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THE LITERARY PARADIGM AND THE DISCOURSES OF CULTURE: CONTEXTS OF CANADIAN WRITING, 1759-1867

by

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ABSTRACT

This study is of pre-Confederation writing from 1759-1867, and constitutes a reflection on the beginnings of the emergence of an autonomous literary institution in Canada. It deals with the grounding of the literary institution, and with questions related to the creation and emergence of national literatures. It does not attempt a totalizing examination of writing done during this vast time frame, but discusses, in a number of synchronic "case studies," some significant moments in the literary life of the colony.

Each chapter dislocates the focus that is typically directed at a handful of disparate instances at the expense of other activities related to the practices of reading and writing, and of lesser-known writers who worked in less "literary" forms, and is intended to reorient our perception of some "canonical" writers of this period. In so doing, it questions some of the organizing frameworks that have been applied to Canadian literature, and proposes a broader conception of the literature of this period, especially since the literary field was only just beginning to define itself in the colony. An introductory section provides a discussion of some of the critical discourses that shaped the study of Canadian literature from the moment of its full institutionalization, in the 1960s and 1970s, and onwards. The second part of the opening section points out some of the consequences of these critical discourses for the conception of a Canadian national literature, and relates them to some earlier formulations of Canada's literary history.

The first of the "case studies" is devoted to Frances Brooke and the reception in Canada of _The History of Emily Montague_ (1769). The second chapter focuses on Thomas Cary and attempts to situate him not only as the author of one of the earliest poems printed in the colony, but also as editor of the _Quebec Mercury_. In this capacity he played a role in the early practices of reading and writing in the colony, and contributed to the largely political public discourse of his time. Chapter Three builds on this discussion by dealing with questions of identity and political allegiance as articulated in some early writings of Upper Canada. It starts out by examining the case of Julia Catherine Beckwith Hart and why Canadian critics have focused on one of her novels in particular, then proceeds to consider the uses that Bishop Strachan and politician Barnabas Bidwell made of writing and printing to sway public opinion and foster competing conceptions of identity. The fourth chapter looks at the role Canadian critics have assigned John Richardson. The concluding chapter, on Thomas D'Arcy McGee, reconsiders the role he is commonly seen to have played as a "father" of Canadian literature and visionary of a "new northern nationality." McGee's poetic figuring of Canada's past in the _Canadian Ballads, and Occasional Verses_ (1858) was followed in subsequent writings by a dismissal of historical concerns in the name of an identity that was to be a thing of the future.

The methodological approach suited to this endeavour is that suggested by literary systems theory, since it allows us to take into consideration the complex of factors or "interactions" that give rise to the practices of "literature."

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PREFACE

La littérature, perçue par les générations successives comme une aventure dont on retrace les avatars, participe davantage du mythe que de la réalité.

Gérard Tougas, Destin littéraire du Québec (1982)

While attempting to survey all writing of continuing interest, this book concentrates on the main stream; it emphasizes authors who may be considered 'major' because they have dominated the country's literary language, shaped its consciousness, and so fostered the native tradition. Ultimately, I am convinced, it is the tradition established by the best that sets the standard.

W.J. Keith, Preface to Canadian Literature in English (1985)

Canadian literature, then, is not a commonly-agreed-upon corpus of work. There exists no consensus. We cannot even agree about who our best writers are--there exists no hierarchy. Criticism is in the hands of rabid factions. There exists no single critical work which offers an undisputed overview.

John Metcalf, What is a Canadian Literature? (1988)

"The Literary Paradigm and the Discourses of Culture: Contexts of Canadian Writing, 1759-1867"--what could such an unwieldy title possibly mean? What "literary" paradigm, what "culture," and what "Canadian writing" are being referred to? These are common reactions registered by those curious to know what it is I am researching in "Canlit," as the field of Canadian literature has come to be known. The eighteenth and nineteenth centuries do not appear to generate much enthusiasm: "Hasn't it all been done?" is a frequent remark, for which "it" tends to mean the publication of worthwhile novels and long poems, necessarily accompanied by explanatory notes, or else the compilation of catalogues such as Reginald Watters' A Checklist of Canadian Literature and Background Materials, 1628-1970 (1959; 1972). Richardson, Haliburton, Moodie,

and Traill have already been "found;" for many they constitute the historical foreword to the real thing, which did not emerge until well into the twentieth century. But how does writing in Canada between 1759 and 1867 relate to the "best" of the native tradition described in the introductory excerpt by W.J. Keith? Or, what arguments have been made for or against it by the rumoured "rabid factions" of Canadian criticism of which John Metcalf speaks? Given the current vogue of contemporary "historiographic metafiction," does this early writing really matter? Admittedly, Canadian prose writing and poetry since the early 1960s constitute more popular literary territory: Canadian writers are often nominees for, and winners of, international literary prizes; Canadian literature in English has a growing role to play in the theatre of Commonwealth literary studies; and a good many Canadian authors are being translated and read by students of literature in other countries. Contemporary Canadian literature seems to have arrived, yet the question of the canon remains a contentious issue.

