradicts the idea of the north as a place where cleansing rhythms and spiritual expansion are to be found. The romantic idea of the north as the former of a distinct national character is ignored in favour of a hard-headed victor mentality in which the north, formidable as it is, will be forced to yield up its wealth to man, who will subdue it for himself and his progeny. The north will not form man; man will form the north.

By the end of the twenties, however, the Group of Seven had left its mark on literature. A Toronto amateur theatre director called Herman Voaden, who had established the Theatre Studio Group, sponsored a playwriting contest in which the competitors were asked to use the northern Ontario landscape as a setting and Group paintings as guides to the mood of their plays. Six of these plays were published in 1930 in a thin volume which included reproductions of the relevant Group paintings. For example, Betti P. Sandiford's The Bone Spoon is illustrated by Lismer's "September Gale," under which the following caption by Voaden appears:

This canvas, striking in its movement and power, epitomizes the spirit of the Georgian Bay country in storm mood. Here are the stunted and wind-blown pines, the shoals and islands, the open stretches of sky and water of the first play in this volume, "The Bone Spoon".⁹¹

A play called The Mother Lode by Archibald F. Key merited a photo of Harris's "Above Lake Superior," under which this caption appeared:

This much-discussed canvas embodies something of the idealism suggested in "The Mother Lode." The trees in the foreground, stripped by fire and ice, are typical of millions in the north. The mood of the country above Lake Superior and, to a certain extent, of the entire wilderness of northern Ontario and Quebec, is summarized--a mood of austerity, loneliness and peace.⁹²

In the introduction, Voaden points out that Canadians have the poise and restraint of the British with the ardour and will of Whitman's American, to whom the Canadian of 1930 is compared. The Canada of 1930 has a great capacity for creative and spiritual growth, and a fresh and untrammelled idealism to which the North makes the greatest contribution. Voaden quotes Harris's term "spiritual clarity" to describe what it is that the North provides towards the creation of this idealism. What is interesting about these plays is the deliberateness of their creation. They cannot be said to be rooted in the culture; instead, they spring from a desire for rootedness and give a superficial appearance of indigenous growth, but they wither under scrutiny.

It remained for Morley Callaghan to use the Ontario painting country truly as a setting for literary work. No Man's Meat (1931) and A Broken Journey (1932) are both set in Algoma and examine the effect of the rock country on the urban sensibility. The themes are set out in the earlier work, which was printed privately in Paris in 1931. Jean and Bert Beddoes have a cottage at Lake Echoé [sic] to which they have been coming every summer for five years. Though they had tried "earnestly to find a long excitement"⁹³ (8) on trips to Europe and Mexico, they had "returned finally to the north country," as it seemed to represent their calm and steady existence better than other places:

Nearly every night he slept alone Sometimes he went into his wife's room in the morning, and they both liked it, though not often could they have a passion strong enough to destroy the feeling of calmness between them, a steady calmness overpowering all quick feeling and every day growing stronger. Hearing the steady swing of water on the shore Beddoes thought happily they had got beyond all undisciplined impulses and had achieved a contented peacefulness they had hoped for many years ago when they had first thought of getting married. (1-2)

Though they see the "dark lake" and a "big rock" all the time from their cottage, they remain untouched by the passion these two natural objects represent. Instead they have a "steady reasoned happiness." They adhere to a regular daily routine which includes sitting down for breakfast in "city clothes and shiny shoes" (2). While a Scotch maid serves, they chat about modern painters and writers. After breakfast, Mrs. Beddoes does woodcarving, "a medium through which she could find a more orderly way of living" (3), and Beddoes takes a morning walk. Mrs. Beddoes appears for lunch "clean and tidy and fresh-faced" (5-6). Lunch is followed by "another definite but always delightful hour of the day" (6) during which they chat on the verandah.

Though Mr. and Mrs. Beddoes regard themselves as part of the landscape, the local people are skeptical of them. Beddoes usually chats with a local farmer, John Scott. Though Beddoes behaves as if there is a sympathetic relationship between them, Scott does not take him seriously. Mr. and Mrs. Scott smile when they see Beddoes walking down the road, "a city fellow with pointed shoes and a neatly pressed suit" (4). The residents of the town regard Beddoes as "the city man who lived in the cabin by the lake and did nothing at all to earn a living" (26). Mr. and Mrs. Beddoes are aware of the local attitude towards them. During their customary walk at twilight, they pass small farmhouses and realize that the farmers think of them as

"foolish ones" who ought to have remained in the city. Unconsciously justifying the local view of them, the couple attempt to turn the people and landscape into art objects in their mind:

All the way back to their own cabin they had talked excitedly about the old woman singing and the solemn children listening, the one picture that the evening gave them. Every evening they selected only one or two pictures from the rock country and talked excitedly and carefully, making the picture last most of the evening. (24)

Fundamentally, they stand in an alien relationship to the people because they stand in an alien relationship to the landscape. Mrs. Beddoes offers the following judgment:

We have a steady reasoned happiness. But look at the sun on the face of the rock. I love the way it shines on the hard rock and streaks it with red and green and thin patches of purple. In the winter time at home in the city I think of the rock in the night time when I can't sleep. (7)

Mrs. Beddoes goes on to describe the rock as "hard and steady and urgent" but not necessarily like a man, a glance forward to the passionate relationship which will shortly develop between herself and Jean, their lesbian visitor.

Since Mr. and Mrs. Beddoes are really tourists in the north country rather than inhabitants of it, their steadiness and calm are apparent rather than real. It is the local people who have succeeded in repressing feeling in order to survive. In the following sentences, Jean describes the landscape as "lovely" but the people as "stunted and warped" (14):

The country is slashed with magnificent color. The farmers are depressing. It's a wild rough hard country of many colors and there's no sap in the people. (14-15)

Beddoes' explanation is that "It's all rock underneath, and the people are like the things they try to grow. They can hardly grow anything. The bright ones have all moved away. . They ought to all move away" (15). Beddoes is thus simultaneously attracted to and repelled by the north country. The

steadiness and calm it breeds are appealing: nonetheless, he and his wife are sacrificing their passionate impulses while there, and they feel a distaste for what they realize is a permanent suppression of feeling on the part of the local people. As Mr. and Mrs. Beddoes are not really "rock underneath," the contrived surface of their life is easily cracked by Jean's presence.

Jean had left her husband two years before and has been travelling in Europe and Haiti. She follows the races and gambles, and is described as wearing a "little red felt Peter Pan hat, her dark hair, prematurely grey, curling out from under it and intensifying so much life and energy in the quickly changing expressions on her face" (9). Mrs. Beddoes immediately links her with the landscape by calling Jean a "lovely wild bird" who belongs in "this part of the woods." One of Jean's first acts is to do a "Grecian dance on the beach with stiff jerky wooden movements." This links her with the dionysian in life, precisely what Mr. and Mrs. Beddoes have claimed they do not require. She talks easily of "Haiti, voodooism, witch doctors and black magic" (10). The couple immediately establish a mysterious sensitive communion with her.

Mr. Beddoes takes Jean canoeing to the big rock across from the cottage, and he is stirred into an awareness of her as a source of passionate life absent from the landscape:

. . . the two of them were alone in the cleft in the rock and the feeling in her was not of the country at all. The beauty of her body, her exuberance and vivacity, was like the surface of the wild hard country; but the land was rocky and sterile underneath.

(13)

In the evening Jean creates more excitement for Beddoes by gambling with him. He contrives to get Jean to wager her "virtue" and wins. Though she

dislikes men sexually, Jean is a gambler with an "extraordinary notion of honor," and she wishes to pay her debt. The encounter is a fiasco, and Mrs. Beddoes must comfort Jean. In turn, Mrs. Beddoes, who has masked shyness and timidity with a "bright metallic hardness" like the surface of the country, is roused to passion by Jean, and the two women discover they love each other.

Some aspect of the landscape is thus antithetical to all the characters of the novella: Jean's beauty identifies her with the surface of the landscape, but she has a sensitive and passionate nature and the north country is rock underneath. Mr. and Mrs. Beddoes have been drawn to the steadiness, calm, and silence to be found in the north, but their capacity for intellectualizing, their taste, and their sophistication have been formed by the city; their reactions remain those of the detached observer. The local people have been sapped of strength and vitality by the constant struggle with the sterility of the soil. The north country does not provide optimum conditions for the survival of man.

Jean's function in the story is to release Mrs. Beddoes into the passionate life that the north suggests but ultimately blocks, and to which Mrs. Beddoes has always been sensitive. Jean's surface similarity to the landscape is helpful, but the two must leave the north in order to further an intense emotional life, as the extremity of the landscape ultimately will be destructive. Beddoes is left uneasy and restless by the unsatisfactory experience. The lake and the rock do not afford him their usual calm:

There were no stars or lights in the land and looking out the lake window at the blackness of the water extending to the more impenetrable blackness of the rock's face in the night, was terrifying, for the skyline could not be seen from the window. Beddoes felt more uneasy, more confused than he had been in years, unable to regain the feeling of isolation. (38)

Beddoes is left to find satisfaction in his protection of the "dark tall first growth pines, the best in the whole country" (42). As Beddoes has remarked earlier, "It's all the country was ever good for around here--timber" (27). Like the Algonquins whose rough carvings he appreciates, Beddoes probably will be driven out.

Though No Man's Meat is much more than a social document, it still provides a gauge to estimate living conditions in northern Ontario in the twenties. In conjunction with non-fictional accounts of the north, it provides a strong contrast to romantic Group views of the area. "What is Wrong with Northern Settlement?" appeared in The Canadian Forum two years before Callaghan's novella. The author, E. Newton-White, argues against the boosters of northern settlement who are intent on obscuring the truth about the poverty and distress among northern settlers. Newton-White points out that "Optimism, in many forms of Canadian development and activity, has gone crazy, and it is reckoned akin to heresy or treason to suggest in print or public that everything is not superlatively satisfactory."⁹⁴ (Courtney Cooper's view of Canadian northern development must have been typical of the views of at least some Canadians.) Therefore, Newton-White undertakes to give a detailed description of living conditions in a "section of a well-known agricultural region now in process of development for upwards of thirty years." Though the area appears superficially prosperous, a generally low standard of housing prevails. Many people live in shacks. Most farmers are in arrears with mortgage payments under the loan system of the province. Financial pressures have caused livestock in the province to be cut down to half the normal number. There are many empty farms, and there is a heavy preponderance of hay fields over grain fields. Newton-White's

position is that agriculture in the "Northern claybelts" has very severe limitations, and that the facts have not been presented honestly by colonization agencies:

To begin with, the word 'clay' speaks for itself. It means soil requiring the maximum of power to work. This is no country for light or makeshift equipment, but for heavy duty implements, heavy horses, and the tractor. The shortness of the working and growing season demands intense work and speed in all operations from seeding to fall plowing; in other words a full equipment of large machinery, motor power, and much help. The long feeding periods--seven months as a rule--mean that large acreages must be cropped. The uncertainty of good harvest weather, and the certainty of bad weather in the late fall and all winter, mean that ample barn space is a necessity. Due to the severity of the winters, the home dwelling and the livestock housing must be of the warmest construction. The latitude precludes the growing of certain valuable crops of bulky yield which help out the stock-feeder of the South.⁹⁵

Newton-White points out that the markets supposedly provided by the mining camps and logging operations do not demand more than a fraction of the hay and oats produced locally, and that local products must compete with the output of about two hundred and seventy-five railway miles of settlement. In short, ". . . a northern bush farm requires the maximum of equipment in every direction, while yielding the minimum of net profit." What appears to be progress and prosperity in the north is a temporary condition only, made possible by the presence of timber. Once the timber is cut or burned, a locality will become distressed. Agriculture can just survive if it is reinforced by the woods, but total dependence on the land brings total distress. "In the easier, richer south, the farmer's trade yields least for the most work and greatest investment of all industries. In the north, handicapped by climate, by soil, by debt, by lack of available markets, and the general inability to grow crops, is it any wonder that he cannot make it go?"⁹⁶ The country in No Man's Meat conforms in many details to Newton-

White's description: the farmers barely scratch out a living, the timber is burnt out, an outsider owns the only first-growth timber in the area, and the town is dismal and seedy.

These depressing socio-economic circumstances are also described by Merrill Denison in his collection of four plays, The Unheroic North (1923). The plays are all set in northern Ontario and are a deliberate debunking of the northern myth.* In Brothers in Arms, a Toronto couple called Dorothea and J. Altrus Browne are stranded in an abandoned farmhouse used as a hunting camp. Browne is worried about the money he is losing by being away from the city, while Dorothea rhapsodizes about the Canadian wilderness:

Dorothea.-- . . . but don't you love it here? (rising, with an outflung arm gesture) This simple camp, its rustic charm . . . the great big out-of-doors? . . . I don't what to go back to Toronto, Altrus. (emphatically) I'd like to live in a place like this forever.

Come and sit down beside me on this simple, rough hewn bench Oh, it's Canada and it's the wilds. Don't you love the wilds?

Browne.--I do not! Might have known that something like this would happen coming up to a God-forsaken hole twenty miles from a railroad. And if that chap doesn't turn up pretty soon. . . .⁹⁷

The Weather Breeder and From Their Own Place are also comedies, and the latter play also relies for much of its humour on the contrast between city and backwoods attitudes. The city man cleverly avoids becoming the dupe of the local backwoodsmen, though he remarks that he would rather "deal with a litter of Paris Apaches or New York Gunmen than these splendid

* These plays were written seven or eight years before the region had become petrified in the six plays coaxed into existence by Herman Voaden.

backwoodsmen of the Canadian wilds."⁹⁸ However, Marsh Hay is the most important play in the collection. In four acts, it is a damning piece of social realism. The title refers to the practice of cutting marsh hay to winter cattle because the growing season is so short and uncertain, and the feeding season is so long that cultivated feed cannot be relied on to supply cattle through the winter. In addition, marsh hay often had to be hauled long distances and was not always abundant. The following conversation takes place between William Thompson, an "elderly man with the city stamp upon him," and John Serang, a backwoods farmer:

John.--I often wondered what you seen in the back country. It aint nothin but a popple wilderness of granite, sickly farms'n lakes . . . A feller can't scrape a livin off'n it.

Thompson.--It's a great country, John. With any sort of care it will be a pinery once more.

John.-- (disgustedly) A lot of good a pinery'll do us a hundred years from now. People like you that don't have to make their livin back here think it's fine country, Mr. Thompson. (dejectedly) Try and scrape a livin off'n this farm of mine that you can't drive a plow straight for ten feet on and you'd change your mind.

'N it'll be a long-time before you'll ever see a government that'll sink a cent of money back here . . . They's townships that aint got twenty voters, if they got that many.

Thompson.--If I hated it as much as you do, I'd leave it.

John.--I suppose you'd walk to Alberta and pick choke cherries to feed yourself. If one of these damn governments Andy is always harpin on'd help a feller get off'n God forsaken farms like these here and get on land where a feller's work'd show for somethun there might be some sense to it. But there aint . . . They bring 'em from Russia and they don't care what happens right here . . .

Thompson.--There's no law to compel you to work the farm, you know. There are lots of jobs around.

John.--And they's twicet the men to fill'em, what they is. The mines aint workin, no shantys runnin, no haulin . . . nothin

. . . (he gets up and goes to the door, opens it and looks out) Fifty acres of grey stone. You cant get off'n it and you can't live on it.⁹⁹

In a review in The Canadian Bookman, Lawren Harris offered a spirited defence of Denison's plays, especially Marsh Hay, which he took for granted would be attacked as "sordid":

In Mr. Denison's book there is not a sentence or a phrase that is not saturated with the tang of the land, not a character that does not ring and murmur and move true, not a situation that is false or forced. Here is no rhetoric, no smug romance, no varnish, no hiding of the head in the sand.¹⁰⁰

As the conversation between the two characters in Marsh Hay might have taken place in the background of No Man's Meat (substitute Mr. Beddoes for Thompson), it says much for Harris that he was prepared to praise literature that took an attitude towards the north diametrically opposed to his own. Harris argued that "a complete exposure of every phase of our existence, the building of a unique structure utilizing all our reactions to our environment" were necessary to the foundation of true art in Canada, and thus he was able to incorporate Denison's debunking of the northern myth into an expansion of Canadian nationalism. Harris did an excellent summing up of the spirit of the plays:

True, all four plays reveal existence in that tired, sparse strip of land that lies between the healthy farming country and the vast northern woods, a country of silent, drab sawmills, rotting lumber camps, stones, stumps, scrub growth and lonely rampikes. The pioneers have pushed farther north, farther west, and with them has gone the zest of life.¹⁰¹

Denison appears to have meant his plays to be a counter-weight to romantic notions about the north in current circulation, notions that he no doubt encountered at the Arts and Letters Club in Toronto as well as in periodicals and art exhibitions. Lawren Harris, Jackson, Lismer, Frank Johnston, Carmichael, and MacDonald were members of the Club,¹⁰² along with

Denison, and Lismer even acted in The Arts and Letters Players' production of From Their Own Place. Brothers in Arms was produced in 1921 at Hart House, and Augustus Bridle's history of the Arts and Letters Club points out that the creators of Hart House were all members of the Club.¹⁰³ Bridle also remarks that the Club entertained both extremes of opinion on cultural matters. Thus Harris could praise Denison's approach to the north while viewing it totally differently himself. What Newton-White argued in socio-economic terms, Denison and Callaghan argue in spiritual terms--the north is inimical to human development and abundance of spirit. The "endurance" developed by the northern landscape and climate is sterile in its effects rather than heroic.

Callaghan's next work, A Broken Journey (1932), is even more critical of the northern myth. Marion Gibbons and her lover, Peter Gould, plan to leave Toronto for a three-week trip to the Algoma Mills. Because of Marion's mistaken belief that Peter loves her mother, Teresa Gibbons, the trip is cancelled. When Marion realizes the truth, she and Peter make the trip. But he has injured his back after being pushed down the stairs by the lover he had acquired during his separation from Marion; Marion and Peter cannot make love. Marion, powerfully affected by the landscape, loses all perspective on her relation with Peter, betrays him and returns to the city. Peter and his brother Hubert, who have not been seduced by the landscape into believing that their values are insignificant, are left to comfort each other.

As a young woman, Marion had entered a convent seeking a life "untouched by any of the passions she felt had destroyed her mother" (22). She had gone to a convent to "devote herself to the eternal Virgin" (37), but one

night when she is trying to lift herself "into an ecstasy so she might see the image of Christ" (40), she realizes that she is seeing a boy who used to hold her in his arms, and leaves the convent blaming her "mother's nature" for her failure. For religion she substitutes a vision of the peace and purity of the Algoma Hills. As the book opens, she is returning from a trip to the west coast, and she specifically mentions having passed through "the rocky country on the north shore of Lake Superior . . . the loneliest and most beautiful country in the world . . ." (8). She sees the Algoma as an appropriate and legitimate setting for her first sexual experience with Peter and urges him not to think her a "hussy" for suggesting the trip. She completely infects him with her enthusiasm, and that night she imagines them together in Algoma:

At last she got into bed, turned out the light and began to think of the blue Algoma Hills, the great lake, the black rocks, the high, over-hanging crags of basalt and the sunlight on miles and miles of burnt timber, solitary, dried out, sun-white stumps with the roots in the surface earth on great rocks. She thought of herself and Peter going up the river in a boat to the Mission and going up the steep bank to Bousneau's boarding-house, the only boarding-house for miles and miles. They would have a clean, white-washed room overlooking the river. (24-25)

As she had done with the convent, Marion mistakes the nature of her attraction to the Algoma. Though Callaghan seems to be suggesting that Marion is a Lawrentian heroine, she herself cries in protest when Peter suggests she ought to like a book by Lawrence which had appealed to him. Her simple passion for Peter is not enough. She wants to idealize it and has fixed on Algoma as having the right purifying qualities. Marion even tells her mother that "people of our special temperaments ought to get out of the city. It only muddles us. We ought to live in the country. The city gets us mixed up" (104). During the period of her "break with Peter she continues

to dream of the "unbroken peacefulness of days at the clean white-washed boarding house at the Mission" (71).

