Book Reviews

Maurice. By E. M. Forster. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1971. Pp. xi, 241. $6.95.

The homosexual experience which forms the subject of E. M. Forster's posthumously published novel *Maurice* is one that modern unshockable readers may have some difficulty in approaching in a suitably serious frame of mind. Completed in 1914, at a time when a homosexual was simply an "unspeakable of the Oscar Wilde sort", a species of outlaw perpetually menaced with blackmail and exposure, the novel could but present a young man's discovery and experience of his own abnormality in terms of tragedy and nightmare. It would be a mistake, however, to assume that *Maurice*, in the light of modern liberated sexual permissiveness, is dated and in consequence irrelevant. Homosexuals are no longer everywhere legal outlaws, but they still have themselves and the realization of their own abnormality to contend with, and while the social context has often changed, certainly for the better, the doubt and loneliness of the deviate and his urgency to achieve self-justification continue unabated, and to this extent the soul searing through which Forster's Maurice must pass is as relevant and contemporary as ever.

One proof of such relevance is the completeness with which the reader can identify himself in sympathy and understanding with this discovery, by a somewhat commonplace young man, of his own abnormal state, and with the fantastic lengths to which he is driven in adjusting his entire life around it. Forster speaks to us, of course, out of his own nature and experience, but he has managed to achieve the necessary objectivity. In Maurice, he has explained,

> I tried to create a character who was completely unlike myself or what I supposed myself to be: Someone handsome, healthy, bodily attractive, mentally torpid, not a bad business man and rather a snob.

The resulting portrayal of a conventional upper-middle-class young man, rendered with studied detachment, is on that account all the more moving and convincing. Quite unsophisticated, he reacts to the discovery of his sexual nature with incredulity, and receives the first declaration of love from another man, who has recognized its counterpart in him, with scandalized horror. The delineation of the ensuing affair with Clive Durham, a fellow undergraduate at Cambridge, is central to the book, and is conveyed to us with all the insight and understanding, the precision of thought and expression with which all the novels of E. M. Forster have made us so gratefully familiar. The mutual idealistic love between the two young men, flawlessly realized, is both totally believable and acceptabe to us on its own terms, even while we are made to recognize that it has no future, that it can exist only on sufferance and in its own abstracted world. In due course the suspended blow falls, and on Maurice exclusively. Clive, on a visit to Greece, discovers that for him after all homosexuality has been but a phase, that he has achieved or reverted to normality and is about to marry.

Had Forster been prepared to conclude his novel at this point, with the shattering impact on Maurice of Clive's "apostasy", then indeed his achievement would have been complete. Unfortunately, and doubtless because his subject meant so much to him personally, he could not bring himself to do this. A happy ending, as he himself explains, in a "Terminal Note" appended to the novel, seemed imperative, as otherwise he would not have bothered to write it at all. And so, relinquishing his artistic objectivity, he sets out to contrive an ending in which it is just impossible to believe. Maurice, betrayed and rejected, endures the intensifying hell of his own private life, while still maintaining contact with Clive at his country estate, and becoming increasingly contemptuous and vindictive towards him. Finally, in a consummation of vengeance and defiance, he sinks below the sanctity of class and takes as a lover a gamekeeper, Alec Scudder, on Clive's estate, and with him—we are invited to credit—and in isolation from his entire preceding life achieves the permanent and ideal relationship for which he has been seeking.

There is more than a little evidence that Forster himself did not altogether believe in his own roseate conclusion. In a letter about *Maurice* to Lowes Dickinson in 1914, he referred to the overwhelming temptation "to grant to one's creations a happiness actual life does not supply. 'Why not?' I kept thinking, 'A little rearrangement, rather better luck' ". And he continued to rearrange and expand the concluding Scudder episode at intervals right up to 1960, bringing to bear on it in the process all his immense resources as a novelist. But really to no avail. Alec Scudder, a shadowy antipathetic figure, who expresses his love for Maurice initially by attempting to blackmail him, never persuades us that he has anything to offer his "gentleman" lover but a fleeting interlude of crude sensuality and a means of consummating his defiance of society through an act upon it of calculated outrage.

Possibly, back in 1914, when so little was known about the nature and manifestations of homosexuality, Forster's contrived ending, his invocation of an Alec Scudder as a sort of bucolic *deus ex machina*, might have seemed less implausible. But homosexuality is now very much in the open, and we have at least come to recognize that the permanent sexually based relationship between man and man longed for by such as Maurice is always fated to be an unrealizable and self-deluding dream. Life itself (as well as literature) has conclusively demonstrated for us, all modern pretensions notwithstanding, that the initial rapture of the homosexual love affair is intrinsically incapable of surviving its own physical fulfilment, and that initial rapture is almost immediately followed by indifference and repulsion, and this in turn by the insatiable illusory hope that the next affair will be magically different. A realization of the sterile repetitions in store for him does break through to Maurice at one point when he is made to encounter an elderly homosexual "stout and greasy faced" in a train. The man accosts him and Maurice knocks him down, but sees "in this disgusting and dishonourable old age his own". This searing moment of prophetic truth is more, however, than Forster himself is prepared to accept, and so the make-believe alternative of an Alec Scudder has to be contrived.

The personal homosexuality proclaimed through *Maurice* requires us to reassess in some measure Forster's preceding novels upon which his high reputation rests. Homosexuality itself, except perhaps by implication in *The Longest Journey*, where Stephen Wonham seems vaguely to anticipate Alec Scudder, is obviously not present. It may well, however, have contributed in no small degree to the extraordinary insight into the feminine mind and spirit that is such a feature of all the novels. In one other more fundamental respect also the author's homosexuality may have influenced his creativity, may be blamed for introducing, especially into his last two novels, an ultimate philosophical reserve, an element of curiously wilful pessimism. Both *Howards End* and *A Passage to India* come to rest in paradox, in a spiritual optimism that is contradicted by and made to co-exist with a final reserve of spiritual denial. The greatness of Forster's achievement as a writer derives directly from his capacity for spiritual intuition, his recognition of the way in which an unseen spiritual world impacts upon and informs the everyday world of the seen. In his two final novels the unseen, operating posthumously through Mrs. Wilcox and Mrs. Moore, is allowed to triumph. But in both novels, while demonstrating that triumph, Forster cannot refrain from introducing, personally and insidiously, a totally illogical note of doubt and repudiation. There may after all have been no spiritual victory, indeed nothing at all. In the triumphant music of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony Helen Schlegel detects the goblin footfall of nihilism, and in *A Passage to India* Forster himself steps in at one point with the devastating assertion that visions may not entail profundity, the "serpent of eternity" be made of maggots. This wilful shying away from the certainty of his own spiritual intuitions, supported by the lack of any reference in his essays or critical writings to what he specifically calls in *Howards End* the 'impact of the unseen', is the ultimate and unacceptable paradox with which Forster confronts us, and an explanation of it may indeed have been made available to us now through the publication of *Maurice*. Again and again throughout this novel, and in particular in its conclusion, the author's artistic objectivity falters, and a certain wilfulness of personal resentment breaks through. This is especially evident in the unreasonableness of Maurice's indignation and vindictiveness over Clive's apostasy, with its implication, now generally recognized, that homosexuality is neither permanent nor natural and that indulgence in it may after all be in some measure voluntary, the expression of an ultimate reluctance to come to terms with life. Forster's refusal in *Maurice* to face up to and admit the whole truth about homosexuality, in particular his resort to a defiant unrealistic ending, is clearly the product of a personal resentment against a society that will not and cannot accept the homosexual's estimate of his condition as fixed, fated and natural—a resentment that becomes very explicit in the concluding pages of the already mentioned "Terminal Note". To an astonishing degree in two great novels, *Howards End and A Passage to India*, Forster manages to transcend the final reserve of bitterness against life so evidently induced by his own homosexuality, permitting in both novels his artistic intuitions of an ultimate

spiritual benevolence to have the last word. But the bitterness, however contradictory, has still been included. And so the goblin footfall, the nihilism of the Marabar Caves, and Maurice's empty defiance of the cosmos through Alec Scudder, may now perhaps be seen to have originated in a single unhappy cause.

University of Alberta DENIS GODFREY

The Imperial Animal. By L. Tiger and R. Fox. McClelland and Stewart Limited, Toronto/Montreal, 1971. Pp. xii, 308. $7.95.