The differing stances of Keith and Metcalf evident in the above quotations are perplexing, suggesting as they do, on the one hand, an established and identifiable "main stream," a number of major authors and a use of literary language that has influenced a "consciousness" and given rise to a "native tradition," and on the other, "no consensus," "no hierarchy," no "undisputed overview." These divergent views propose a difficult choice between an ordered vision of Canadian literature and a chaotic one. But in this deliberately extreme presentation of the situation of Canadian letters, how are we to know what part is myth, what part reality?

There is a temptation to qualify these views, so that both might be deemed accurate to a certain degree; but this sort of qualification would in turn imply that a canonical Canadian literature both does and does not exist. Such a conclusion would in turn require a more comprehensive explication.

For the most part, discussions of canonicity revolve around twentieth-century writers: A.J.M. Smith and F.R. Scott and their modernist vision; the didactic novels of Hugh MacLennan; the prominence of Canadian women writers and their representation in anthologies; the reviewing space accorded to works by writers of "ethnic" communities. In the meantime, early writing in English Canada suffers from something of an image problem, regardless of claims to the contrary:[1] this writing is said to be rooted in "rotten romanticism" and, faithful to the English model out of which it emerged, it is "immune to intellectual aliveness, to speculative ideas, to experimental living, or to exploratory writing," according to Louis Dudek; like the best of English culture, English Canada "has been conservative, cautious, dead-set on traditional values and the advantages of prestige" ("Two" 47-48). What could possibly motivate one, then, to delve into such an apparently vapid literary heritage?

To answer this question it is necessary to begin in the present, and to proceed in a roundabout way. This study proposes as its time frame the admittedly lengthy period from 1759 until 1867. Like any historical project, it is intimately related to and inevitably conditioned by the perspective of the present. In this sense history may be described as a "science of double vision"

which attempts to see past events in terms of their historical discreteness but inevitably does so through the filter of the present by placing them "in a system under the sign of contemporary problems" (Èjxenbaum 56). In the present case of this thesis, the contemporary problems involve the definition of a national literature. This enterprise has frequently been equated with that of defining a national identity, and has certainly been a dominant source of discussion and reflection during the last thirty years or so. Not surprisingly, the question of a national literature has inevitably led to the consideration of a wide range of related cultural, economic, and political problems. It is with this scenario in mind, and as a direct result of studying contemporary Canadian writing and criticism, that my thesis suggested itself to me.

The introductory section, "Issues and Research Perspectives," launches this dissertation by focusing on some of the critical discourses that shaped the study of Canadian literature from the moment of its full institutionalization, in the 1960s and 1970s, and onwards. Key to this discussion is Margaret Atwood's Survival, a study which continues to enjoy critical currency in spite of its detractors. Although organizing frameworks such as Atwood's were important in constituting Canadian literature as a field of study, they have ultimately had a reductive effect. The second part of the opening section points out some of the consequences of these critical discourses on the conception of a Canadian national literature, and relates them to some earlier formulations of Canada's literary history, these too informed by nationalist

sentiment. The "Research Perspectives" proposed here are based on literary systems theory, and are offered in response to calls for an alternative approach to early writing in Canada.[2]

The subsequent chapters deal with what I take to be a number of significant moments in the literary life of the colony as it emerged in the province of Quebec, then in the Canadas up until Confederation. Each undertakes to renew the perception of a given "beginning" of Canadian literature by dislocating the focus usually directed at a "recognized" or "canonical" work, and reorienting the discussion of it by considering other types and uses of writing. The first chapter centres on Frances Brooke's The History of Emily Montague (1769), commonly cited by Canadian critics as Canada's first novel. I argue that the reception of this work in Canada really only takes place in the twentieth century, and that if we must relate it to the life of the colony at the end of the eighteenth century, then the basis for doing so is its consideration of the status of women and their rights within the institution of marriage. The chapter on Thomas Cary seeks to situate him not only as the author of one of the earliest poems printed in the colony, but as an important agent in the promotion of its literary life. As editor of the Quebec Mercury, Cary was actively involved in early practices of reading and writing that came to be dominated by local political questions. Chapter Three deals with questions of identity and political allegiance and how they were articulated in some early writings of Upper Canada. It begins with the case of Julia Catherine Beckwith Hart and why Canadian critics tend to focus on one of her novels in particular,

