

NEW BOOKS

JAMES ISHAM'S OBSERVATIONS ON HUDSONS BAY, 1743, and Notes and Observations on a Book entitled A VOYAGE TO HUDSONS BAY IN THE DOBBS GALLEY, 1749. Edited with an Introduction by E. E. Rich, Toronto, The Champlain Society, 1949. Pp. CV, 352.

This is Volume XII in the Hudson's Bay Company Series and the last of that series to be published by The Champlain Society, as the Hudson's Bay Record Society, having been helped on its feet by the Champlain Society, now feels that it can stand alone.

The volume itself is interesting, not only because it deals with a period in the history of the Hudson's Bay Company, when the validity of its charter was being questioned, but also because of the light it throws on both the officials of the Company and the men who were challenging its monopoly. Apart from Isham's comments on the climate, the language and customs of the natives, there is much in these notes and observations, that enables the reader to get a vivid picture of the life of a Factor in the Company's outposts, the responsibility that was placed upon his shoulders in an emergency, as well as the restricted limits within which he ordinarily had to move in accordance with his instructions from London.

James Isham (1716-61) was a clerk at 16, a factor at 21, a chief factor at 25, and was barely 30 when compelled to uphold the Company's interests in the face of the rival expedition of the *Dobb's Galley* and the *California*. It was while confined to Fort Prince of Wales during the winter of 1742-43, that he wrote his "Observations on Hudson's Bay" as an antidote to illness and for the information of the Committee in London. It therefore is not controversial in tone; but his comments on the account of the expedition in the *Dobbs Galley*, which had been published during the attack on the Company, were made in defence of both himself and the Company and were as caustic as the most ardent champion could have wished.

All this, and more, is noted by Mr. Rich, who in an 'extended' introduction of CV pages traces the fortunes of the Company from the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 to the end of the Parliamentary enquiry in 1749, sketches the background of Isham's activity in the period of his notes and observations, his difficulties in affording assistance to the *Dobbs* expedition without injuring the interests of the Company, and the yeoman service he rendered the Company in preparing its defence before the Parliamentary committee. This introduction, together with the closely packed biographical note of eight pages in Appendix C, enables the reader to form a more discerning opinion as to the character of Isham and the value of his notes and observations.

D.C.H.

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MODERN FAR EASTERN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS. By H. F. MacNair and D. F. Lach. Toronto, D. van Nostrand and Co., 1950, \$7.50. Plates, maps, Pp. 681.

This well planned and well written book tells the fascinating story of the international struggles and intrigues which lie behind the present struggle between America and Russia for the control of the Far East. The book deals primarily with China, Korea and Japan, and their relations with the United States and with Russia, and particularly those relations as they have existed during the last fifty years. The first part, about one sixth of the whole, describes the period prior to 1900, during which the Western powers first came into contact with Asia. There follow concise but detailed histories of the Russo-Japanese War, the First World War, the Japanese invasion of China, and the Second World War, together with a very fair account of the revolution in China.

That this book is an admirable introduction to the study of current events in the Far East is shown by the way in which happenings since the completion of the book (Spring 1950) fit in with the authors' interpretations of the past and indications of the future. Here is the full, sorry tale of American intervention in China, of Russian imperialism, of the aftermath of Japanese invasion and propaganda, and of the growing feelings of independence and nationalism. Such books as this can contribute much to an understanding of Asia, without which the prospects of cooperation and good will between the West and the Far East are grim indeed.

DONALD B. CLARK.

STABILITY. By F. E. Duncan. Macmillans. Pp. 273. \$4.25.

This book deals with the age-old conflict between two ideas or ideals, "Eternal Progress" and "Stability." The author attempts to show what the latter ideal means as applied to social organization, to economic systems, to government, and to international politics. He is also concerned with its meaning to great thinkers of the past and to the Greeks, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Jews.

The author defines stability as "continuity of the existing social and political conditions". A belief in some form of stability differs from the belief in progress in that stable conditions are desired as ideals which are opposed to the actual facts of life, while the belief in progress is first a belief in a fact and only afterward the belief in a necessity and an ideal.

The book is divided into two main parts. Part I deals with the movement toward stability, beginning with the teaching of Greek philosophers, the Jewish concept of stability, the ideas of Rousseau and Burke, and concludes with chapters on stability as a matter of principle and as a matter of policy. Part II deals with the meaning and elements of stability. After a discussion of stabilization by tradition and by law, the last two chapters are concerned with a pro-

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gram for economic and international stability. These are likely to prove of greatest interest, not only to economists and political scientists but also to the general reader. In a brief epilogue, called "The Awareness of Limits", the author points out that while in a narrow sense stability is opposed to progress, in a wider sense it includes a good deal of progress and consists in the "ability of a social organization to avoid excessive and one-sided advances as well as the immobility which heads to breakdowns." Here such institutions as parliament and diplomacy may help to promote a spirit of moderation, but the greatest reliance is placed on the universities. These must imbue their students with the qualities of independence, responsibility, tolerance, and moderation, "all of which are guarantees of true stability."

