

Book Reviews

Desmond Pacey, ed. *The Letters of Frederick Philip Grove*, Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1976. pp. 584. \$25.00.

On January 15, 1941, a 23-year-old professor of English at Brandon College wrote to Frederick Philip Grove in Simcoe, Ontario, requesting information needed for a radio talk on the former Manitoba novelist. Just out from Cambridge, the young scholar had been asked to participate in "The University of the Air" series, to which the University of Manitoba was contributing a number of "Manitoba Sketches." "I was asked to cover the field of Manitoba literature," the professor recalls, "[and] as the only Manitoba literature I had then read was Grove's novels, I made [his] novels the subject of my talk."

It is likely that Grove did not hear this talk, broadcast over local Manitoba stations, but this exchange of letters marked the beginning of Desmond Pacey's formal study of Grove, which culminated in his book-length study of the novelist in 1945. In the thirty-five years that have elapsed since that first letter, Pacey has been singularly dedicated to keeping Grove's name before the public, and though he has been upstaged recently by the sleuthing of Douglas Spettigue in regards to Grove's life, his body of critical assessments about his fiction still stands as a requisite for the Grove scholar. It is therefore fitting that Pacey should have capped his career with this monumental collection of Grove's letters, completed just before his untimely death on July 4, 1975, which to my knowledge is, aside from the *Selected Letters of Malcolm Lowry*, the only collection of letters ever published on a major Canadian literary figure.

It is one of the many ironies of Grove's career that Pacey's final tribute to him and his work is much more sympathetic and generous than Grove's own attitude to Pacey in a sense deserved. In light of his early encouragement of the young scholar, it is difficult to understand Grove's comments in 1946 about being "indignant . . . about the Pacey book," and about Carleton Stanley being "vastly superior to Pacey; he is a real critic." Looked at with all the hindsight provided to us by Spettigue's revelations about Grove-Greve, Pacey's book is now clearly deficient in those areas where he traces biographical-fictional lines, but in his analyses of individual Grove novels, it was clearly more commendatory than it was destructive. Perhaps Pacey's summing up of the situation provides the answer: "He never took kindly to adverse criticism of any kind, and he did not suffer fools gladly."

This judgment is supported throughout this volume of letters, and one is left with the clear impression that a large number of people — Grove's casual acquaintances, his publishers, and most

of all his wife — did in fact suffer him more gladly than he deserved. From the first he was overbearing and demanding, and though he protests in an early letter (February 10, 1914: to Isaak Warkentin) that "I have very little patience with narrow-mindedness," he demonstrates time and again that he himself was not free of this trait. Much of his defensive attitude can of course be attributed to his need to keep his real identity concealed (we now know that he was German-born, and that he fled Germany in 1909 after faking a suicide to escape financial and marital problems), but it is unfortunate that he did not realize that his newly adopted country was more than ready to take him at his word. In that long letter to Warkentin, he already started to weave the legend that was to constitute so much of his 1946 autobiography, *In Search of Myself*:

My father was a Swede, my mother a Scotchwoman, I was raised in Germany, I have lived in pretty nearly every country of Europe, in North America and Canada, I have travelled in Africa, through Asia, in Australia, I know India and China a little, the Islands south of Asia fairly well — so I believe — speaking merely geographically — I can claim a certain 'manysidedness.' . . . I speak English, French, German, Italian, and Arabian — and I have a fair knowledge of Latin, Greek, Sanskrit, Spanish and Swedish with their respective literatures.

Clearly, modesty was not part of his make up, and one would be more charitable about this trait had it been confined to the initial covering of his tracks. But we find almost at random evidences of this characteristic throughout this series of letters: "I write my books for a public which is not yet born" (1926); "It shows again that the right sort of people gravitate towards me." (1928); "Ottawa is Dukes and Lords; and I'm at home among them." (1928); "Here, there is an enormous to-do about my visit. Banquet in my honour at noon. Had to speak, of course, and set them by the ears. . . . I am a drawing card." (1929); "My friends will say, . . . why don't you teach moderns or classics in some University? You can do it better than many of the present instructors." (1934); "Friends of mine who have read the type-script call it a 'knock-out' of a book and talk of the Nobel Prize." (1939). "May I say that W. J. Alexander, in one of his last discussions of my work with Carleton Stanley, called the book 'ultimate and enduring.'" (1945). I do not know whether replies to these letters are extant — Pacey does not give any indication — but I suspect that the reactions of Grove's correspondents would give us other views of his talents.