then goes on to consider the uses that John Strachan and Barnabas Bidwell made of writing and printing to sway public opinion and foster competing conceptions of identity: were the inhabitants of Upper Canada to continue as British North Americans, or were they to cultivate a sense of loyalty to collective local interests? The fourth chapter discusses the role Canadian critics have assigned to John Richardson, and considers a number of his writings in order to understand his ideas on literature's relationship to the colony's political and cultural identity. The concluding chapter, on Thomas D'Arcy McGee, sets out to reconsider the role he is commonly seen to have played as a "father" of Canadian literature and visionary of the emergent nation. McGee's poetic figuring of Canada's past in the Canadian Ballads, and Occasional Verses (1858) was followed in subsequent writings by a dismissal of historical concerns in the name of an identity that was to be a thing of the future.

In some ways, McGee's discourse on literature may strike us as similar to that of a certain strain of criticism of Canadian literature that flourished during the years of its institutionalization, in that the project of naming and asserting--or mapping--a Canadian identity emerges as literature's main function. We might understand this similarity as a sign of the persistence of "rotten romanticism" in the twentieth century; if so, then it can only be in our interest to improve our knowledge of this tenacious condition.

ISSUES AND RESEARCH PERSPECTIVES

I: Institutionalization, Nationalism, and *Survival*

Even though this study purports to examine "literature," its temporal limits do not coincide with salient events in the world of "literature" if we define literature narrowly in terms of published fictional works in book form by individual authors and poets. Instead, the dates "1759" and "1867" allude rather baldly to political events. Just as baldly, they make the plea for situating specifically literary texts and activity in their political, social environment. In the case in question, the political environment of moment preceded Confederation, with the result that it has often been awkward, if not entirely inappropriate, to identify or classify texts in terms of specifically "national" criteria, if we use the adjective "national" to refer to specific characteristics of a people who inhabit a defined territory and are united by a common descent, language, history or religion. This is an acceptation that dates roughly from the mid-eighteenth century and which, like many other words formed on the basis of the root of "nation," was increasingly employed from then on. The concept of nationalism was being shaped during this time, first within the context of the events of the French Revolution, then within that of the various nineteenth-century struggles for independence and national consolidation that took place in Europe and elsewhere.

Thus, a discussion of pre-Confederation "Canadian" writing, in English or French, as that of either an "independent" colony or territory, is impossible unless linked to a discussion of Britain,

of British North America, of France, and of the United States of America. It cannot exist and make sense as an autonomous subject. As significant dates in Canadian history, "1759" and "1867" have been the object of a good deal of writing of various kinds. Besides military journals and letters, the British victory of 1759 also prompted occasional poems. These include the anonymous "Daphnis and Menalcas: A Pastoral" (1759), dedicated to the memory of General Wolfe, as well as François Antoine de Chevrier's comic-heroic "L'Albionade ou l'Anglais démasqué" (1759). Apparently fixed in time and typically related to landmark occurrences in the chronologies that appear in appendices of various sorts, specific dates nonetheless tend to assume different meanings and take on varying connotations depending on one's point of view: they belong to the realm of "history." As signs, then, they resemble literary works, and may be read in a number of ways. Despite the somewhat cavalier use of dates to refer telegraphically to historical moments that have been more or less agreed upon by documenters of history, dates are disconcertingly ambiguous. Metaphorically, they function something like a revolving door, inviting a movement both backwards and forwards in time. Thus, 1759 may be seen simultaneously as the end of New France; as the marking of the start of a temporary period of British domination; as another beginning of British settlement in North America; or as the start of central-Canadian domination over the "other" regions of Canada. These possible interpretations give us the option of looking either forwards or backwards from 1759. In staking out the temporal period of 1759 till 1867, I have elected to read 1759 as a

beginning, a point justifiable as such if we consider that modern Canada is in many ways the result of the British conquest and the events that both surrounded and succeeded it.