J. I. MOSHER

DIARY OF A DEAN, St. Paul's 1911-34. By The Very Rev. W. R. Inge. Hutchinson, 1949.

When Madame D'Arblay's novel, *Evelina*, appeared, Burke sat up (he says) all night to read it through, and Sir Joshua Reynolds could hardly stop reading it even for his meals. I cannot say that the *Diary of a Dean* held my interest so firmly as that, or that even where it did refuse to let me go, the merits of the book were its chief attraction. As in the case of Pepys, with whom the publisher's advertisement compares this diarist, what the French call *succes de scandale* is an auxiliary to *succes d'estime*. For this Dean's Diary, published in his eighty-ninth year, has many of those satiric thrusts at popular heroes, much of that caustic irony known in American slang as "debunking great reputations", by which he so often held the public interest in his books and speeches of the past.

The period covered is 1911 to 1934, strictly that of the writer's Deanship. Its interests too are predominantly those of one in the succession of eminent literary ecclesiastics. Asquith chose Dr. Inge as fit to maintain the high traditions of such predecessors as Milman and Church who had made St. Paul's a notable centre for what the Oxford thanksgiving calls "Piety and Good Learning". The choice was shrewd. It will be conceded by those most fiercely dissentient from Dr. Inge's opinions, no less than it is the pride of those who agree with them, that he has been a highly distinguished man of letters. I cannot think of any original contribution to learning that he has made equal to that of some of his predecessors—for instance to Milman's *History of Latin Christianity*. But he has been a brilliant expounder and critic. His Diary records the tribute paid him (unique, according to his American friend who pointed it out) of having his sermons when he was on a trans-Atlantic tour reported on the front page of American newspapers. The observer's hope that this would be found to indicate revival of religious interest at the new centres concerned was perhaps a little sanguine. But Dean Inge did hold the attention of a very wide reading public, and directed it effectively

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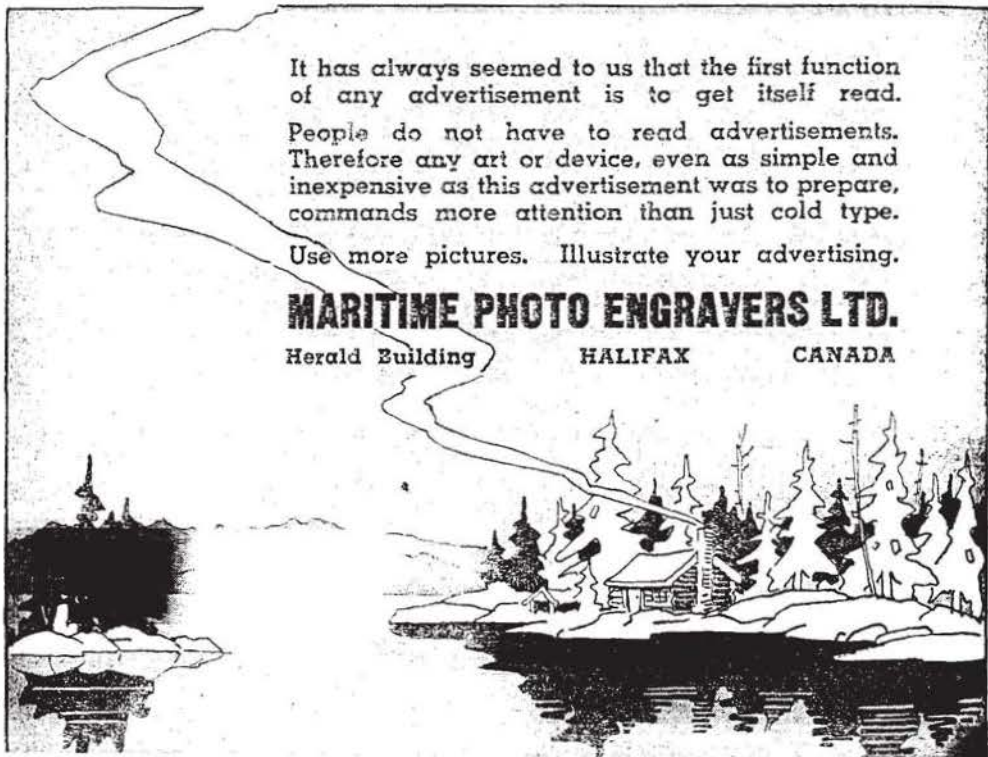
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to the Eternal Values. His gift of vivid, incisive phrase, his miscellaneous and always available erudition, his outspoken candor in criticism, his unmistakable devotion to the service of his ideals, gave him a place all his own in the public mind.

Those familiar with his writings and those who often heard him preach will be interested by this Diary showing how he recorded his experience and reflections, obviously with no thought at that time of publication, from day to day while he was Dean of St. Paul's. But I think his reputation would have been more secure if he had not given this to the world. A Diary is like a confidential friend, and here is something like a bad breach of confidence. Thoughts and impulses which it is altogether pardonable that human nature should at last temporarily indulge may seem, when published, what an American critic has called "indelicate exposure of one's mind".