Jokes concerning the appropriateness of the authors' names have been rife since the appearance of their first collaborative effort, an article which was published (1966) in *Man: The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* entitled "The Zoological Perspective in Social Science" (incredulity increases when it is further learned that their Christian names are Lionel and Robin). The names are genuine. That everyone feels constrained to mention this appropriateness is, of course, somewhat curious in itself; perhaps it is part of our "biogrammar" as Tiger and Fox might say.

This book is concerned with man's (including woman's) biogrammar. As anthropologists Tiger and Fox are interested in trying to look at man in terms of the fact that he is a human primate. They insist that the continuities between man and his close primate relatives so far as behaviour is concerned are at least as important as the continuities, now taken for granted, in physical composition. Thus they are asking us to look at our own species with complete objectivity in order to make explanatory sense of the fact that the basic sorts of behaviours in all human societies are everywhere the same. Undoubtedly there are immense varieties of cultural difference between societies and within societies, but it is universally the case, for instance, that men act violently, socialize their young, recognize the leaders and the led, and so on.

The factor which goes to explain these basic similarities is the "biogrammar". What Tiger and Fox mean by this (building upon the work of E. W. Court who coined the word "biogram") is that man possesses an innate repertoire of behavioural possibilities (as do other animals): he is, as it were, programmed to act in certain ways, programmed to respond in certain ways at particular points during the course of his lifespan. This is not to imply that man is narrowly determined in what he will do, but rather that he is "wired" (their word) through processes of mutation and natural selection to do certain things and to have the potential to act in only very broadly circumscribed ways. The point for the scientist who would understand man and how he acts, therefore, is to draw up the rules by which the biogrammar is to be described. Man has evolved to behave in certain ways, and the task which the authors embark on is to sketch, or suggest, what some of the elements

of man's biogrammar are. It is, at best, a hazardous enterprise, since this isolation of the highly general leads to some curious interpretations of man's contemporary position. (For example: "The frustrations resulting from the repression of the full expression of the hunting syndrome lie behind most of the anger and alienation that have characterized socioeconomic revolt" p. 128).

The main difficulty with the thesis, perhaps, is that the actual evidence for the existence of a biogrammar is not forthcoming. We are constantly told that this or that mode of behaviour or social institution is not compatible with the biogrammar. But this kind of special pleading merely points up the fact that Tiger and Fox's scheme is one of those all encompassing explanatary devices which are assumed to exist rather than shown to exist. It leads them into a position of upholding the view that there are basic human rights and a kind of natural law. For instance: "The 'right' to a minimum wage, . . . or to adequate and inexpensive medical care, or to an education, or to a free and creative use of the intellect, is simply a 'right' to behave in a way that is intrinsic to being human; it needs no more justification than the crowing of a cock". This may indeed be a laudable moral stance to take, but one may adopt it without grounding it in man's biogrammar and, furthermore, there appears little good reason at all to connect it with the biogrammar's programme.

Thus despite the authors' claims that they are "doing" pure science and hence that there are no obvious moral implications in their position, neither of these claims is true. The nature of the biogrammar as described is questionable. Having posited its existence they go on to discuss man and his works in a very distinctly evaluative manner. The evaluations usually turn out to be what one would think of as conservative ones: ("There will always be black limousines; it is only the people in the black limousines who change" we are told, flippantly perhaps, but significantly enough on page one).

A last comment: Lionel Tiger in particular, mainly on the argument of his previous book *Men in Groups* (1969), has become a target for Women's Liberation sallies. On the basis of his latest, he will continue to be such a target.

University of King's College J. GRAHAM MORGAN

The Last Spike: The Great Railway, 1881-1885. By Pierre Berton. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1971. Pp. xii, 478. $10.00.

The best history is lively, imaginative, and analytical, yet well-researched and careful with the facts. This kind of history can be read, and is read, by everyone, academics, students and ordinary adults alike, with pleasure and profit. It is one of our happier traditions that such books can be written both by academic historians and by professional writers. One thinks of William Kilbourn's biography of William

Lyon Mackenzie, *The Firebrand,* and Joseph Schull's biography of Sir Wilfrid Laurier. Kilbourn is an academic, Schull a professional writer. Academic history at its worst is pedantic and dreary: popular history at its worst is febrile and shallow; but at their best both kinds of history come to the same, not easy to do but infinitely rewarding to read.

In academic circles there have been on occasion sneers at some of the attempts by popular writers to produce history for "ordinary" readers. Condemned as superficial and unoriginal, some of these books doubtless deserved the sneers. Academic writers, however, ought to remember that they can afford to take the time needed to do thorough research. They are—although they seem not to be aware of it—subsidized by university salaries, to say nothing of Canada Council. Professional writers, most of them, have to live by their writing. They may or may not see it as their duty to lay in their research properly, but academics should occasionally recall the kind of pressures professional writers have to work under.

This book of Pierre Berton's is a first-class piece of work by any standard. He has a great theme and he has done justice to it. It is impossible not to admire the sweep of the book, its pace, its force, its sense of fresh air. Berton has a sense of the West, and in not a few Canadian historians who have been reared and trained exclusively in the east, this sense is often missing.

In reviewing Vol. I, *The National Dream,* this reviewer complained of misquotations, that is, errors in transcribing documents from the originals in the Archives into print. These kinds of errors are easy to make and have to be watched continually. Most of the errors in Vol. 1 were minor, but one or two of them were more serious. In this book, however, an attempt has clearly been made to get the quotations right. The errors that I was in a position to notice were, all of them, quite minor.

There are some quibbles to be made. Canada is not the second largest country in the world (p. 11), it being third, after China; nor is its depth, through 40° of latitude, the greatest in the world; the Soviet Union has claim to that. It is a nice question whether John A. Macdonald ever did forgive and forget (p. 1) Donald Smith's failure to support him in 1873.

It was not Macdonald who in 1870 made the rash commitment to British Columbia to start the railway within two years after the date of Union and complete it in ten; that has to be laid at the door of Cartier, Macdonald being virtually out of action from an attack of gallstones, and he was afterwards to regret Cartier's boldness. This is also the place to note that Macdonald had not always been in favour of an all-Canadian Pacific railway. It is true, as Pierre Berton notes, that Macdonald was convinced of the necessity by 1880; but it is salutary to recall that he thought differently in the early 1870's. This point is brought home in a book missing from an otherwise admirable bibliography, namely, L. B. Irwin's *Pacific Railways and National in the Canadian-American North-West, 1845-1873* (Philadelphia, 1939).

Why did Macdonald keep putting off C.P.R. relief in 1885 in order to pass the Franchise Act? This is not answered, surely, by saying (p. 398) that "the Prime Minister was afflicted by a myopia that permitted national interests to give way to those of party." As far as the CPR was concerned there could be no salvation outside of the Conservative party, and Macdonald was by no means certain that there was any salvation within it. The party had to be rallied in the face of two disasters of that early spring of 1885, the North-West Rebellion and the apparent failure of the CPR. A franchise bill that might strengthen the hold of Conservative MP's on their constituencies—or would appear to do it—was one form of party cement. The actual crushing of the North-West Rebellion by June, 1885, was another. A third method was to make the CPR pay for its own exigencies by paying for political railways, like the North Shore railway from Montreal to Quebec, and for the "Short Line" from Montreal to Saint John. The Quebec and Maritime MP's were going to be pacified by the Pacific Railway and at its own expense. Certainly it is true to say that the Liberal party, and not a few Conservatives, were by no means convinced that a further loan to the CPR was in the national interest, and that a Conservative government's duty might better lie in taking over the CPR line, lock, stock and barrel.

Altogether, however, these are really minor points. The book can stand on its own. The range of sources used for it is remarkable. One could quibble about the failure to distinguish primary and secondary sources in the bibliography, but we are in Mr. Berton's debt for having had given to us such a rich range of materials, especially in some few, but important, out-of-the-way sources. Mr. Berton has something of the quality of detective that all good historians have to have.

One crying need this reviewer felt with this book—and it is, really, the greatest praise—pictures! The story is so vivid that the reader positively craves photographs, not just four or five, but a regular plethora of pictures, of which there are dozens in the British Columbia, Manitoba, and Ottawa Archives. Alas! there is only one picture, the famous one of driving the last spike, that everyone has seen before. It is fair to add, though, that Mr. Berton puts names to faces in that picture in a way it has never been done before.

I don't think there is a proofing mistake in the whole book (more than I can say of some of my own), and the index is excellent. Altogether it is a book worth anyone's time or money. Apparently McClelland & Stewart thought so too: the first printing must be near a record for any Canadian book: 65,000 copies. May it enjoy many more.