The present-day state of Canada, a member state of both the British Commonwealth and of la *Francophonie*, arises from colonial beginnings that lie clearly within the scope of historical memory. But, as previously noted, that state's beginnings have also coincided with the development of modern nationalist sentiment, as well as with the rise of historicism. The coincidence of these events has perhaps been one of Canada's greatest handicaps; and it helps us understand in part why collective identity and historicity have been the motivating forces behind much scholarly writing in Canada. Although the Literary and Historical Society of Quebec was founded in 1824 and was active from this relatively early date in preserving documents related to the history of New France, it was not until after Confederation that a concerted effort was made to found institutions in the aim of recovering and preserving documents and papers relevant to Canada. Thus, the Public Archives were established in 1872, the Royal Society of Canada a decade later. The turn of the century saw the founding of the Review of Historical Publications relating to Canada (1897) and that of the Champlain Society (1905). Now, at the close of the twentieth century, we have an even greater access to many of the documents that mark the beginnings of Canada, but none of them is in the form of a national epic relevant to both the French and English colonial cultures. Even though the Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions (CIHM) project to make early manuscripts having

to do with Canada available on microfiche has now reached a point of roughly 65% completion, there is no sign that a national epic will be found among the documents still to be published. The microfiche project is without a doubt very useful, but it cannot satisfy the yearning for a plausible Canadian epic, a yearning which has apparently prompted the numerous attempts to fashion a Canadian tradition and to project it upon "Canadian literature." These attempts to identify the distinctiveness of Canadian writing and culture as a whole have invariably done so at the expense of differences within that very body of texts, and within Canadian society itself.

Accordingly, my research is based on an inverse procedure: my study of pre-Confederation writing is informed by an awareness of the heterogeneity of the cultural discourses of that period and aims to address the complexity of the cultural system as it developed up until Confederation. Canadian writing, as early examples reveal, finds its roots in diversity. As a consequence, attempts to organize Canadian cultural production according to abstract, ahistorical categories tend to falsify our perception of Canada as a political and cultural entity, and ultimately do not help us to understand the literary paradigm in colonial, or modern, Canada. Although the development of contemporary discourse on Canadian literature and the work that led to its constitution as a subject of scholarly interest call for a major study in itself, a preliminary critique on a lesser scale is essential to the present study.

This leads us to more dates. As I began to write, it was the year 1992; despite the deadlock of its constitutional crisis, Canada was nonetheless celebrating the 125th anniversary of its Confederation, for which commemorative stamps had been issued and souvenir coins minted. It was the first major celebration since Expo 67, when Canada celebrated its centennial; it was another reminder of how young "Canada" is--first as a dominion, then as an independent state, Northrop Frye's claims to the contrary notwithstanding (145). Yet Canadian literature in its institutionalized form is still younger; Metcalf has written with scepticism of academics "beavering away" at a literature which for the most part "*is all of twenty-five years old!*" (100). In effect, this field of green literary studies does seem to attract a sizable share of students. In 1973, in his assessment of the progress of the study of Canadian literature, Desmond Pacey noted that the number of graduate theses accepted in the field of Canadian literature, in English and French, for the year 1969-70 nearly equalled the total recorded for the period 1920-1946. He detected a similar growth of interest at the undergraduate level, citing the example of Dalhousie University, where enrolment in courses on Canadian literature grew sixfold in the period 1962-72 ("Study" 67-68). But how could this be if, as Metcalf remarks, the field was so new and if there was then, as there presumably still is now, a mere quarter of a century later, so little actual literature to practice on? Where did Canadian literature come from, and how did it grow so quickly? One event that signalled the beginnings of Canadian literature as a discipline was the appearance of the

Literary History of Canada: Canadian Literature in English, first published in 1965. Since it preceded Canada's centennial celebrations by just two years, the History must have seemed a timely endeavour. Its publication also distinguished the activity of some scholars in Canada from that typical of critical movements elsewhere, and to which historical questions were largely irrelevant: in the United States, New Criticism still reigned supreme, while structuralism had reached its apogee in Europe. If symbolism had not yet reached Canada in the 1930s, as W.E. Collin observed in 1936, a philological sense of historicism certainly prevailed in the 1960s. Accordingly, the critical milieu greeted the History with enthusiasm: Donald Stephens judged that it would "prove an indispensable reference book to students of Canadian literature" not only in Canada but "around the world" ("Literary History" 10); George Woodcock recognized that it marked "a stage in the development of Canadian studies" and that the completed product would "inevitably influence our views of Canadian literature and sub-literature for long in the future" ("Literary History" 14); and Desmond Pacey saw it as "the first truly comprehensive study of its subject" that would doubtless provide a "stimulus" for "other, more specialized studies" ("Outlook" 16). It was hoped that the History would be the beginning of something.