The diary comes down to 1934. One thinks of the convulsions that marked the last five years of that period: the great Economic Depression; Britain's Union Government formed to preserve the Gold Standard and abandoning it among its first measures; the closing of United States Banks, the march of the unemployed upon the White House, and F. D. Roosevelt's first Presidency with its slogan of "the Forgotten Man" and the "New Deal"; Adolf Hitler's first year and a half (just ended when the Diary stops) in the German Chancellorship. There is not a trace in the Diary of serious reflection in the Dean's mind on any of these events. Why should there be, it may be asked, in a personal memorandum of the engagements the writer has fulfilled? It may be urged, too, that the interest of a Diary in such details of the writer's own concerns has thus indirectly great historic value—like the value Macaulay found in Xenophon's *Oeconomicus* beyond any in his formal Histories. But the Dean's pages include a great deal that is not personal. They have discussions of problems of the hour, and record the writer's strong convictions regarding them. What startles, and may well disappoint, the reader is the selection made—its inclusions and its omissions.

Why have we to read of the writer's vanities, his pettiness, his intellectual and social "snobbery"? If he felt moved to record in his own notebook that he thought G. K. Chesterton "an obese mountebank" who hated him through a journalist's jealousy of an amateur commanding higher fees in Fleet Street (a guess about fees whose accuracy I doubt), why should this outburst be published? Or the one about the "most unchristian sermon" delivered by the Bishop of London, who did not share Dean Inge's view that Great Britain should not have been fighting Germany in 1914 to 1918, and said so plainly from the pulpit of St. Paul's. That David Lloyd George was "a mere time-server", while H. H. Asquith (who, by the way, had appointed him Dean of St. Paul's) was a noble statesman, is a reflection which makes one think again of what would have befallen Great Britain if the noble statesman had not been pushed aside by the time-server in 1915. Unedifying, to say the least, in this published Diary is the description of the Bishop of Ripon as a worn-out, unsuccessful prelate,

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even if it is correct—which, on evidence I value much more than that of an angry aside by the Gloomy Dean, I strongly dispute.

"The public", wrote this diarist in 1919, "is coming round to my way of thinking". To which ways of thinking? To the one that predicted the downfall of the Russian Bolsheviks and restoration of the Hohenzollerns to the throne of the German Reich? To forecast of revulsion from Socialism, from Nationalism, from Roman Catholicism on the continent of Europe, and from Anglo-Catholicism in England? Has there been a return of homage to rule by "the noble families", to imperialist direction of the lower races, to the Protestantism which the Dean (forgetful, apparently, of what he had said about "democracy" elsewhere) extols as "the democracy of religion"? In truth, no coming round to his way of thinking, but rather the success of the movements he most abhorred and the break-down of those he most desired to promote or preserve have marked the process of his later years. This indeed by no means settles the question whether his ways of valuing were right or wrong, but it does discredit what he fancied to be his keen insight into the way things were moving.

One who feels that the publication of this *Diary* will not be good for its writer's repute may still be glad that it appeared, because of greater solicitude for other interests than for the repute of the former Dean of St. Paul's. Not seldom too, amid all the play of egotistic gossip about himself, the diarist gives us memorable suggestive comment or some unforgettable brilliance of descriptive language. "In England", he writes, (p. 174) "almost all serious thought on theology is done by laymen": I wonder whether that is true, but can at once think of cases which illustrate it, and it is well worth considering what, just now, such a novelty signifies. Where will you find packed into the same space so much worth turning over and over in mind as in the words (p. 169) "That society of cooperative guilt with limited liability which the New Testament calls 'the world'"? Or a more arresting and opportune admonition to young clergy than "Don't fancy yourself disinterested when you are only uninterested, and don't fancy yourself attracted to God when you are only repelled by man" (p. 155).

This *Diary*, both for its merits and for its faults, is one not to be missed by reflective readers of our time. The author must have his moods of historical reminiscence in which he feels like a predecessor of four centuries ago, the great Dean Colet who founded St. Paul's School and who in his last years was glad of the shelter of retirement because he was too "modernistic" to be left at peace by the orthodox. Perhaps readers of this diary may think too of another in the long succession, the famous political divine Dean Donne, who is recorded as having been so self-conscious in his last hours as to get wrapped in his winding sheet to have his picture taken. I shall not develop either of these analogies further.



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THE BRITISH OVERSEAS. EXPLOITS OF A NATION OF SHOPKEEPERS.
By C. E. Carrington, M.A. The Macmillan Company of
Canada, 1950. Pp. xxi, 1092. Illustrated by maps, graphs
and portraits.

In this study, Mr. Carrington has made a commendable effort to relate in one volume the history of British expansion overseas during three centuries. Modestly disclaiming any pretence to original research in so large a field; but keenly interested as one of a family whose members, for a hundred years, have moved freely about the Empire; and believing, what need be true only in a geographical sense, that to have "An uncle or cousin in every Dominion is a great help to thinking imperially", he has consulted the best secondary sources and succeeded in presenting an intelligible view of a phenomenal movement and some very definite conclusions as to its future.