Though they have parted, Marion has left her vision of Algoma with Peter. He talks about Lake Superior so vividly in the city hall press gallery that he is forced to lie and claim that he had spent time there as a child. "No one doubted him because he had the look in his eyes of a man who was trying to remember half-forgotten, far-away things" (76). Peter carries around two railroad maps marking the route to the Algoma Hills, has located the Indian reserve, has read about the gold mines, and can give glib details about the fishing. The trip has become so loaded with significance in the minds of Peter and Marion that, after they are re-united, they press on with it despite Peter's injury. Marion describes the trip as putting all "our eggs in one basket" (128). On the steamer, a doctor advises an X-ray, but they press on nonetheless.

After their arrival Marion feels a sense of "satisfaction" despite Peter's condition, but the collapse of her values is imminent. She is immediately attracted to Steve, who takes them to the Mission in his motorboat. Much later Hubert describes Steve as "solitary," "melancholy," "sure of himself," and, most significant, "perfectly a part of this country. If you don't like the quality of the country, you don't like him" (247). Marion's attraction to Steve is initially synonymous with an attraction to the landscape. As her love for Peter disintegrates and she comes to see her existence as meaningless in the grandeur of nature, she views Steve's competence in the environment as protection for her from the landscape. Steve's colouring is like that of the hills. "His face is "richly copper-coloured" and he wears a gold and purple sweater; he even has an

air of "melancholy peacefulness" about him. Peter's helplessness is accentuated by Steve's competence. For example, as Peter walks up to the boarding-house "with a slow, wavering step," Steve follows "carrying the three bags effortlessly" (163). Later in the story Marion and Hubert have a hard time catching grasshoppers to use for bait, while Steve fills his hat while hardly moving from one spot. Steve's competence seems to be the answer to existence in the north. Marion initially believes that his "placid, silent manner" (223) conceals "deep gentleness and sympathy," but when they finally make love and she asks him to stop, he does not. She is "disappointed" by their union, and when she cries, he does not "disturb her by talking to her" (258). He does not "mind" about her crying. Steve turns out to be a human embodiment of the north--his deep calm conceals a lack of emotion. He is presented as having no human connections; his wife is dead and his son is absent. The fire he makes for Marion smoulders but does not flame. Though the thick weeds near the plank dock are described as "holding down the life in the river," Steve asks "What for?" when Peter asks why the weeds have not been cleaned out.

Marion's experience in the Algoma is a powerful test of herself. In her own eyes she fails. Her moral collapse is signalled early on when her foot slips in the thick weeds near the dock, and she feels with a "strange nervousness" that she would be helpless in such a country" (161). After she lets Steve make love to her, she considers drowning herself in this same weedy water. Marion's nature makes her peculiarly vulnerable to the landscape. One day while watching Bousneau with his horses and wagon, she thinks idly that the horses might stop suddenly and the wagon fall to pieces on the road. Callaghan makes clear that she would feel helpless through the

following:

Of course it wouldn't matter. What on earth did matter up here in this spectacular country? She thought . . . The country is too vast. We're too small (185-86)

When she questions the doctor about Peter's condition, her manner seems almost indifferent, and she believes that, if she cries out her concern will "become utterly unimportant" (187) in the strong sunlight. Her sense of the vastness of the landscape soon overwhelms her so thoroughly that she loses her ability to make moral distinctions:

They [the hills] make me feel small and unimportant, they're so rugged, hard and brilliant. My notions of people and things become unimportant. What is right, what is wrong, what is important, or any ambition, all seem unimportant here. (214)

I can't figure it out There might be something even bigger underneath, but nothing of any accepted importance seems to count at all. (15)

Shortly thereafter, Hubert reminds her that Peter's crippling is not a permanent one, and that it will not be necessary for her to "starve" herself forever, only for a little while. Her response is, "Isn't all of life just a little while?" (243). She is therefore open to Steve's story about the boy who was "helpless" before the loon, and was then stabbed and killed by the bird. She understands the boy's state of mind: "It's terrible to be helpless and not able to resist. Then you get so that you don't want to resist" (255). It is this sense of helplessness which the Algoma has induced in her as much as her own passion which makes her succumb to Steve. Marion's union with Steve is simultaneously a union with the country, and a way of protecting herself from it. When Steve proves as indifferent as the landscape, she realizes that the city is her only refuge. Peter clearly links Marion's deterioration with the landscape:

. . . you don't resist because there's something so inexorable about the place. It's not so much the big, quiet river, or the lake, it's the primordial hills and the stillness. I believe it's a kind of grandeur, not the grandeur they talk about finding in Shakespeare's plays It's something more quiet and more steady, and more inexorable. It's odd. Well, you said a moment ago something about dissolving. It's funny to feel and hear and see a person's identity dissolving, going to pieces, and you can't do anything about it It's the destruction of the character. (250)

Marion sees her departure from the Algoma as a penance. She is "eager to scourge herself by leaving so much behind" (267). She puts on her city clothes and city make-up, and leaves the brothers to comfort each other.

From the beginning, Peter is presented as having great faith in the new society being built in Canada. He is contrasted with Peter Gibbons, with whom he argues about "Old World sicknesses." He reads John Stuart Mill, "the libertarian," and Clarence Darrow, and he describes himself as having "talked so much about the rights of the individual in a democratic society . . ." (215). One day he walks along the street trying to think of an idea for a friend who is planning to write a "romantic poem that would be a symbol of North American experience":

. . . he thought of a massive, bronzed woman standing on a hill looking out over a darkened field, listening for sounds from the battle; she heard the sound of flying hoofs, and the strange animal, the terrible horse, bearing a rider in shining armor, swept by, and she knew the field was soaked with the blood of her race. When the newcomers from the far-away world came rushing over the hill, she knew they would rape her, so she tried to send her soul after the horse, for it was so swift in its passing and its hoofbeats were still pounding in her ears. (54)

In Peter's mind the bronzed woman's face becomes Marion's. One night before going to sleep, he begins to mutter a rhyme: "Marion, clarion, darion, Darien, the peaks of Darien, silent upon a peak in Darien" (93-94). For Peter, Marion symbolizes the independent New World woman, strong and free; thus

her helplessness and inability to cope with that new world in the raw are a grave disappointment. When they first had arrived in the Algoma, he had seen her as "utterly apart and beyond the country because of the strength of her own independence" (248), but because of Marion's collapse he sees his experience in getting "right down close to the root of America" as a "joke" (250). Callaghan apparently means both the United States and Canada by the term "America."

Ironically, Peter's most satisfying contact with nature occurs in the presence of Patricia, whom he does not love:

They lay there looking up at the farm land. The fields were quiet and peaceful and everything was growing. Peter thought with sudden pleasure that the crops were ripening, the soil was exceedingly fertile, seeds had come up out of the ground and in the late summer, there was a fulfillment. He looked at Patricia, who was lying lazily on the grass, and he felt a oneness with the hills and bluffs, the lake water and the ripening fields beyond the low fence. (113)

The natural world described above is completely under the control of man. Having mastered it, he can take pleasure in it. Peter longs to be part of the "harvesting time"; he makes a parallel between the ripening plants and the ripening of his relationship with Patricia, but she is unable to rise to the occasion.

Lying on his back in the Algoma Hills, Peter talks continually about the city. Though he thinks that the noise in the city drives people insane, the following makes clear his sense of the "futility of trying to escape into the woods":

Whatever is to be done culturally, creatively, economically will all be done in the city. Whatever is to rise up from the ashes of the old American world will have its growth in the city. (195)

Peter cannot function out of the setting that is natural to him. He has adapted completely to a different environment, and his accident only serves

to make the point more dramatically. He remarks that in "this country [the Algoma] there's no room for me as I am" (182), and his vision of contentment includes city streets and crowded restaurants:

I was thinking it would seem so good to walk through the residential districts and see the rows of trim, tidy green lawns, and the wide smooth roads, or in some other part of the city downtown, see the restaurant windows with the beef roasting in them and the crowds pushing in. (195).

Peter wants to see a newspaper every morning and wonders what is going on in Russia. One night Marion has an ecstatic experience in nature and feels that ". . . it's just like it ought to be always" (210). She runs to Peter to share the experience with him:

* As the northern lights began to sweep vastly across the sky, she felt a strange harmony and peace all around her, and she felt herself groping toward it and trying to become a part of it. She felt, as her heart began to beat heavily, that her love for Peter was the way toward a more complete and final peace than any she had ever known, and that they might both know the mystery that rounded out the night. (208)

Though the moon has been shining in at his window, he had been thinking about going to see a game of box lacrosse as soon as he got back to the city. Peter survives by resisting the disintegrating effect of the country from his room:

I've been here trying to resist with my whole being something that's outside the window, in the noise of the river running and the lake and in the very silent nights . . . something I can't touch and can only feel. It's something I know I longed for. It still seems wonderful, and I feel almost mean and blasphemous to be resisting it now. I'll resist, though. (236-37)

The experience which Marion has in the moonlight and which Peter resists is similar to Ann Crump's "cosmic consciousness" of nature (The Patterson Limit) and Lauren Harris's theosophical view of the hidden reality perceivable in nature. As Northrop Frye points out in the conclusion to the Literary History of Canada, world views that avoided dialectic, views of a theosophical

or transcendental kind, were linked with the "mystique of Canadianism" as far back as Roberts and Carman.¹⁰⁴ The very fact that Callaghan questions this view of nature in the early thirties indicates how tenacious a hold it still had in Canada.

Hubert is presented as Peter's alter-ego. There only had been enough money for one of them to go to university, so Hubert had gone north to the lumber camps and the mines, and out West for the harvesting, feeling the sinister quality of the northern country and getting his calmness and curious contentment out of it" (49-50). In fact, Hubert had already experienced what Marion hopes to find in the north. Though he lives in the city with Peter, he has experienced its dehumanizing effects through his relationship with Elsie Saunders. Nonetheless, his view of the clarity and unity of human experience has come to him in the city, not in the north. A casual question by an unctuous minister one morning in a church had suddenly stirred him. "Can you feel God?" the minister had asked. Hubert tells Marion of the experience:

"The words just seemed to offer an intimation that bewildered me . . . I began to stride along the street without having any idea where I was going, as if I had a knot in my head and if I kept on moving it would slowly untangle itself . . . I remember clearly standing on the bridge opposite the tall chimney on the paper mill, and then looking down suddenly at the shallow river bed . . . And while I was looking down at the water this thing like a knot in my head was suddenly unravelled. I had a really swell feeling of elation and extraordinary clarity. There was clarity and unity and I was a part of the unity. The water, the banks, the old paper mill all seemed so perfectly co-ordinated by the feeling of spontaneous elation. I clutched the bridge railing tightly and was very happy." (242)

When Marion jeers at him, he points out that she must hold on to herself:

". . . this isn't one of those affairs where the guy you're crazy about is permanently crippled, or frozen from the waist down so that it's necessary

for you to starve yourself forever. It's just a little while in this case" (243). As Peter points out, Hubert has a "happy acceptance" of the world which makes it possible for him to accept the sinister nature of the north, but to keep it in perspective. His view of the unity of life prevents the north from overwhelming him as it does Marion.

It is suggested that Mrs. Gibbons, in all her bewilderment and frustration, has a view of life similar to Hubert's, though hers is more clearly founded on her religion. When Marion suggests that she and Mrs. Gibbons ought to get out of the city, Mrs. Gibbons retorts that she couldn't "stand the country" (104). Like Peter, Mrs. Gibbons finds nature rewarding when man controls it. Other than her religion, her most serious occupation is the growing of roses, and it is in an apple orchard that she has the most moving experience of her life. At the age of thirty-five, she achieves a communion with a young officer which, though it does not include a physical consummation, sustains her for the rest of her life.

As in No Man's Meat, the people have made little impression on the landscape. The long-time inhabitants can barely eke out a living. The Indians "hunt a bit in the winter and they fish a bit in the summer, that's all, and they've been around here over a hundred years" (168). The picket fences and roofs of the village are "caving and falling with age" (176). Though there are over forty families at the Mission, Peter hears barely any sounds of people talking. One old man owns "thousands of acres of land along the beach, with the best gravel in the whole wide world" (239), but he is waiting for a city contractor to come along and discover its quality. The gold mines in the area had been "wild-catted out of existence and there was too much sulphur in the iron ore to make heavy production worth while".

(167). Up at the Falls, however, a power house is being built and there is a construction camp, but it is too far away for its energy to influence the Mission community.

A wealth of minor characters from outside is introduced by Callaghan to emphasize how ludicrous any values other than environmental competence are in a place like Algoma. Immediately after meeting Richmond, the Anglican priest, Marion tells him that the country will kill him though he has just told her that it is the "unsettled and primitive" quality of the land that attracted him to it. She later remarks that he makes things seem like a "comic opera." He is presented as obtuse about the Indians to whom he preaches; for example, he imagines that they are sensitive to the fact that he is willing to say a Roman Catholic mass though he is an Anglican. A tourist, "very likely some big fellow in fishing boots and leather jacket" (192), has to engage a seventy-three year old Indian woman to "look after him" in the woods. A British gentleman rows Marion on the river, and they go round and round in a circle because of his ineptness.

Even the principal characters come in for considerable ridicule. Hubert, while dressed in a "neat fancy city bathing suit," loses a fishing spoon and is smirked at by two Indians when he asks them for help in retrieving it. He had sunk into an undercurrent and had hardly been able to get back up when he had attempted to recover the spoon himself. Marion, in a tight yellow sweater, blue beret, and riding breaks seems "theatrically comic at the Mission" and an Indian boy hurries away "to have a good laugh at her." Of himself, Peter remarks, "In this country there's no room for me as I am" (182), and indeed his motionless body lying in the boarding-house acts as a dramatic counter-weight to the tension generated by the landscape

in Marion.

A Broken Journey reveals a skepticism about the romantic idealism that was being generated in the twenties in relation to the northern Ontario landscape. Marion has wanted a pure and perfect setting for her love affair, but when she finds impotence instead of fertility, her perplexity over Peter's condition causes her to see herself as insignificant in relation to nature. Her attraction to Steve is an attempt to re-constitute her relationship to nature and to live out her fantasy about the north, but in the process she betrays her values and violates her sense of right and wrong. Similarly, Peter's ideas of new world independence and freedom are linked with Marion and, through her, to the landscape. When she falters and he sees her identity "dissolving," his vision of being close to the "root of America" (251) seems like a joke to him. So much for the North American epic that Peter had imagined while walking down a Toronto street! Romantic idealism is incompatible with the competence necessary to exist in primitive natural surroundings. Hubert, who has himself suffered a serious blow to his values because of his belief in Marion, is left to re-constitute the world for Peter. He makes a feeble reference to Mexico, another ideal place, and then falls silent. Like Mr. Beddoes, the two brothers are left behind in a landscape which appears to be alien to all they believe in. Their departure is inevitable and indeed necessary.

In No Man's Meat and A Broken Journey Callaghan rejects the notion that the northern Ontario wilderness could express something fundamental about the Canadian metropolitan consciousness or that complex ideas about freedom and society could be linked to primitive landscape. Peter's argument that the city will be the source of culture and creativity in the new world

(the United States and Canada are indistinguishable in this respect) is Callaghan's argument.. To some extent it is Frank Underhill's argument as well. In an article in Saturday Night published in 1936, four years after A Broken Journey appeared, Underhill described as "false hair on the chest" the notion that the spiritual home of Canadians was "among the rocks and winds of the North."¹⁰⁵

The artistic cult of the North is, as a matter of fact, pure romanticism at its worst, and bears little relation to the real life of Canada. Far from seeking inspiration among the rocks and winds, the normal Canadian dreams of living in a big city where he can make his pile quickly and enjoy such urban luxuries as are familiar to him in the advertising columns of our national magazines

Moreover, as thousands of normal Canadians who have knocked about it can testify, the North is not really the sort of country that a stranger would imagine from seeing the paintings of the Group of Seven For it was not the north country at all that they were painting in those terrific canvasses of theirs. It was the civilization of Toronto. They did not live in the North themselves, they lived in Toronto; they were members of the Arts and Letters Club. The passionate intensity which they brought to the North must have developed from their experience in Toronto. Those bleak barren shores, those tortured rocks, those twisted frustrated tree-trunks, represented the "waste land" of Toronto we had here a body of men who were in passionate reaction against all the values of our civilization and who, in an agony of soul, were trying to tell us what they saw in Canadian life and how they felt about it.¹⁰⁶

Underhill goes on to argue that the art critics who were "naive and childish in their own social understanding" (3) missed all the social implications of the Group's work. He urged Canadian artists to concentrate their gaze upon the life that was really being lived by ten million Canadians. Underhill and Callaghan were in agreement in attacking the romanticism of the cult of the north, but Underhill attributes the development of the mystique to critical misunderstanding of the meaning of Group paintings--they imply an attack on the city and represent an escapist alternative to materialism.

Callaghan parts company with Underhill and urges the city on his reader as a viable cultural alternative to unrealistic, even potentially destructive, imaginings about the wilderness. Callaghan accurately assessed the northern myth as a reaction against the city, but he was astute enough to recognize that it was not enough to acknowledge the reaction as Underhill did. He went further and urged on his readers a national sensibility emanating from the cities. Underhill is mistaken in laying the blame for the interpretation of Group paintings as embodying a national spirit solely at the door of the critics. Though the Group began painting nature as a reaction to city life, they soon began to believe they were painting the national spirit. To some extent this accounts for Jackson's continual search for new landscape. He eventually must have come to believe that a truly national painter could not limit himself to landscape scenes done in Ontario and Quebec. In a recent article called "A New Approach to the Group of Seven,"¹⁰⁷ Margaret F. R. Davidson has discussed the connections between the Canadian Forum and the Group. Both the Forum and the Group were founded in 1920, and both "sensed the need to give a voice to values other than the predominantly materialist ones of the growing cities."¹⁰⁸ The Forum contributed art criticism which paralleled the thrust of Group painting, but the Group were "the most dramatic of the heralds of the post-War vision of Canada espoused by the Forum." Thus, examination of one strain of art criticism in Canada at the time reveals that a symbiotic relation existed between critics and painters, and that the painters were as responsible as the critics for propagating the belief that the rediscovered wilderness represented the Canadian spirit.

Barker Fairley, who wrote for the Forum and encouraged the Group, was

one of the first critics to express reservations about them. In a review of the third Group exhibition in 1925, Fairley said he had noted a lack of "inner adventure" in the paintings. He did not feel totally "comfortable" about Harris's paintings, and MacDonald showed "the same reliance on a formula."¹⁰⁹ In 1948 Fairley was prepared to admit that though the Group had set "landscape painting free," what was needed then, and what was still needed, was the "human subject, the human fact, the human figure, whether alone or in groups or in crowds, in town and country, in war and peace, in life and death . . .":

The characteristic work of the Group is as empty of humanity as an extinct volcano. And this, whether they wished it or not, has had a powerful and far from beneficial effect on those who came after This is not a purely Canadian problem. It merely comes out strongly in Canada because of the unpopulated North, which explains, and to some extent justifies, what has happened in Canadian painting.¹¹⁰

Fairley's remarks imply that wilderness painting somehow must be connected to humanity or it cannot be said to be representative of a people's sensibility. By this standard Callaghan's fiction about the wilderness is more national in intent than any single painting could be. In explaining the "case of the missing face" in Group paintings, Hugh Kenner has laid the blame on the Group's "valid but half-focussed intuition that while Canada lacked altogether the human traditions that nourish painting keyed to society, the Constable pastoral idiom as imported by . . . Homer Watson was strictly phoney. So they sought their traditions where once upon a time life had demonstrably been lived, by the Indians, the trappers, and the coureurs du bois." Writing in 1948, Kenner asks whether "it is yet safe to cut the umbilical cord to the wilderness" ¹¹¹

The umbilical cord to the wilderness was being cut by Callaghan in

1931 and 1932 just as the Group had become completely institutionalized. The "missing face" was in the city, but Canadians have only recently been willing to look for it there. In the closing remarks of his essay, Kenner seems to be pointing Canadians towards the urban life they live:

The Missing Face will not prove to be pretty. But the next great infusion of life into Canada's multiple and struggling arts will be its discovery. Look in your mirror and paint. Your mirror is sitting next to you in the bus. "The desert is in the heart of your neighbour."¹¹²

A. G. Bailey has seen fit to remind his readers that, in view of the discussions in Canada concerning the impact of nature upon the Canadian consciousness, it is important to bear in mind what seems sometimes to be forgotten: "that man since the advent of his species has never lived in a state of nature, but has always lived in a physical environment modified by human artifice."¹¹³ If man were to step from the world of culture to the world of nature, he would cease to be human. By virtue of his humanity man can give only "a conditioned response to the sensory stimuli of the physical environment." The impact of nature on the senses is registered in the mode of the particular time and place. Bailey points out that the Canadian artist has been more engaged with the relation of man and natural phenomena than with man and man;¹¹⁴ nonetheless, his reactions to environment emanate from a social context.