Dalhousie University P. B. Waite

What Coleridge Thought. By Owen Barfield. Middleton, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1971. Pp. 304. $15.
Coleridge: The Damaged Archangel. By Norman Fruman. New York: Braziller, 1971. Pp. 650. $12.50.

Of the many studies that will be published this year to commemorate the bicentennial of Coleridge's birth, two of the most important most likely have already been published. Neither one will supplant Lowe's *Road to Xanadu,* but both are significant works of scholarship and quite indispensable to serious students of Coleridge. Barfield's study is positive in approach and adulates Coleridge as thinker, poet, and critic. Fruman's study, on the other hand, has to be described as somewhat negative. Despite his stated purpose to understand Coleridge through "a scrutiny of his letters and notebooks . . . his most private thoughts and feelings," much of what Fruman has written reads like a blatant attack on the reputation of a literary giant. Barfield writes with praise and appreciation; Fruman, as he put it, "under the pressure of evidence," but taking sides with those who charge Coleridge with being not only a derivative and fragmentary thinker but one who actually purloined extensively from the writings of others.

Since his death in 1834, critics and scholars have been laboriously examining Coleridge's poetry, his lectures, his essays, his letters, notebooks and unpublished manuscripts. Hundreds upon hundreds of articles and books have resulted. All sorts of conclusions have been drawn regarding his baffling personality, his intellectual range, and his aesthetic accomplishments. Today he is widely hailed as one of England's greatest writers and a mighty hero of thought. His major poems enjoy great popularity. His *Biographia Literaria* has been labelled "the Bible of modern criticism". His stature as a literary critic and aesthetician has never stood higher than it does now. His essays on Shakespeare are ranked among the chief glories of English literary criticism. There are those who proclaim that he possessed the intellect of a genius, that his was one of the great seminal minds of the nineteenth century, that his explorations of the unconscious mind predate Freud by more than a hundred years. But is all this veneration of Coleridge the man, the artist, the thinker as it should be? Barfield would respond with an enthusiastic *yes*; Fruman, with a skeptical *perhaps.*

Barfield's study is the shorter of the two, yet he apologizes in an Introduction that it is "if anything, too long for its main purpose". No less than a full-scale study of the development of Coleridge's philosophy considered strictly on its own terms has been his specific aim. Believing that the organizing insight ought to be internal to Coleridge's thought—"in order to see what that thought is and not merely what it is like or unlike"—Barfield does not treat his subject as representative of Germanic idealism, English platonism, pantheistic mysticism, semantic anaylsis, or depth psychology. Accordingly, the reader is immersed immediately and unceremoniously into Coleridgian philosophy *per se* in Chapter I. The next four

chapters amplify some of the abstruse speculations spun off from the first. Not until Chapter VI does the reader come to the more familiar territory of the Imagination and the Fancy. Chapter VII continues the exploration of the Modifying and Aggregating Faculties. Six more chapters take the reader through Coleridgian aspects of Understanding, Reason, Ideas—Methods—Laws, Cosmology of Science, Man and God, and Man in History and in Society.

Throughout his thirteen chapters Barfield shuns the comparative approach, which has dominated recent Coleridge scholarship. The biographical/comparative and the biographical/psychological methods, he maintains, have their disadvantages: both tend to keep the scholar "outside the intellectual content with which he is dealing." As his title has it, Barfield is interested not in the complex and allusive web of comparative philosophy but in what Coleridge specifically thought. In chapter after chapter he expounds Coleridge's system as clearly as possible in its own terms in an endeavor to reveal its self-consistency. This is not to say that Barfield makes Coleridge simple to understand. The poet-philosopher himself once wrote, "You may not understand my system, or any given part of it—or by a determined act of wilfulness you may, even though perceiving a ray of light, reject it in anger and disgust . . . . " Much to his credit, Barfield manages to cast a great deal of light, light that helps the reader come closer to a proper understanding of Coleridge. Carefully organized to demonstrate what Coleridge's ideas were and how they developed, Barfield's study charts Coleridge's system in reasonably comprehensible form.

In addition, Barfield demonstrates the relevance of Coleridgian thought to contemporary philsophy. In doing so he resists the temptation to establish links with Jungians, structuralists, delvers into the unconscious mind, Yin and Yang votaries and others; they can detect any connectives they desire, he suggests. Finally, aware that he is not consistently perceptive and convincing in his analyses, Barfield (taking a clue from Coleridge that it is good to goad readers into thinking for themselves) recommends that "it is better for the reader to make up his own mind than for me to argue it." Indeed, the principal object of *What Coleridge Thought* is to assist the reader to do so.

The principal object of Fruman's lengthy study is not so simple to state. His title, which comes from Lamb's description of Coleridge as "an Archangel a little damaged", implies both the temper and the thesis of his book. True, Coleridge has often been scorned, damned, and condemned as an irresponsible, insincere and self-indulgent sensualist, but the portrait that Fruman draws of his subject is much darker emotionally and morally than has hitherto ever been drawn. Nor has anyone probed so deeply into Coleridge's sex life and come up with evidence of impotency, homosexuality, castration phobias, and masturbatory tendencies. Furthermore, he makes out an interesting case proving Coleridge deceiver and plagiarist.

The attack is four-pronged. In Part I, Fruman focuses on the young poet

his difficult childhood, his shattering anxieties, and examines "the arid emotional soil in which the ill-fated young Samuel Taylor Coleridge put down roots". Part II begins with the scrutinizing of the *Biographia Literaria*, ". . . one of the most misunderstood books ever written". Fruman tries to put all Coleridge scholars straight. "Many a bitter battle has been fought over the original proprietory rights to these fertile grounds," he states, "and the stinging odor of scholarly gunpowder still hangs heavy over those celebrated fields from which has sprung so much modern thought." Should Coleridge rule these vast domains? Fruman thinks not.

In Part III, he retravels the fabled roads to Xanadu and Tryermaine but spends more time in the humble hills around Nether Stowey, where "The Ancient Mariner," "Christabel," and "Kubla Khan" were written. Through the agency of dreams that Coleridge recorded in his notebooks, Fruman interprets the relationship between the poet's emotional problems and the meaning of his great poems—"all of which is linked to the riven and sometimes tragic events of his external life." And in Part IV, Fruman takes on such formidable authorities as John Livingston Lowes, Elisabeth Schneider, Arthur Nethercot, and Marshall Suther; many of their interpretations are faulty if not downright wrong, he concludes after a detailed analysis of Coleridge's poetic process. His own views, though not always convincing, are original and provocative, especially when buttressed with materials found in Coleridge's letters and journals.

Fruman has such a complete grasp of everything he writes that it is difficult to take him to task. His views are controversial, but he reasons so well that it is not a simple matter to break the concatenation of his presentation. Much of what he concludes, moreover, is demonstrably true. His inferences are drawn from facts and his documentation is complete. Coleridge's concealed debts to Kant, Schelling, and Schlegel are given in dozens of parallel passages laid out side by side. It would appear that Fruman has dislodged Coleridge from his pre-eminent position as a profound original thinker. His study is so overbearing that it does not allow any other conclusion and certainly will be convincing to those who fail to consider its antithesis.

And yet the charges Fruman levels against Coleridge are hardly unique. The charge of plagiarism, for one, was first made a few months after his death by his old friend and fellow opium-eater, Thomas De Quincy. Today the question of extensive borrowings forms the staple of many specialized articles, and Fruman has made good use of most of them. His marshalling of the evidence is impressive. There remains little doubt that Coleridge intentionally misdated several of his works, that he exaggerated claims to linguistic expertise, that he failed to acknowledge his extensive paraphrasing, and that such activity continued throughout his entire "stress-laden life . . . the result . . . of deliberate action."

In the Introduction to his study Barfield ventures a few opinions of his own upon the subject. He admits that under current copyright laws Coleridge would

be sued many times over. Barfield, however, makes a fine distinction between verbal plagiarism and psychological plagiarism. "Coleridge himself in a letter of 1811," notes Barfield, "divided human heads into two types, the *tanks* and the *springs*. It is only the tanks who may accurately be said to *borrow* the thoughts, together or not with the words of others. The springs adopt them."