The overall conclusion at which Mr. Carrington arrives is that British expansion in the territorial sense and, even in the sense of net emigration, has come to an end; but that British ideas and ideals have still a contribution to make, and will continue to make it through members of the race overseas, even if there is no further stimulus from the Mother Land. "Nor would the descendants of the pioneers be any less the British race overseas, if the inhabitants of the United Kingdom were caught up into the air by an atom-bomb in the twinkling of an eye."

After tracing British expansion into all quarters of the globe and showing that the Empire was built up in five ways, by settlement, trade, finance, conquest or annexation in competition for spheres of influence, and by the spreading of ideas, he concludes that the first four modes of expansion have ended but the last has not. Quoting Macaulay with approval, "There is an Empire exempt from all natural causes of decay, the imperishable empire of our arts and our morals, our literature and our laws," he argues that the English language is spreading more rapidly than ever before and may in time become, perhaps in some rationalized form, the universal means of communication, carrying with it some notions that are implicit in its vocabulary." What these notions are may be gathered from the following quotation:—"Wherever the tongue of Milton and Shakespeare is understood, voices will bear witness for individualism, even for eccentricity, for a belief in the efficacy of tolerance and compromise, for a sense of liberty based on common-law rights, above all for the untranslatable spirit of fair play which is so different from abstract justice. Here is an Empire which still has great benefits to offer freely to the world."

Apart from the conclusions, which must be disappointing to all but the most altruistic imperial statesmen and will no doubt be questioned seriously; and despite the clear-cut plan of the book, the systematic organization of material in sections, each preceded by an "argument," which suggest that it was designed as a text-book for students as well as for the general public, it can be recommended as a text-book only with the proviso that its dates and other statements of fact should be checked carefully with original sources. In the field with

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which the reviewer is most familiar many of the best known dates are incorrect and many of the statements only partly true. Only a few examples can be given.

On page 100, he says that after 1763, "Steps were taken to allure settlers to Nova Scotia with promises of land"; but proclamations to this effect were issued in 1758 and 1759. "The abandoned site of Annapolis, marked by ruinous stone walls and orchard trees, was re-occupied in 1764;" but the site of Annapolis Royal was never abandoned and this migration of New Englanders commenced in 1760. "As early as 1765 Highlanders from Scotland were settling in the district of Pictou"; but this direct immigration commenced in 1773. On page 110 he speaks of the Quebec Act of 1773, for 1774; on page 129, of the founding of Sydney, Cape Breton, in 1783, for 1785; and, on page 553, he places the famous Charlottetown Conference in New Brunswick instead of Prince Edward Island, and makes the erroneous statement that general elections were held in each of the Maritime Provinces in 1865, repudiating the Quebec resolutions.

From these and many other examples that could be given one can see that from either carelessness or haste, Mr. Carrington has diminished the value of a work, which was obviously written *con amore* and was well worth doing. Another defect of this work, probably due to the fact that it was near to his heart, tends to detract from the value of his opinions: Such phrases as "The incorrigible New Englanders", "the mealy-mouthed Quakers" are not used by the objective historian. Despite these errors of fact and judgment, which may be corrected in a second edition, the work as a whole is well-planned, readable and informative.

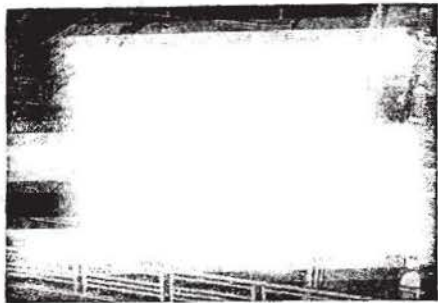
D.C.H.

THE FAR DISTANT SHIPS. By Joseph Schull. Ottawa, The King's Printer, 1950, 515 pp.

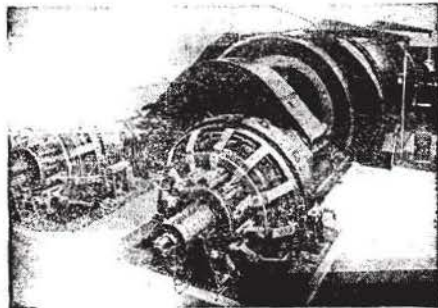
"Ships" is the key word in this title, the principal motif in naval activity, and the central theme of this work. Although due reference is made to personnel, and some aspects of organization and strategy, the principal concentration is upon ships on duty. It is an impressive theme, told in excellent prose. The considerable Canadian contribution of personnel to the Royal Navy and to various types of detached duty away from Canadian Ships is also recounted with care and proportion.