Bailey stresses the confidence and buoyance of Thomson's and the Group's paintings and attributes them to the "new felt world of the revolutionary age in which they lived--"¹¹⁵ that is, a world in which social and political change for the better appeared possible. The mineral wealth of the Shield suggested parallel revolutionary changes in the economy. Thus Bailey, like Underhill, implies that Group paintings were not so much a reaction to the

wilderness environment as to the social environment in which the painters lived. Underhill saw the paintings as anti-materialistic; Bailey views them as a sign of confidence in the future. For Bailey, Harris's later "metaphysical" paintings suggest his awareness of a mounting crisis in twentieth-century culture.

Underhill's awareness that Group paintings implied a revulsion from urban materialism, Fairley's acknowledgement of an avoidance of humanity in Group paintings, Kenner's use of the phrase "umbilical cord" to describe Canadian concentration on the natural environment all seem to circle the same point: that it was a consciousness formed by a complex metropolitan sensibility that chose to paint the wilderness and chose to claim that it had been formed by the wilderness. Bailey's emphasis on the social context of artistic treatment of the environment is very apt. Callaghan, on the other hand, fully acknowledged his cultural debt to a metropolitan centre. Without romanticizing the wilderness, he assessed its impact on both the society that existed in a wilderness context and the larger society which made incursions into the wilderness. He did not accept the idea that the spirit of the new world was continuing to be formed by rocky landscape far from the centre of society where values were inculcated and fostered. Callaghan's starting point is the city, and he takes it for granted that it is the basic framework of society. Callaghan is Canada's first major urban novelist, and it is significant that he chose to affirm his metropolitan consciousness in reaction to an entrenched intellectual position in the twenties which linked the national spirit and sensibility to a rediscovered northern Ontario. Though Callaghan is viewed as an urban novelist, just how radical he was cannot be appreciated without an understanding of the connections

being made in that part of the century between the nobility of the Canadian soul and the nobility of the Canadian landscape. That Callaghan was directly reacting to the new meaning given to the word north by the Group and their interpreters is clear from this cursory survey of twenties fiction on the north. Callaghan was the only novelist who chose to describe north as a point geographically north of Toronto. Denison's plays may be seen as part of the same development of an urban consciousness as Callaghan's novels. However, it was Callaghan who set the pattern for the modern Canadian novel, and he did so partly in reaction to a new version of the northern myth, a myth which continues to be present in Canadian culture.

Notes

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"I see a new Canada--not oriented east and west, but looking northward, responding to the challenge of that hinterland, its energies focused on the exploration and exploitation of the Arctic--A CANADA OF THE NORTH!"

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⁴ Cavalcade of the North, An Entertaining Collection of Distinguished Writing by Canadian Authors, intro. by Thomas B. Costain, selected by George E. Nelson (New York: Doubleday, 1958).

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⁷ W. L. Morton, The Canadian Identity, 2nd ed. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), p. 4.

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⁹ Ibid., pp. 110-114, passim.

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Chapter VII

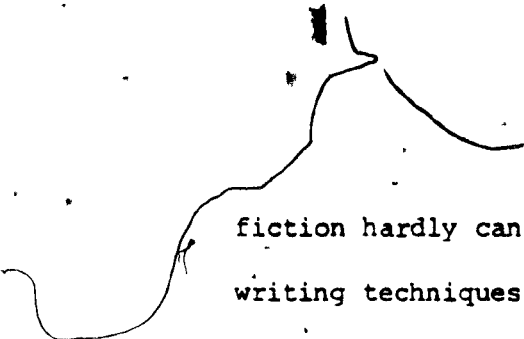
Conclusion

Attitudes Towards the City in the Post-Twenties Novel

In May, 1926, the book reviewer T. D. Rimmer, writing in The Canadian Bookman, made the following comment on a novel called The Shanty Sled by Hulbert Footner:

This novel also lays stress on the virtues of a return to nature --or at least on the virtues of those who live close to nature. Naturally this view has much right on its side, for the city has many gifts and some of them are not healthful, but the insistent repetition of this in countless novels is apt in time to become boring.

Fortunately, Rimmer's boredom with the "countless" novels that stressed that the city was not "healthful" was about to be alleviated, at least partially. Sime already had introduced continental realism to the Canadian novel, and she deserves enormous credit for her pioneer work in establishing the urban novel in Canada, especially since her use of the "city-theme" presents many aspects of Montreal in a positive light. Two years after Rimmer's remarks appeared in print, Callaghan continued the trend Sime had begun. Strange Fugitive opened up a period of great productivity in the Canadian urban novel. Callaghan is still writing urban novels over fifty years later, having established a new genre through which novelists could describe and respond to their environment. He can be credited with having produced the largest single body of Canadian fiction about the urban consciousness, and his significance in twentieth-century Canadian



fiction hardly can be overestimated. The establishment of realistic writing techniques in the twenties by not only Sime and Callaghan but also by Sinclair, Stead, Grove, Durkin, Evans, and others has broadened and deepened the non-urban novel as well during this same fifty-year period.

MacLennan and Richler are the two other figures who can be said to have contributed in a major way to the establishment of the urban novel, MacLennan by using it as a nationalistic tool, and Richler for comic effect and to describe the urban Jewish immigrant. Richler is only one of several writers who have written immigrant novels set in the city, and a variety of such novels, some of considerable stature, have appeared in recent years. Though Callaghan, MacLennan, and Richler are still the most outstanding figures in urban writing, by virtue of the variety and number of their novels, many writers have appeared who are taking the urban novel in new directions--for example, Scott Symons and Margaret Atwood.

Not to be overlooked during the post-twenties period are those twenties writers who continued to be heard from during the Depression and after. Besides Callaghan, Sime, Evans, and Grove are the major figures who carry over into the period after World War II. Mainly they reiterate the messages of their earlier fiction. Though Durkin and Macbeth live to 1968 and 1965 respectively, their later work is of little interest. Knister and Jacob die at the end of the decade, and Stead writes his last novel in 1930. Stead's failure to continue writing novels (he died in 1959) is a serious loss to Canadian fiction. After many experiments, he had written his best work, Grain, in 1926 and seemed to be moving into urban fiction by the end of the decade. Bridle died in 1952, but produced no other novels, though his monograph on the Arts and Letters Club is invaluable.

The non-urban novel continued to be very strong in Canada between the thirties and the present. In fact, there is greater variety among non-urban writers than among urban writers. One thinks, for example, of such polar opposites as Robertson Davies and David Adams Richards. However, not all non-urban writers chose to make a statement about the city. Of the writers who did, some, like Ross, Buckler, Laurence, and Richards, saw the city as an escape to a wider arena, though how their characters would view the city ultimately is not always made clear. Some writers, for example, Wilson, Lowry, Mitchell, and Atwood, presented city dwellers as escaping to the land or wilderness for either a permanent or temporary sojourn. The anti-urban tone of much of this recent writing is similar in its anti-materialism to the tone of some twenties writing. The flight from city to land may be linked with other subjects important to the Canadian imagination such as the role of the Indian, or the significance of Christianity or of feminism.

In tracing the attitudes towards the city presented in novels after the twenties, Callaghan provides the most obvious starting point, not only because of his importance for the urban novel but also because his writing bridges the entire period, and he responds to major social phenomena such as prohibition, homosexuality, the northern myth, prostitution, the depression, the election of a pope, the two world wars, and the world of sports. By and large, his books offer moral examinations of these phenomena, and his setting is always urban.

Callaghan's view in A Broken Journey that everything that would be done creatively and culturally in Canada would be done in the cities continued to be consistent. He is the principal novelist of the thirties, publishing

such milestones in Canadian writing in that decade as A Broken Journey (1932), Such Is My Beloved (1934), They Shall Inherit the Earth (1935), Now That April's Here and Other Stories (1936), and More Joy in Heaven (1937). In the forties Callaghan disappears from the field except for a weak book about the University of Toronto, The Varsity Story (1949). However, in 1951 he publishes what is still probably his best "urban" novel, The Loved and the Lost. Set in Montreal, his moral fable makes use of the city setting in a complex and fascinating way. At the close of the book, symbol and realistic setting are intertwined by Callaghan so that the life of the character and the life of the city form a rich thematic whole. As McAlpine walks through Montreal in the cold dawn light, parts of the city are still shadowed by "the heavy mountain darkness against the sky." As he thinks about Peggy's nature and death, and begins to shift the blame from Wolgast to the "human condition," a "faint pink streak" appears in the sky over the mountains, though the houses and apartments remain in shadow. Callaghan then re-introduces the "white horse," the symbol of man's ambitions and dreams throughout the novel, and uses it in combination with the sunrise and the mountain to indicate a moment of illumination for McAlpine:

As the sun touched the top of the mountain and suddenly brightened the snow, McAlpine stopped, watching it intently. He had a swift wild fancy: the streets on the slopes of the mountain were echoing to the pounding of horses' hoofs. All the proud men on their white horses came storming down the slope of the mountain in a ruthless cavalry charge, the white horses whirling and snorting in the snow. And Peggy was on foot in the snow. She didn't own a white horse. She didn't want to. She didn't care. And he was beside her; but he drew back out of the way of the terrifying hoofs and they rode over her.

The slope of the mountain is a field of slaughter, and the dreams of the city dwellers are the agents of destruction. McAlpine's moment of illumination

re-establishes his faith in Peggy, and he sets out to find the little church she had shown him early in the book. He decides to orient himself by the bells of St. Patrick's, and he believes that he hears the chiming of the bells of the little church. The sound appears to come from the west, then from the east; in complete confusion McAlpine hears "another bell" chiming from the mountain, then "monastery bells" from St. Catherine. Callaghan describes him as "tormented by the soft calling bells." The mingled chimes of the city bells are extremely effective in recalling both Peggy's nature and in suggesting McAlpine's final confusion, pain, and loss.

Similarly, in the close of The Many Colored Coat (1960), also set in Montreal, Callaghan uses the diversity and variety of a crowded street to indicate Harry's sense of community with others after he has gained some self-knowledge:

It was a tough neighborhood of ordinary people. Kids with long smooth hair and leather jackets, workmen, a lawyer taking a stroll, a serene-faced old man, girls in sweaters and short, straight hair, and middle-aged men with pale hard faces and shifty eyes--they all brushed against him on the way to their cafés.²

The touch of other bodies is not an intrusion, nor does it make Harry feel stifled; instead, he thinks that though some of the faces are evil and some pious, they look as if "they could handle their lives and be comfortable together." Only the terror of innocence keeps men alone. Through the use of these and similar techniques, Callaghan has created a distinctive Canadian urban novel over a period of fifty years. He has consistently emphasized the dignity of the individual within the urban setting. Despite the sometimes overwhelming strength of the social and economic forces that urban man faces, the battlefield Callaghan continues to describe is the city. A

man who hears "magic" in the noise of streetcars³ is hardly likely to recommend that man retreat from the sound of them.

Though the thirties produced some interesting urban novels other than Callaghan's, notably the novels of Claudius Gregory and Irene Baird's Waste Heritage (1939), it was not until 1941 that another major urban novelist surfaced in Canada. Hugh MacLennan published Barometer Rising, set in Halifax towards the end of the Great War, almost as if MacLennan wished to identify the moment at which Montreal and Toronto ceased to be the only cities in which an "urban" novel could be set. MacLennan deliberately chose to pay an unusual amount of attention to setting and background in order to identify his writing as "Canadian":

As drama depends on the familiar, and as the social and psychological novel depends on the capacity of the public to recognise allusions, to distinguish the abnormal attitude from the normal, to grasp instantly when a character is prompted to act by the pressures of his environment [italics mine] and when by his own idiosyncracies, it seemed to me that for some years to come the Canadian novelist would have to pay a great deal of attention to the background in which he set his stories.⁴

This theory of writing accounts for the fact that Halifax is the principal character in Barometer Rising, and that is both the book's strength and its weakness. In a passage in which MacLennan attempts to knit city and character, Neil Macrae seems lifeless while Halifax harbour and the oil refinery seem vital and intense:

Halifax seemed to have acquired a meaning since he had left it in 1914. Quietly, almost imperceptibly, everything had become harnessed to the war. Long ribbons of light crossed on the surface of the water from the new oil refinery on the far shore of the Stream, and they all found their focus in himself. Occasionally they were broken, as undiscernible craft moved through the harbour, and he suddenly realized that this familiar inlet had become one of the most vital stretches of water in the world. It still gleamed faintly in the dusk as its surface retained a residual glow of daylight. Ferryboats glided like beetles across it, fanning ruffled water in their wake.⁵

Though the lights focus on Neil, he remains merely a seeing eye whose function it is to describe the city and emphasize its new importance; the city does not act as a catalyst which brings him to life. However, between Barometer Rising and The Watch That Ends the Night (1958), a noticeable development occurs. MacLennan presents the narrator in the closing pages of the book as spiritually connected with the lights of Montreal. The scene takes place as George leaves the hospital after he realizes that Catherine will live:

Light seemed to be shining inside of me when I stepped outside and walked down the driveway toward the city. The weather had turned still warmer, and on the precipices of the mountain tiny rivulets of icy water were making musical sounds The chaos which had been dark within me for days had disappeared and my soul was like a landscape with water when the fog goes The whole city shone and seemed to have a voice and I heard it, the voice of them all, the lights shaking and standing up, the sky opening to receive that volume of sound and color from underneath, all of it glad and good. As I walked along the familiar street chipped out of the rock of Mount Royal, with the city luminous below and the sky luminous above, there was music within me, so much that I myself was music and light, and I knew then that what she had upheld from childhood was not worthless⁶

MacLennan internalizes the environment through which George moves; lights, weather, city noises all combine to identify the character's inner state.

The Watch That Ends the Night achieves smoothly what Barometer Rising clumsily gropes for and barely reaches.

MacLennan's conscious Canadianism was the latest effort on the part of writers to create literature that was distinctively Canadian. Though he has no direct literary link with nationalistic writers of the twenties such as Bridle and Jacob, all three were responding to a need they sensed for Canada to produce a body of writing that mirrored cultural and social forces they detected around them. In fact, Bridle makes the same linkage

between the city and nationalism that MacLennan makes. In Two Solitudes, MacLennan deals with the national tensions between English and French Canadians, but he simultaneously handles the conflict between urban and rural values. McQueen's transformation of Saint-Marc into an industrial satellite of Montreal, initially with the support of Tallard, represents the destruction of values derived from a life on the land and the imposition of urban, industrial values. Though a unique way of life is destroyed, MacLennan presents the process as inevitable. Bridle's and MacLennan's books both end with a marriage, the one in Hansen uniting not two, but four solitudes.

The next major figure in Canadian letters to produce a substantial body of work on urban themes was Mordecai Richler. His first novel, The Acrobats (1954), is set in a Spanish city, Valencia, but his next, Son of a Smaller Hero (1955), is set in Montreal. With Richler, setting and theme are meshed together effortlessly. The city has a distinctive character which is defined simultaneously by the narrative voice and by the mood of the hero. The remnants of self-consciousness in the MacLennan passage quoted above from The Watch That Ends the Night are absent from Richler's work:

Montreal is cleanly defined on cold autumn nights. Each building, each tree, seems to exist as a separate and shivering object, exposed to the winds again after a flabby summer. Downtown the neon trembles like fractures in the dark. Fuzziness, bugs, groups of idlers blurring cigar-store windows, have all retreated together. Whores no longer stroll up and down St. Lawrence Boulevard, but beckon from the shelter of doorways or linger longer at nightclub bars. The mountain, which all summer long had seemed a gentle green slope, looms up brutal against the night sky. Streets seem longer, noise more hard.

Autumn is stingy, Noah thought unhappily.⁷

George Woodcock has remarked of Son of a Smaller Hero that "The little border

territory in which Noah Adler's experiences are developed becomes the microcosm of a whole city, and, by the multiplication of reflections, the microcosm of a whole country that lives by the mutual attractions of the divided."⁸

These remarks apply as well to The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz (1959), which also uses the Montreal ghetto environment to reflect a major cultural conflict. Duddy stands in a tense relationship between the values of his European grandfather, which hinge on the ownership of land, and the values of his city, and "by the multiplication of reflections," his society. That Duddy's grandfather's values have their own place in the larger society is part of the paradox the book explores. The following exchange between Duddy and Mr. Calder sums up Duddy's confusion:

'And what about you,' Mr. Calder asked. 'Why didn't you go to the university?'

Duddy guffawed. 'I'm not the type, I guess.'

'Are you positive?'

'I come from the school of hard knocks.'

'And what do you want out of life? Money.'

'I want land. A man without land is nothing. Listen, about Lennie--'⁹

At this moment in the action, Duddy is trying to save Lennie from the consequences of the botched abortion. Thus he is not only acting out the role of Jewish patriarch rescuing the errant child, but he also is offering his grandfather's philosophy as his own. Though Duddy saves Lennie and acquires the land he wants, he fails to understand the rural vision his grandfather had tried to transmit to him. For Duddy, the land is a "property," a piece of "real estate," not a green utopia conjured out of Jewish poetry. Duddy has merged what his grandfather has taught him with what he has learned from his society, and the combination is grotesque. In the closing scene of the book, Max sees the land for the first time and calls it a "wilderness":

"Sure," Duddy said, jumping up and down, "a goddam wilderness, and remember it, goddam it, take a good look, goddam everything to hell and heaven and kingdom come, because a whole town is going up here. A camp and an hotel and cottages and stores and a synagogue--yes, Zeyda, a real shul--and a movie and . . . well everything you can think of."¹⁰

As the book closes, Duddy seems close to being the "brute" Uncle Benjy had warned him he might become, and not the "gentleman," the "mensch," Uncle Benjy had seen in him and urged him to become. However, as Uncle Benjy had written, Duddy lived in a "hard world," and it would be "the easiest thing" to let the brute in his nature overpower him. Thus Duddy does take the easy way, the way for which society will reward him materially. Being a mensch does not allow the waiter to mark the bill on one's account. Richler recognizes the existence of a vision of the land which sees it as offering authenticity, a way of being a mensch, but he sees the vision as anachronistic, and certainly incapable of fulfillment in the "hard world" of Canadian society. The Zeyda's vision, if it has any realistic underpinning at all, may be carried out by Lennie, who is going to Israel. Richler is not so much concerned with the destruction of rural values as he is with the attainment of human dignity in the face of conflicting messages in the urban environment, some of which are drawn from outside the immediate cultural mix.

Sime's Our Little Life and Richler's Duddy Kravitz set up parallel situations. In the former book an immigrant intellectual ethic clashes with urban materialism, and though the immigrant is crushed by the life he is forced to lead, he leaves a legacy to Canada through his book. Sime's book, despite its depressing picture of Montreal poverty, also offers hope for the future through the character of the second generation immigrant, Miss McGee. In Richler's book, a second-generation immigrant absorbs conflicting cultural lessons all too well. Though he briefly recognizes

his failure in terms of one set of ideals, he simultaneously recognizes his success in terms of another, and this recognition of success is not only his own failure, but the failure of his society.

