

ALASKAN ESKIMOS. BY WENDELL H. OSWALT. *San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., 1967. 5¾ x 8½ inches, 297 pages, 14 text illustrations, 10 colour prints, maps, tables, bibliography, index. \$4.00 paper, \$7.25 cloth.*

Everyone concerned with university education should take a close look at this book, although in appearance it is more like the product of a machine than of a man: the distributors (Science Research Associates) are a subsidiary of IBM.

Dr. Oswalt has done significant work on Alaskan Eskimos. His *Napaskiak* (1963) and *Mission of Change in Alaska* (1963) stand in marked contrast to the vast amount of purple prose that has poured out about Eskimos of late; both books were eminently readable, factual and the product of sustained and serious work in the field.

As elsewhere in education, the machine seems to have taken over, and secured another "notorious victory". The book is the first in a series of Chandler Publications in Anthropology and Sociology, so perhaps it may just be possible to pull out the plug before the machine gives birth to the next volume in the series.

"Alaskan Eskimos" deals with the traditional ways of the Eskimo; no mention is made of their current condition. Dr. Oswalt is able to fight off the machine at times and to rise to some heights. In the chapter on "The Individual" (which surely should have started the book) the author seems to think like an Eskimo and at times he writes "from the inside" as it were. He mentions (p. 205) the story of Attungowrah — a truly remarkable Eskimo from Point Hope. Some of the book sounds like a parody: "Murdock (1949, 231-32) regarded the Yuman type as unstable with descent in a state of flux and little internal consistency . . . We find, too, that according to the calculations of Hirsch (1954, 835), the Kuskowagamiut (Yuk) are removed from the Unaligmiut (Yuk) to about the same degree as the Siberian Eskimos (Yupak) and Nuniwagamiut (Cux) are removed from the Unaligmiut. This, however, does not fit with Hammerich's conclusions, nor with what is generally accepted to be the relationships among these dialects." Any student who can memorize these two excerpts — he does not have to *understand* them — is bound to do well in anthropology. At times the book becomes a mere catalogue.

This volume represents some sort of ultimate degree of specialization. Are there a sufficient number of students interested in studying Eskimos to make it worthwhile?

After all, they are among the most studied people in the world and soon there may be more people studying Eskimos than there are Eskimos to be studied. In the words of the old cliché, the book tells us more about Eskimos than we need to know: houses, history, origins, carvings, physiology — all are described, and in exhaustive detail. The book contains line drawings and illustrations in the text, and some excellent colour photographs of artifacts. The text is clean and clear, but the binding is hideous.

Books are written to be read. It is doubtful whether many people will sit down and read this one, although it is an invaluable reference book.

Jim Lotz

CANADA'S NORTH. BY R. A. J. PHILLIPS. *Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada, Ltd., 1967. 6 x 9 inches, 306 pages, photographs, maps, index. \$7.95.*

This book was published on the occasion of the Centennial of Canadian Confederation. The preparation of the manuscript was subsidized by the Centennial Commission. The author was for many years in the Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources as Chief of the Arctic Division and Director of Northern Administration. He has therefore had access to considerable reference material, and has personal knowledge of the plans and policies of the Federal Government. In fact, Mr. Phillips helped to formulate these policies during the important years of change after the establishment of the new department. In addition to his first-hand knowledge of, and great interest in, the region, the author also has a talent as a writer. It is not easy to be entertaining, informative and interesting when dealing with such a wide range of material as that contained in this book. Mr. Phillips manages this, although it is not always light entertainment.

It was right and proper that this book should appear in the Centennial Year. "Whose North?" asks the author in Chapter 6 — and stresses that Canada's claim to its northern lands has sometimes hung by a slender thread. We should not be complacent about it; we still lag far behind other northern nations in our attitude and performance.

Various ways have been thought of to foster more knowledge and enthusiasm for the north by agencies concerned. In the summer of 1967, for example, 45 "big-business tourists" were taken on a trip of many thousands of miles through the Arctic by the