For one who has no first hand experience of Canadian naval activity in the late war, this account will be fascinating and bring a new appreciation of a hitherto little known field. Yet, as for all publications of this nature, certain limitations have necessarily imposed themselves. The book seems to have been produced for the general reading public; the narrator is thus not technical. The impression in general is that of a release by the Public Relations section, rather than a definitive history. Again, the great watersheds in Canadian Naval development are somewhat blurred by introducing subsidiary themes

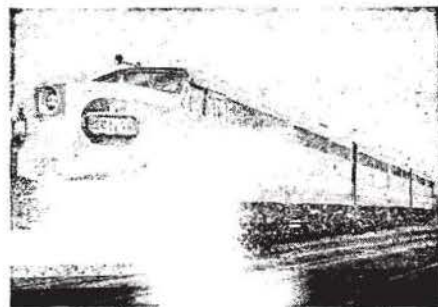
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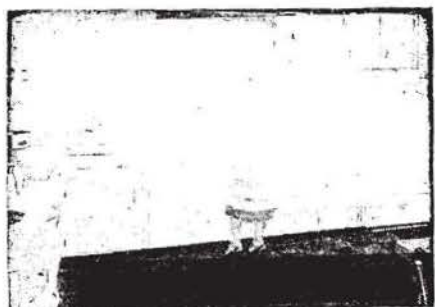


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quires that its writer must have done something intrinsically interesting to the rest of us, and must be able to write it in an interesting fashion. He must have a lot of good stories to tell, and he must be able to tell them with the spirit and verve of the raconteur whose conversation dominates the clubroom by its content and sparkle.

To a very large degree indeed the life and the abilities of Mr. Arthur R. Ford of the London Free Press fill the basic requirements for a good book of memoirs; therefore it is a welcome volume that Mr.

From his half-century in Canadian newspaperdom, Mr. Ford has culled a wide selection of interesting incident, varying from tales of the fabulous Bob Edwards of the Calgary Eye-Opener to an account of Mr. Ford's audience with the Pope. The meat of this book, however, lies in Mr. Ford's description and estimates of the political figures of Canada during this first half-century. Quite obviously, here lies Mr. Ford's chief interest, and he has a great wealth of knowledge and experience on which to base his observations.

Not everyone will agree with all of his estimates, especially as they concern Hon. Arthur Meighen, and Hon. Howard Ferguson. Yet Mr. Ford has reasons for his judgment, and he adduces his reasons—a refreshing course in a world of snap judgments, or, what is even worse, pre-judgments.

Mr. Ford has written a good book. It is an interesting book to read, and in many places it throws new light on political events in Canada during the past half-century. It merits two readings—one for the fun of it, and a second one to note, classify and assess Mr. Ford's always shrewd judgments.

B.E.R.

THE SINCLAIR EXPEDITION TO NOVA SCOTIA IN 1398: A pre-Columbian crossing of the Atlantic definitely dated as to year, month, and day of landing. By Frederick J. Pohl. Pictou, Nova Scotia: Pictou Advocate Press. 1950. Pp. 46. (\$1.00).

To demonstrate that Sir Henry Sinclair, a man bearing one of the surnames of Scotland, was the leader of an expedition which landed in Nova Scotia and explored Pictou County nearly a century before Columbus crossed the Atlantic, or Cabot reached the North American coast, would in the opinion of a Nova Scotia reviewer appear not only to be very fitting in the light of subsequent local history, but also to give rather belated justice to a prince "worthy of immortal memory." That is the purport of this new edition of the famous narrative of the Zeno brothers, which has afforded so many subjects of contention for geographers that more than a century and a half ago John Penkerton called it "one of the most puzzling in the whole circle of literature." Mr. Pohl has taken some of the points in the narrative which have cast doubts on the authenticity of part of it, and by a combination of research, insight and ingenuity has endeavoured either to explain them

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almost those parts." Farther to the south they encountered more refinement, a milder climate, and saw cities with temples dedicated to idols, where men were sacrificed and afterwards eaten. At length one of the fishermen set out for home, and passed from one chief to another as before, until he again came to Drogeo. There he spent three years until some boats arrived from Estotiland. Thereupon he returned to Estotiland, where he engaged in trade and became very rich. Then he fitted out a vessel of his own, returned to Frisland, and gave an account of his experiences to Sinclair. To verify these reports Sinclair and Antonio Zeno made their voyage.

They touched at "Icaria", which has been supposed to have been Kerry in Ireland, continued westward and reached land, which in the Zeno narrative is not named but which Pohl submits was Nova Scotia. From the name given to the harbour where they landed (Trin), Mr. Pohl infers that the year of the voyage was 1398, because Trinity Sunday fell on 2 June in that year. From the description of that harbour, and the distance from the great hill that poured forth smoke, which was found to proceed from a great fire in the bottom of the hill, whence a spring of pitch-like substance ran into the sea, Mr. Pohl concludes that Trin Harbour was Guysborough, and Stellarton the location of the smoking hill. Sinclair is said to have settled at the harbour reached, to have explored the whole country with diligence, as well as the coasts on both sides of Greenland; this was "particularly described (delineated) in the sea charts; but the description (textual) is lost."