It is true, of course, that singling out extravagant remarks like these is carrying the fight unfairly to Grove, and as Pacey points out, reading anybody's letters "gives the uneasy feeling that we are trespassing upon the private domain of their author." This is particularly the case with the letters Grove wrote to his wife which, it seems to me, should not have been released for publication, without a more rigorous excision of those statements which are clearly extra-literary. Such domestic comments as "am sending you a parcel of dirty laundry today," or "shall send

underwear tomorrow morning," — and by the frequency of such comments, Mrs. Grove must have received more parcels than any other Canadian during the period of Grove's Canadian Club tours of 1928-29 — these comments tend to distract us from the more substantial things he had to say.

In these matters, literary and otherwise, Grove was somewhat uneven, though his letters on the whole make it clear that he was a man of considerable intellect. He was generally more appreciative of European writers than his Canadian contemporaries, and he was particularly hostile to Martha Ostenso, whose *Wild Geese* came out the same year as his own *Settlers of the Marsh*. His judgments of that book — "deplorably, even unusually immature," "[Ostenso] knows nothing of the grim things of life," "untrue and silly" ending, its "petty sexiness [which] makes a mature person smile," — have not been supported by subsequent generations of readers, and one can only attribute his attacks to jealousy. Of Philip Child, Hugh MacLennan, and W. O. Mitchell, he speaks very highly, particularly of the latter, whose *Who Has Seen the Wind* he read in manuscript form a year before it was published: "Keep your mind open for a young Albertan, W. O. Mitchell, whose first novel I have just most strongly recommended. . . . There is all of Saskatchewan in it. Glad to see him coming along. To me he seems much better than myself." It is interesting to compare this judgment with his earlier one on Ostenso: was it just that Mitchell's novel was better, or did Grove at 75 have less reason to be threatened than he did at the outset of his career? It is inconsistencies and contradictions such as these which compel one time and time again to question Grove's judgments.

I think the reader will ultimately be saddened a bit by this collection of letters in that so much hope is expressed in them and often so little realized. On a first reading, they are of course as fresh to the reader today as they once were to Grove and his correspondents, but unlike those parties, we have knowledge of the aftermath, and we can therefore plumb the emptiness of some of his boasting. On the positive side, however, we learn much about the state of letters in Canada for close to three decades, and we ultimately have to stand amazed at the desperation and nerve of this man who not only assumed a new identity and a new life in Canada but had all of his countrymen fooled for almost four decades. As Ronald Sutherland expressed it at the Grove Symposium in 1973, "He was a stranger and he took us in."

This collection of letters clearly needs two companion volumes: first, the letters of Grove's correspondents, and particularly those of his publishers and of his wife, who seem to have borne the brunt of his vagaries and demands. The present volume is complete in that it contains all the letters of Grove Pacey had had been able to locate, but there are unfortunate gaps: McClelland Stewart, for example, the publishers of Grove's first two books, apparently destroyed all their early correspondence from Grove. One can only hope, as with Grove's unpublished novel *Felix Powell's Career* (which apparently confirms the

Felix Paul Greve link), that reports of their being destroyed prove to be unfounded, and that new light will eventually be shed on this enigmatic personality. Secondly, what is needed is an edition of Grove's letters written when he was still Felix Paul Greve, which include letters to his German publisher, as well as to such writers as André Gide, Stefan George, and Friedrich Gundolf. Pacey acknowledges this need, and does add a very useful appendix of some of Greve's more significant letters, as well as the letter written by the publisher to Greve's widow after his apparent suicide. The final item in Pacey's volume is in a sense the most intriguing of all: two letters in German handwriting, one by Felix Paul Greve (1907), and one by Frederick Philip Grove (1913). If handwriting were the sole evidence on which the Grove-Greve link was predicated, it would be a weak case indeed, for the scripts are entirely dissimilar. Though Spettigue's case, as presented in his *FPG: The European Years* is extremely convincing, Pacey points out that it "is still not conclusively proven," and in this light, these two handwritten letters stand as his final admonition to Spettigue and to the rest of us that as far as anything about Grove is concerned, the final word may not yet have been written.