The issue of the clash of immigrant values with the material values associated with the Canadian city is one which has produced a substantial body of modern novels. Apart from Richler's work, one can point to Adele Wiseman's The Sacrifice (1956) and The Crackpot (1974), John Marlyn's Under the Ribs of Death (1957), and Brian Moore's The Luck of Ginger Coffey (1960). Marlyn's book, set in Winnipeg, presents the immigrant, Sandor Hunyadi, as wholeheartedly adopting the values of the society to which he has been brought as a child. Sandor rejects his father's view "that the war of each against all is not a law of nature" and that Sandor's goal in life should be to "serve mankind."¹¹ Sandor's father warns him that it is "shameful to be a money-chaser, to be dishonest, and to remain ignorant when the opportunity for learning" is so great in Canada. However, Sandor learns different values from the society around him, and Marlyn presents him as reaching a turning-point in his life goals one day when he reads a Horatio Alger type story in which success is defined as the achievement of wealth and power:

The great men his father talked about, what were they after all but talkers like himself? The great ones in this book were the doers, the men of wealth and power, the men who counted, whose words people listened to. And one had only to work hard and devote oneself wholeheartedly to the things they believed, to become one of them.¹²

However, Marlyn takes Sandor beyond the point to which Richler takes Duddy. Sandor eventually finds that he has been betrayed by the society whose values he has so readily adopted, what Eli Martdel refers to as "the grey desolation of a bankrupt civilization,"¹³ and we witness a change of heart at the end

of the book. Looking into his son's eyes, Sandor sees "all those things, miraculously alive, which he had suppressed in himself; stifled for the sake of what he had almost felt within his grasp, out there . . . in the grey desolation."¹⁴

Similarly, Avrom, in The Sacrifice, returns to the life-affirming tenets of his religion, having lost his way as the result of a clash of values in which he and his family had been caught up. The new generation, represented by Aaron, the grandson of another immigrant who was Avrom's friend, and Moses, Avrom's grandson, are presented as returning to more authentic values than the society around them offers. Aaron, like Lennie in Duddy Kravitz, is planning to go to Palestine and "build new, clean, get rid of all the dirt--."¹⁵ Moses accepts his grandfather's dearly purchased insight as a guide for his own life.

Richler's latest novel, Joshua Then And Now (1980), not only moves back and forth in time from the Montreal of Joshua's childhood, the thirties and forties, to the Montreal of the late seventies, but it also moves back and forth from Europe to Montreal. Like St. Urbain's Horseman (1966), it draws on Richler's knowledge of Europe in order to connect Canadian society to the larger world of European politics and culture. During Joshua's first visit to Ibiza, for example, he finds that among the expatriate Germans it is hardly significant that he is a Canadian. To them he is a Jew, and eventually he is driven off the island because of his Judaism. Ibiza, Paris, and London act as a vast testing-ground for Joshua. What the city is to the young man growing up in a rural community, Europe is to Joshua (and Noah before him). The Montreal of Joshua's boyhood has the narrowness of the small town; the Montreal of Joshua's manhood is mediated

through his European experiences. It is not only Montreal which has changed, it is also Joshua who has learned, perhaps too accurately, to tell the spurious from the real. Thus, Richler's last book, conventional enough in its inclusion of the journey to gain knowledge, presents the urban Canadian as making that journey to other countries and other cultures rather than within his own land.

In the sixty-year span between Sime's Our Little Life and Richler's Joshua Then And Now, the urban novel has established itself as a sensitive reflector of changing social patterns in Canadian life. By and large, Canadian urban novelists have not used the city novel as a propaganda vehicle for reform of social conditions, though it can be argued that Baird's Waste Heritage (1939) and Garner's Cabbagetown (1951) come close in spirit to that genre of writing. Callaghan, Richler, and others basically have tried to communicate the atmosphere, way of life, and material pressures of an urban environment. A leftist novel such as Dyson Carter's Fatherless Sons (1955), which deals with the effects of the urban capitalist structure on the individual, is the exception rather than the rule. The hero in the Callaghan novels is presented as already in a state of acceptance of urban life. The tension in the book is generated by an interior struggle which uses the setting as an objective correlative for the inner drama. Since the environment is integrated so skillfully with the character's dilemma, Callaghan's novels offer social documentation of the smoothest kind. A chronological reading of Callaghan's production over the fifty-year period in which he has been writing offers us a picture of the changing nature of Canadian urban society as it is experienced by the ordinary man, who does not hold in the forefront of his consciousness the vastness of the economic

and social forces that have created his environment. It hardly needs to be said that these forces are implied by the action. McAlpine's difficulty in assessing Peggy partly stems from his own ambiguous attitude towards the Montreal black community and towards Peggy's willingness to work in a factory. Like a pebble dropped in a stream which creates ever widening circles, McAlpine's confusion reflects social attitudes present in the city and the society as a whole. However, these reflections enrich the novel; they are not its focus.

The self-consciousness of MacLennan's aims as a writer have resulted in the production of less well-integrated books. Human characterization collapses in Barometer Rising in the face of urban characterization. Barometer Rising is a less sophisticated book in this respect than Strange Fugitive (1928), which was published thirteen years earlier in a period when the urban novel virtually did not exist in Canadian literature. The characters in Barometer Rising lack vitality because neither they nor the city itself are subsumed within an overall narrative structure with a clear internal logic. This problem is less apparent in The Watch That Ends the Night, but nonetheless the book has too many detachable descriptions consciously inserted to evoke atmosphere, especially the descriptions of Montreal in the thirties. Judged from the point of view of social documentation, however, MacLennan's expository approach, nationalistic in intent, is useful in its own way to the aesthetic development of the urban novel. His approach spotlighted the validity of a shift in judgment of the city. He has helped move the literature away from the simplistic condemnation of urban life that we find in some twenties novels to a more realistic assessment of the non-rural environment. In fact, in Return of the Sphinx MacLennan invests

Montreal with a momentous significance—he has Gabriel assess Alan as a man who has believed that the psychic centre of the world may possibly be Canada, or, judged on another scale, Montreal.¹⁶ The political and cultural confrontation in Quebec becomes a paradigm for cultural clash as it is occurring elsewhere in the world. Halifax and Montreal are the only two Canadian cities MacLennan has chosen to write about, though in The Precipice (1948), New York City is presented as the most corrupt of big cities. MacLennan may have sensed that his presentation of Montreal as the soul of Canada in Return of the Sphinx needed some underpinning. In the passage immediately following Gabriel's remarks, MacLennan describes a solitary cross-country drive that Ainslie makes, first to the Atlantic coast, then back to the Pacific coast, and finally back to his starting-point, the Laurentians. This journey restores Ainslie's faith in the strength and future of the land, "Too vast even for fools to ruin all of it."¹⁷ Presumably the riddle that the city has proposed only appears incapable of solution. The journey that Heather and Paul take in Two Solitudes similarly authenticates their union and the union of the two cultures, and the final statement in that book about the countryside in Canada in 1939 has a similar purpose.

In recent years, the urban novel, firmly established as a genre on its own, has assumed a diversity and complexity which reflect in detail the level of development of the cities in which it is set. Scott Symons's Place d'Armes (1967), for example, uses the buildings of old Montreal as metaphors for the narrator's search for a personal and a national identity. Symons has Hugh Anderson remark that "objects always personify the people they master"; the "objects" in the book, for example, the Bank of Montreal Building, the antique shop, the Church of Notre Dame are thus the symbolic vehicles

that the author uses to further the narrator's ever-deepening perceptions of himself and his country. Relationship between character and object is of the most intimate sort. Indeed, complete comprehension comes at the moment when the narrator is located physically in the exact centre of Place d'Armes.

Margaret Atwood's Life Before Man (1979) also uses a very restricted locale in Toronto to present her bleak picture of modern urban life. The area she chooses is the corner of Bloor Street and University Avenue where the Royal Ontario Museum, the Planetarium, and Murray's Restaurant stand. From there one has a view of Queen's Park. There are a few scenes in nearby spots such as the Selby Hotel, but basically the Museum and Planetarium are used to give the narrative the wider implications Atwood intends. Though relationship between character and "object" is not as intensely realized, as in Symons's book, the narrative depends heavily on the parallel between the fossils in the Royal Ontario Museum, which offer "some kind of record" of the organism, and the incomplete or stunted lives of the characters. (Similarly, the unfinished apartment building in The Edible Woman is used to suggest Peter's incomplete development as a human being.) Unlike Place d'Armes, Life Before Man offers no moment of comprehension, but it is Atwood's single-minded honesty of vision and her unwillingness to lapse into sentiment that hold the book together. The ROM brochure Lesje has written as a guide for "parents and teachers" suggests that they try to imagine "what it would be like if suddenly the dinosaurs came to life." As we take leave of each of the three main characters, they are all in a state of longing for some condition of psychic wholeness; Lesje would "prefer" to "forgive, someone, somehow, for something"; Nate will be going "home";

Elizabeth, though she is convinced "China does not exist," nevertheless "longs to be there." Within the confines of the novel, the "dinosaurs" never come to life, despite the characters' attempts to imagine them. As Lesje notes, "Organisms adapt to their environment,"¹⁸ and despite her pregnancy, it is clear that the social environment presented in the book is forbidding to life.

Some of the twenties authors continue writing into the more recent past. Their reactions to the changing times vary. Some stand fast in attitudes to the city expressed in the twenties books; some modify their stance. Grove, for example, continues to be an important figure into the forties. After the twenties, he publishes Fruits of the Earth (1933), Two Generations (1939), The Master of the Mill (1944), In Search of Myself (1946), and Consider Her Ways (1947). His message about urban life varies little from that described in the chapter in this thesis on Grove's novels of the twenties. Of the more recent group of books, The Master of the Mill offers the clearest statement of Grove's views on technology and industrialization. However, Grove had presented minor versions of the "mill" in earlier books. Mackenzie's huge farm in A Search for America, Niels Lindstedt's house in Settlers of the Marsh, Abe Spalding's barn and house in Fruits of the Earth, even the consolidated school in that book, all stand as concrete manifestations of the substitution of the material for the spiritual. Grove's dates for the composition of The Master of the Mill are 1930 to 1944;¹⁹ thus the mill seems a logical extension of the massive buildings in the books published in the twenties. Spalding's house, for example, shows minute signs of decay only five years after its construction.

The decay signals the ultimate failure of all material goals, and is linked by Grove (through the voice of Dr. Vanbruik) to the clay mounds which now cover the sites of the magnificent constructions of Babylon. Dr. Vanbruik tells Abe of the "clay mounds covering the sites of the ancient Babylonian cities The moment a work of man was finished, nature set to work to take it down again And so with everything, with his machines, his fields, his pool; they were all on the way of being levelled to the soil again This great mechanical age was bound to come to an end" ²⁰ As Abe's rural community is turning itself into a city, it already is beginning to decay:

Nonetheless, the link between Abe and his constructions is not totally severed by the end of the book; the total polarization of man and structure, now a gigantic machine, occurs in The Master of the Mill. The existence of the machine that controls the world because it controls its food has been made possible through the willing surrender of power by man himself. In an effort to rid himself of the "curse of labour" and create a paradisiacal condition, he has created a society in which technology and industrialization direct and control man's activities. The book presents the triumph of matter over mind. However, in the long run, matter will crumble like the constructions of Babylon, and the few men remaining will begin once again to till the soil, but they will start a new cycle which will culminate once again in an industrial revolution. In the last few paragraphs of the book, Grove holds out hope that the "collective human mind" will find some way to break this pattern, but the effect of the book is such that its final words seem pathetic, even silly. The book is full of numerous descriptions of the mill, designed to instill in the reader a sense of its sinister nature.

Sentences laden with doom litter the pages; for example, the vaults of the mill are "blasted out of the living rock";²¹ Rudyard Clark is "a slave handing his slavery on";²² the mill looks at Sam Clark "out of an ironic, Mephistophelean face."²³ The following passage linking the industrial revolution and the city is typical of the rhetoric and of the point of view presented:

The industrial revolution had not only made possible, it had postulated the multiplication of numbers till cities had grown where there had been hamlets, till whole populations had been withdrawn from the green of the fields and reassembled in factories; and now, by drawing, from its own premises, the final conclusion, it drove those numbers out again; it handed them over to that ogre called unemployment. Was man, once started on that road, going to go the way of the mastodon and the dinosaur?²⁴

Though Grove began writing for Canadian readers shortly after World War I and ceased writing shortly after World War II, his philosophical position changed very little. His vision hardly widened in response to the social changes that resulted from the spread of urbanization and industrialization. The Master of the Mill is the deeper mining of an old vein. The return to the soil he foresees at the end of his book is a forced return, the result of a failure of technology and a residual instinct for survival. What surprises one about the book is that it does not predict the extinction of man, but even offers a glimmer of hope that technology may be kept under control.

One further comment on this book should be added. Though Grove had no direct literary reaction to World War I, in the twenties, The Master of the Mill, published during World War II, offers commentary on the Great War and, by implication, on the one in progress. In a letter to Barker Fairley dated December 1, 1941, Grove talks of "the present Germany, with

its craving for power gone rampant."²⁵ He then makes an oblique reference to his attempt to publish "a rather subtle novel dealing with what is underlying it all"²⁶ Desmond Pacey remarks in a note, "Presumably, The Master of the Mill."²⁷ There is no doubt that that was the book to which Grove was referring. Edmund Clark is presented as having had all his ideals shattered by the war. He comes out of it viewing it as a "business venture which had failed for both victors and defeated."²⁸ In another passage Grove dismisses as "irresponsible scribblers" and "demagogues" those who claimed the war would "usher in an era of peace and universal brotherhood."²⁹ Belated though it is, the literary attack on the Great War comes at last, and the attack is made explicit through the depiction of Edmund Clark, who personifies in Canada the connection between war and industrialization. It is hardly by chance that Grove presents German engineers as responsible for the design, construction, and installation of the mill.

Hubert Evans, the twenties novelist who entitled his comment on the Great War and the post-war period The New Front Line, also bridges the period between the twenties and the post-World War II novel. Like Grove, Evans maintained a negative stance towards urban life, though Evans' view gains complexity and scope with the passing of time. Though Evans, now eighty-eight years old, is a prolific writer, he has only three novels for adults. Mist on the River (1954), set in British Columbia, presents the opposition between rural and urban life in terms of Indian and white culture, but it explores the clash in some depth. Though Cy Pitt takes "his rightful place among his people" in his ancestral village at the close of the book, it is by no means certain that his "old, lost peace" will return. He has never mastered the art of canoe-making to the satisfaction of old Paul,

keeper of tribal traditions, nor has he the values required for "success" in the white world. His sister June, on the other hand, becomes a "big city girl" and wholeheartedly adopts urban life in Vancouver. She sees village life in the bush in terms of its "limitations," that is, from a white point of view. June takes as her model another Indian woman who has "freed" herself and who has "moved out into the world of whites with unassertive confidence in her ability."³⁰ It is clear that June will adapt to Vancouver, but Evans presents others who collapse under the cultural stresses: Dot becomes a prostitute in Prince Rupert and Bert Silas ends up in jail. The conflict in the book is not only between village and city, but also between the city the Indians partially understand, Prince Rupert, where the canneries are, and Vancouver, which is totally alien. Cy's vision of the tension between his culture and the white culture is depicted vividly in this passage, which contrasts the city and the natural world:

On the top of the hill, above the business streets, was the white part of town, self-contained, successful, knowing what it wanted and how to get it. Out there, beyond the misty darkness of the harbour, were the strong old villages and the good clean sea, and in between were the native people he wanted to forget-- the human drift, the rootless ones cast up on this sordid tide flat of the in-between, unable as now he was unable to return to the proven old they had deserted, yet failing to strike roots in that other world which only the most gifted and resolute of his race could make their own.³¹

In O Time In Your Flight (1979), Evans wrote an autobiographical novel set in 1899 in a small town in Ontario (Evans was born in Vankleek Hill, Ontario, in 1892). The work comes complete with lovingly detailed drawings of such objects as a spool bed, a cradle scythe, and an apple peeler. Indeed, its intent is to re-create a way of life, and in this respect it is similar to Day Before Yesterday by Fred Jacob, who was a contemporary of Evans, having been born only ten years earlier in 1882. However, Jacob's book

appeared in 1925 and Evans' appeared over fifty years later. As Evans closes O Time In Your Flight, his family is about to move to Vancouver, that is, they are about to start what became for Evans himself a life-long attachment to the freedom of British Columbia, especially the wilderness life described in The New Front Line. The closing lines of the book are "Gilbert's, the boy who represents the young Hubert Evans:

The thing was, you never knew if the next place would be your promised land until you got there. Until you did, your promised land was all inside your head. Would British Columbia turn out to be his promised land? And would a whip-poor-will be singing there?³²

Evans apparently heard the whip-poor-will, for he eventually built his own house in Roberts Creek, British Columbia, where he raised a family and still lives. In his work he has consistently connected the land and nature with the achievement of individual freedom and genuine community.

Robert Stead's last novel, published in 1930 for the Doubleday Crime Club, is called The Copper Disc. The book is a mystery story with a city setting which capitalizes on contemporary excitement about the radio. Early in the book the heroine announces that she lives "in an atmosphere of radio."³³ She tells us that her father is "steeped in it," that the family guests are "usually radio people," and that she herself sings on it. The villain, Hertzon, is fascinated by electrical energy and misuses it. After his plot is foiled, the heroine's father announces that "Every invention is charged with danger unless, with the invention, comes a corresponding sense of responsibility,"³⁴ which the villain lacked. However, he is described as having sailed "a new, uncharted sea" which "engulfed" him. Nonetheless, "that way lies progress." These cautionary words perhaps best sum up Stead's attitude towards industrialization, in so far as it is

possible to deduce it from his novels. Unlike Grove, Stead did not fear technology. Like Gander Stake, he appeared to be able to bridge the rural and the urban world. In 1919, he moved from Calgary to Ottawa, where he became publicity director for the Department of Immigration and Colonization. In 1936 he shifted to the Department of Mines and Resources and worked there until his retirement in 1946. In retirement, he wrote articles for the Canadian Geographical Journal.³⁵ It is regrettable that just as Stead had reached his stride as a novelist, he chose to retire from literature. Potboiler though it is, The Copper Disc indicates that Stead had the adaptability to deal with purely urban material.

Bertrand Sinclair also published a novel in the thirties. Down the Dark Alley, set in Vancouver, appeared in 1936, and deals with the export of liquor to the United States during Prohibition. The book is written with unqualified sympathy for both Canadians and Americans involved in the trade in bootlegged liquor. Sinclair says at one point ". . . strong drink is the right of strong men,"³⁶ and he treats the liquor traffic alternately as a business enterprise capable of yielding huge profits if managed properly, and as a "cops and robbers" adventure story. Sinclair's very strong sentiments on the issue are expressed in several attacks on the "churches, militant dry groups, politicians and fools"³⁷ who are responsible for Prohibition. The "hidden places" of the British Columbia wilderness have become the booze-laden holds of fast motor launches making the run from Vancouver to Puget Sound. Though Down the Dark Alley is by no means the first book in which a city setting has figured, it is the first in which some variation of the conflict between wilderness and city values has not figured, though Raw Gold (1908) and The Land of Frozen Suns (1910)

handle this theme in embryonic fashion. Sinclair was moving towards a purely urban novel in The Inverted Pyramid (1924), and once he had found a suitable theme ("Hail to Bacchus," as he puts it),³⁸ he wrote a city novel around it. He appears to have been uninfluenced by Morley Callaghan's far superior novel on the same theme, Strange Fugitive (1928). In the fifties, Sinclair wrote Room for the Rolling M (1954) and Both Sides of the Law (1955), entertaining adventure stories which show Sinclair's sense of the marketability of his writing. He died in 1972 in Pender Harbour, British Columbia, the remoteness of which indicates that his ties to the wilderness never slackened, though his didacticism about it may have.

Jessie Sime returned to Great Britain in 1945, but not before writing an autobiographical account of holidaying in the Canadian wild called In A Canadian Shack (1937). It rhapsodizes over nature in the tone of a confirmed city dweller. She also published an account of her dreams and their meaning called The Land of Dreams (1940). Though she acknowledges the assistance of Frank C. Nicholson in an author's note, his name does not appear on the title page. The two appear jointly as authors on the title page of Brave Spirits, a collection of reminiscences of famous people, including Yeats and Meredith; A Tale of Two Worlds (1953), which is an expansion of the "city-theme" of Our Little Life, and Inez and Her Angel (1954), a short account of a series of mystical experiences that the heroine (perhaps Sime herself) has over a period of time. Despite the appearance of Nicholson's name on the title page, it is unlikely that he contributed very much to the volumes. The style is undisputably Sime's and Brave Spirits is clearly autobiographical; for example, the first person is used throughout and phrases like "my father, my mother and I" abound. Nicholson was Librarian

of the University of Edinburgh from 1910 to 1939. He had once been an instructor of German, having taken a first in the Medieval and Modern Languages Tripos at Cambridge. It is likely that his assistance to Sime consisted less of writing than of research and, especially in the case of A Tale of Two Worlds, seeing to it that the details about the Viennese setting were accurate. Putting Nicholson's name on her books was probably Sime's way of acknowledging the time and care he had expended on her writing.