Mr. Pohl's deductions are interesting, but do not entirely eliminate the difficulties in an account which students once described as "rank imposture" or "memorable fraud." Whether liberties were taken in 1558, with the narrative as well as with the map, and if so, to what extent, would to-day be hard to decide. The description of Antonio's return to Frisland, however, is not easily reconciled with a voyage from Nova Scotia. One also wonders how the Ramusio edition of the Zeno narrative, bearing the date December 1558 in its dedication, could have appeared, since Ramusio had died in July 1557. If it does not appear in the Ramusio edition of 1559, why was it interpolated into the edition of 1574, seventeen years after his death? Moreover, if the materials for such a narrative as would point to the discovery of a new world nearly a century before the voyage of Columbus existed, it seems unlikely that Ramusio would declare that he considered it in the nature of a duty to vindicate the truth in behalf of Columbus, who was the first to discover and bring to light the New World. Some again might wonder why the passage representing Estotiland as abounding in gold and other metals was suppressed from the Venice editions of 1583 and 1606. Notwithstanding all this, however, it is not unlikely that Scandinavian fishermen did visit the coasts of North America in the fourteenth century; and it seems clear from the narrative that the descendant of Antonio who published the account in 1558 made no claim for Sinclair and Antonio with respect to the "discovery of America."

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NOBLE ESSENCES. By Osbert Sitwell. Macmillans. Pp. 324. \$4.50

This is Volume V of Sir Osbert Sitwell's autobiography. It is, however, not a continuation of the earlier volumes, but rather a supplementary volume. Having brought his life up to date, Sir Osbert felt that he could give a slightly different picture of an age that is definitely past through portraits of some ten prominent people whom he had known in the twenties, all of whom were, with the exception of Rex Whistler, of an earlier generation. There is no "debunking" in the presentation of these people, but a deep appreciation of their fine qualities, though the author never hesitates to portray the "wart on the nose" if there is one.

Students of literature will be most interested in the portraits of Ronald Firbank, Wilfred Owen, Gabriele D'Annunzio, W. H. Davies, and Arnold Bennett. Each of these sketches adds materially to our understanding of the subject. Readers may not rate the work of Davies as highly as does the author, but they will be grateful for the intimate details of the man; the sketch of Bennett corrects certain common misapprehensions of the novelist, for it shows him as a very kindly person towards young, struggling authors. The other sketches help to give the reader a picture of the last decade of the 19th century and the first two of the present century. In some ways it is unfortunate that the first portrait is of Sir Edmund Gosse, who has little standing to-day as an accurate scholar and who stands forth as a rather pompous, vindictive snob. Hovering over all the characters, however, is the spirit of Oscar Wilde, whom most of them knew personally and who appreciated not merely his wit but his personal charm.

The author's purpose was, however, to fill in some details in his massive presentation of an age in English culture. He has succeeded admirably. Here are highly cultivated people who formed a class apart in English life. One must not forget, however, that they were able to be so richly cultivated not merely through their innate qualities but because of inherited wealth as well. The author may not like the changes coming over the face of England and may be scornful of the money-grubbing spirit, but this select group owed much to their acquisitive ancestors, who did not always appreciate culture. In the changes going on in English economic life there is the hope—or illusion—that more people may enjoy the pleasures heretofore restricted to a small, privileged group.

Sir Osbert is a good hater and knows what he hates. It would be hard to make a consistent political philosophy out of the views expressed in this book; for example, one cannot dismiss war in the over-simplified way the author does. Again, the author hardly loves on this side of idolatry, and one grows a little tired of his admiration of the Sitwell trio. Still these are very slight shortcomings in a very interesting book. One might surmise that for several years would-be wits will cull from this book dozens of anecdotes to pass off as their own.

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Specific character sketches of individuals are infrequent in the volume, but "The Oath" contains some fine descriptions of the two old war veterans—

In the blank twilight with not much left untold
By two old friends when neither's a great liar.

Rarely does Mr. Tate include humour in his poems. Only two poems are humorous, "Eclogue of the Liberal and the Poet", which criticizes the U. S. A., and "The Trout Map", "a fishy map for facile fishery".

This volume concludes with several of Allen Tate's translations, the best of which is the *Pervigilium Veneris* (*The Vigil of Venus*).

Allen Tate uses a wide variety of verse forms, some of which are illustrated above. His poems include sonnets, four-line rhymed stanzas, blank verse, and free verse experimental metres. The poetry is not profuse with imagery, but those images we find are close-packed, often Eliotan.

The reader of this volume will find its contents stimulating, particularly if he is critical of his era, and has given thoughtful consideration to the problems of life. He will find a wide range of subject matter and techniques, with maturity of thought. There are in the book perhaps only half a dozen weak poems. The major fault here lies in occasional touches of sentimentality and repetition of ideas.

ROBERT G. LAWRENCE

THE INDEX OF AMERICAN DESIGN. By Erwin O. Christensen. Macmillans (in conjunction with the National Gallery of Art, Washington). Pp. 229. Illustrations, 378 (117 in full color). \$17.25.

Some writers have pointed out that war has begotten more scientific advancements than has peace; that is not, of course, a justification of war, but merely a condemnation of man's poor social thinking. If one had to find some good from the depression of the 30's, one might refer to this truly magnificent book. In his Introduction, Mr. Holger Cahill traces the genesis of the work.