Accusations against Coleridge assume in advance that he was more of a tank than a spring. Barfield prefers to see Coleridge as "a spring [which] must continue to give in the act of receiving." Only when Coleridge's own thinking had reached virtually the same point as his creditor's, emphasizes Barfield, did Coleridge borrow. Nor, he adds, was Coleridge concerned with originality, if the word is taken to mean novelty. With him, originality consisted in the power of digesting and assimilating until it became part of his own life and thought. Barfield, in contradistinction to Fruman, concentrates upon the more substantive matter in Coleridge, thereby dismissing the issue of plagiarism as debatable but irrelevant.

St. John's University, Jamaica, New York G. A. CEVASCO

Arms, Yen and Power. The Japanese Dilemma. By John K. Emmerson. Foreword by Edwin O. Reischauer. New York: Dunellen Publishers, 1971. Pp. 420. $15.00.

Canadian observers of Japanese imports arriving on their shores in ever-increasing variety and quantity may find in Emmerson's book an explanation of the fast rising commercial and economic expansion of Japan. A careful, documented, and tightly reasoned explanation is made in a clear style that reveals at the same time the confidence with which Emmerson approaches his subject. The confidence is justified. Since the 1930s Mr. Emmerson has followed Japanese affairs closely, first as a language officer, and then in higher positions of rank within the U. S. diplomatic service.

Beyond the modernization and industrialization of the country, the author quite properly directs attention to the military situation. Restrained by her post-World II treaty obligations and underwritten in her present constitution, Japan has constructed a "Self-Defense Force" that supplements the nuclear umbrella held over her by the U. S., which has been the basic security guarantee for the past score of years. Indeed, it is not too much to say that the economic flowering, as well as the military protection afforded Japan, has been possible only through North American expenditures in those two decades.

Older readers will be startled at the memory which Japan's present trade relations with former colonies (Korea and Taiwan) and former enemies, (China and Russia) brings to mind. That memory is of the goal of the 1930s: The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. Emmerson makes clear the characteristics

of the contemporary, compared to the historical surge of foreign trade. Former U. S. Ambassador to Tokyo, Edwin O. Reischauer, in his Foreword, states that "virtually every country in the Far East finds Japan either its first—or its second—largest trading partner." And in 1970, in British Columbia, 40% of all automobiles were of Japanese manufacture.

Although Japan has signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, she has not ratified it. This fact may not be a sinister foreboding of a future nuclear capability on Japan's part, however. Labor unions, pacifists, and student organizations have mobilized a public opinion which the author thinks will not soon permit the country's resources to be expended in that direction. From the point of view of technology, Emmerson feels that it is within Japan's reach, albeit thus far it is politically not feasible. The author is probably correct in writing that "Japan's perception of a threat to her security will depend upon the policies and actions of the U.S.S.R. and China".

The author ends with the hope that Japan's arms and yen will be used in a manner worthy of the Great Power Japan has become. So do we all.

University of Maryland WILLARD BARBER

Affidavits of Genius: Edgar Allan Poe and the French Critics, 1847-1924. By Jean Alexander. Port Washington, N. Y. and London: Kennikat Press, 1971. Pp. 246. $12.50.

This study is divided into two main sections: an "Introduction" (pp. 5-76) and a section entitled "French Criticism" (pp. 79-243). In the first the author discusses Poe and his reputation and influence in France under the general headings of "The Outlaw", "The American" and "The Poet". The second section consists of translations (all presumably by the author) of a number of passages chosen in order to illustrate the opinions on Poe of a representative selection of French critics and writers between 1847 and 1924.

In a preface the author states that the purpose of her "double" study is:

> . . . to present the evidence, and second, to consider it reciprocally, re-evaluating Poe by the French commentary and the French commentary by Poe's work as understood by an American. Since most of the documents showing Poe's reception in France and his status in the nineteenth century are not available to American students, a judicious selection of essays enables them to weigh various critical interpretations against the evidence itself.

The selection is, as she admits, a "carefully chosen" one, and while it does not attempt to supersede the work of Léon Lemonnier, C. P. Cambiaire or Joseph Chiari in this field, it provides a number of stimulating and interesting insights into the prevailing critical opinion of the period. A selecton like this must necessarily

give some account of Baudelaire's response to Poe, and here it is represented by parts only of three essays: "Mesmeric Revelation" (1848), the well-known *Revue de Paris* article (1852) and the revised version of this republished in 1856. Scholars will still, however, wish to refer to Lois and Francis E. Hyslop Jr.'s *Baudelaire on Poe* (1952).

Both the translated passages and the author's critical discussion point up the difficulty of assessing the nature of Poe's reputation in France, and as a whole the study clearly demonstrates that a very wide range of opinion existed, much of it unfavourable. The French, like many American critics in the nineteenth century, are shown as apt to confuse Poe's life with his work—a problem compounded by later French commentators who in addition tended to confuse the life and works of Baudelaire with those of Poe.

Yet the French response is almost universally tempered by a peculiar sympathy and fascination, which includes a tendency to brood over the events of Poe's life as they understood them. What is apparent in these comments—from those of Paul-Emile Daurand Forgues and Baudelaire to those of Remy de Gourmont and Paul Valéry—is an intense interest in Poe, which the criticism of the first section of this work amplifies and defines. A common concern of several of the writers here—Barbey d'Aurevilly, Baudelaire, Forgues—is to blame America for what it did to Poe and to deplore the assertively materialistic culture which "destroyed" him. Jean Alexander places these comments within the larger context of a reaction of the French intelligentsia against contemporary America and its philosophy of "progress".

If certain American critics have regarded Poe as in some sense "un-American", there were certainly in France at this period writers who, like Louis Etienne and Remy de Gourmont, asserted the representative and uniquely American quality of Poe's art. Barbey d'Aurevilly saw in Poe's fate ". . . a terrible accusation, an imprecation against all America" (p. 151), and in Poe himself a type of the American artist:

> For he is American, no matter what he does, this man who detested America and whom America, mother of his vices and his poverty, pushed to suicide. Fatal origin and race! One never erases from his forehead the sign of his nationality or his birth. Edgar Poe, the Bohemian genius, is after all no more or less than an American, both the product and the antithesis of the American society of the United States. (p. 150)

The faults in this reviewer's copy included a number of spelling mistakes and the fact that the first seven pages were bound in twice. Louis Etienne is, for some reason, omitted from the section of "Biographical Notes". The four pages of "Preface" might usefully have been numbered, and a full final bibliography including details of all the translations of relevant material to date, would have been a valuable addition.

Dalhousie University M. GRIFFITHS

Mapping the Frontier: Charles Wilson's Diary of the Survey of the 49th Parallel, 1858-1862, while Secretary of the British Boundary Commission. Edited and with an introduction by George F. G. Stanley. Toronto: Macmillan, 1970. Pp. 182, maps.

Lieutenant Charles William Wilson, R.E., served as secretary to the British survey party sent to British Columbia to locate the boundary laid down by the Oregon Treaty of 1846. This was his first overseas posting. During the course of his stay he travelled extensively in the region and visited major settlements on both sides of the border.

Throughout his diary, Wilson echoed the comments of other British travellers in North America. He had a generally low opinion of Indians, colonials and Americans. Like Basil Hall, Francis Trollope and Charles Dickens, Wilson was appalled by American manners. He described the "genus Yankee" as those who "chew, whittle & keep stores or hybrid collections of the cheapest & worst description of nearly every article under the sun". His opinion of Indians was based on evidence he had of their laziness and inclination to steal. He attributed a large number of miners' deaths to the Indians and was disgusted by reports he had heard of the practice of eating human flesh prevalent among the Shimpshians. Although he was on friendly terms with some, he never regarded Indians as "noble savages". His attitude towards colonials might best be described as "amused toleration". It concerned him that the young ladies of the colony could have looked better if "they would only learn to wear their crinoline properly".

Wilson is at his best in describing the arduous nature of the survey party's work. Among the natural obstacles to overcome were the mountainous terrain, bad weather and insect pests. Mosquitoes were the scourge of the surveyor's existence and Wilson reflects at some length upon mosquito-induced suffering.

In spite of the trying conditions he had to endure, Wilson is eloquent in his descriptions of the country through which he travelled. This is enhanced by the delightful sense of humour which sustained him through all difficulties. Indeed the strength of the diary lies in Wilson's ability to express himself well and with wit. Its weakness is its lack of detail in some aspects.