The fact that the History was so well received by those involved and interested in its subject is understandable. In 1965, "Canadian literature" was not yet a recognized, or recognizable, field of literary studies; some might even venture to say that it did not even exist. Pacey allows that, during the 1940s, "the

study of Canadian literature was far from being academically respectable" ("Outlook" 15). About twenty years later, the situation had not changed substantially. Recalling her days as an undergraduate at University College in Toronto during the early 1960s, Susan Jackel notes that Canadian literature figured as a "non-subject," and that the Canadian component of a course focusing on American and Canadian literature "had shrunk to a single title at the very end of the year" which the class "didn't get around to" (103). Metcalf more pointedly asserts that "*there were in 1962 few available books*" (35). This assertion goes some way towards explaining why Canadian literature was not a more visible part of the curriculum. Whatever the reason, it has now become something of a commonplace to remark that, up until the 1960s and 1970s, Canadian literature's status as a subject of study had been superseded by canonical texts of the British tradition. Canadian writing did not qualify as serious literature, and was not studied. Barbara Godard puts the question thus: "how can a text be literature when it's Canadian?" Her response to this question expresses the dilemma that apparently confronts Canadian writers:

> 'Canadian Literature' is a contradiction in terms, for to be acknowledged as *good*, as 'Literature,' Canadians must follow the norms of writing in England. To be recognized as *true*, as authentically 'Canadian,' they must break these norms by writing 'differently.' (7)

Yet if the problem of difference has been crucial to Canadians, it has been so not only in terms of their having to develop ways of distinguishing their writing from that of England. There has been an even more pressing sense of the need to differentiate themselves

from their English-speaking neighbours on the North-American continent.

Back in 1867, Thomas D'Arcy McGee had already warned in a lecture before the Literary Club of Montreal that "books that are made elsewhere, even in England" were not always best-suited to Canadians ("Mental" 6). As the brief biographical sketch in Carl F. Klinck and Reginald Watters' widely used Canadian Anthology reminds us, McGee is remembered for his role as a "Father of Confederation" and for his speeches designed to foster "a Canadian national spirit" and give it "imaginative range and memorable phrases befitting a new northern nation" (60-61). But our view of his ardent, nationalist commitment to the Canadian nation is skewed unless we add that, when he emigrated from Ireland in 1848, McGee's first choice of residence in North America had been the United States. One of the reasons why he headed northward was that he had failed to win a political following for himself among Irish Americans, due in part to his opposition to the influence of the Roman Catholic Church. By the time he left the United States in 1857, he had become an unpopular figure in the eyes of many Americans. Seen in this light, McGee's decision to emigrate to Canada, where he appears "more Canadian than the Canadians" (Snell 36),[1] is tinged with a degree of opportunism. Since it was a motive for emigration shared by thousands of others who had settled in Canada and who would continue to do so, McGee's practical choice is not remarkable in itself. Yet his experience in the United States may inform the anti-American stance he was to promote in

Canada. This stance was likewise favoured by many cultural nationalists of the 1960s and 1970s.

That Canadian nationalists did position themselves in this way, producing at their most strident books and articles with titles like Canadian Literature: Surrender or Revolution and "The Line of National Subjugation in Canadian Literature,"[2] should come as no surprise, and should not strike us as being in some way unique to the Canadian context and the emergence of specifically "Canadian" literature. Although the hard-line nationalist stance has become something of an embarrassment for some critics who have in retrospect both deconstructed and denounced it, the nationalist discourse prevalent in so many early studies in the 1960s and 1970s was a phenomenon more or less dictated by the order of things natural to the creation of a new national literature.

The nationalist element was equally instrumental in the process of legitimizing what were to become, in the Canadian context, the so-called "colonizing" literatures of England and France, even though the traditional literary histories of most European literatures have avoided focusing on the conditions of their own emergence in relation to Latin (Even-Zohar 57). Any sustained reflection thereupon would necessarily detract from their status as independent literary systems.[3] However, it should be remembered that England, too, was subjected to a colonial status, both political and cultural, at the hands of a number of colonizers during its history. In Germany, Herder likewise railed against the "*ausländisch[e] Nachafferei*" prevalent in cultural circles, since this tendency had not only strictly literary consequences, but also

led Germans to dance French minuets in an earnestly German way. In the United States after the War of 1812, Americans launched a massive campaign to promote an indigenous national literature, for which Emerson was hardly an isolated supporter. The results of Belgium's accession to independence in 1830 are also of interest. José Lambert notes that the changed political circumstances following Belgian independence ushered in a wave of nationalism that was quick to put "les lettres au service d'un état nouveau;" this entailed the hasty invention of "des principes et des maîtres" that embodied "un idéal littéraire national" and which were distinctly opposed to the norms and models of neighbouring countries, especially to those of the "ennemi par excellence," France (364). Though the contemporary international literary scene may not pay close attention to recent developments in Belgian letters or to the definition of la Belgitude, French-speaking Belgians seem to have accepted their fate as producers of a satellite literature, while Flemish writers have long been content to include themselves in the literary community of the Netherlands. Lambert writes that "le concept de 'littérature belge' est devenu une absurdité, *aux yeux des critiques*, à notre époque, alors qu'il ne l'était nullement au XIXe siècle" (364).