Hallvard Dahlie

Webster, "*The White Devil*" and "*The Duchess of Malji*": A Casebook. Ed. R. V. Holdsworth. Toronto: MacMillan of Canada, 1975. pp. 256. \$11.95.

Begun in the late sixties under general editor A. E. Dyson, the MacMillan Casebook Series now includes over fifty titles. The series combines the advantages of the Critical Heritage format, which provides ample coverage of sometimes forgotten commentary from the past, with the advantages of a series such as *Twentieth Century Views*, which concentrates, of course, on contemporary criticism. But the Casebooks have suffered from an apparent lack of editorial control and seeming confusion over the aims of the series as a whole: one might ask why *Emma* merits a volume to itself, when *Sense and Sensibility*, *Pride and Prejudice* and *Mansfield Park* are all to be considered under one cover; why some volumes include questions designed for undergraduate students, while others have no questions whatsoever; why some volumes on drama focus almost exclusively on literary analysis, whereas others are attentive to reviews of theatrical productions. Although each work clearly demands its own special treatment, the reader of volumes in this series will find their quality strikingly uneven and cannot hope to have his expectations about their value consistently fulfilled.

R. V. Holdsworth's Casebook on Webster, however, is a usefully eclectic sampling of comments, articles and reviews on one of the most challenging of Jacobean dramatists. Despite Ralph Berry's recent attempt in *The Art of John Webster* (1972) to revive interest in *The Devil's Law-Case*, Webster is still known as the author of the two tragedies which he wrote after working for ten years as a collaborator with Dekker and Heywood. *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malji* are not mixtures, but

mosaics (see Symonds, Wendell, Brooke, Lucas and Brown), mosaics of sententious moralizing, sensational horror-mongering and magnificently powerful, if grotesque and inconsistent characters. When we enter what John Russell Brown calls the "hot-house" atmosphere of these plays, we enter a world peopled with the likes of Iago, Edmund, Goneril and Regan, a world where the fox has put the lion to rout in order to cohabit, at least briefly, with the gilded serpents of court and clergy. Flashes of human decency are rare and surprising where the norm is at best expediency and at worst totally gratuitous violence. As Rupert Brooke has said, "A play of Webster's is full of the feverish and ghastly turmoil of a nest of maggots." If we can bear the reality, we see in the midst of this turmoil, existence, not life.

The question to which the critics in this book constantly return is why Webster tries to make "our flesh creep." William Archer and Ian Jack claim that in Webster art is totally devoid of moral purpose, echoing the complaints of Hazlitt and Charles Kingsley. Swinburne, however, anticipating to some extent Brooke's assertion that Webster was a satirist, praises him as a "high-souled and gentle-hearted poet"; some modern critics represented here (Una Ellis-Fermor, Irving Ribner, Ralph Berry) follow Swinburne's lead to suggest not only that the sophistication of Webster's imagery counteracts his superficial disregard for moral feeling but also that the glimpses of regret we see in *Flamíneo* and *Bosola* reveal Webster as an exorciser of illusion who exposes the vanity of human wishes. But the most stimulating modern approach to the plays emphasizes the differences rather than the similarities between the most villainous of Webster's villains and by viewing the plays as companion pieces sees some characters attaining a tenuous moral awareness in the later play. As culpable, then, as the Duchess may be in flouting Order, she is more attractive because more conscious of moral realities than Vittoria Corombona; as chastened as he is, Delio has more reason for hope than Giovanni; as unscrupulous as *Bosola* seems, he moves through the "maze of conscience" to come closer than *Flamíneo* to the "integrity of life" which Webster keeps beyond the grasp of all his characters. In different ways, Peter Murray, J. W. Lever and Irving Ribner provide here in excerpts from previously published books carefully argued demonstrations of Webster's moral purpose in the last two Jacobean tragedies of state.