Professor Stanley, in his excellent introduction, calls the diary "the work of an academic dilettante". The description is apt. There are none of the detailed scientific observations familiar to readers of Hall's *Travels in North America.* Nor are there any useful insights regarding political institutions and practices. One is disappointed to find that, although he met such prominent historical figures as Governor Douglas and Judge Begbie, Wilson had little to say about them. But one must also remember that the diary was written primarily for the entertainment and information of Wilson's sister.

Like many diaries, Wilson's might be most useful for what it reveals about

its author. Those who are unfamiliar with the British officer class or pioneer life in British Columbia at the time will find it of interest.

Ottawa IAN McCLYMONT

Baudelaire As A Love Poet and Other Essays. Edited by Lois Boe Hyslop. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1969. Pp. xiv, 130. $5.00.

In the art works of today, the transcendence of man manifests itself as integral to the processes of historical life. In the middle of the nineteenth century the French poet Charles Baudelaire helped to usher in this change in direction. Baudelaire was not only a poet; he was also a critic, and his many treatises on art helped develop the thought that poetry could no longer be simply the play of imagination in a purely eternal, non-historical realm, divorced from history. Instead, poetry was seen to arise out of the depths of human existence as it unfolds in a particular cultural context defined by varying human needs and efforts. The poet, then, came to have the task of being actively and creatively involved in the forever fluctuating countenance of his epoch.

The volume under review contains four essays by university professors, lectures read at a symposium at the Pennsylvania State University at a conference to commemorate the one-hundredth anniversary of the death of Baudelaire (1821-1867). Each essay analyzes a different facet of the poet's work. The first attempts to show the limitations of Baudelaire's use of the theme of love in his poetry, arguing that the poet stands at the end of a poetic tradition ("Rather than a beginning, he is an end: the supreme flowering of romanticism. . . ."). The second essay is a comparative study tracing the connections between Baudelaire and Rimbaud, their lives and their works. A further essay develops the similarities between some of Baudelaire's aesthetic principles and the symbols of contemporary anthropology. The last, co-authored by the editor of the volume, Lois Boe Hyslop, re-appraises Baudelaire's personal and artistic relationship with the painter Manet, arguing that Baudelaire did indeed recognize genius in his critical works.

Two of the essays, René Gallant's "Baudelaire's Formulary of the True Aesthetics" and Lois and Francis Hyslop's "Baudelaire and Manet: A Re-Appraisal" deal in part with the poet's conception of modernity and beauty, particularly their relationship.

Baudelaire claimed that the nature of beauty can be seen neither in what is strictly contemporary nor in what is strictly ancient, neither in what is simply characteristic of the present epoch nor in what is already found established in the museums as masterwork. It can only be seen in modernity, according to the poet's paradoxical understanding of this term. The phenomenon and attractions of fashion,

of "la mode" in dress and manners, serves as an example. Baudelaire praises the work of his contemporary Constantin Guys for endeavouring "to extract from current fashions that of a poetic nature which they are able to embody in the historical, to draw the eternal from the transient". Modernity only makes sense as an "extraction" from the eternal: it makes sense *as* extraction. "Modernity is the transistory, the fugitive, the contingent, the half of art; the other half of which is the eternal, the immutable". In the fashions of the times, beauty emerges not simply as historical, not simply as eternal, but as the embodied ideas of historical people extracting from the eternal what is relevant for them, and necessarily transient for that reason: "Whatever the idea of beauty which man imagines for himself, it impresses itself into his whole attire, it rumples or stiffens his garment, rounds or straightens his gestures, and in the long run even penetrates subtly into the traits of his face. Man ends up resembling what he would like to be".

In a metaphor, the beauty of women likewise serves to exemplify the paradox of beauty in general: "The transient and fugitive element, the metamorphoses of which are so frequent—this you have no right to disdain or pass up. If you suppress it, you necessarily fall into the emptiness of an abstract and undefinable beauty—the beauty of the only woman before the first sin". Baudelaire suggests that only after the fall can Eve become interesting as a reminder of the distance between our own historical circumstances and the eternal, which would otherwise be monotonous. In general, art and poetry fulfill their task in so far as they succeed in incorporating contemporary, otherwise merely distractive elements into an experience which recalls, but does not identify with abiding strains which would otherwise be all too constant.

Perhaps we are currently experiencing an exaggeration of the modern tendency toward the transient. Whereas at one time poetry was expected to compete with philosophy for the depiction of eternal verities, we now see poets and artists competing with one another to see who can produce the most transient works. Baudelaire envisions art as straddling the two realms.

The critical approach of all four essays in this volume is traditional. Baudelaire's work is considered as a collection to be examined, commented upon, and judged. In this approach the endeavor of the critic is consummated in the discovery of certain facts about the work which might otherwise have escaped notice, defending the discovery, and proving that the assumptions underlying it are correct. The chief assumption, effective at least as a heuristic device, is that the aesthetic character of the work under criticism is clear enough and open enough to immediate appreciation and experience. Criticism here does not mobilize the understanding itself, but simply adds to the assumed stock. Thus it is not likely to shake our understanding even of the work, let alone of the world.

It is interesting to note how little the critics in North America have been influenced by the new criticism that has been emerging on the European continent

during the last decade or more. Roland Barthes, for instance, remarks: "writing means shaking up the meaning of the world", and he (as well as many others) approach the work of poets and artists with a view to participating in and enhancing this general "shake up". Criticism here means mobilizing an understanding, helping others get into the dynamics of (not the facts about) works, holding open what might be called the "transgressive" function of the work: the way its own shake-ups encroach upon the world of the reader. Thus this kind of criticism is consummated not in judgement but in new literature.

Mount Allison University LILIANE WELCH

The Dual Image. By Harold Fisch. New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1971. $6.95.

This little book is an attempt to add to the small but rapidly growing collection of critical materials dealing with the Jew and the Jewish image in English literature, or perhaps more accurately, in literature written in English. The selected bibliography at the end of Mr. Fisch's book mentions some of these works, and it might be worth-while to suggest what seem to be the best of them. The book by Edgar Rosenberg is undoubtedly at the top of the list of such surveys in modern scholarship, by virtue of its accuracy, its wit, and its lively style. Another thorough book is the study by Montague Modder called *The Jew in the Literature of England to the End of the Nineteenth Century*. Among the many books on the Jew in American fiction and the Jewish American writer, the writing of Leslie A. Fiedler is probably the most interesting. A book which Mr. Fisch does not mention is by Norman Cohn, and is called *The Pursuit of the Millenium*. While this book is not strictly speaking on the subject of the Jew in English literature, it is invaluable for its penetrating understanding of the Christian persecution of the Jew in the Middle Ages, and to some extent thereafter. One of Mr. Cohn's central propositions is that the millenial thinking which has plagued western Christianity has turned to the persecution of certain groups and certain kinds of people, among them Jews, priests and witches, for instance, out of its frustrated failure to attain a perfect world. Mr. Cohn explains a great deal about the self-evasion and social escapism that characterizes the pursuit of millenium and leads to the diversionary tactics of sadistic persecution, thus giving us new insight into the nature of the scapegoat and the purposes served by projected images of that sort. I mention the profound quality of this latter book by way of approaching Mr. Fisch's superficial contribution to the field.

The title of this book, *The Dual Image*, contains the thesis that is supposed to hold the work together. This is simply that in the history of English literature that deals with Jews a double attitude may be discovered, namely the Jew as

mediaeval devil or monster, that is the Jew as enemy pure and simple, and on the other hand the Jew as noble sufferer carrying the burdens of the human race on his back and wandering with Stoic nobility from place to place and time to time. Mr. Fisch claims to be able to trace this kind of image from very early writing through Shakespeare and Marlowe up to the present. This simple thesis is as crude as it appears here and forces the author to read everything in almost identical terms. It is quite clear that nothing so facile will serve to improve our understanding of the extraordinarily complex response in Christian culture to the presence of the Jew in its midst. One would be much better advised to pursue the idea, not of love-hate as Mr. Fisch suggests, but of hate-doubt, for the Christian response contains the element of a torment as to its universality, validity, totality and credibility by the very fact of the presence of the unconverted Jew left over from the millenium of the New Testament and its promise. The Jew is a thorn in the side of the believer. Mr. Fisch attempts nothing so complicated as a pursuit of ideas along these lines. He confines his analysis of a subject to the most cursory survey of large quantities of material, and given that he does indeed mention a great number of works of literature, it is hardly surprising that in such a small compass he can do no more than glance at each item and give it a quick wrench to fit his overall pattern. The result of this extremely rapid survey is boredom for the reader. The only benefit I can detect accruing from such a process is to convey to the newcomer to his field some sense of the extraordinary quantity of material that does in fact exist and Mr. Fisch's book does have the virtue of producing an impression, by its very brevity and compression, of the amazing pervasiveness of the Jewish image and Jewish character in English literature.

