

Les épidémies de choléra qui éclatent avec l'arrivée massive d'immigrants d'outre-mer réunissent un Baillargeon, un Strachan, un Mountain et tant d'autres ecclésiastiques dans une même œuvre de dévouement. Et comment peut-on parler d'éducation au Canada sans invoquer les noms Strachan, Fulford, Machar, Leitch, Turgeon, Casault, Billaudèle? Mais d'autant plus impressionnante est l'impulsion que donne l'Église aux services sociaux dans une société qui s'industrialise et s'urbanise. Comme le soulignent fort bien les biographies de Lagorce, de Cadron, de Huot, ce sont les religieux qui peuvent offrir un élément de continuité à une population tiraillée entre la campagne et la ville. Enfin le volume IX nous permet de voir à quel point l'ingérence politique du clergé est chose courante dans toutes les colonies et chez la plupart des sectes religieuses, que ce soit la ferveur libérale d'un Mullock et d'un Forrester ou le penchant tory du clergé anglican du Haut Canada.

Dans les sociétés coloniales les plus vieilles, la vie de l'esprit commence à se cultiver. On est à la recherche de son identité et on tente d'exprimer tant bien que mal ce qu'il y a de particulier en Amérique du Nord britannique. Les auteurs Julia Beckwith et Thomas Haliburton manifestent les tensions qui subsistent chez eux entre les valeurs du nouveau monde et celles de l'ancien. Aussi révèlent-ils, avec l'inventeur Gesner, le dynamisme culturel des provinces maritimes.

Dans les deux Canadas, on se taille des mythes (Laura Secord et Jos Montferrand) et on se donne une identité surtout historique. C'est à ce titre que Garneau domine la production culturelle du siècle en Amérique du Nord britannique. Son œuvre a de remarquable qu'elle raffine le mythe de Montferrand et lui donne une dimension artistique. Même les anglophones connaissent son *Histoire du Canada* grâce à une traduction de Andrew Bell. Et pourtant nos devanciers lui préfèrent Ferland et Faillon dont les biographies dans le volume IX sont à la fois deux beaux essais dans l'histoire des idées. La manie pour l'histoire se voit aussi chez un Faribault qui fait copier et publier les documents canadiens préservés dans les archives françaises et américaines. Trois facteurs favorisent cette éclosion culturelle: les contacts avec l'Europe que Vattemare parmi d'autres encourage; les octrois du gouvernement que McGee veut intégrer à une politique nationale qui engloberait la vie culturelle; le patronnage de l'élite sociale qui est indispensable pour un Théophile Hamel et pour un Garneau.

Mentionnons enfin la bibliographie du volume IX. Elle constitue une véritable mine parce qu'elle réunit des sources primaires et secondaires si diverses. En diffusant des renseignements qui n'étaient peut-être pas aussi accessibles ni aussi concentrés auparavant, elle encourage une meilleure connaissance et utilisation des ressources historiques. C'est dire que la qualité de ce dictionnaire biographique est chose constante d'un bout à l'autre du volume.

Roberto PERIN,
York University.

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MARGARET ORMSBY, ed. — *A Pioneer Gentlewoman in British Columbia. The Recollections of Susan Allison*. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1976. Recollections of the Pioneers of British Columbia Series, # 2.

Margaret Ormsby's edition of the recollections of a remarkable British Columbia pioneer is a most valuable piece of work. It is, according to her, the only first-hand account of a pioneer woman in B.C., and Allison was the only authority

on the Similkameen Indians. Ormsby's introduction provides a vivid description of community life and development in the early days, in delightful contrast to her *British Columbia. A History*. Especially pleasing is the sympathetic and fascinating description of the family backgrounds of Susan Moir Allison and her husband. The usefulness of the book is increased by Ormsby's extensive annotations and inclusion of samples of Allison's writings on Indian legends. The recollections themselves were written for publication near the end of Allison's life, which may account for the consistently cheerful tone in which she describes nearly three decades of joys and disasters. The stiff-upper-lip tradition seems to have gone well with pioneer life. Allison learned early "that even if you are terrified it is best not to show it, then you get the credit for being fearless — I certainly was not."

Allison's experiences illustrate an important feature of the lives of many Victorians: mobility. Much is written about the travels of the younger sons of upper and middle class Victorian families, but little about the corresponding experiences of their sisters. At a time when British ladies were supposed to be occupied with needlework and confined within the walled gardens of their homes, numbers of them were in fact traipsing all over the Empire. There was a concerted effort in Britain to get female emigrants to come out to the colonies, marry men of good families, found British homes, and thus build the Empire. These women were to be missionaries for the domestic and cultural aspects of the British way of life.