Although modern commentary seems at last to have coped with the horrors in Webster — horrors thought appalling and indecorous in the eighteenth century and fascinating in the nineteenth century — this Casebook ends appropriately with reviews of twentieth century performances of the plays. These reviews, particularly E. M. Forster's, reflect on the difficulty of presenting uncommonly subtle characters and extremely intricate plots to modern audiences. At times, however, producers seem to have thought of Webster merely as the author of dramatic "thrillers": Jack Landau refers to Webster's *Italy* as an "Elizabethan Mickey Spillane world" and Kenneth Tynan calls *Bosola* "a private eye with a nose for corruption." At other times absurdity, sexual

perversity and brutality closer to Belsen and Auschwitz than to Bedlam have been exaggerated on stage. In both cases, contemporary performances have shunned the critics' preoccupation with Webster's moral purpose.

Although scholars will still have to consult Boklund and Dent on Webster's sources, this book serves its purpose well: for both student and teacher it is a provocative introduction to Webster's major plays.

Ronald B. Bond

John Wain, ed., *Johnson as Critic*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. (The Routledge Critics Series) 1973. pp. 472. \$23.25.

John Wain, *Samuel Johnson*. New York: Viking Press. 1975. pp. 388. \$10.

John Wain's interest in, and affection for, Samuel Johnson is well documented. Those who heard, as I did, his professorial lecture at the University of Edinburgh were already aware of Wain's sense of identity with Lichfield's greatest son and his strong affection for him. This love of his subject persuaded even an Edinburgh audience, loath to forgive Johnson his anti-Scottish humours, and unwilling to admit that any further biographic work was necessary after Boswell's *Life*, that John Wain was an unusually suitable person to write a new biography. As Wain put it in the introduction to his biography:

I was born in the same district as Johnson — some thirty miles away — and in much the same social milieu. I went to the same university, and since then have lived the same life of Grub Street, chance employment, and the unremitting struggle to write enduring books against the background of an unstable existence. The literary and social situation that Johnson knew in its early days, I knew in its twilight; and perhaps even this will give my book, whatever its shortcomings, some documentary interest.

This quality of strong love for the subject is, at one and the same time, the strength and weakness of Wain's biographical work. To use a Johnsonian word, it is an "encomiastic" biography, and *not* an analytic one. Inevitably, some of the more disturbing sides of Johnson's personality, such as his "vile melancholy" or extreme neuroticism, and the fact that Johnson, in his attitude towards national groups like the Scots, the Americans and the French, tended towards the stereotype of the "prejudiced" as opposed to the "tolerant" man, are consistently played down. Wain is at his best in extolling the finer sides of Johnson's moral thinking: his basic humanity, his opposition to exploitation, his hatred of the slave trade, and his desire for a more merciful penal system. Wain clearly believes that one of the major merits of his biographical work is the new emphasis he gives to aspects of Johnson's personality which we know best through James Boswell's eyes. He reveals many weaknesses in Boswell's perspectives and flaws

in Boswell's own personality. Such is the power of familiarity, however, or it may even be a question of superior literary talent, that when I compared parallel biographical passages in Boswell and Wain, I consistently felt that Boswell was more dramatic and immediate. Boswell's famous sketch of Johnson's religious, moral, political and literary character at the beginning of the *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*, which Boswell himself describes as an "imperfect sketch of the combination and the form of that wonderful man, whom I venerated and loved while in this world" seems to me to obtain a kind of "loving truth" that Wain, for all his affection for Johnson, never equals.

Wain's biography has one feature which distinguishes it from all other biographies known to me, with the possible exception of that of Joseph Wood Krutch. As one would expect from a distinguished writer and critic, what Wain has to say about Johnson as writer, and particularly about the *Journey to the Western Isles*, and about Johnson's poetry, is perceptive and absorbing. It is, however, not surprising that one gets a *déjà vu* feeling in reading some of it, for Wain had earlier written extensively on Johnson as writer, starting, I believe, with his essay on Johnson's poetry in *Encounter*. Wain's introduction to the selection of Johnson's critical writings, published in 1973, inevitably anticipates many of the things that Wain has to say in the biography about Johnson as a critic of Shakespeare, Johnson on other poets, and Johnson as lexicographer. Wain's criticism of Johnson as writer has many of the qualities of Johnson's own criticism; it concentrates on essentials, it quotes and summarises successfully, and is lucid and pleasant to read. If it occasionally gives the impression of being "old-fashioned" and thus unaware of some of the more recent excesses of critical writing on eighteenth-century literature, it is, to my mind, none the worse for that.