Aside from this, however, I see very little to recommend this book to the scholar of Jewish culture or of English literature. Mr. Fisch seems either insensitive to, or ignorant of, any distinctions between Jewish literature or Jewish subject matter in writing from England, Canada and the United States. It is my own feeling that there is a considerable difference between the writing say, of Mordecai Richler and that of Phillip Roth, a difference that has something to do with national culture. Part of this difference stems from a quite unique dilemma in which a Jewish writer in America finds himself, and Mr. Fiedler has written of this with much perception. There is a great deal of work to be done in this highly provocative area of critical research and thought.

One might point to other and different faults in Mr. Fisch's work, faults which are no less irritating for being of a completely different kind. For instance, the book seems entirely devoid of documentation of any sort. The countless references to material from the history of English literature are not footnoted and it is highly frustrating not to be able to trace the many quotations offered in the text. The index is quite unreliable and inadequate and incomplete. The following sentence is not the only example of thoroughly careless English.

There is good evidence that many touches in the mariner's guilt, his expiation, and his extraordinary subreading of the legend in M. G. Lewis's fantastic novel *The Monk* (1796) where the Wandering Jew specializes in exorcism and the uncovering of guilty secrets.

All in all then, this is a thin book in every sense of the word. Mr. Fisch has a fine net and for this reason his extraordinarily rich collection of references to works by or about Jews will be of interest to those in the field as something of a difficult-to-use little reference book. But as a book to read or enjoy or increase one's understanding of the subject it cannot be recommended.

University of Waterloo JOSEPH GOLD

The Poetry of Edwin Muir: The Field of Good and Ill. By Elizabeth Huberman. New York: Oxford University Press, 1971. Pp. 251. $7.95.

Astonishingly, when one considers that his first collection appeared nearly half a century ago, this is the first full-length critical study of Edwin Muir's poetry. Professor Huberman has timed it well. Peter Butter's two critical biographies, as well as Willa Muir's *Belonging* and the poet's own *Autobiography*, have extensively examined Muir's life, and numerous critical articles have suggested interesting directions and possibilities of interpretation. It is certainly time for a comprehensive judgement.

Professor Huberman draws heavily on the biographical sources, as well as the poet's own fiction and critical writing, in her attempt to give meaning and shape to the poetry, and this leads to a certain amount of repetition for those who are familiar with the biographies. But she does suggest a pattern in the poetry, considering the early work to lead up to *The Narrow Place* (1943); a volume in which, she claims, Muir achieves maturity, technical mastery and, incidentally, the lowest point of despair. After this volume, the poetry moves steadily upward, through *The Voyage* (1946), *The Labyrinth* (1949), *One Foot in Eden* (1956) and the last uncollected poems, displaying, from 1943 on, a more balanced vision of good and evil, hope and despair.

This pattern is interesting but not wholly convincing. In order to justify her claims for *The Narrow Place*, Professor Huberman saddles the little poem "The Gate" with a weight of significance it can hardly bear. The poem seems neither as good nor as pessimistic as is suggested here. But, more than this, the pattern loses persuasiveness because Professor Huberman, like most of Muir's earlier critics, has failed to come to terms fully with the poet's techniques. Muir's work embodies a long struggle towards the perfecting of certain symbolist devices which would allow him to release through symbol his fierce apprehensions of good and evil, of Eden and the Labyrinth, in their full potency. It is only in *The Labyrinth* that

he mastered these techniques, and it is in that collection, rather than in *The Narrow Place*, that he explores evil most fully. Written mostly in Prague around the time of the terrible *Putsch* of 1948, poems like "The Combat", "The Interceptor", "The Interrogation", "The Helmet", "The Labyrinth", "The Good Town" and many more are studies of overpowering evil, of a shattered Eden, of man's twisted and distorted soul, more terrible than anything else he wrote. In these poems the positive symbols are negated and almost swamped by the sickening impact of massive destructive forces; they can do no more than gesture feebly and bonelessly towards humanity and hope. It is not until his 1956 volume that Muir's poetry is free of this terror and able to oppose positive and negative symbols in a mutually energizing and illuminating tension.

Without seeing Muir as a symbolist poet, and without analyzing the struggle of Eden and the Labyrinth to establish and define themselves as fully viable symbols, it is, I believe, fruitless to search for significant pattern in Muir's work. The battle of good and evil, the craving for eternity, for "archaic time", are inseparable from the poet's finding ways to incarnate and release the paradigmatic symbols which contain his vision. This is essentially a problem of technique; of manipulation of tense, metre and syntax and the deliberate dislocation of time and space.

Professor Huberman is best on the early poems. Her treatment of *Variations on a Time Theme*, for instance, is not only thorough, but easily the finest interpretation of this difficult sequence yet published. The relationship between the life, the early poetry and Muir's psychological and emotional states is handled with care and no little insight, adding to our knowledge and response, and throughout this study there are valuable approaches to individual poems. Professor Huberman is less successful with the late poetry, which is rather hurriedly treated. For instance, the last poems—39 of them, including some of Muir's most important work—are merely referred to in two paragraphs; a surprising and sudden abdication of critical comprehensiveness.

This book, then, is simultaneously impressive and valuable and disappointingly incomplete. It tells us important things about the early poetry in particular but largely avoids the problems of Muir's techniques and does not fully succeed in coming to terms with the late poetry, which is Muir's great achievement. But in spite of these reservations, Professor Huberman has deepened our knowledge of a major poet and, above all, has convinced us again of Muir's deep humanity, his tough visionary gentleness and the authenticity of his vision of man.

University of Calgary CHRISTOPHER WISEMAN

Call to Revolution: *The Mystical Anarchism of Gustav Landauer*. By Charles B. Maurer. Detroit: Wayne State University, 1971. $9.50.

Even among students of the anarchist movement, the name of Gustav Landauer

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is little known today. If he is remembered at all, it is for the secondary role he played in the ill-fated Bavarian revolution of 1918-1919 and his summary execution at the hands of the troops sent from Berlin to repress the revolution in May 1919. Beyond this, it may be recalled that his close friend Martin Buber sought to perpetuate his memory by collecting and publishing Landauer's writings and letters in the decade following his death.

The value of Dr. Maurer's book, however, does not lie in his description of the Bavarian revolution, which reveals little which was not previously known, or in his account of Landauer's relations with Buber, since there is no indication that Buber was in any way significantly influenced in his own writings by those of Landauer. Nor has Dr. Maurer unearthed any evidence to suggest that Landauer made a greater impact on the men or events of his time than previously suspected. Rather, Gustav Landauer is chiefly interesting as a representative figure of pre-war German intellectual circles.

Landauer was one of the *Jungen*, a group of young intellectuals expelled from the Social Democratic Party in the 1890s because of their anarchist sympathies. He became editor of *Der Sozialist*, the "Organ of Anarchism-Socialism" and the most intellectually reputable of anarchist newspapers in Germany (if one of the least read). On the side, Landauer wrote novels and short stories, which sound curiously morbid (*The Preacher of Death, Dead Alive*), or distinctly alarming (*Might and Destinies* has as its hero a sixty-two year old giant called Himmelheber, an intellectual and physical superman who is the precursor of a super race), or just plain terrible (*The Yellow Stone* is a pseudo-Celtic tale featuring the King of the Day, the King of Dreamland, and their respective blond and red-headed queens whom they proceed to swap for some obscure allegorical reason).

In addition to writing novels, Landauer translated various works of Oscar Wilde, Walt Whitman, Tagore, Kropotkin, and the medieval mystic Meister Eckhart into modern German. He wrote political and philosophical essays on the coming socialist revolution, and the new age which would dawn thereafter. Landauer had originally been a disciple of Kropotkin, but by 1900 his philosophical position as an anarchist had swung much closer to that of Proudhon and Tolstoy. He founded the Socialist Bund, which was designed to serve as the coordinating agency of a group of small communities to be established on anarchist principles. The Bund aimed at bringing about a nonviolent social revolution by withdrawing further support from the state and the capitalist economic system, much in the manner of the contemporary commune. By 1911 there were twenty-one groups in the Bund, including one in Paris. Before the war Landauer was also active in the pacifist movement; during the war he resigned himself to writing literary studies, principally on Shakespeare and the German romantics. At the same time he attempted, unsuccessfully, to found a free school, and he became associated with a theatre in Dusseldorf.