Towards the end of the 19th century, Europeans showed interest in native American crafts and arts, and Americans here and there began to follow suit. Local museums began to flourish, but the movement was very slow. The First World War gave some impetus, but it was the need of the Federal Government during the 30's to find employment for commercial artists that really brought these incipient interests to a focal point. One project was to record in water colors the best specimens of American handicrafts throughout the country. As much of the work had to be done with the aid of state governments, delicate problems sometimes arose, but eventually 35 states participated in the movement between 1935 and 1940. Some of the artists were not at first interested because they felt it merely meticulous

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copying, but gradually they realized that artistry was involved. New England, and the Middle Atlantic States were best represented in the project; for various reasons the Southern states were least involved. Some 15,000 drawings were made, which are now preserved in Washington. Travelling exhibits have been used as a means of acquainting the country as a whole with the great heritage, and now this sumptuous volume is published in the hopes of reaching a wider group. One could only wish that one of the great corporations had endowed the publication so heavily that it might have been sold at a price within reach of small libraries and people of average means, for it is a book to be studied carefully and often.

Every phase of life to the end of the 19th century, when industrialism finally won over the craftsman, is represented. Here we have beautiful costumes, fine glass, stands for flat-irons, simple but beautiful Shaker furniture, cigar-store Indians, ship figureheads and religious furnishings. The color plates are especially rich and clear, but the ordinary plates are also very clear for detail. The running text is highly informative, seemingly accurate, and, at times, humorous. An oft recurring question is "What is peculiarly American?" On p. 82, one answer is suggested: "If any trend in design can be called American, it is a tendency to simplify the forms inherited from Europe. A new country, where much work must be done by few hands, does not encourage elaboration." This fact, together with the religious scruples of the Shakers, led these people to anticipate modern functionalism. It is interesting to compare the contributions of the various ethnical groups that settled in the young country.

As they look at and read this truly beautiful book, most Canadians will perhaps wonder if anything like the Index of American Design is being undertaken by the Dominion, or any provincial government. Such a question is particularly pertinent to the Maritime Provinces, where we had similar handicrafts. One thinks of the ship figureheads, hand wrought iron, homemade furniture, hooked rugs, and quilts that can still be found in Nova Scotia. Here is an undertaking that should not be delayed too long.

B.M.

THE GROWTH OF SCIENTIFIC IDEAS. By W. P. D. Wightman. (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd; Toronto: Clarke, Irwin). Pp. 496. \$7.50.

Perhaps any discussion of growth phenomena, particularly of the sort that comprise history, is fanciful to the extent that a knowledge of after-developments is used to explain or to gain insight into the antecedent. Even the afterthought ephemerality of causation helps to make mirage out of the sought thing. Certainly these difficulties show in the sometimes interesting hindights labelled Histories of Science.

But then, is it possible for a history to avoid judgments and utility considerations that draw their meaning from today? On the other hand, can the questions of validity with regard to past things be even

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discussed in the presumed absence of that present frame from which spring our expressible notions and ideas?

If it is assumed that no myth will be created when history is written as if we were there, then, at any rate, personal and engrossing narratives are possible. Mr. Wightman uses this accepted technique, but in addition is concerned to clarify certain features that relate specifically to his choice of subject. First of all, he finds it convenient to judge past performers in the sciences with regard to the proportion of "essential truth" their arguments contained, this factor being assessed from the rather cruel vantage point of today. Once this ambush has been used, automatically the development of science takes on the aspect of a struggle, within man, around man and between men. It is Wightman's object that this too be clear. He has written the book with the purpose of showing the growth of scientific ideas to be a continuous and complicated human conflict, involving only people and the situations peculiar to themselves, in which they enact their roles in word and deed so that science, too, becomes a "branch of *Litterae Humaniores*". Although the chaos of dead endeavors may be given their simplest (though not necessarily relevant) meanings only by the operation on them of our present convictions, still Wightman wishes to emphasize as well the wide interdependence between these apparently separate items in the past. Each specific development in science, each new concept or technique, was not born in isolation but had detailed and often unexpected relationships to factors antecedent and contemporary with itself.

It may not be too difficult to visualize an historical fact as having a twofold nature, "namely that every standpoint is what it is by virtue of its origin from the past and its urge towards the future." But it is probably quite another thing to write a history that shows this to be so. Wightman has been clear in the statement of his purpose, and by and large consistent in its application, though this need not be a point up for him. Beginning his story with the Greeks, becoming fascinated with the Renaissance, making a winsome giant out of Newton, Wightman takes us on this course to the beginning of the present century. Then turning back for the latter part of the book, he gathers together those threads that to him appear to lead to the question "What is Life?" This reviewer may have been partly disturbed by the eerie evocativeness of this last question, but nevertheless found the book interesting from beginning to end.

W. R. TROST

THE RENAISSANCE. By George Clarke Sellery. University of Wisconsin Press (Toronto, Burns and MacEachern). \$4.75.

This Canadian-born historian retired some eight years ago after completing forty-one years of service at the University of Wisconsin, during which time he became a professor, Dean of the College of Letters and Science, and Acting President. Now in retirement Professor Sellery styles himself a "free-lance historian".