One pleasing feature of both books is the genuine modesty of the hidden scholarship. Wain makes no claim to original scholarship, but he handles the very considerable body of modern critical writing on Johnson that he has read with tact and sensibility. In the *Johnson as Critic* volume, one is occasionally surprised at his choice of text for the forty-seven selections which he makes. A Fellow of Brasenose presumably had access to more significant texts of the *Lives of the Poets* than that in the World's Classics series, and the reasons for not using the Yale text for Johnson on Shakespeare are not clear. Generally speaking, however, texts are handled carefully and sympathetically. The note on sources in the biography denies originality: "There is no research in this book. Every fact it contains was previously known to scholars and to any reader who kept abreast of scholarship." Wain's sure touch with his primary and secondary material would put many an "academic" researcher to shame. Wain further says: "everyone who knows his way about Johnsoniana will recognise my debt to certain modern studies in fields where my ignorance was too great to allow of my consulting original sources." In view of the fact that the weakest part of Boswell is that dealing with Johnson's earlier life, the name of J. L. Clifford,

author of *Young Sam Johnson*, might have been added to the names of the other great Johnsonians, Birkbeck-Hill, Powell, Greene, and the Hydes, whose work Wain gratefully acknowledges.

R. H. Carnie.

M. M. Badawi, *A Critical Introduction to Modern Arabic Poetry*. New York and London: Cambridge University Press. 1975. pp. 289. \$23.50.

Dr. Badawi is a prolific writer whose main strength lies in his deep awareness of eastern and western cultures. After his recent study, *Coleridge: Critic of Shakespeare* (1973), he has written the first critical survey in English of modern Arabic poetry. The book, based on his lectures at the University of Oxford, covers the era from the late nineteenth century to the present day. Presumably, this ambitious study is designed for Arabists as well as average cultivated readers. All the selected verse, newly translated into English by the author, is closely examined in the light of the literary climate, with a minimum of technical jargon. The material is well-ordered, lucidly and gracefully expressed, systematically reasoned, and amply but never excessively or pedantically supported by references.

As a literary historian, Dr. Badawi adopts a chronological pattern which consists of four main stages: "the neoclassical," the "pre-romantic," the "romantic," and the "contemporary." This design, more or less, parallels the development of English literature from the Augustan age to the modern era. But the author gives a word of warning about the danger of applying European critical terminology to Arabic poetry (p. 26). He carefully draws clear distinctions in order to avoid distortion, over-simplification and misleading comparisons. The terms of classification are defined with clarity and precision to indicate the common characteristics of each group of poets, without disregarding individual disparities.

After a brief historical introduction, the second chapter deals with neoclassical poets such as al-Barudi and Shauqi who turn to the Arabic tradition for their inspiration, creatively imitating the profuse elaboration and decorative style of medieval writers, especially those of the Abbasid period. In general terms, they are earnest moralists usually writing didactic poetry to glorify the ideals of honour, chivalry, valour, munificence or hospitality. With their emphasis on the decorum of form, these neoclassicists display great interest in magniloquence, elegant and archaic expressions, verbal acrobatics and stylistic ingenuities.

As a literary and social phenomenon, this mode of expression fades away in the early decades of this century, with the cultural movement towards change and modernization. The "pre-romantics" gradually reject the limitations imposed by the conventions of the classical heritage, and attempt to revolutionize themes, diction and imagery in Arabic poetry. It is significant that Khalil Mutran, a highly conscious artist and a

chief exponent of the new trend, translated *The Merchant of Venice*, *Othello*, *Macbeth* and *Hamlet*, as well as many works of Corneille, Victor Hugo and Paul Bourget. According to Dr. Badawi, "there is definitely an interesting parallelism between Mutran's insistence on uncommonness of imagination or strangeness of subject, together with essential truthfulness, minuteness and accuracy of description, and the avowed intentions of the authors of the *Lyrical Ballads*" (p. 72). On the fecundity of the imagination, Mutran writes: "The soul, like Nature, is an ever-creating mother/Bringing to a new form all created things" (p. 77).