Just as new writers appeared after Callaghan began writing to take up the urban theme in Canadian letters, many important novels appeared over the next fifty years that were without a distinctive urban setting, but which expressed an attitude towards the city. Some of these books are consistent with the general pattern of twenties books--that is, they express skepticism or distrust of the large city from the vantage point of the inhabitant of the wilderness, farm, or small town. As in many twenties novels, the authentic life is seen as one lived in some direct contact with nature. Sometimes the vantage point is that of the city dweller who journeys from urban to rural or wilderness life, undergoes a revivifying experience on the land, and then returns to the city. In some instances the city dweller remains on the land. Yet another group of novels views the city as an escape from a stultifying life on the land.

Of this last group, the most significant is still As For Me and My House (1941). The Bentleys find each other in a small university town in Saskatchewan. Phillip is in his fourth year at college. Self-educated and from a small town very like the Horizon in which we find the Bentleys, Phillip has been disappointed by the university town, which has turned out

to be "just an extension of the old."³⁹ He is "straining towards still another outside world, farther than the little university city, than the Middle West."⁴⁰ Mrs. Bentley already has spent a year in the "East" studying piano, and even dreams of further study in Europe. At the close of the book, after twelve years in "Tillsonborough, Kelby, Crow Coulee--now Horizon,"⁴¹ the couple return to their starting-point, the "little city" where they used to live, in order to run a second-hand bookstore near the university. Mrs. Bentley hopes to teach piano as well, partly because she wants to give Philip the chance to succeed at something on his own, without the interference of her talent for "workaday matters." The sterility of their life on the prairie, plagued during the thirties by both drought and the Depression, has been discussed at length by other critics and need not be detailed. However, what has not been stressed is the encapsulated nature of that twelve-year period, bounded as it is by the city on both ends. At the opening of the period, both protagonists see themselves as potential artists; at the end of it, both view themselves as failed artists who are settling for an improvement in their way of life. However, the cyclical nature of their experience is emphasized by a hesitant re-establishment of each one in the other's eyes as a serious artist. Ross presents Mrs. Bentley as playing the same Liszt rhapsody at the Ladies Aid social that she had played the night Philip had asked her to marry him. Philip views the performance twelve years later as a "success" though he believes she has tried to enrapture Paul. One of Philip's last paintings is a similar "success": Mrs. Bentley describes the picture as "a good job--if it's good in a picture to make you feel terror and pity and desolation."⁴² It is clear that Philip has learned from the hundreds of drawings of his

environment that he has been making. Mrs. Bentley, on the other hand, believes herself to have "wooden fingers" only two months after she plays the Liszt, a plausible discovery since she practices so irregularly. Nonetheless, tentative steps are being taken by both to return to earlier visions of themselves, visions that only seem possible because of their return to the city. It is also clear from the Steve episode (his father and the woman he lives with are "the only case of open immorality in the town"⁴³) that if Philip's child is not to be thought of all his life as a bastard, the Bentleys must start anew in some larger centre.

Like the Bentleys, David Canaan in The Mountain and the Valley (1952) is a repressed and frustrated artist. Unlike the Bentleys, who have lived in a city, he has never known anything but rural life in the Annapolis Valley. Though David feels that he must go down the highway to Halifax if he is ever to develop as an artist, the book ends as it begins, with a description of David looking at the highway, but heading for and reaching the top of the mountain. David's longing for an experience larger than the Valley life affords him is depicted through Toby and Anna, David's male and female alter-ego. In the scene in which Toby first tells David about Halifax, he is entranced and identifies himself with all of Toby's enthusiastic accounts of city life. When Toby falls asleep, David feels guilty, thinks of his family as defenceless, and craves reassurance of their love for him. At one point, David is rebelliously helping his father move a boulder; he angrily contrasts the repetitiveness of life in the Valley with the "movement, and something to feed your mind"⁴⁴ that he would find in the city. When his father strikes him, he makes his first and only attempt to go to Halifax. Out on the highway, he gets a ride in a car with a couple

on their way to Halifax and discovers that he can talk to them "their way." However, in a more intense repetition of the scene with Toby, David interprets the sophisticated control of language which makes it possible for him to communicate with the city-dwellers as a betrayal of his family: "He thought of having used words like 'shall' against his father, who had none of his own to match them or to defend himself with."⁴⁵ So he gets out of the car and stands on the highway, a prisoner of his perceptions. As he arrives home, he sobs because he can neither leave nor stay.

Anna represents the part of David's self prepared to accept the burden of experience that the city offers. In a scene set in Halifax, Anna cries when she receives from her family a package of tenderloin "patiently" wrapped in waxed paper from the cornflake boxes. She is aware of how mistaken their perception of her pleasure will be. The pork will not taste "much different from the pork she could order any day"⁴⁶ in Halifax. Anna also acts as a link between Toby and David. It is she who sees Toby's similarity to the picture of the sailor in Ellen's locket, thus linking the archetypal wanderer to Toby's experiential approach to life and David's imaginative approach.

When Toby passes on the train and fails to acknowledge David's presence in the field, a montage of all the things he had never done flashes through David's mind. This is yet another variation of the scene discussed above. The disappearing train becomes the symbol of all the choices David has made that have left him "irretrievably far behind."⁴⁷ David's moment of illumination at the close of the book throws into question the value of his life-long desire for experience. It suggests, especially through the image in which David sees time as spatial in nature, that the material for

his art has always lain close at hand. However, Buckler's presentation of the illuminating moment is sufficiently ambiguous that one cannot say with any certainty what the author intended. The weight of the book suggests, perhaps, that the road to the top of the mountain is reached via the highway. Halifax remains a beckoning presence throughout the novel.

A curious parallel exists between The Mountain and the Valley and Fred Jacob's Peevee. Both deal with frustrated writers who are faint-hearted on both a literal and metaphorical level. The two books conclude with the writer's death from heart failure. Both men have a male and a female alter-ego. In both cases, the female (a sister of the protagonist) marries the male (the best friend of the protagonist). This plot coincidence suggests how integral a part of Canadian culture the repressed artist has been. He has only now and then been identified by artists like Jacob and Buckler, who themselves have had a difficult time filling the role of writer.

In 1974 Margaret Laurence published The Diviners, a novel about a successful writer who manages to break away from her small-town Manitoba background to educate herself in Winnipeg, and then makes a second break for freedom, this time from the bleakness of a Toronto high-rise apartment (which seems like a "desert island" or a "cave"⁴⁸) and a loveless and barren marriage. Morag flees to Vancouver, not because she feels that she needs a city with a character different from that of Toronto, but because "it only ever occurs to prairie people, when they light out, to go yet further west."⁴⁹ The flight to Vancouver should be seen in this perspective. For Morag, Vancouver simply represents freedom; it is not "urban" experience she is seeking. In fact, the novel rejects urban life. Morag feels threatened by the sight of the mountains in Vancouver. She sees them as "cold and

infinitely lofty, diminishing the city and its inhabitants,"⁵⁰ and decides that it was "insane" to go to the city. Her sojourn there is temporary, a stopping-place on the way to McConnell's Landing. The newspaper ad for the farm there reads "80-acre farm, river frontage, good well, four-bedroom log house structurally very sound" The ad strikes Morag "like the spirit of God between the eyes." The loghouse was built by a pioneering couple, and with it she acquires "History. Ancestors."⁵² With the purchase of the southern Ontario farmhouse, Morag re-acquires her Manawaka prairie past and the values it represents for her:

Innerfilm: Outside, the blizzard rages and the snowpiles up against the house and along the window frames. It is Forty Below. (Forty Below is the magic winter temperature figure. Only to prairie people? It means something more than temperature--it denotes amazing endurance and people say it with pride, almost reverence. They never say Forty Below Zero. Does it go that far down in southern Ontario?) Inside the little house, all is warmth, all is cheer. Morag, having put in an excellent day's work on the nearly completed novel (which will in time prove to be her best thus far) is reading in her comfortable chair near the black woodstove which is crackling a merry tune (safely; new stovepipes).⁵³

A few years later Pique makes a similar decision about her life. She decides to go and live on Galloping Mountain in Manitoba where her Uncle Jacques and his wife Mary take care of an assortment of homeless Métis children. Morag thinks, "Forty Below all winter. Probably an outdoor john."⁵⁴ However, her very use of the phrase indicates that Morag understands the nature of the search Pique expresses in her song, "The valley and the mountain hold my name." Minor characters in the book, for example, A-Okay and Dan, similarly see the land "as a gift and not an affliction," because as Morag puts it, ". . . they had known something of Babylon, that mighty city which dealt in gold and silver and in the souls of men"⁵⁵

The Diviners forms an interesting contrast with Knister's White Narcissus.

Knister's successful artist thrives on the stimulation of Toronto; Laurence's successful artist flees Toronto. Nearly fifty years elapse between the publication of the two novels, and the difference in perspective may result from the fact that the twenties novelist was much more self-conscious than the writers of the seventies. Knister was aware of the native Canadian author as a phenomenon. His short story collection, for example, was an attempt to make his awareness a part of the general consciousness of readers of literature. Laurence can endow Morag with a distaste for her Toronto milieu without impairing Morag's credibility as a writer; in fact, Morag gains in authenticity by disliking the life she lives in Toronto, wanting to live near a river, and forming a friendship with a water diviner. Knister could not, perhaps, allow his hero what would have seemed "anti-cultural" behaviour, given that the centre of the Canadian literary "renaissance" in the twenties was in Toronto, and that his hero is a writer who lived there.

In The Fire-Dwellers (1969), Laurence's only urban novel, life in a city is given extended treatment. Stacey Cameron and Morag Gunn have similar views of Vancouver, and both books end in an attempt to re-constitute traditional childhood values in settings very different. For Stacey, Vancouver is a city of the old, impotent, and dying, or conversely a city of distorted and perverted energy, though twenty years before, the city had represented freedom and experience to her. Now she feels alien there, and her fantasies turn it into a place where thin panthers stalk the streets and Roman legions march. Metaphorically, she dwells in a burning world in which death may come at any moment. The Manawaka she had wanted to escape from so desperately now seems a flawed Eden to her. Though she learns that Eden is not recoverable, its traditional values can be re-affirmed in

suburban Vancouver on Bluejay Crescent. The MacAindras take in Matthew and plan on inviting Mrs. Cameron and Rachel for Sunday dinners. The city recedes as the book closes, but we know Stacey will never be entirely comfortable there.

It is Laurence's Rachel Cameron in A Jest of God (1966) who sees Vancouver positively. "Where I'm going, anything may happen," she says, and she speculates about getting married and having children in Vancouver, and even about being an aunt to her sister's children. What comes of this move from Manawaka to Vancouver we never learn, but the degree of Rachel's longing for a widening of her horizon is conveyed to us in the rhyme which opens the book:

The wind blows low, the wind blows high
 The snow comes falling from the sky,
 Rachel Cameron says she'll die
 For the want of the golden city.
 She is handsome, she is pretty,
 She is queen of the golden city--⁵⁶

As the book progresses, Rachel suffers several near deaths for "want of the golden city," and it is clear that no matter what happens to her and her mother, "it's time"⁵⁷ to move from the known and the limited to the unknown and the unlimited, that is, from small town to big city. The reader is probably safe in predicting the eventual disillusionment of Rachel in Vancouver. Mrs. Cameron probably never will adjust at all. However, at this stage in her life, Rachel needs the anonymity of a city, and, more than anything else, she needs the experience of living in a different way.

Thus, though none of Laurence's characters really enjoy cities (Morag is even "terrified" of them), Laurence understands full well how significant and necessary a role cities may play in the mind of the rural dweller; though

they may not represent a final answer, they may be a necessary stage in one's growth. At the very least, one has to live in cities in order to find out that one does not like them.

A similar desire for experience motivates Cathy and her friend Karen in David Adams Richards' Blood Ties (1976). However, the two girls are eighteen, not Rachel's thirty-four, when they leave the Miramichi area of New Brunswick for an unnamed big city, probably Toronto, and there is no note of desperation in their departure. In fact, they go with the consent of their families, and Cathy's father buys them sleepers so they will not have to sit up all the way on the train. Cathy's older sister, Leah, has preceded them by a week. Like Rachel's departure from Manawaka, Leah's has the panache of a nearly missed opportunity in it. Leah is twenty-seven and has endured a brutal marriage for years. By leaving, Cathy avoids a marriage to John, a man similar to Leah's husband. Cathy skips Leah's temporary entrapment by becoming aware of the possibilities outside her environment at an early age. We never see the Bentleys or Rachel or Cathy in the city; the reader simply must accept that in the context of these lives the city seems good and beautiful.

The bulk of non-urban fiction, however, continues to reject urban life. The journeys described above of the rural dweller to the city to find a better life are reversed. The city dweller journeys to the land to find an experience denied him by the city. Once in contact with nature, he regains some spirituality vital to his nature. His departure from the city may or may not be permanent, but the book emphasizes the restorative nature of the non-urban experience. Among the most significant of this group of books is Ethel Wilson's Swamp Angel (1954). Her heroine, Maggie Lloyd, was born

in New Brunswick, where her father kept a fishing lodge, but she has been living in Vancouver, married to a man she does not love. When Maggie flees the city and her dead marriage, she feels herself to be "on a margin of life,"⁵⁸ and recalls that twice before in her life she had been on the "margin of a world which was powerful and close."⁵⁹ The recognition comes as she sits beside the Similkameen River in the dark in communion with the wind, the river, the pine trees, the rocks, and the stars. She is still in flight, having left Vancouver for Hope, an aptly named village which lies between "two forks of highroads, each going into the mountains" Maggie's eventual destination is Kamloops, reached via the northern fork along the steep banks of the Fraser River. However, before starting on the major journey, she has taken the southern fork along the Hope-Princeton Trail which moves into British Columbia's heart. At Hope "you meet the continent,"⁶⁰ but along the Similkameen River on the southern fork, time, and space dissolve for Maggie, and she smells again "the pinewoods of New Brunswick, one with these woods, a continent away,"⁶¹ and she is back in her childhood again. Thus, the temporary detour during which she fishes connects her past and present and erases for her the intervening period with Edward Vardoe, what she calls her "slavery," in Vancouver. In this passage as in others throughout the book, fishing is treated as a mystical activity which places the fisherman in an exalted spiritual state in which he has an intense awareness of nature and God. Maggie returns to Hope and rides on a bus along the Fraser Canyon. Twenty-five miles from Kamloops at Three Loon Lake she finds the sort of fishing lodge she is looking for, similar to her father's in New Brunswick, and she finds herself "swimming" again after a long stagnant period:

There was this extra feeling about the swim: Maggie's life had so long seemed stagnant that--now that she had moved forward and found her place with other people again, serving other people again, humouring other people, doing this herself, alone, as a swimmer swims, this way or that, self-directed or directed by circumstance--Maggie thought sometimes it's like swimming; it is very good, it's nice, she thought, this new life, serving other people as I did years ago with Father; but now I am alone and, like a swimmer, I have to make my way on my own power. Swimming is like living, it is done alone.⁶²

The presentation of other characters reinforces Maggie's rejection of the city. Principally, there is Edward Vardoe, whose sleazy business transactions and sleazy liaison with "Ireen" best sum him up. On the bus to Kamloops, Maggie converses with a man who settled in the city after the first war and tried to sell encyclopedias. He tells Maggie that in order to be a successful book salesman, "you gotta have quite a bit of larceny in your blood, city people seem to have larceny in the blood by nature. I got out and came back, and I never go out now if I don't have to."⁶³ (The larcenous book salesman is a motif that appears in Grove's A Search for America as well.) Joey, the original Chinese taxi-driver, proves unsuitable for the British Columbia wilderness. He is "pure city"⁶⁴ with his suggestion that Maggie put up a stand to sell wieners to fishing parties that come for the day. His brother, Angus, however, is different. He finds an identity in the wilderness: "He was more of a person than he would be on Pender Street A man, and even a man's dog, has a special value in a landscape with trees."⁶⁵ The Gunnarsens themselves are examples of contrasting values: Haldar is a returned man (World War II) whose dream of happiness is fulfilled by the lodge at Three Loon Lake. Vera Gunnarsen is "city bred"⁶⁶ and does "not like living outside a city."⁶⁷ Eventually, Vera proves totally unable to deal with the situation at Three Loon Lake. She cannot provide the competence and control that Maggie has in abundance. Wilson sums up the

clash between wilderness and city in an image introduced at the point when Maggie opens her cabin door to find Vera standing there after an unsuccessful attempt to drown herself. The despair that has caused the suicide attempt seems alien to the natural surroundings: "A room lit by a candle and in a silent and solitary place is a world within itself in which there is nothing urban nor vulgar. It has a singularity."⁶⁸ When urban life is treated positively, it is through the character of Nell Severance, who "rescues" Edward Vardoe, gives up the Swamp Angel for the sake of her daughter's happiness, and declares to Maggie that "Everything of any importance happens indoors."⁶⁹

About the same time that Ethel Wilson was writing her book about the British Columbia wilderness, Malcolm Lowry was writing his. Margerie Lowry notes that a draft of October Ferry to Gabriola was ready in 1951, another in 1953, and that Lowry was still struggling with the book in 1957 when he died.⁷⁰ The unfinished manuscript was sorted out by Margerie Lowry and published in 1970. The book is a paean to the British Columbia wilderness, and along with the short stories "The Bravest Boat" and "Gin and Goldenrod," and the novella "The Forest Path to the Spring," it forms a substantial statement about the Canadian wilderness and the city. The last fifteen years of Lowry's life were spent living in a shack at Dollarton on the Burrard Inlet, about ten miles from Vancouver. The shack and the surrounding wilderness are the setting for these works. When the Lowrys believed they were to be forced to vacate their shack, they started a search for another home among the Gulf Islands. October Ferry to Gabriola is a fictional account of one of these searches. The trip includes a temporary stay in Vancouver and a bus ride from Victoria to Nanaimo, where the fictionally dispossessed

couple, Ethan and Jacqueline Llewelyn, board the ferry for Gabriola.

Though stories and novel cannot be viewed as autobiographical, the works draw heavily on the details of the life that the Lowrys lived in British Columbia.

The Llewelyns' shack is located on the other side of the inlet from a Shell oil refinery. No greater contrast is imaginable in the mind of the narrator than the two banks of the inlet. On the Shell side are "unfamiliar demonic magenta lights" and a "sword-shaped" oil-waste pyre which gives off a "rushing roar, mingling with a noise like rattling chains . . . sounds of machinery, half-submerged in the high lament of huge invisible saws in far sawmills northwestward."⁷¹ Temporarily, the "S" in Shell is unilluminated at night, and the refinery seems a "lurid flickering City of Dis indeed" ⁷² A "gruesome carpet of dirty oil" sometimes covers the inlet until the cleansing tide disperses it.