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How does one account for the achievements on the part of Europeans which ushered in modern times? Diverse answers have been offered by historians ever since Jacob Burckhardt's *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy* (1860). In his treatment Professor Sellery stresses historical continuity and sees the economic prosperity, which underlay so many of the phenomena of civilization in the 14th and 15th centuries, as having its roots far back in the 12th and 13th centuries. Though Professor Sellery appreciates the importance of urban life on the development of the Renaissance, he nonetheless refuses wholly to accept the old and delightfully simple thesis that the growth of wealth brought into existence a leisure class some members of which devoted themselves wholeheartedly to scholarship and the arts and that, since the Italian cities were the most wealthy centres, therefore the Renaissance was at first an Italian affair. The author points out that other factors, such as the intelligence displayed in trade and commerce, the role of the bourgeoisie in municipal government, the mental stimulation acquired through travel could develop intellectual power and wisdom just as effectively as literature, scholarship, and the arts. By means of a careful study and evaluation of what he considers the significant individuals, movements, and achievements of this period, Professor Sellery attempts to arrive at some useful conclusions regarding the Renaissance, which continues to remain "a baffling concept". The author finally arrives at the major conclusion that the Revival of Learning, though far from being a negligible factor in the evolution of our modern civilization since it fertilized the modern age "with cleaner conceptions of the breadth and richness of ancient times than the Middle Ages knew", was not the creative force ushering in modernity. The general force as seen by Professor Sellery's was the natural effort of men to achieve a more abundant life on the earth by applying their wits to problems which required, and admitted of, solution."

Here is an essay on the Renaissance that can be enjoyed by the general reader as well as by the student of the period, who whether or not he agrees with Professor Sellery's treatment cannot well ignore it.

J. P. HEISLER

POETS OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE (5 vols. boxed.) Edited by W. H. Auden & Norman H. Pearson. (Viking Portable Library). Macmillans in Canada. \$2.95 per volume.

An anthology of any kind is a difficult subject to which to do justice in a review, where so much depends on the taste of the individual evaluating it. The five volumes comprising *Poets of the English Language*, because of their many excellent features, pose even more than the usual amount of difficulty. The set should provide readers with one of the most useful and comprehensive studies extant of poetry written in English. What the compilers have achieved is "a picture of the poetical tradition from Langland to the beginning of World War II." Langland was chosen as a beginning, not because the tradition began with him, they explain, but "because the lang-

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uage of earlier periods communicates directly only to those with scholarly training." Indeed, it might very well be said that numbers of prospective readers would have difficulty in understanding some of the texts presented in Volume I were it not for the brief but informative "Note" on Middle English contributed by E. T. Donaldson, which is to be found in the introductory portions of this book.

As a further aid in enabling readers to see the course poetry followed in historical perspective, *A Calendar of British and American Poetry*, arranged in columnar form, has been placed side by side with a similar column detailing the history of the period, and these precede the text in each volume, so that the relation between the political history and literature of the times may always be apparent. In addition to Langland, a number of anonymous lyricists are represented, and there are generous excerpts from the works of Richard Rolle, from the *Canterbury Tales* and other poems by Geoffrey Chaucer, as well as from the writings of Lydgate, Skelton, Sir Thomas Wyatt Sir Philip Sidney and last, but by no means least, from the *Faerie Queene* of Edmund Spenser. There are, too, the famous *Morte D'Arthur*, *The Romance of the Rose* and *The Second Shepherd's Play*, and examples of the work of a number of minor poets included. The period covered in this first volume is roughly from 1360 to 1600. Volume II (1550-1700) covers the Elizabethans from Marlowe to Marvell and includes much of Shakespeare's poetry other than the drama; Volume III (1600-1800) deals with poets from Milton to Goldsmith, Volume IV (1750-1860) embraces writers from Blake to Poe; and Volume V (1800-1914) those from Tennyson to Yeats. American poets represented appear in volumes IV and V, among them Emerson, Thoreau, Whittier and Poe, though they are by no means the only Americans whose work appears.

Poets whose work is included in Volume V must have been born before 1870, and the examples of their poems given must have been written prior to 1914.

It is safe to say that few persons, apart from scholars, realize what a heritage the English-speaking peoples possess in their literature, of which the poetry is a part. Here one may glean some slight idea of its extent and of the diversity of its subject matter. But the collection is of value to the student and scholar, too. The well-known critic Horace Gregory calls it "the best . . . comprehensive collection of its kind in existence," and adds that "With Auden's introductions . . . it clearly shows what intelligent twentieth-century editing can do if enough brilliance and poetic insight go into it."

Opinions on the value of any survey will differ with the taste of the individuals expressing them, but there appears little doubt that the great majority of opinions on *Poets of the English Language* will be laudatory. The introductions alone are worth the price of the books, and the textual content will provide pleasure to readers for years, while affording a compact and convenient means of speedy reference. *Poets of the English Language* is worthy of inclusion in public and institutional libraries, as well as in those of the bibliophile and the lover of good poetry. They are a credit to their editors and to the publishers, and their modest price puts them within the reach of all.

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