Badawi proceeds to explore the spirit of romanticism in the works of Zaki Abu Shadi, Ibrahim Naji and the Apollo Group, who clearly reflect the deep influence of Wordsworth, Shelley and Keats in their approach to nature. In Naji's words, it is the poet who "endows the mountain, the sky and the desert with movement and vitality and clothes them with his imagination, bestowing upon them his emotions . . ." (p. 131). The Arab romantics often dwell on the healing power of nature as a moral force which shares the sufferings of man in a spirit of tenderness and compassion. Their poems, essentially meditative and descriptive, sometimes convey a sense of isolation, exile and psychic homelessness, looking back with regret and nostalgia to primitive modes of existence, to the lost paradise of beauty, innocence and freedom. Like Keats, many of these romantics regard the poet as the priest of humanity, descending "on earth like a ray of celestial light,/Bearing the wand of a magician and the heart of a prophet"; "his heart and tongue" are inspired "with every elevated thought from the world of wisdom and light" (p. 139). In terms of style, lyricism and simplicity of language become the norm, inspiring the pursuit of ideal beauty without artificial ornament or over-elaborate phrase.

There is also a highly sensitive and perceptive analysis of the *Mahjar* poets, i.e. the Arab poets who emigrated to the United States and Latin America. Among their favourite themes is the celebration of human love against the background of harmonious nature. The romantic yearning for the landscape in their poetry usually reflects intense feelings of homesickness and nostalgia, which lead to idealization of their homelands in the Lebanon or Syria. Some of the emigrant poets such as Iliya Abu Madi seem haunted by "obstinate questionings" of the human condition, writing about the destiny of the soul, the vanity of worldly glory, the mystical longing for the ideal, metaphysical doubts or man's eternal restlessness. Perhaps the most influential among them is Jibran Khalil Jibran who rebels against social inhibitions, legalistic morality, religious tyranny and conventional literary modes in a way strongly reminiscent of William Blake. Many readers of English are familiar with his work of popular mysticism, *The Prophet*, which abounds in Blakean symbols and biblical echoes.

Dr. Badawi's survey ends with a chapter on the "recoil from romanticism" after the second world war, with the Arab peoples becoming painfully aware of their harsh political and social realities. The intellectual and literary milieu is fully explored

to provide the background of contemporary poetry, dominated by either committed social realism or symbolism and surrealism or other trends of literary "modernism." Generally speaking, modern Arabic poems are experimental, formally complex, evocative, allusive and elliptical, containing elements of de-creation as well as creation.

The pioneer and leader of committed socialist poets is al-Bayyati, an Iraqi Marxist whose works have been translated into Russian and Chinese. In the recent edition of his poems, he cites Boris Pasternak's statement that "romanticism is only the poetic content of the *petit bourgeois*" (p. 210). But it is not only the Messianic and millennial Utopia of Marxists which attracts many contemporary poets; there is also the cultural impact of the West, leading them "from the mournful traces of encampments in the Arabian desert to the tragic Waste Land of western Europe and America, and even further still to the nightmarish and paradoxical world of the surrealists and post-surrealists" (p. 261). The pervasive influence of T. S. Eliot is unmistakable in the works of the Iraqi Badr Shakir al-Sayyab and the Egyptian Salah Abdel-Sabour, who often communicate with passionate intensity the sense of emptiness and incompleteness of disillusionment and irrevocable loss, of barrenness and futility, of existence without equilibrium or spiritual centre.

The most articulate and sophisticated apologist for the "new poetry" is undoubtedly the Syrian Adunis (Ali Ahmad Sa'id) who draws upon such French writers as René Char, André Malraux, Rimbaud and Baudelaire to support his argument. In *The Time for Poetry*, he states that the new poetry "issues from a metaphysical sensibility which feels things in a revelatory manner suitable to their essence and true nature for these cannot be apprehended by reason and logic but by imagination and dreams. From this point of view New Poetry is the metaphysics of human existence . . . The contemporary Arab will not seek his sustenance in the sources of his Arab heritage alone, but in the totality of human civilization . . . The poetry that aspires to nothing more than serving the Revolution and describing its aims and achievements in an optimistic spirit, at times to the point of naiveté, is a poetry that in the end betrays the spirit and meaning of Freedom and the Revolution" (pp. 233-35).