In English Canada, a similar nationalist literary campaign renewed itself during the mid-1960s and the early 1970s, this time with more long-term success than those known previously, both during the latter half of the nineteenth century and at the outset of the twentieth. However, the situation in Canada since the 1960s has been the reverse of what Lambert has observed in Belgium:

critics have continued to take the concept of specifically "Canadian" literature quite seriously. The _Literary History of Canada_ demonstrated that if it was possible to rally a team of over thirty to research and produce a history of Canadian literature in English, then the subject of such a history must exist. Carl F. Klinck, the _History_'s general editor, made explicit the work's purpose in his introduction. First, he hoped that it would be useful as a "comprehensive reference book" in the study of "the (English) literary history" of Canada; second, he wished to promote the "critical study of that history" amongst both "established and younger scholars" (ix). My own interest in the study of Canadian literature is consistent with the latter aim; the fact that my birth more or less coincided with that of the _History_ clearly qualifies me as a "younger scholar," a status which in itself, some thirty years after the _History_ first appeared, testifies to the development of "Canadian literature" as a legitimate field of study.

Since then, under the aegis of English departments and institutes of Canadian studies all over Canada, Canadian literature has become a firmly entrenched option in the study of English-language letters, regardless of its relative youth. In still more recent years it has seen its audience expand to include scholars and students elsewhere in North America as well as in Europe and Asia, a promising indication of Canadian literature's potential for exportation. Courses, journals, and books devoted to Canadian literature abound. Thus, following Klinck's example, it is now appropriate to speak not only of the literary history of Canadian

literature in English, but of the history of the study of Canadian letters, both within and without Canada. In other words, it is now possible to reflect on the emergence and mode of existence of a number of practices which have developed over the past decades, and which are current both within the institution of the university and outside it.

This transformation is noteworthy. It began in part with the History and its reception. In his review, Donald Stephens also comments that, up until the History's publication, there had been "little real criticism of Canadian literature" ("Literary History" 10) (even though the journal featuring his review, explicitly titled Canadian Literature, had existed since 1959, and was presumably intended as a forum for critical discussion); he faults post-World War I critics for their embarrassingly shallow new nationalism, taking especially J.D. Logan and Donald G. French to task for their "insipid moralizing and pompous grandiloquence" (11). The subtext is that literary history should shun the overt profession of nationalist allegiance because its object is of a purely scholarly nature that calls for neutrality. Yet, like the movement in romantic, or modern, historical writing, the related notion of "literary" history is born of nationalism and is therefore *un*neutral by definition.

Broadly speaking, the writing of Canadian history has been typically "historical" in the romantic sense associated with the nineteenth century. François-Xavier Garneau's Histoire du Canada depuis sa découverte jusqu'à nos jours (1845-1852) followed the example of the nineteenth-century French historians, and in turn

became a source, alongside works such as Alexander Henry's Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories (1809), for Francis Parkman's lengthy historical writings on New France and British North America. These were to be of considerable use to William Kirby in the writing of The Golden Dog (1877), a historical romance that made a successful synthesis of history and fiction, and enjoyed considerable popularity in English and French Canada alike. Its fictional depiction, or "mirroring," of historical events that took place during the eighteenth century epitomizes the inherent ambiguity of the word "history." Although this ambiguity is less immediately evident in the English language, for which "history" and "story" share the same root but are nonetheless different words, the equivalent terms in German and French are more effective in their illustration of the narrative element common to historical and fictional modes of writing. These terms are repsectively "*Geschichte*" and "*histoire*," both of which may be used to designate "history" (ostensibly concerned with "true," verifiable events) and "story" (meaning a fictional invention of the imagination). In Canada after Confederation, as Carl Berger has noted, the writing of history "was generally regarded as an especially instructive branch of literature." He adds that, as a result, "when the Royal Society of Canada was founded in 1881, history was grouped with English literature" (2).

Traditionally, one function of this combined field of study has been to promote the consolidation of national identity. Literary history plays a similar role, so that the question of nationalism cannot be easily dismissed where such histories are

concerned. Rather, nationalism is inextricably linked to the study of Canadian writing, especially when it is studied in terms of its status as a separate, national literature.