During the Llewelyns' temporary "return to civilization"⁷³ in Vancouver, they rent an apartment which turns out to have been an abortionist's clinic. Ethan often feels "like killing himself out of sheer boredom,"⁷⁴ and as they fail to find permanent housing, he begins to hate Vancouver "with an almost pathological savagery":

Its soul seemed to him like one of those sportsmen who count their civic reputation of the highest value, are noticeably quiet, sober pillars of the church, object publicly to risqué movies and symphony orchestras on Sundays, neither drink nor smoke, and call the police themselves on the slightest provocation. And certainly--this wasn't just imagination. That the city could be seen as, was, just such a strangler and murderer was no more than truth. So miserable a place had it apparently become to live in that at this period literally not a day passed without a suicide, usually by gas, or a murder of the most horrible type.⁷⁵

The distaste Llewelyn feels for Vancouver is summed up by a trial held in the city in which a fifteen-year-old boy has been sentenced to death for rape

and murder. The newspapers hail the sentence as a triumph of justice. Ethan partakes of the general guilt by failing to raise his voice in protest. What is beautiful in the city is slowly being demolished. For example, an old house Jacqueline Llewelyn has hoped to rent is among a group of thirteen between the promenade and the bay which will be pulled down to widen the approach to Stanley Park:

Well, gone was another piece of life. And what were they going to put up in its place . . . More deathscape, more potlust --bah! . . . It would soon be the same everywhere. Canada's beauty was in its wildness, and if you like, untidiness. It was the only originality it had. If one loved it, it was because it was--Ethan had been going to say--a sort of bastard. There might be beauty in the effort of trying to tame it, but the result was something else. Final success would be its death-- or the work would have to be undone, the striving start again--⁷⁶

By contrast, Ethan sees the shack and their side of the inlet as the answer he has received in middle age to a prayer he said as a child: "Grant me, Oh Lord, to know that which is worth knowing, to love that which is worth loving, to praise that which pleaseth thee most, to esteem that highly which to Thee is precious, to abhor that which in Thy sight is filthy and unclean."⁷⁷ At Eridanus, Ethan feels mentally and physically reborn. Never before has he delighted in sheer physical labour, never before has he taken such a delight "in swimming itself, in sailing a boat, in sunlight and sea wind and the flight of gulls, in making love to his wife."⁷⁸ The Llewelyns learn seabirds and wildflowers by name, and master the complexities of the tides. Ethan, formerly troubled by clumsiness, becomes something of a carpenter. Ethan finds that life finally has "meaning, ritual, direction"; he feels an "ecstatic joy simply in living . . ."⁷⁹ The view from the shack is "ever-changing; the mountains, the sea never looked the same two minutes on end . . ."⁸⁰

The sense of peace and wholeness that Ethan associates with Burrard Inlet is better communicated by the narrator in "The Forest Path to the Spring," who never reaches the depths of despair and guilt which plague Llewelyn, but who is similarly in need of regeneration. He is a jazz musician who has literally to learn to live in the daytime. Of the shacks on the inlet, the narrator asks himself, ". . . why had these shacks come to represent something to me of an indefinable goodness, even a kind of greatness?" The answer he finds is that the shacks have come to symbolize "man's hunger and need for beauty, for the stars and the sunrise."⁸¹ Though living "under conditions so poverty stricken and abject . . ." they were actually condemned in the newspapers,"⁸² the narrator and his wife believe themselves to be in "heaven, and that the world outside--so portentous in its prescriptions for man of imaginary needs that were in reality his damnation--was hell."⁸³ Of the "Liverpools" of this world, the narrator remarks that a child born there may "never find a single person any longer who will think it worth pointing out to him the simple beauty"⁸⁴ of rain falling into the sea. The narrator tells of a family living in the shacks who have brought city values into the wilderness ("keeping up with the Joneses"), and who therefore sink into degradation and eventually leave to move "into a slum in the city."⁸⁵

The narrator's wife, though she has spent "years in the cities,"⁸⁶ had lived in the country as a child, and thus is presented as having "some mysterious correspondence with all nature"⁸⁷ She acts as an intermediary for the narrator so that he may become "susceptible to these moods and changes and currents of nature" Though "the forest path to the spring" is often difficult to traverse and sometimes even terrifying,

illumination does occur, and the novella concludes with the narrator and his wife stooping down to the stream and drinking.

In an article on Lowry,⁸⁸ George Woodcock suggests that over the course of Lowry's writing life, the personality of his characters decreased in importance for him, but that "place--not merely as a reflected state of mind--but also in its physically apprehensible sense"⁸⁹ became increasingly important. This "personalization of place,"⁹⁰ as Woodcock puts it, is what overwhelms the reader in "The Forest Path to the Spring." Lowry had planned the closing scene of this work as the final scene of a sequence of six or seven novels of which Under the Volcano was to be the central book.⁹¹ Thus, Lowry had intended to end his magnum opus not with what he called "Civilization, creator of deathscapes . . .,"⁹² but with a fully realized vision of beatitude in the wilderness. Lowry along with Wilson deserve the extended treatment given them here because they are excellent recent examples of that element in Canadian culture which has been prepared to polarize nature and the city and perhaps do an injustice to both. They are the descendants of Bertrand Sinclair in focusing the natural romantic paradise on the British Columbia wilderness, but the writing and thought are far superior to Sinclair's in quality and therefore more deserving of attention. Another recent British Columbia writer who fits this pattern is Jack Hodgins, who writes of the British Columbia rain forest as a territory where "magic" is possible. The Group of Seven romanticized the northern Ontario wilderness in very similar ways in their painting, but unlike Wilson and Lowry, the Group linked their romanticization of the wilderness to nationalism. This linkage, of course, was verbal, not visual, and depended on Group statements and word-of-mouth interpretation by viewers

(both professional art critics and the general public) to maintain it. In the light of the dispersion of power from central Canada to other parts of the country, it is possible that nationalistic interpretations of Group paintings will fall into disrepute in the future, and that the paintings will simply be seen as versions of the romanticization of the wilderness so prevalent in Canadian culture. A book like "The Forest Path to the Spring" thus will be as legitimate an expression of nationalism (in its romantic interpretation) as a painting like MacDonald's "The Solemn Land." Leacock remarked of northern Ontario that it is the great spaces that appeal, to which one might add, no matter where they are.

Far more consciously "Canadian" than Wilson and Lowry is Robert Kroetsch, who chooses in Gone Indian (1973) to write an ironic send-up of both the "deep American need to seek out the frontier"⁹³ and the Canadian belief in northern forests and buffalo plains. The hero of the novel is an American Ph.D. student named Jeremy Sadness who has chosen Grey Owl as a model to "embody his dream of westward flight," almost as if he realizes the self-deceiving nature of his vision. Sadness's Canadian Ph.D. supervisor sends his student to Alberta, and the book is a zany account of his journey to Edmonton and his participation in the Notikeewin-Winter Festival. Despite the ironic stance the book takes towards Jeremy's question, surprisingly, like Maggie Lloyd and Lowry's heroes, Jeremy finds what he is seeking in Alberta. After regaining his ability to make love lying down (his trauma has to do with the fact that if one is lying down, one is not working on one's Ph.D. thesis), he probably fakes his own suicide and disappears into the wilds of northern Alberta. Before his disappearance, Jeremy dreams "the scalping of Edmonton. The last city north. The Gateway."⁹⁴ Edmonton's

greedy houses are eating "grass and trees." The Indians, Jeremy among them, decide to take the city by surprise:

Hardly had the sun found the sky when the earth was red with fire and blood. Department stores gave up their treasures to crackling flame: banks bubbled and burst like cauldrons of molten money. Churches fell in on their weeping worshippers. High-rise apartments and their occupants, fused at last into a community of soul, smoked like wildcat gushers into the darkening sky Businessmen at a conference, hand in hand, leaped together from a balcony of a large hotel, fell like a strand of dark pearls onto the indifferent cement Big Bear, with a handful of warriors helping, filled the local jail with uniformed policemen, then touched fire to the powder magazine; the smoking air rained badges and boots, rained ears and legs.⁹⁵

Once the Indians have liberated the city, the buffalo take over. They graze on the rich green lawns of the old homes overlooking the river, rub against the lamp posts, and lie down "in the shade of bloodied automobiles." They drink from the fountain in front of City Hall and chew their cuds on the "bucolic campus, where the fly-touched corpses lay eyeless and open to the scoffing crows."⁹⁶ Jeremy dreams that he himself becomes a buffalo.

Underlying all the spoof is the serious notion that not only do the Indians have prima facie rights to the land, but that their use of it in its natural condition as grazing territory for buffalo was morally and aesthetically superior to the use the whites have put it to, that is, the construction of the city of Edmonton and the staging of a gimcrack event like the Notikeewin Winter Festival. The use of the Indian as a set of moral weights and measures to describe Canadian white culture is fairly common in the contemporary Canadian novel (for example, The Temptations of Big Bear, Wooden Hunters, Riverrun, The Vanishing Point, The Diviners, and David Adams Richards' next novel, Lives of Short Duration, which is about the Micmac), but Kroetsch's comic treatment of the subject is unique.

Permanent flight from the city to the land continues to be a popular

theme in Canadian fiction. Aritha van Herk's Judith (1978) combines this theme with a feminist statement. Her heroine is born on a farm, flees to the city, but ultimately rejects "the lethargy of a city"⁹⁷ and "callous urban pragmatism"⁹⁸ in order to return to the land and raise pigs, alone. She leaves behind a male chauvinist city slicker, and after proving to herself that she can go it alone by castrating all her male piglets herself, she accepts the attentions of a liberated young farmer, prepared to accept her as she is. This uneasy mixture of thematic material does not produce good literature; however, the embedding of the theme of the flight to nature from the evil city in what is essentially a feminist novel indicates the strength of the notion in the culture.

A better handling of the feminist theme and the contrast between urban and wilderness life exists in Margaret Atwood's Surfacing (1972) and Marian Engel's Bear (1976). Not only are these books feminist, but the flight from the city, unlike those taken by Wilson's and Lowry's and Kroetsch's characters, is a temporary one. Atwood's and Engel's heroines leave Toronto, that is, civilization, in search of communion with the wild, have ecstatic experiences in nature, and return, purified, to the city.

Engel's heroine, Lou, appears to have spent her childhood in Algoma, and as she speeds north to the highlands, she feels "lightheaded."⁹⁹ She writes to the "Director" that she has an odd sense of "being reborn."¹⁰⁰ We learn that in the city it has been "years since she had had human contact."¹⁰¹ Lou has lived with "ideas" and has hidden behind her work as a bibliographer. The "Director" of the Institute "fucked her weekly on her desk" without "care in the act, only habit and convenience."¹⁰² Though Lou's physical relationship to the bear is central to her northern experience, there are

other aspects of her stay that are almost as significant. For example, she learns once again to understand "morning" through her senses: "Morning in the city is to be endured only."¹⁰³ She becomes conscious of the rain, which makes her want to urinate, and when the rain stops, she wants to listen to "the riverworld shaking the rain off its wings."¹⁰⁴ However, it is through the bear that she finally regains contact with her unconscious self: "She loved the bear. There was a depth in him she could not reach, could not probe and with her intellectual fingers destroy."¹⁰⁵ What passes from the bear to Lou is an awareness of herself as an animal in nature: ". . . she could feel in her pores and the taste of her own mouth that she knew what the world was for. She felt not that she was at last human, but that she was at last clean. Clean and simple and proud."¹⁰⁶ She returns to the city with the courage to change her life. The implication is not only that Lou will stop allowing herself to be a habit and a convenience for someone else, but also that she will remain in touch with her animal self, the self that knows what the world is for.

Surfacing has a more complex plot, but details essentially the same experience. The locale is northern Quebec, where the female narrator had lived as a child. She returns to her island home, ostensibly to search for her missing father, but actually to get back into touch with the natural world and her unconscious self. This process takes place in stages throughout the book, but culminates in what could be described as a psychotic episode but is actually the climax of the healing process, which begins when the narrator knows she is ovulating. She efficiently gets her partner to impregnate her in an animal-like manner and thus destroys the curse of her abortion. Getting rid of the rest of her party by a ruse, she starts the process of

unfreezing her emotions by crying. In the city she has been a book illustrator, but as she now feels her career to be false, she destroys her drawings for Quebec Folk Tales and her painting materials. She also drops into the fire the ring which symbolizes another fiction, that of her marriage and child. In addition, she destroys the "artifacts" of her childhood--photographs, scrapbooks, glasses, books, blankets, and clothing. Everything from "history" must be eliminated if she is to enter the spirit world her parents now inhabit. As a last purification, she bathes in the lake naked, and naked she hollows a lair in the woods in order to approach the condition her parents have entered. When the narrator can think, "I lean against a tree, I am a tree leaning I am the thing in which the trees and animals move and grow, I am a place," she finally is able to see her mother and her father, that is, what they have become in the process of returning to nature. She sees herself, "face dirt-caked and streaked, skin grimed and scabby, hair like a frayed bathmat stuck with leaves and twigs," as the "natural woman," unidentifiable to others who think of the "natural woman" as a "tanned body on a beach with washed hair."¹⁰⁷

Though she dresses herself in order to start a new life with Joe and her unborn baby, like Lou she knows what the world is for, at least temporarily. There is a suggestion in Surfacing that the narrator may lose sight of her knowledge again in the city to which she is returning, but at the moment she knows that illustrations of Quebec folk tales are not the same as living out their stories. Judith, Bear, and Surfacing are all novels of the seventies. Whether this linkage between feminism and the flight from the city to the land will continue in the novels of the eighties remains to be seen. (Feminist re-interpretations of earlier novels probably will be appearing in the next

few years, and Swamp Angel will, no doubt, be among them.) Nellie McClung saw war and industrialization as male cultural phenomena and so apparently does Atwood (the narrator's brother in Surfacing drew battle scenes even as a child and not the nature around him). Even Lowry presents the genius of the wood in "The Forest Path to the Spring" as female, (Joshua's wife in Joshua Then and Now is presented as living a more authentic life than other women in her country club set because she gardens, and at the close of the book Joshua lures her back to him as if she were the spirit of nature temporarily scared out of its natural habitat.) Laurence's "diviners" are both male and female, but they are all in touch with the land.

The journey from the city to the land in search of authenticity is presented through a male hero by Rudy Wiebe in First and Vital Candle (1966). Like the flight in Bear and Surfacing, there is a return to the city at the end. The beginning of the novel is set in Winnipeg, where Abe Ross is between assignments for the Frobisher Company, an organization like the Hudson's Bay Company. He has just returned from a long stint with the native peoples at the trading post at Tyrel Bay, and though he had established a rapport with the Eskimos by respecting and living their way of life, he has not yet found what he is looking for. Winnipeg offers crowds which irk him, advertising which assaults him, and people whose faces seem "skull-like in the darkness."¹⁰⁸ In an image which both connects Abe to the authentic life among the Eskimos and alienates him from the city in which he is conducting a panicky search for something to believe in, Wiebe sums up Abe's uncertainty and fear:

He walked faster; soon he was moving in the slow lope of the dogsled trail, bent forward, arms up. His feet found a give of lawn as he turned back at the corner and he ran on its softness.

A car's headlights swung onto the street, found him and slowed momentarily. But he ran oblivious, parallel to the river out of sight, his body tingling in strength, ran on over the grass the sidewalks the streets the miles between him and the heart of the lonely city.¹⁰⁹

After rejecting an opportunity to be "virtual head of what'll be a multi-million dollar operation" in the Arctic because its chief advantage is the money it will bring him, Abe accepts a run-down trading post in northern Ontario with the Ojibway Indians. There he discovers that though he has lived his life as a kind, thoughtful, even decent man, he has never had "God's grace."¹¹⁰ His understanding of Christianity comes through contact with a missionary couple who do not proselytize and a selfless white teacher with whom he falls in love. Their relationship with the Ojibway demonstrates the workings of "God's grace" to him in concrete form. His departure represents his belief in the Indians' ability to control their own destiny. At the conclusion of the novel, he decides to go to a city (it seems that any city will do) because he is now fully armed to live in one. He has learned the lesson that nature has to teach. Thus, not feminism, but the traditional Christian message is what is being linked to the contrast between nature and the city. It is worth noting that Ross has been brought up on a Saskatchewan farm, and that he also is a veteran of World War II. Wiebe offers the reader a retrospective scene on a battlefield in which Ross sloughs off his hate for the belief forced on him in childhood by his father. However, it is not till his time with the Ojibway Indians that this new belief matures.

Wiebe's first novel, Peace Shall Destroy Many (1962), does not actually present the characters in quest. However, the book takes a clear position on the city which is consistent with that of First and Vital Candle. The

book deals with a group of Russian Mennonites in Saskatchewan during World War II who have to deal with various pressures from the larger Canadian community that threaten their way of life. A young schoolteacher from the city is assigned to the community school. Though she is a good teacher, she reads The Sun Also Rises, wears lipstick and high heels, and vamps some of the younger men. During the school Christmas festivities, she is discovered in the barn with a Mennonite man who had defied the community and joined the army. A violent scene ensues which causes the community to question itself. The teacher, like several other characters who serve the same function, is a catalyst introduced to further the re-evaluation process, not a fully developed character. She is a rubber stamp who represents urban values that are not only alien to the Mennonites but immoral as well. The war, of course, is the main issue the Mennonites must re-consider, and it is linked by Wiebe to social institutions unconnected with the farming of land.

The quest is reversed and abbreviated in Sheila Watson's The Double Hook (1959), whose setting is the Cariboo country of British Columbia. James briefly escapes to the nearby town, where he withdraws his money from the bank in preparation for departure for a city. James wants to "attach himself to another life which moved at a different rhythm."¹¹ However, even the rhythm of the town is alien. He forgets his new duffle bag, refuses to eat "pickled fish" (the other fish in the novel are life symbols), and gets involved with Traff, whose hair reminds him of Lenchen's. The "parrot who lived between two worlds"¹¹² arouses his sympathy as he is himself in that condition, and he buys the bird a beer. When "the price of his escape" is stolen, he laughs in the moonlight while watching the artificial lights of

the hotel and the station. He thinks of his return to his community as having been turned "once more into the first pasture of things,"¹¹³ and the "soft ground" to which Coyote refers in the closing lines of the book is soil, not asphalt. James's venture into town life is meant to act as a bridge between his unthinking acceptance of his rural community and his conscious choice of it as a way of life. However, The Double Hook is a self-consciously artistic work, so dependent on a "literary" understanding of its meaning, so static and heavily symbolical that the reader remains unconvinced of the author's candour in writing about a primitive community in close contact with nature.

In W. O. Mitchell's novel The Vanishing Point (1973), the flight to the land has occurred before the book begins. As in First and Vital Candle, the Indian is presented as living a more authentic life than the city dweller. Carlyle Sinclair has deliberately sought the isolated Stony Indian Reserve as a retreat from the death of his wife and a teaching job in a small Alberta town called Shelby. Paradise Valley is thirty-four miles from Shelby and eighty miles from the city (probably Calgary). Sinclair has been in "Paradise" nine years as both teacher and agent when the book opens, but he is not fully aware of his love for the place and the people. Mitchell uses the character of Victoria Rider, a nineteen-year-old Indian girl, to reveal Sinclair's emotional attachment to the land and the Indian and his alienation from the city. Because Victoria is "lost" in the city, Sinclair must search for her. Mitchell is thus able to move his narrative back and forth from the Reserve to the city in order to compare and contrast the life in both places. Sinclair eventually finds Victoria, but the repeated motif in his mind and ours is "little lost lamb, Victoria." Mitchell makes

clear that prostitution would have been her lot, as she is sheltered temporarily by a prostitute and a pimp. Though Sinclair finds Victoria, Archie Nicotine, an Indian, forces the girl back to the safety of the reserve. Archie's clarity of vision teaches Sinclair a final lesson about the Indian, and this dearly bought knowledge culminates in Sinclair's decision to marry Victoria. The Indian is no longer "other," but is indeed himself. Mitchell prepares the reader for this decision by connecting Sinclair with the land and by showing him as increasingly alienated from the city. Fishing with his friend Peter Sanders one day, Sinclair feels himself "part of the magic land flow--grassinclair--cloudsinclair--sinclairrock"114 When Sinclair tells Peter that the city was "noisy," Peter foresees Sinclair's eventual immersion in the natural world to which the Indians are still closer than the whites:

"I'll tell you something--every year it's going to get noisier for you--and it is not life noise--wind or water or leaf or bird or man--machine noise--it is one crowded, noisy, concrete and glass and plastic and asphalt slough! Whenever I get too sorry for these people, I just need one trip in there to straighten me out. These Stonys are aliens, but what are they alienated from, huh? From the rest--from the real aliens--that concrete and asphalt doesn't sprout and turn green in spring for them--those high-rises don't bud and leaf and turn and drop --that is one rigid, frantic, son-of-a-bitching slough!"115

After Sinclair's decision to marry Victoria, and her choice of him in a tribal dance, he realizes that man could lift "bridges between himself and other men so that he could walk from his own heart and into other hearts."116

Thus, it is clear that the task of documenting the imaginative reaction of the individual to the urban environment has been taken up by both urban and non-urban writers. Whether the city is seen as a lover as in Place d'Armes or as a hostile force as in The Vanishing Point, whether it is considered in an urban novel as in the former book, or in a non-urban novel as in the latter

book, it has a power in the imagination of the Canadian writer that it lacked before the twenties. A writer such as Laurence, whose books are essentially anti-urban in character, considers the city on some level in all of her books.