This leads us to the fact that Dr. Badawi has not exposed the cheap political propaganda, which verges on intellectual and literary prostitution in the works of some contemporary Arab poets. Out of fear and oppression in Nasser's days, many talented writers have played an infamous part in the indoctrination of their readers with slogans and platitudes. Badawi has also failed to indicate the use of allegory in such poems as Abdel-Sabour's "The Attack of the Tartars," designed to condemn tyranny without fear of censorship and persecution. Besides, apart from fleeting references here and there, the author has not adequately explored the poetry of defeat, pregnant with feverish soul-searching in the Arab world after the six-day war in 1967. He should have analysed such vital elements in modern poetry, instead of wasting many pages on

detailed biographical material which does not seem strictly relevant to his critical explorations.

However, it is easy for the reviewer to sit smugly back and pass judgment on what the writer should or should not include in his work. There can be little doubt that this book is a most valuable contribution to scholarship and criticism, badly needed by English students of Arabic literature as well as western readers who lack any knowledge of this fertile field. In the enormous number of translations provided by the author, he has reached a happy compromise between the spirit and the letter, rendering the original texts with elegance, lucidity and accuracy. In the process of intellectual and aesthetic enjoyment, many readers may not be aware of the tremendous effort involved in handling two languages with vastly different habits and modes of expression. The reader's appreciation of Arabic poetry is enhanced by Dr. Badawi's central insights into his subject, which reveal depth of thought and clarity of vision.

Saad El-Gabalawy

Books Received

- ADAM, IAN, ed., *This Particular Web: Essays on Middlemarch*. Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1975. pp. 121. \$10.
- ANDERSEN, BENNY, *Selected Poems*, trans. Alexander Taylor. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1975. pp. 141. \$9.50. \$2.95 pb.
- BALLSTADT, CARL, ed., *The Search for English-Canadian Literature*. Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1975. pp. 214. \$5.95.
- BLACK, JAMES, ed., Nahum Tate, *The History of King Lear*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press; Don Mills, Ontario; Burns & MacEachern, 1975. pp. 111. \$3.05.
- BLACK, STEPHEN A., *Whitman's Journeys into Chaos*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976. pp. 255. \$13.50.
- BOLD, ALAN, *Cambridge Book of English Verse 1939-1975*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1976. pp. 248. \$24. \$7.50 pb.
- CHAMBERS, ROBERT D., *Sinclair Ross & Ernest Buckler*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1975. pp. 109. \$2.35.
- CORKE, HELEN, *In Our Infancy: An Autobiography*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press; Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1975. pp. 236. \$16.95.
- DAVIS, TOM, ed., Goldsmith, *Poems and Plays*. London: Dent, 1975. pp. 258. £4.95.

- DINESEN, ISAK, *The Angelic Avengers* (reprint of the ed. published by Random House, N.Y., 1946). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1975. pp. 149. \$1.95. £1.
- DINESEN, ISAK, *Ehrengard* (originally published by The Curtis Publishing Co., 1962). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1975. pp. 111. \$1.95. £1.
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- DOYLE, JOHN ROBERT, JR., *Arthur Shearly Cripps*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1975. pp. 264. \$8.95.
- DUTHIE, ENID L., *The Foreign Vision of Charlotte Brontë*. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1975. pp. 237. \$24.75.
- EGGLESTON, WILFRED, *The High Plains*. Ottawa: Borealis Press, 1975. pp. 267. No price stated.
- FRAYNE, JOHN P. and JOHNSON, COLTON, eds., *Uncollected Prose by W. B. Yeats*, Vol. 2. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1975. pp. 543. \$63.
- GASPARINI, LEN, *If You Love*. Ottawa: Borealis Press, 1975. pp. 64. No price stated.
- GRABES, HERBERT, *Vladimir Nabokovs englische Romane*. Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1975. pp. 130. DM 32.
- GRASSER, CAROLYN, *Nine Lives*. Ottawa: Borealis Press, 1975. pp. 55. No price stated.
- GRAY, STEPHEN, *Local Colour*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press, 1975. pp. 126. R4.95.
- GREGORY, LADY, *Selected Plays*. Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1975. pp. 269. \$4.95.
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