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On a basis of these activities, Landauer's life would hardly seem to merit a biography. But the chief interest of the book rests more on Landauer's personality and ideas than on his deeds. His life bears certain resemblances to that of his more celebrated contemporary, Walther Rathenau, the German foreign minister who was murdered in 1922. Like Rathenau, Landauer was a Jew who at the same time took pride in his Germanic heritage, and as with Rathenau, the attempt to reconcile two competing loyalties was not successful. Landauer's ideas derive in part from those of Fritz Mauthner, a critic and philosopher who undertook a critique of language which shares certain similarities with the later work of Ludwig Wittgenstein. For Landauer, the skepticism Mauthner applied to language destroyed forever existing human illusions about reality, thereby creating the basis for a new understanding of the world. To achieve this understanding, Landauer considered that a mystical approach to the world was necessary. Accordingly, he constructed a model of the world in which elements of primitive biology were interwoven with theories involving such untranslatable German abstracts as *Geist, Nation, Volk, and Wahn.* Dr. Maurer takes pains to point out that Landauer's theories of the *Volk* and his emphasis on the need to return to the land have nothing in common with the *Völkisch* movement which achieved its triumphant legitimation during the Nazi period, and indeed, a close reading of Landauer reveals fundamental differences with regard to such questions as political power. The disturbing fact remains, however, that the very vagueness, mysticism, and romanticism of such terms facilitated their misappropriation by people with far more sinister motives than those of Gustav Landauer. It is in this aspect of Landauer's life and work that the dilemma of the German Jew takes on a particular quality of tragic irony.

The irony was not appreciated by the Nazis, who, in attempting to obliterate his memory, went so far as to disinter Landauer's body. Perhaps this gesture is, in some curious way, the greatest tribute of all to the integrity and force of Landauer's ideas and personality. Dr. Maurer has done well to rescue Gustav Landauer from this ill-deserved oblivion.

Dalhousie University JOHN GODFREY

A Sort of Life. By Graham Greene. New York. Simon and Schuster, 1971. Pp. 220.

Graham Greene's story of his early years is of interest to students of Greene because it complements the autobiographical material, including important references to his youth, found in his earlier non-fiction. It is important because it is likely to be the most penetrating definition of the novelist's embryonic years that his followers will ever see, and also because Greene's fiction is largely psychological (much of it

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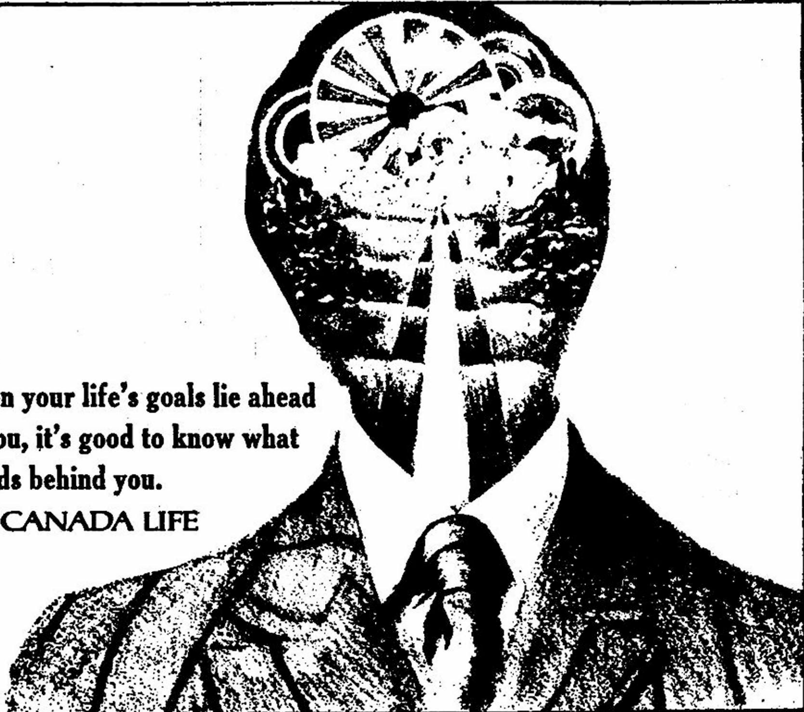

built upon theological questions having intimate connections with psychic disharmonies); and psychologists of various schools often consider a child's experiences the chief exhibits in the explication of his adult character—an idea with which Greene is in full accord.

The writer's belief in the significance of the formative years is apparent in stories like "The Basement Room", "I Spy" and "The Hint of an Explanation". Most of his child characters are either frightened in their innocence or secure in their cruelty, during a time of supposedly (to the romantic) unalloyed rope-skipping happiness. *A Sort of Life* displays essential parallels between the fictitious tragedies of youth and the historic trials of the characters' creator.

The Greenes lived at the Berkhamsted School where Graham's father was headmaster, and where for young Graham "the misery of life started". His immediate world took on, in a child's measure, the dimensions of the greater world. Home and school became countries on a mutual frontier, and he would tour the grounds "with the exciting sense of travelling abroad". This territorial polarity remained real throughout his years in Berkhamsted—the dimensions changing but the juxtaposition of the familiar and the alien, the safe and the attractively fearful, growing into the influence that has become one of the most pervasive themes in his fiction (epitomized in such works as *The Power and the Glory* and "Across the Bridge"), as well as the impetus that drove him to such hazardous adventures as his treks through Liberia (*Journey Without Maps*) and Mexico (*The Lawless Roads*). Indeed, "fear has an odd seduction". It is Greene's way of fighting boredom.

The hazards of exploration began early; the geographic extent was small but the dimension of the fear shows that the child's world is not just the trivia that adults often remember. Of his move from his home in School House to St. John's house as a boarder at the age of thirteen, Greene says: "I had left civilization behind and entered a savage country of strange customs and inexplicable cruelties: a country in which I was a foreigner and a suspect, quite literally a hunted creature". His life at St. John's drove him to gestures of (rather than attempts at) suicide and, his message received by those who cared, to the redemption of psychoanalysis. "Successful suicide is often only a cry for help which hasn't been heard in time".

For the analysis, "perhaps the happiest six months of my life", Greene has "never ceased to be grateful". His resultant respect for the problems of the psyche and the promise of the analyst has lived in his work, and it lives now in his latest book. He gives much space to the description of dreams, particularly the recurrent (most medically symptomatic), and the reader, seeing in Greene the need to confess as well as to entertain and to report, observes the psychoanalytic brain-picking still going on. "I kept perforce a dream diary (I have begun to do so again in old age [late sixties]), and fragments of the dreams I can remember still, though the diary

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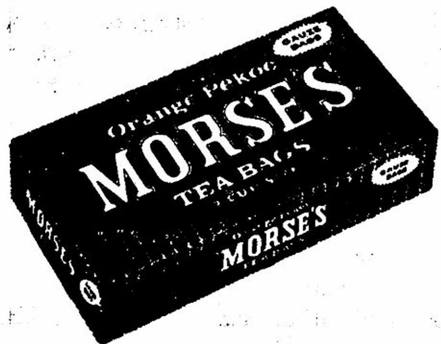

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has been destroyed for nearly half a century". "Two novels and several short stories have emerged from my dreams". One is not inclined to suspect Greene of overzealous belief in modern psychology, however, for the reader finds that "there were times when I realized that my old enemy was merely biding his moment"—there had been no cure in analysis.

The early attempts at writing were no less disastrous than the early attempts at living, and Greene's *Life* deals as incisively with these as with the mysteries of his youth. Throughout the book he recalls the readings that influenced him: "when I read the sermon on hell in Joyce's *Portrait of the Artist* I recognized the land [St. John's house] I had inhabited". J. D. Beresford's "*The Hampdenshire Wonder* remains one of the finest and most neglected novels of this period between the great wars".

Greene's journalism, school and professional, is the background of the early signs of his impending career, but the most interesting revelations, to those who think they have read all of Greene, are of the two disastrous novels, now difficult to find, that followed his first in print (*The Man Within*): *The Name of Action* and *Rumour at Nightfall.* These, together with his first two unpublished novels, were literally the trial and error of his career. By writing bad fiction he learned to write good fiction. "Now I can see quite clearly where I went wrong. Excitement is simple: excitement is a situation, a single event. It mustn't be wrapped up in thoughts, similes, metaphors. A simile is a form of reflection, but excitement is of the moment when there is no time to reflect. . . . I should have turned to Stevenson to learn my lesson".