But let us return for the moment to Stephens, for whom the History marks the beginning of what he calls "real criticism" of "the whole growth of Canadian literature." The History is "often well written" and shows "some amazing perceptions;" Northrop Frye's conclusion is "brilliant" ("Literary History" 10, 13). George Woodcock shares Stephens' admiration for the conclusion, but voices concern over the editorial team's lack of critical judgment. He seizes on Frye's suggestion regarding the need for an additional work to provide a critical assessment of Canadian writing. These reviews flatly contradict each other: *was* the History the beginning of "real criticism," as Stephens states, or was it basically deficient in critical intelligence, as Woodcock suggests? These opinions tend to obscure the fact that the specifically *critical* assessment of all the works discussed in the History was not at all central to the chief editor's aims in producing it.

The issue of critical assessment was again raised, some twelve years later, when Canadian Literature devoted a number to the subject of nationalism. In an essay entitled "Nationalism and Literature in Quebec," Gilles Marcotte observes that a "'national' literature is a project, much more than an object" and that a "literature of that kind could exist without poems or novels (but not without criticism), by the virtue of the emotions and hopes that are invested in it" (8). This observation suggests that a national literature is something that is to be consciously created,

rather than something that exhibits a given mode of existence and about which something might be learned through study. Of course, Marcotte was writing shortly after the Parti Québécois' election of 1976. Although the 1970s as a whole were dynamic years for the writing community of English Canada, 1976 as a particular date is not usually associated with any noteworthy advances in the study of "Canlit." In Quebec, however, it is not only a date that marked the culminating point of the reforms and political activity of the 1960s, but a moment that appeared to guarantee the further development of an optimistic period of cultural expansion that had been gaining momentum, especially in the publishing industry.[4] But if we consider Marcotte's comment in terms of Canadian writing in English, we may understand why critics were perhaps in no immediate hurry to act on Woodcock's suggestion: criticism does not necessarily have to "mean" in an evaluative or critical way; it may simply "be," sometimes in what some might take to be a questionably creative way. In doing so it performs its function. Likewise, Marcotte's comment provides a possible response to Metcalf's concerns for Canadian literature: it does not matter if virtually no books were available in 1962, nor does it matter if Canadian literature--by which Metcalf understands contemporary writing--has only existed for twenty-five years or so; criticism itself, accompanied by the grounding of a self-sufficient critical machine, is enough.

With the gradual refinement of literary studies during the twentieth century, criticism has generally come to be conceived of in contrast with poetics, in that it is seen as an activity whose

primarily concern is with the interpretation of individual works, or the generation of readings, rather than the attempt to define the nature of specifically literary discourse and how it comes to be regarded as such.[5] However, when dealing with an individual work, "criticism" does not automatically imply the critical evaluation of works in the sense that Woodcock seems to have intended. The results of critical activity in Canada have proven unsatisfactory to a number of people who have commented on the situation. Thus, Dudek "rib-roasted" a group of critics during the early 1970s for what he saw as their indiscriminate propagation of the "mytho-symbolic branch" of criticism, and for striving at all costs to identify a sense of unity in Canadian writing. His final message was that "Canadian critics, and Canadian writers, have some heavy thinking to do" ("Misuses" 67). Pacey had similar words of caution:

> So far we have done the easy things--the impressionistic critical essays, the tracing of image patterns, the exploration of dominant themes. ... The last two decades have seen a great upsurge in interest in Canadian literature, but so far this interest has not drawn forth anything like an appropriate measure of scholarly response. Perhaps Canadian literature has come of age in the post-War period, but Canadian literary scholarship is still in a state of juvenility. ("Study" 72)

Pacey was writing in 1973, as was Dudek. Over a decade was to pass before W.J. Keith would make a strikingly similar assessment. That he did so suggests that critics had not rallied to the cries of either Pacey or Dudek. Although Keith detects a movement in the study of Canadian literature from an initial to a second phase, he nevertheless concedes that the critic who opts to "cross the

boundary into Canadian studies" is often regrettably struck by a "lowering of the intellectual temperature."[6]

If we accept Marcotte's view that criticism, not poems or novels, is essential to the project for a national literature, then we need no longer expect of criticism that it fulfill the critical, evaluative task that Dudek and Woodcock call for it to perform. This is because criticism, in surpassing poems and novels in importance, is not so much a commentary on literary works--an instance of "second words," to use the expression of one Canadian author[7]--as it is a by-product of the hopes and emotions invested in the idea of a cohesive, unitary national literature and what such a literature would apparently represent. In this way, criticism bears a stronger relation to the articulation of hopes and emotions than it does to the literature it purports to gloss, and consequently has little to do with the objective, critical faculties that might be expected to play a role in the different activities that criticism implies.