Allison came to British Columbia as a consequence of the desire of her new stepfather to become a part of the landed gentry in the colonies. Her mother had married him after nine years of impecunious widowhood, to end her dependency on other people. The plan backfired; Thomas Glennie was a charming wastrel disposing of his latest fortune. Less than two years after their arrival at Fort Hope, Mrs. Glennie's household goods had to be auctioned, and two years later he deserted his wife and left her and her daughter to fend for themselves.

After five years of sewing and teaching to supplement her small income, Susan Moir did what most distressed gentlewomen did — she married John Allison, a rancher twenty years her senior. Ormsby is not sure why she did it. She suggests that Mrs. Glennie may have consented for financial reasons, and that Susan Moir may have feared spinsterhood at the age of 23. This is hardly convincing, given the scarcity of women, and the rapidity with which those who wished to marry, did so. There must have been ample opportunity for marriage during the time spent in Victoria and New Westminster, if she desired it. At any rate, the marriage was a happy one and the question remains unanswered and unanswerable.

Susan Allison settled with her husband in a remote and unsettled area of the Similkameen Valley, and lived there and in the Okanagan Valley for the next thirty-odd years until his death. During these years she bore and raised fourteen children. She also ran the household, the trading post, the post office, kept the accounts, and acted as a nurse, in her spare time becoming an authority on Indian life and legends. From 1872, when her trip with three babies proved arduous, until 1892, when she visited her ailing mother in Victoria, she did not go west of the Hope mountains. Much of the time she was cut off from other white women, and from the Indians as well until she learned Chinook. She did not like her husband's partner, and saw few other people. She describes much of this life as "perfectly ideal". Parts of it do sound idyllic — long picnics and days on the lake with the children, playing with pet deer. Calamity was not infrequent, however. The hard winter of 1880 caused severe damage to their home and ranch. Necessity drove

her to make all the clothes for the children, including moccasins and straw hats, as well as to bake, cure and dry meat and fish, plough and plant a garden, and learn "patience". Another year their home burned, and in 1894, it was lost in a flood.

The recollections end with the last days of the pioneer phase in B.C., with a description of the family home and outbuildings floating down the river. The last scene describes the reestablishment of their garden. The tone remains maddeningly cheerful. Given the choice between the whining martyrdom of Susanna Moodie, and the matter-of-fact tone of Susan Moir Allison, the latter is definitely a more attractive representation of our pioneer gentlewomen tradition. Whether it is as realistic is another question. Allison seems a warm, sensible, brave and eminently likeable person. Her matter-of-fact approach makes her seem almost enigmatic, however; could it really have been that pleasant at the time?

Barbara ROBERTS
University of Ottawa.

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CARL BERGER and RAMSAY COOK, eds. — *The West and the Nation, Essays in Honour of W. L. Morton*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1976.

In recent years commemorative *festschriften* have honoured outstanding Canadian historians. Arthur Lower, Frank Underhill, Donald Creighton, Charles Stacey, and J. J. Talman have been recipients of such works and now William Morton has received his long overdue recognition. (Donald Masters is certainly another who merits consideration for such an honour.) These individuals are highly respected craftsmen who have made a substantial contribution to the discipline and to the production of the class of university educated Canadians.

These essays reflect Morton's interests and such diverse topics as historiography, geography, religion, culture, business, politics, female reformism, civil liberties and government. The majority of the fifteen articles pertain to politics which is justifiable since Morton wrote extensively on that topic. The themes concern the prairies and the national scene with emphasis on the prairie region.

Carl Berger's historiographical essay, which is reproduced almost identically as chapter 10 of his new book, *The Writing of Canadian History*, provides a sensitive and sympathetic analysis of Morton's work as an historian. Berger traces Morton's development from a regional to a national historian, and he demonstrates clearly that Morton's regionalism was not narrow and parochial but rather that he wanted to give meaning to the prairies' position within the nation. As a Conservative national historian, Morton accepted the concept of a bi-cultural and bi-national nation and showed an understanding of the cultural heterogeneity that constituted Manitoba and Canada. Berger concludes that there is no label that can be readily applied to Morton but suggests that Morton represents "The delicate balance of region and nation". Berger does not consider why Morton refused to interpret the prairies-central Canadian relationship in terms of capitalist exploitation rather than regional differences. To have conceived Canadian development in that context might have raised questions about British laws, justice and institutions which do not discourage exploitation. This exploitation was indicated, in a non-Marxian framework, by V.C. Fowke in his powerful books, *Canadian Agricultural Policy* and *The Canadian Wheat Economy and the National Policy*. There are too a number of tantalizing loose ends about Morton's interpretation of Cana-