Another lesson could be learned from the encyclopedists: the *Life* needs an index, a great aid in referencing the profuse literary allusions, Greene's and others', with which the *Life* abounds. What else the book lacks is more of a mystery however. It is well to note, and I don't know what to make of it, that from the *Life* we learn little of the author's parents and less of his wife and children. Perhaps he has written all that matters about his parents—we read that they were aloof, that he felt betrayed when moved to a boarding house with his family living on the school grounds. Later, beyond the scope of his book, when he travelled the earth researching for novels or non-fiction, he generally travelled alone, or at least wrote from the solitary experiences. The trips were often dangerous (masculine) of course, but one has no sense from reading *A Sort of Life*, or any of the other non-fiction, of any strong relationship between the writer and his loved ones. If this selective life story is definitive, unless it is meant to be a mystery, a journal of introspective espionage where some questions are left unasked, some identities masked, Greene seems to have lived his sort of life alone.

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Fiddlehead Press, and one big first volume from McClelland and Stewart. Fiddlehead is noted for publishing first books, and I shall deal with some of those first.

Ed Byrne's *Poems* 1968-1970 introduces a young experimenter in life and poetry who occasionally reveals an eye for precise detail and an ear for a good phrase that should serve him well in the years ahead.

Some of his short imagist poems work very well within their deliberate limitations. A few longer, more difficult poems, do not always succeed, but they come close enough to be readable (which is more than can be said for a lot of the stuff that gets published today). He has a tendency suddenly to become sententious for a line or two just where such preciousness can ruin the tone of his poems. Nevertheless, these poems are enjoyable enough to suggest that if Byrne continues to mature as a writer, he will someday write poems of real worth.

Peggy Fletcher's *The Hell Seekers* reveals a psyche ravaged by life, and fighting back with all its resources. A cry of pain, to be interesting, however, must be controlled and modulated. Peggy Fletcher only occasionally attains the control necessary to raise these verses from the realm of therapy to that of art. The first poem, "Twin Despair", one of the best in the book, reveals the specific problems her lack of craft entails. The last two stanzas read:

> The lake danced
> to the whip
> of gale morning
>
> We made love
> on the floor of a broken
> marriage, and everything
> was Autumn and growing old.

The first of these is rhythmically awkward and just a little prolix. Nevertheless, a certain wit and intensity comes through. In the longer poems, the lack of control is too much for the poems to bear; they are diffuse, awkward, and uninteresting, as poems. Still, if she can gain the craft to control the language of her poems, she could become an interesting writer.

Brenda Fleet is also somewhat awkward in her first book, *Bullets and Cathedrals*, but she does have more control over her language and rhythms than does Peggy Fletcher. Her vocabulary fails her sometimes, resulting in a somewhat damaging bathos in poems where such a tone is only intrusive. But Miss Fleet has a very good feeling for the irony and pathos of human relationships: the most successful poems are those dealing with friendships or love, which reveal a sensitive and compassionate mind at work. "Poem for Bill" is a good example of her work:

> Where do the birds sleep?
>   in the trees
> But how do they sleep?
>   upright on branches,
>   leaning against the trunks

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How do they keep from falling?
they sleep, and the wind
cradles them

What do they look like?

leaves that could fool
winter, if their shadows
were not so plump and
suddenly, not there

On the basis of *Bullets and Cathedrals*, I think we shall hear more of Brenda Fleet, and I think her next book will contain better poems, for she has already clearly demonstrated she cares enough about craft to keep working at improving it.

Tunnel Bus to Detroit is Len Gasparini's second book. It reveals no growth in craft or understanding from his first one. I don't really like most of Gasparini's poems, however, which may be an irrational bias. He seems to feel that it's important to be a tough-guy poet, "a horny truckdriver who delivers/l-o-n-g-d-i-s-t-a-n-c-e poems". As a result his books contain a lot of apparently hard and honest poems which strike me, at least, as completely false and pretentious. Occasionally, when he lets his guard down, Gasparini can write little ordinary vignettes of life that have a certain naive charm. But even these are not exciting in the way I feel good poems should be. But perhaps I just can't appreciate that kind of poetry, and it is in fact quite good. Perhaps.

Don Gutteridge's *Death at Quebec* is the book of a poet who has a deep feeling for the people who inhabit our history. Riel has always fascinated him as a figure of mythic proportions and was the subject of his first booklength poem. He appears again in this volume, along with the Jesuits in Huronia, La Salle, Hudson, and the anonymous seigneur of the title poem. Gutteridge is a solid, workmanlike poet, not a fancy word-spinner. He builds his poems carefully, using simple language and craft, and his poems, while not often rising to moments of high excitement, are usually equal to their subjects. He understands the raw fact of Canada, and recognizes that "This granite is other/than our first bone,/is scarred with myth".

John Robert Colombo is Canada's greatest devotee to the cause of the "found" poem. Frankly, I don't think collections of "found" poetry are enough to base a career in letters upon. Be that as it may, in *The Great San Francisco Earthquake and Fire*, Colombo has found both a subject and a book on that subject, James Russell Wilson's *San Francisco's Horror of Earthquake and Fire* (1906), to enable him to produce a cycle of eminently readable excerpts which look like poems. This is certainly Colombo's liveliest and most enjoyable book yet.

Anne Marriott has published no book since 1941, although her 1939 collection, *The Wind Our Enemy*, won the Governor General's Award for that year. The poems in *Countries* indicate that the loss has been ours. This is an accomplished

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poetry, mature enough, and sure enough of itself, to take all kinds of chances, using the simplest language for all kinds of complex effects. The title poem is a brilliant investigation of the countries of the mind and heart of love, forced upon the writer by a severe sickness. Moving through simple but powerful evocations of countries she has known, the poet arrives finally at a revelation: "I belong here/in the world's country and/out/out, beyond/however far the echoing rings run/in the Welshman's glorious air/to the end of/no end". The other poems in the book reveal a finely honed intelligence and talent, working with the materials of common life and transforming them into poetry. They are simple with the simplicity that comes only after one has passed beyond complexity. Simply, they are good poems.

As are the poems of Dorothy Livesay. Her *Plainsongs* has been re-published in an extended version only a year after it first appeared, and the new poems enrich what was already a very good book, filling out its major themes, adding to the profundity of the whole. Some of Miss Livesay's best poems can be found in *Plainsongs*, ranging from the profoundly erotic poetry of Part I, "Loving", to such rich meditations on history and place as the long "The Artefacts—West Coast" in Part II, "Living". Miss Livesay's *Collected Poems* will be out in late 1972. Until then, *Plainsongs* allows us to share with her such complex visions of life as the following:

And if I hurt my knee
my good leg shows my poor leg
what to do

and if I hurt my arm
my good arm rubs my poor arm
into place

and if I hurt an eye
my good eye sees beyond the other's range
and pulls it onward upward
into space

The sun's eye warms my heart
but if my good heart breaks
I have no twin
to make it beat again. "Look to the End".

The one large book here, Bill Howell's *The Red Fox*, introduces an exciting new talent to the Canadian poetry scene. Howell is only 25, but he already has the attributes of a good writer: a feeling for people, environments, and language. Thus there are poems strewn throughout the 96 pages of this volume that are really worth reading. But McClelland and Stewart have not served their new young writer as well as they might have: the book is too long by half, and there's a lot of uninteresting, and even clichéd, filler to be gone through. This is really too bad, for in his best poems, Howell reveals an ear for idiom and an empathy for others which

give me great hope for his future as a writer. He is a superb storyteller, as his articles in *Maclean's* reveal. He has a novel coming out soon, and I suspect he is really a storyteller at heart. But some of his poems, such as "First Poem for Another woman", "From this Headland", and the long, not quite successful, letter-poem, "Our Time of Night" reveal that a certain kind of storytelling makes for very interesting poems. As an introduction to a young writer who has already passed the stage of "promise" *The Red Fox* is a worth-while book, if you can afford it. I do wish it had appeared in a less expensive paperback edition: then it would have been available to the readers who would truly enjoy Howell's kind of writing.

Oh well, the less expensive Fiddlehead books have their problems, too. Almost all of them contain far too many typographical errors to be funny. I hope this doesn't continue, because they serve a very useful function on the poetry scene.

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