In an article called "From Villages to Cities,"¹¹⁷ Norman Pearson notes that Canada crammed into the ten decades after Confederation an environmental transformation that had taken centuries in Europe. As we look at the Canadian environment today we see the traces of several different worlds which have risen and fallen in uncommonly brief periods compared to the European experience. Thus, if we look at two novels set in Toronto and separated in time by over seventy years, Robert Barr's The Measure of the Rule (1906) and Margaret Atwood's Life Before Man (1979), it may be possible to grasp the vastness of the changes in the society and the literature. Barr presents a twenty-three-year-old rural schoolteacher arriving in Toronto to attend normal school. His young hero is in a state of such "exaltation" that the snow he treads on seems like "the clouds of heaven."¹¹⁸ The streets present the "splendour of an Arabian tale transported north." However, the all-covering mantle of snow makes it possible for the youth to sustain the illusion that the city park is still the "very brother to the farm."¹¹⁹ Responses such as these to the environment of present-day Toronto would be impossible to put down and make credible, no matter what the background of the hero. Here is Nate in Life Before Man walking towards his old house in Toronto: "The trees he's passing, leaves limp in the heat, the houses with their patchy lawns or gardens crammed with tomato plants, look segmented, a collection of units, not really attached. The leaves aren't attached to the trees, the roofs aren't attached to the houses; blow and it would all fall

down, a Lego town."¹²⁰ The two passages indicate the rise and fall of many mental worlds. The hero of the Barr novel has just entered a magic world, but natural images are still strong enough to suggest its imaginative hold on him. The Atwood hero is in an ugly and mundane world from which he feels dissociated, and the natural world is unable to maintain itself, so overwhelming is the man-made landscape. The Lego world teeters on collapse just as does the Arabian nights world, but the former world is the product of despair, the latter of hope. The character in the Barr novel could no longer exist in Canadian fiction because the urban world is too firmly embedded in rural life today. Only by setting a novel back in time can the Canadian writer attempt an imaginative re-construction of such attitudes towards the city. If a truth about the contemporary world is to be told, in most cases the urban scene must be part of the emotional baggage that the character carries, and an Arabian nights version of the city is an anomaly in today's world of fast communication and transportation. Disillusion about the city now even precedes discovery of it, as in the character of Larry Bowman in Jack Hodgins' The Resurrection of Joseph Bourne (1979), who has never left Port Annie, British Columbia, but has no intention of joining the city crowds in Vancouver.

Norman Pearson closes his essay on Canadian villages and cities with the comment that within the next few decades as much man-made environment will be built in Canada as was built during the entire history of the country:

The new Canada will be seen in the outline of two vast cities, each of five million people, centred around Montreal and Toronto and spreading laterally along the St. Lawrence Valley which produced them. It will be seen in the cities exceeding one million, centred around Vancouver, Winnipeg and Ottawa, and in a few other large cities. It exists already in the physical surroundings that are a summary of the sweeping changes of the past century. The only constancy is change. We have gone from

villages to cities, from the frontier to the space age in our first century and we shall, in the next few years, change our environment even more profoundly.¹²¹

Naturally, the literature will continue to reflect these stupendous changes in the Canadian physical environment. However, it does not seem likely that the society, and by reflection, its literature, will ever uphold political and social values associated with the development of urbanization and industrialization in western Europe and the United States. George Woodcock has also noted in Canada and the Canadians the compressed nature of Canada's development from villages to cities. He remarks that while Europe was developing the "monolithic and totalitarian" elements of modern society, Canada, still in the village and small town stage, was upholding the "simplistic values of the Enlightenment, tempered by Jansenist and Calvinist puritanism"¹²² He sees Canadians as always having preferred "decency to dogma" because of their impatience with ideologies. If his assessment of the Canadian character is accurate, the continuing growth of the cities, so long as it is associated by Canadians with materialism and the anti-human, will continue to produce a significant body of literature that is anti-urban in nature, whether the setting is urban or non-urban. The wilderness myth will continue its hold on the Canadian imagination, though it is unlikely that the wilderness will be associated in future with northern Ontario. Speculation may be carried too far; however, one may be forgiven for attempting to peer at the literature beyond the immediate future, and it is possible that the wilderness myth may not only change its locale but its very nature. Robertson Davies suggests, in an essay called "The Canada of Myth and Reality,"¹²³ that the wilderness myth, literally associated with "the savage land of rocks and forests," is admirably suited

to conversion into an exploration of the "equally savage land of the spirit." Not only does the created physical environment imperceptibly merge into wilderness, but so may urban and non-urban literature merge. If the far future of Canadian literature lies in as yet uncharted spiritual realms, the contrasts among the wilderness, the rural, and the urban will have far less significance than they have at present and will have in the near future. The accidents of history have helped form the national character and the national literature, even beyond our imaginings, and the literature will continue, indeed must continue, to respond to history.



Notes

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- ² Morley Callaghan, The Many Colored Coat, Laurentian Library 12 (Toronto: Macmillan, 1972), p. 326.
- ³ Morley Callaghan, That Summer In Paris (Toronto: Macmillan, 1973), p. 22.
- ⁴ Hugh MacLennan, Thirty and Three, ed. Dorothy Duncan (London: Macmillan, 1955), p. 52.
- ⁵ Hugh MacLennan, Barometer Rising, New Canadian Library N 8 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1969), p. 5.
- ⁶ Hugh MacLennan, The Watch That Ends the Night, Laurentian Library 32 (Toronto, Macmillan, 1975), pp. 369-70.
- ⁷ Mordecai Richler, Son of a Smaller Hero, New Canadian Library N 45 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1965), p. 49.
- ⁸ George Woodcock, "Introduction," ibid., p. vii.
- ⁹ Mordecai Richler, The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz, New Canadian Library N 66 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1969), p. 197.
- ¹⁰ Ibid., p. 311.
- ¹¹ John Marlyn, Under the Ribs of Death, New Canadian Library N 41 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1971), p. 25.
- ¹² Ibid., p. 111.
- ¹³ E. W. Mandel, "Introduction," ibid., p. 13.
- ¹⁴ Ibid., pp. 219-20.

- 15 Adele Wiseman, The Sacrifice, Laurentian Library 8 (Toronto: Macmillan, 1968), p. 339.
- 16 Hugh MacLennan, Return of the Sphinx, Laurentian Library 10 (Toronto: Macmillan, 1971), p. 304.
- 17 Ibid., p. 307.
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- 22 Ibid., p. 111.
- 23 Ibid., p. 117.
- 24 Ibid., p. 112.
- 25 The Letters of Frederick Philip Grove, ed. Desmond Pacey (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1976), p. 416.
- 26 Ibid.
- 27 Ibid., p. 417.
- 28 Grove, Master, p. 280.
- 29 Ibid., p. 290.

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- 34 Ibid., p. 307.
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- 36 Bertrand W. Sinclair, Down the Dark Alley (Boston: Little, Brown, 1936), p. 52.
- 37 Ibid., p. 186.
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- 73 Ibid., p. 182.
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- 75 Ibid., pp. 185-86.
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Appendix I

Student Unrest at the University of Toronto in 1895

The progress of the dispute at the University of Toronto can be followed by reading local Toronto newspapers for the period January-April, 1895. The following account is based on articles that appeared in The Globe for that period. Though that was the period during which matters came to a head, some aspects of the controversy dated to 1893. In the February 2, 1895 issue of The Globe the students laid out a seven point statement of their position. Their first and most serious statement was that ". . . in some of the departments the professors are not equal to the duties they have assumed; that in some cases they are wanting in scholarship, in others they lack the power of presenting what they know". The statement continued that in some cases "these defects are combined." The second item in the controversy was The Varsity series of articles urging action on the authorities, and the student protest against the "irregularity and apparent injustice of a certain recent appointment." This was a reference to the appointment in 1893 of the Reverend George Wrong, son-in-law of the Chancellor of the University, Edward Blake, as a lecturer in history at a salary of \$1500., almost twice that generally awarded to lecturers, and his promotion to professor of history the following year. At the time Wrong had only one publication, a short study of the crusade of 1383.¹ The students charged that Wrong had obtained both his appointment and promotion through the use of influence. The third item the students listed was that

the University Council had attempted to block The Varsity investigations. Point four dealt with the control of the gymnasium and of the student union building.

The fifth point was more complex. It dealt with Professor James Mavor and the Political Science Club. The following account is based on Globe articles for January 25, 1895 (pp. 4-5). The Political Science Club recently had invited Alfred Jury and Phillips Thompson to address them. T. Phillips Thompson is described by Frank Watt as a "poetaster, journalist and notorious radical."² Thompson, the editor of a radical newspaper called the Labor Advocate, had published a book in 1887 called The Politics of Labor, a "reasoned attempt to draw labour into the political world as a united class conscious force."³ Watt remarks further that from 1864 until his death in 1927 "Thompson succeeded in remaining well to the left in the political movements in Canada, however much they altered with the passing of time."⁴ Alfred Jury was associated with labour interests all his life, contributed a series of articles on the working class to the Globe, and contested a Toronto riding as a Labour-Liberal candidate.

The students sent a copy of their programme to Professor Mavor, who deleted the names of Jury and Thompson. Professor Mavor later claimed that he did not personally oppose the men, but "anticipated opposition." The students, who did not believe, or claimed not to believe, that permission was required to invite speakers, printed their programme with Jury's and Thompson's names. The University Council thereupon refused the use of the hall for the meeting. The Club held the meeting at the Forum Hall "outside University walls and without the sanction of the University authorities." The Varsity published an article severely critical of the Council. The

University demanded an apology. The student editor, Joseph Montgomery, who had recently replaced James Tucker, apologized, but his own editorial board rejected his action. Montgomery resigned and Tucker, who had written the articles about faculty incompetence, took over again. The Globe took the position that the University had acted wrongly in attempting to prevent the students from hearing Jury and Thompson:

The subjects of research here are men and women, their hopes and fears, their homes and modes of life; the wages and other conditions of labor, the disputes of the workers and the capitalists in regard thereto, and the proposed solutions. Messrs. Jury and Thompson have made a life-long study of these subjects----The students are not children, and the sooner their judgments are trained in discerning what is true and sound and what is false or fallacious the better for them.

The Globe reported that officers of the Club had stated that President Loudon had indicated that he was personally opposed to having Mr. Jury lecture in the University "if for no other reason because he was an active politician-- a notorious Grit and agitator."

The Globe for January 26, 1895 (p. 16) reported that Tucker had stated in an editorial in The Varsity that the issue was whether The Varsity had the right to express an opinion on the actions of the University Council.

The Globe quoted The Varsity:

This right, judging by the universal feeling of both undergraduates and graduates, is one that no one will ever be allowed to wrest away without the severest of struggles, and so long at least as the present editors are at the head of The Varsity, we can assure our readers that, while its liberty shall never be allowed to degenerate to license, its freedom of speech shall be jealously and faithfully guarded.

On Saturday evening, January 26th, the controversial meeting was held. Both Jury and Thompson spoke. Greenwood, the President of the Political Science Club, introduced them. Jury's paper, quoted fully in The Globe,

included the following statements ". . . there is no question which concerns the material and moral well-being of the people so much as the equitable distribution of wealth, and that is really the labor question." Jury, who described himself as a trade unionist of the old school, argued for trade unions and against laws that "centralize wealth and spread poverty." As examples he cited "the giving away of the public lands, the monopolization of transportation, the restriction of the exchange of the products of labor by means of customs tariffs, the fencing in of capitalists from that competition which the laborers have to submit to [a reference to the tariff], and the giving of close corporations by act of Parliament to the lawyers, doctors and other professional classes." A follower of Henry George, Jury was in favour of the single tax but did not think socialism suited "to our state of development." He was greeted with a storm of applause. Thompson's speech argued that a straight trade union approach was inadequate to the age, and that socialism was the answer. He saw society as having to make a choice between socialism and "monopoly rule." At this distance these speeches seem mild enough in content, and it is hard to imagine opposition to them in a university setting.

The sixth point the students made was that the University was harassing The Varsity about the Jury/Thompson issue. The seventh and last point was a plea by the students for a hearing in view of the bad press they had had. They argued that it was scarcely possible that the students were to blame in all these matters.

On February 9, 1895, The Globe published a letter from William Dale, Professor of Latin in University College, which charged that influence had been brought to bear in the appointment of Professor Wrong. Dale made the

following even stronger attack on the University:

For some years past the appointments to the chairs of the University have been of such a nature that at the present moment it is hardly an exaggeration to say that scholarship and ability to teach belong to those who occupy lecturers' positions at, say \$1,100 a year, in as high a degree as, if not higher than, to professors, so that the distribution of work and pay between professors and lecturers is grotesquely unfair.

Professor Dale was critical of the mode of appointments to professors' chairs. Retribution was swift. On February 15th Professor Dale was dismissed, and on February 18th The Globe reported the dismissal and stated that the "University Council had acted with forbearance." On February 19th, the University College students started a boycott of lectures, and President Loudon locked Tucker, who had by now been expelled, and Greenwood, out of the Biology building to prevent them from addressing the students. On February 21st, the boycott was suspended. R. MacGregor Dawson, in his biography of W. L. M. King, reports that Greenwood and King were responsible for lifting the boycott so quickly. He reports the existence of a student cartoon depicting King as the King of Clubs calling out on one side, "Let us boycott lectures," and on the other, "Let us return to lectures."⁵ The students called for a public investigation of the entire issue. The Globe for February 26th announced that the House had issued a commission to investigate the troubles at the University.

A Royal Commission met from April 8 to April 23. All who were willing to appear were heard. Professor Dale appeared and named the Hon. Richard Harcourt, provincial treasurer, as the Cabinet member who had been approached by Chancellor Blake on behalf of Professor Wrong. In his testimony, Harcourt denied having been approached. The report of the commissioners indicated that "there had been a want of tact in dealing with the students at certain

points during these troubles"; but the commissioners also found that the charges were vague and indefinite or unproven. The suspension of Tucker and the firing of Dale were approved, and the commissioners stated that the students had misconceived the "scope and proper construction of the statutes regulating discipline in the University. On the whole, the verdict of the commissioners was a distinct triumph for the University authorities, and it put an effective end to the trouble."⁶ At least that was the judgment of W. Stewart Wallace, Librarian of the University. Dawson has a somewhat different view of the affair:

Some of the students' complaints may have been excessive in degree if not objectionable in kind, but the basic faults were there: a stiff-necked and tactless President, supported by an intolerant administration which was determined to allow the students little freedom either in voicing their own opinions or in controlling their own affairs.⁷

. . .

The kindest thing to say about the effort of the commissioners is that they had little conception of how a university should be conducted, that they were alarmed at the students' assertion of their rights, and they were therefore determined to gloss over what must have appeared even to them as the shortcomings of the administration.⁸

James Reaney's view of the matter is clear from the following speech which he puts into Professor Dale's mouth in The Dismissal (Dale is addressing the University Council and defending his letter to The Globe):

Sir Daniel is not dead. [The reference is to Sir Daniel Wilson, previous president of the university.] He's still very much alive around our college, for we still invite our young people to be culturally raped by teachers who couldn't get a job in Britain or the States. Take my own case. I was a farmboy from Blanshard Township who almost became a full professor at the university, but . . . All the young people in my native township and its capital--St Marys--they began to see this university as theirs because I was here. But when they came down--down to Toronto they found that I was the exception. For the big, important appointments are made to foreigners from

Oxford, Glasgow, Edinburgh, New York--men with accents and manners that sometimes would freeze your blood. Look, if my family had stayed in Yorkshire, I would have just now taken over my father's forge--a blacksmith. He came to Ontario and at first it seemed a different society--but, oh no, a new hierarchy forms, new ways are thought up to alienate the people from their birthright and so I wrote that letter to show you that when you appointed me in 1885 to the tutorship in Latin, you didn't appoint my soul or is it lying around here perhaps in one of your filing cabinets, well I claim it back not with money or power or influence, but the effluence of the same ink bottle I've marked thousands of your children's themes with, ink, pen, words--I claim back my soul with the only thing that matters--its language--a letter, letters.⁹

Reaney's play makes clear that the issue of academic freedom was tangled with the question of nationalism. Not only did the provincial government appear to be using the university as a way of dispensing patronage, but an outmoded hierarchical approach was being taken to appointments which placed Canadians at a disadvantage. Class prejudice also seems to have been involved in the attempt to block the students from hearing Jury and Thompson.

Notes

¹ Carl Berger, "The Founders of Critical History: George M. Wrong and Adam Shortt," in The Writing of Canadian History, Aspects of English-Canadian Historical Writing: 1900 to 1970 (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1976), p. 8.

² F. W. Watt, "The National Policy, the Workingman, and Proletarian Ideas in Victorian Canada," The Canadian Historical Review, XL (1959), 23.

³ Ibid., 24.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ R. MacGregor Dawson, William Lyon Mackenzie King (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1958), p. 35.

⁶ W. Stewart Wallace, A History of the University of Toronto (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1927), p. 154.

⁷ Dawson, ibid., p. 34.

⁸ Ibid., p. 36.

⁹ James Reaney, The Dismissal or Twisted Beards & Tangled Whiskers (Erin, Ontario: Press Porcépic, 1978), p. 38.

Appendix II

Lantern Marsh by Beaumont Cornell

Intellectual and Cultural Life in Toronto and Kingston

Beaumont Cornell's Lantern Marsh (Toronto: Ryerson, 1923) presents a picture of rural Ontario, university life in Toronto, and upper-class society in Kingston. The main character, Mauney Bard, rejects each in turn only to end up at his starting-point, Lantern Marsh, where he realizes that the cyclical pattern of nature affords him a comfort and a perception of victory he has not achieved elsewhere in his life. Whereas Callaghan sees cultural life in Toronto in It's Never Over as stagnant because of a false connection between morals and art, Cornell portrays a stagnant academic community, perpetuating itself through nepotism and fearful of vitality, enthusiasm, and new ideas. In addition, Cornell's Kingston is a moribund town whose old families concern themselves with social status, gossip, and trivia. Although Mauney is resentful of Lantern Marsh as a boy, as an adult he ultimately comes to see it with kindlier eyes than either Toronto (called Merlton) or Kingston (Lockwood).

The Bard farm lies on a road leading in one direction to the village of Beulah, and in the other to the town of Lockwood. Beulah is a typical, small Ontario town with a residential section, small grocery stores, and a weekly newspaper. The "puritanism" of the pioneer period has survived there because the town has not been in touch with the "commercial energies of the nation at large." Though Mauney is himself a puritan (in the best sense of

that word), he is eager for experience and connects his own development and happiness with the world outside Beulah, not with the monotony of farm life. In a passage similar in tone to Knister's later description of Richard Milne's youthful frustrations, Cornell describes Mauney's thwarted state:

. . . the raw wound in his nature, made by no sudden sword-gash, but worn there by the attrition of dreary seasons, grew more unbearable. Every hope that had dared to rise had been forced down as by a vigilant counterpart of external opposition. Every aspiration that trembled gently upward had been tramped by heavy feet, as violets in the path of horses. (100)

An even stronger parallel exists between Lantern Marsh and Augustus Bridle's Hansen. Both books start out on farms in rural Ontario and have heroes who have few emotional ties but a strong desire for a university education. Mauney and Hansen are both encouraged in their educational ambitions by a young and pretty teacher who is attracted to them, but to whom they are both sexually indifferent. Both men complete the high-school requirements on their own in record time; they both show astonishing discipline and intellectual curiosity despite inauspicious and motley educational experiences. They run up against the stuffiness of the University of Toronto, and though both are graduated, they reject what the university stands for. The theme of the sensitive and intelligent farm boy longing for education and a larger life is an important one for the novel of this period and appears also in The Yoke of Life.

Mauney sees the 1914 war solely in personal terms. It seems a chance for new possibilities, a path into the mystery of real life which has long been denied him. Unlike Gander Stake in Grain, whose horizons do not extend beyond the farm, Mauney rushes to Lockwood to enlist and is disappointed to be rejected because his chance for escape is cut off. After Mauney has

matured, he sees the war as a "vital obstacle to his philosophy of optimism" rather than as an opportunity to expand his horizons: "All good that had ever been, met in it a blasting contradiction" (202).

Eventually Mauney succeeds in leaving the farm for Merlton. He believes himself to be embarking on a great adventure, one that will bring him untold happiness:

Just the prospect of an education was sufficient now to lift Mauney into a mood of happiness. To return from mental darkness to mental light, to learn of the mysterious forces that promulgated life on the globe and kept it living, to know how peoples had lived and how they lived now, to pierce the meaning of war. In short, to pick the pearls of knowledge from the vast, pebbled coast-line of life--this was a task and an opportunity that thrilled him with a splendid resolve and high hopes. (119)

Mauney undertakes a course of private study "with the sharp appetite of a starved mind" (138), and he is described as "thrilled" by his first view of the university. Contemporary readers instantly would have recognized the University of Toronto in the description of the institution Mauney attends, as Cornell makes no attempt to disguise it (137-38); in fact, the reader forms the impression that Cornell's attack on academic life is specific, that is, that it is aimed at the University of Toronto rather than at academic life in general. Mauney elects the straight history course at the university because he wants to understand the "basic principles of human progress" (149), and because historical characters are "real and living" to him, and he is able to see the past as a "glowing passage of actual life" (155).

Mauney soon discovers that the history department does not view history as he does. For example, Lorna Freeman, the only other student taking the straight history course, is a "disembodied intelligence," someone who can always trip him up in an argument as if tripping him up is part of her natural

occupation. Though she fails nothing in "gaining an accurate knowledge of history" (202), she lacks Mauney's ability to see history as actual life. The war is a "phenomenon" to her, "similar to, if vaster than, other wars . . ." (202). Lorna is the daughter of the chairman of the department, Professor Robert Freeman, a man of profound erudition who has applied himself not only to history but to philosophy, logic, theology, literature, and various other subjects. He has reduced them "to their elemental fallacies," and decided that because one can never be sure of his premises, nothing can be proven. Though Freeman's "adroit intellect" provokes Mauney's admiration, he always feels "temporarily treed by a savage, snarling premise" (167) when he speaks to Freeman. Though the two men always arrive at the "blind, stone wall of nullity" in their conversations, and Mauney feels defeated in a superficial sense, he also feels victorious in a deeper sense than Freeman is prepared to acknowledge. However, initially Mauney looks with "reverent eyes" on both the man and the university.

Another historian in the department, "Nutbrown Hennigar," is writing a history of World War I in which the war is "so definitely sized up that you don't feel any surprise at anything that happened" (219). The battles he describes contain "no smoke or explosion or blood" (219); in short, the human element has been removed. Hennigar is shown up as one of those "fossilized specimens of the teaching profession who think history is merely an opportunity for displaying academic methods" (234-35) when he is asked to comment on a treatise on history that Mauney writes. Hennigar reports that Mauney's arguments are "subversive, crudely iconoclastic, tintured by a raw individualistic attitude, blurred by an emotionalism approaching sentimentality . . ." (234). Hennigar's father is Senator Hennigar,

Chancellor of the university, and the implication is that "Nutbrown" has obtained his position through his father.

Indeed, all members of the history department have a family connection to Senator Hennigar. Professor Freeman is married to one of his daughters, and Professor Tanner is married to another daughter. Frieda describes the rise of Professor Freeman in the department in the following way:

"Professor Freeman is a brilliant man, but, without a little bit of Hennigar, his brilliance would have been doomed to obscurity like the jewel in the cave. He started life as poor as a church mouse, but saw help in two directions He had opinions of his own, but ascension on the academic ladder meant consistent self-suppression. He quietly taught the young idea old ideas [sic], and rose in favor, until, gradually passing through assistant-ships and associate-ships, he stretched out finally in the chair of history. But, of course, the magic behind it all was his connection with the Hennigar family. You see, the senator is Chancellor, chairman of the building committee, friend of the university in general, and heaviest endower in particular. If Freeman could have done a cleverer thing than marry Miss Hennigar, it would have required a committee of corporation lawyers to discover it." (181)

Frieda MacDowell remarks that if the faculty of the university is not actually related to Hennigar it "has a very special stand in" with him. She sees control of the university being held by "the great eternal family compact" (182). Cornell's view of the University faculty and especially of the history department must be based on the furor surrounding the appointment of Professor Wrong (for a full discussion of this controversy, see Appendix I), which also figures in Bridle's Hansen. However, the time setting of Bridle's book is the same as the chronology of the events themselves, that is 1887-1905, whereas Cornell's book takes place after World War I. Nevertheless, the charges that both Cornell and Hansen make against the University of Toronto are essentially the same--it is an institution controlled by a clique of the wealthy and powerful who distribute positions among themselves.

Worth is measured in terms of the most sterile of academic standards, and the kind of vitality that a maverick like Mauney demonstrates is looked on askance.

Mauney has sought other rewards than marks and scholarship at university. Learning "the story of humanity" has stimulated him to "wonderful thoughts about history" (189), which he has written down in a ledger. It is this ledger which Frieda induces him to turn into a book called Thoughts on the Teaching of History. The book, which is favourably reviewed, argues that history is a record of the conduct of mankind, but because it can approach the past "only in fairly broad outlines" the history "obtained from books is dead" (252). A university needs to emphasize the importance of the individual, man as a separate unit, and the life around him, which is "more accurate, though less decipherable" (253). Mauney writes the following:

"We are taught wars, revolutions, social and political experiments. We are led by our teachers to believe that these constitute the bases of the subject. This movement or that movement is vaunted as novel or important. But underneath them all lies the insinuating power of individual thought. All are formed by it, promulgated by it, controlled by it. The greatest movement of this century was also the greatest movement of the last century and of all centuries, from the very dawn of history--namely, the movement of the individual mind by struggle, through perplexity, to a greater, simpler life." (253)

If the reader analyzes Mauney's argument closely, one can only conclude that nothing but the collapse of history as a separate discipline would satisfy him, as he seems to be suggesting that history turn itself into psychology or even literature. Cornell clearly wants the reader to join Mauney as a partisan fighting against the dry academics in the history department, but this is hard to do despite the negative presentation of the faculty. Cornell seems to have jumped on a popular bandwagon of the

twenties--the new awareness of psychology and its possibilities in assessing human behaviour.

Another episode in the book makes clear Cornell's rather superficial consciousness of the new science. A character named Stalton has suffered from a variety of ailments for years, ailments which have prevented him from holding down a job. After one visit from Dr. Adamson, trained in the new science, Stalton's pains go away and he begins to work steadily. Adamson has correctly diagnosed Stalton as having a variety of psychosomatic complaints caused by a rebellion against work. Just becoming aware of the nature of the problem is enough to cure it. Cornell is far more oblique about the history department, but what he has Mauney advocating comes quite close to psychological analysis of history. However, in terms of the narrative, Mauney's point of view is vital and positive, and he is presented as standing in a polarized relationship to the history faculty. Though he has been offered an appointment in the department, Mauney is maneuvered into resigning it by being forced to admit that being on a history faculty is illogical in the light of his views on the teaching of history. Professor Freeman uses a passage from Mauney's book against him:

"History must cease to be a subject for the five-finger exercises of defunct mentalities, and become rather the earnest objective of men who are in tune with the issues of current society. It must cease to be the property of an elite academic dispensing agency, and become the property of those, who, valuing form less than substance, will not so much dispense it as interpret it. It must be rescued from fossilization, as every branch of learning requires, at times, to be rescued." (270)

Though Mauney's intent in accepting the position initially may have been to rescue history from "fossilization," he realizes that such a course of action would be regarded as "frank rebellion." Though Mauney comes for his final interview with Freeman in a state of mind that includes "fear of his new

responsibilities" and "reverence for his high calling" (262), he leaves "up in arms against the universe" (276). Though the university professes academic freedom, in reality its standards are narrow and stop short of acceptance of even limited rebellion within its ranks.

Nevertheless, Mauney has absorbed an ideal of behaviour from his university education: he has learned that nobility of character comes from service to humanity. He has learned this lesson not from the history department but from the "courageous, educational formula of Garnett," the president of the University, whose influence pervades the institution:

A thousand men scoffed at Garnett as a visionary. A thousand fawned upon him for personal reasons. A hundred knew him. There were many thoughtless individuals ready to teach him his function. But there were many also who left Merlton each year inflamed by his idealism and determined to serve humanity's needs. Garnett might have considered this a tribute much deeper than praise. (290)

While at university, Mauney also has formed a true friendship with Max Lee, a medical student who becomes a researcher. Early in the book, Max expresses skepticism about the relation of a university education to life. Initially, Mauney discounts Max's criticism as a "personal warp," but eventually the two men agree. If there can be said to be a hero in the book, he is Maxwell Lee "constantly bent over his laboratory desks, constantly delving into the secrets of disease, constantly at work, heroically striving against handicaps of poverty and ill-health" (203). It is from Lee that Mauney learns a great truth of conduct, that it is "the vast desire for human betterment" that should guide and sustain us. In this respect, Lee and Garnett are one: they are both motivated by a desire to serve human needs and to better the human condition.

As a counter-weight to the picture of the sterile life at the university, Cornell offers a picture of vitality and tolerance in the life at Mauney's

boarding-house, No. 73 Franklin Street. Everyone who lives at the boarding house has a "grouch that lurks under the surface" and prefers "irony" to "barbarous optimism." Rebels of a minor variety, they live in peace with each other because they adhere to a set of unwritten rules which include avoiding extremes of behaviour such as "nauseous hilarity," "gloom," and effervescence; they live, but do not plan because "Today was to-morrow, yesterday" (146). In a clumsy fashion, Cornell's depiction of life at the boarding-house emphasizes the importance of man as an individual and stresses the significance of ordinary human life. Life at No. 73 illustrates on a practical level what Cornell has Mauney advocating on a theoretical level. Not only Mauney but Frieda, the other "rebel" in the book, finds a home there.

Driven out of the university, Mauney finds a job in Lockwood, the "Garden of Upper Canada" (291) and home of "aristocratic members of the Family Compact" (292). Though the original "exclusive set" either "sailed for England in disgust at democracy's progress, or died out," the scions of that early patrician strain remain. The town is moribund, deliberately kept that way because the old families do not want industry ruining its appearance. They spend much of their money in "California, Honolulu or Europe" where they live half the year. The town's cardinal industry, a carpet company, had burned down and been re-built elsewhere. Though many of the company's employees had moved away, the former general manager, George MacDowell, a member of one of the old families, had refused to leave Lockwood and had become one of its most ardent boosters, arguing that prosperity was on the verge of returning. (He actually has an uxurious attachment to his wife, who would never leave the town.) The women occupy themselves

giving afternoon teas at which much damaging scandal is exchanged, but ironically the persons gossiped about may become popular if they behave cleverly rather than stupidly. Frieda and her mother are presented as estranged from each other because of Mrs. MacDowell's immersion in this sort of trivial social life.

Mauney has been engaged to teach history at Lockwood Collegiate School, where he finds the staff "capable" but "terribly stand-offish"; Frieda describes this attitude as the "key-note" of Lockwood. Mauney also finds that his students have "unusual ability" but no enthusiasm. He decides that he would like to start a "seminary" for one of the classes where "open discussions" could be held. The headmaster discourages Mauney, telling him that the idea had once been tried out and had failed because the special class had had to be held after hours, "and a lot of the wealthy people objected to their children being kept in" (350). The headmaster explains his view of Lockwood, which is based on a quarter of a century of living there:

"... A teacher who teaches in this town, is just a paid servant of the community. He has no social status, whatever. His wife has none either. His planetary orbit reaches as far as school at nine in the morning, and as far as bed at nine in the evening. If he tries to do more than he's paid for he becomes unpopular. They want uniformity, here in Lockwood and, by George, they're going to get it. That's why seminaries won't work, Mister Bard."
(351)

Innovations in the curriculum are blocked, and so is a badly needed enlargement of the school, which is so crowded that classes are held in the basement. The middle class of the town is composed of "retired shopkeepers, farmers and clergymen from the country districts," all living on fixed incomes and unwilling to pay the taxes which would finance the expansion. The town is seen as conservative, even stodgy, by people like Jean Byrne's husband, who

has gone out west. Mauney observes that "the lower and middle classes . . . are constantly fault-finding and grouching" (359). Indeed, the only persons who seem contented in Lockwood are the wealthy old families who spend only half the year there and live on invested money.

Lockwood, however, is very beautiful. Cornell describes the town as seen from a boat on a bright night:

There are broad, grey buildings whose massive stone faces shine like frost. Lines of glimmering lamps stretch far along the level thoroughfares and mark the streets that climb steeply upward from the water. In the midst, clusters of generous trees, motionless and black, send up, somewhere from their indefinite mass, dark spires into the soft, grey sky, while a tall clock-tower gazes with its yellow eyes east and south and west. At midnight, town and river are silent, save for the mournful chime of the clock marking a new day. (385)

Cornell also points out with pleasure that the "conservative cult" in the town which admires "the symbols of leisure" patronizes the driver of an old hack which has been on duty for forty years in preference to one of the newer taxis. The old hack is an old-fashioned vehicle with "quaint side-lamps of brass, designed like the wall-torches of a baronial castle" (300). However, Lockwood's beauty is only superficial. Its scandal-mongering expresses its soul, and scandal is at the base of the quarrel which leads to the breakdown of Mauney's and Frieda's engagement. Possibly because of the temptations to which Lockwood exposes her, Frieda is unable to find in herself the staying power Mauney needs. Mauney, in turn, perhaps because of a puritanism instilled in him as a child, lives his life "curbed constantly to the line of average emotions" (355). His loyalty to his dying friend, Lee, and Frieda's "innate casuistry" prevent them from finding a common meeting-ground. Against the background of social life in Lockwood, Mauney seems sombre.

It is appropriate that the book should end where it began--at Lantern Marsh. Despite the fire raging in the marsh, it is presented as unchanging; it seems "completely defeated, ruined and blotted out," but in the spring the scorched basin will grow again. Mauney's essential optimism triumphs --the marsh signifies life. To drive home the point, Cornell presents William McBratney arriving at Lantern Marsh just when Mauney does. Both men had left for Merlton at around the same time, but McBratney had gone to study for the ministry. Essentially he had come to the same decision about theology that Mauney had come to about history: ". . . these fine points of doctrine were all twaddle" (395), and instead of studying theology, he had started to work at an organization which reclaimed "bums and no-goods" by giving them food, clothing and a job and thus "a second chance to go straight" (396). "Fighting the worst in men was his occupation It was muscular Christianity of the most earnest and pugnacious type" (396-97). Like Max Lee, McBratney is a "modern crusader" seeking human betterment. The implication is that Mauney will find satisfaction in a crusade of his own.

Mauney had already made his peace with Lantern Marsh during the period between leaving Merlton and going to Lockwood. For the first time he had found "a strange kind of comfort" in gazing at the swamp, "never the same for two days in succession, and yet always the same" (317). The swamp, "hated and loved, defeated, but eternal," seemed to represent life itself. This sense of stability at observing the eternal renewal of nature is the note on which the book ends.

The change of locale of the book three-quarters of the way through from Merlton to Lockwood is not as arbitrary as it at first appears to be.

With some slight rewriting, mainly involving the Mauney-Frieda relationship, Cornell could have ended his book with Mauney's departure from Merlton. Instead, Cornell chose to introduce an entire set of new characters not long before the narrative closes (only Mauney and Frieda provide continuity). That Cornell was prepared to set himself such an awkward task suggests the depth of his conviction that central Canadian society badly needed re-vitalizing. Having shown the damage the wealthy and powerful could do through control of the academic world, Cornell wanted to show how the growth and development of a community could be halted by the frivolity and self-interest of those families who have an obvious mandate to lead but do not.

In Merlton, Senator Hennigar, originally in the business of making jam, represents the commercial energies that acquire respectability and prestige through association with learning. As Frieda puts it, Hennigar's jam has ". . . 'jammed' out a small-sized marble palace in Riverton, a fleet of motor cars from Rolls to Buick . . . an army of liveried servants It has 'jammed' Elias Hennigar into the Senate, into the front ranks of the Church, into the intimate counsels of the university--in fact this jam has made him" (183). Hennigar's money has thus brought him his position at the university and with it the power to have a say in the making of academic appointments.

Lockwood society is controlled by a combination of old and new families. The Smiths trace their ancestry to a British colonel active in the Rebellion of '37, have an "excellent social rating," an old graceful mansion, and no money. George MacDowell, married to Gloria Smith, is presented as a man of such gifts that he could have been "Premier of Canada" had he so chosen, but his principal desire is to be his wife's lover. He is mayor of the town

and pretends to believe that it has a brilliant industrial future. Actually he has no municipal sentiment and stays there because of his wife's social ambitions. Though he appears to provide leadership, in reality he provides only an amiable facade.

The other prominent families are the Courtneys and the Beechers, part of the new "cheap plutocracy." They were unknown fifty years ago, have ostentatious homes, and plenty of money originally made in property investment in the west, in steel and in perfumes. The heir to the Courtney fortune, Ted, is a mental lightweight who explains to Frieda one evening that he is "bored" with Lockwood and that he needs excitement. Frieda finds his "essential vapidty" (382) no solace.

Between the old families and the new, there seems little to choose; all are involved in a frantic social struggle. The Courtneys and Beechers use cars, yachts, and trips to outdo each other. The Smiths use their breeding as a social lever. The energy and vitality of the leading families is frittered away in trivial social activities while the town stagnates and capable people move elsewhere. In short, the energy and enterprise that made the original fortune have dissipated themselves and left behind power and authority without wisdom and discernment. The result is a mortmain on the life of the town which stifles initiative and represses dissent. Thus the target of the book is larger than the tight little Toronto educational establishment--it is the type of deadening control that can be exerted by the wealthy and powerful on institutions and even towns. The university, full of people who owe their advancement to Hennigar, loses its independence and its traditional toleration of dissent; the town is maintained in pristine condition so that it can serve as a retreat for those

who make and spend their money elsewhere--local energy is encouraged to expend itself either on maintaining the status quo or is encouraged to leave. One acquires a knowledge of art only in order to be fully armoured socially, as Betty Doran, who renders Chopin brilliantly at an afternoon tea, uses her music to give her an edge in Lockwood society.

It is the Betty Doran view of culture that Cornell appears to be attacking in the Lockwood section of the book, culture used to acquire prestige and to place a veneer over the crassness of money. However, Lantern Marsh poses a problem that the books treated in Chapter V do not. For example, underlying Callaghan's attack on the narrowness of the Toronto musical world is the assumption that there is such a thing as a musical culture with artistic standards held in common by musicians and audience. Knister's White Narcissus presupposes the value of literature, and Sime's Our Little Life the value of written social commentary. However, Lantern Marsh contains an underlying ambiguity about pure learning and the academic world in general. Though the book purports to be an attack on the "fossilization" of the teaching of history, we are offered only Mauney's theories about what vital teaching would be like. No strong alternative to Dr. Freeman, for example, is presented. Maxwell Lee is held up as an ideal, but he is a researcher whose theoretical knowledge has direct practical applications (he is trying to "discover the cause of pernicious anaemia"). Arrival at a state of mind in which "the vast desire for human betterment" dominates one's behaviour is seen as the goal of a university education by Mauney, but Cornell does not seem to have been able to reconcile this goal with the value of pure learning. Cornell seems to have sensed the weakness in his own book and attempted to remedy it partly through the

introduction of Garnett and his ideal of a university, but the reference to Garnett is clumsy, almost abortive. A minor character, the "wrinkled" old tutor with whom Mauney does his ~~make-up work~~, provides some balance, but again the presentation is too sketchy. The book's final emphasis on McBratney also weights the narrative towards the value of the practical rather than the theoretical in life.

In this respect, it is worth noting the presence in the book of that ubiquitous concept of the period--cosmic consciousness. Intellectuals of the time agreed on the desirability of the development of such a "consciousness" as it would lead to a "vast desire for human betterment." If Cornell had absorbed the intellectual currency of his time, he might unconsciously view pure learning as "personal passion" which had no practical application, and this might explain the underlying ambiguity in the book about learning whose value is not immediately apparent. Here is Mauney's view of the change in himself (maturity is viewed as a development of cosmic consciousness):

His problems had thus changed a good deal from the time when they concerned merely his personal liberty, for they now concerned rather the liberty of the human race. He had gradually emerged from selfish considerations. He had lost touch with his family. Old bonds no longer held him. The new thing--the cosmic consciousness--which he owed to the university training, took possession of his mind. Wonderful gift of the college. That a man, through its agency, should unconsciously loose himself from all that relates to personal passion and tune his being to the pitch of the general passion of mankind! (203)

Ironically (and perhaps inadvertently?), Cornell has Mauney achieving the educational goals of the university despite the best (or worst) efforts of the history department. In short, a book that appears to be arguing for the restoration of vitality to the intellectual life of the university actually offers a message that contradicts the apparent one. The value of pure learning is brought into question, not just its degeneration

into intellectual games that always end in nullity. Though the book appears to argue that Mauney could have been better served by a university not dependent on sterile logic and nepotism for its strength, it actually raises the question of whether Mauney would not have been better off avoiding the intellectual life altogether in favour of the continuity and security of life on the land.

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