Not surprisingly, hopes and emotions have figured prominently in contemporary developments in Canadian literature. Thus, Klinck is aware of the "national significance" of the _History_'s subject, and is careful to explain the intentional wording of this subject in the title, which announces "Canadian literature in English" rather than a hyphenated "English-Canadian literature" because "the former term puts the name of this country first and suggests unity rather than division" (Introduction ix). Klinck will certainly be remembered for his contribution to Canadian literature. In a number of _Canadian Poetry_ dedicated to his memory, he is described,

in keeping with the mapping metaphors so common to the study of Canadian writing, as a "pathfinder" and is praised for having encouraged students to "explore and chart the various regions of [Canada's] imaginative landscape" (Conron 4). Sandra Djwa's introduction to Giving Canada a Literary History: a Memoir (1991) draws attention to Klinck's work in terms of a patriot's gift to his country. But besides the expression of gratitude for the time and effort that Klinck invested in Canadian letters, what can be said of the status of the History, the work that many consider to be his most important contribution? Desmond Pacey, who in 1968 had welcomed it as "the first truly comprehensive study of its subject" ("Outlook" 16), had revised his assessment by 1973, when he wrote that Canadians "do not even have a comprehensive history of Canadian literature," and described the History as "a compilation of historical essays rather than a thorough-going history written from a distinctive point of view" ("Study" 71-72). Clément Moisan saw the History's structure, which he describes as a "juxtaposition d'études séparées d'auteurs, de genres, de mouvements, d'écoles, de tendances etc., sans lien entre elles," as its main handicap. As for Frye's conclusion: "[c'] est un bel éssai indépendant et détaché du reste, qui aurait pu paraître n'importe où ailleurs qu'à la fin de cette Histoire littéraire" ("Quelques propositions" 117). W.J. Keith, in the introduction of his own history of Canadian literature in English, has described Klinck's as "a classification and intellectual census" (Canadian 4). Steven Tötösy de Zepetnek has recently judged Maurice Lemire's Dictionnaire des oeuvres

littéraires du Québec (1980) to be near to complete, but adds that the same cannot be said of Klinck's History (43-44).

These criticisms prompt us to ask the pending questions of what a literary history is supposed to be about and which form is most appropriate to it. Should a history focus more selectively on the "best" of a literary tradition, and provide a chronicle of the main stream authors, as Keith proposes in his history, or should it aim for a broader scale, like the recent example of W.H. New's A History of Canadian Literature (1989), whose chronological table begins in the ice age and ends with writers and events of the 1980s? (297-360). These questions are clearly fundamental to the present discussion. For the moment, however, let us return to the subject of the hopes and emotions invested in the project of a national literature.

Let us consider an internationally recognized literary personality who has taken a leading role in promoting Canadian literature and culture: poet and novelist Margaret Atwood. The remarks made in her "brilliant introductory essay" (as the anonymous note on the book's jacket describes it) to The New Oxford Book of Canadian Verse in English (1982) imply that the campaign for the recognition of Canadian literature, once so urgent, had, by the time of the anthology's publication, largely been won. This is quite an achievement if we recall some of the comments cited above regarding the despondent state of the Canadian publishing industry and the relative absence of courses on Canadian literature in universities up until the late 1960s. This buoyant sense of progress, however, does not prevent Atwood from writing that she

accepted the task of editing an updated equivalent of A.J.M. Smith's The Oxford Book of Canadian Verse (1960) "with the same sense of cultural mission that Smith himself pursued through his tireless collecting and elucidating" (Introduction xxvii). In her concluding remarks she prefers to bypass what she refers to as the formerly "mandatory" "Canada-come-of-age motif," the "usual apology for 'eclecticism'" and the "promising-beginning or threshold-of-the-future speech" in favour of stating that Canadian poetry is "a unique organism: spiky, tough, flexible, various, and vital. Finally, it is its own" (xxxviii-xxxix). Since Atwood was writing just a decade after the publication of Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature (1972), I suspect she was fully conscious of her paralipsis, though she may not have seen how it undermines her claims for Canadian poetry. But if she is able to state with even a moderate degree of confidence that Canadian poetry is "its own"--by which she presumably means that it has reached a stage of maturity, and is no longer in need of being defended--then we might suppose that there has been some measure of progress since her first major, and dramatic, assessment of Canadian literature made in Survival, assuming that what she wrote then on the basis of the novel was also true for poetry.

Still more recent comments of Atwood's made in 1990 indicate a sense that the predicament of Canadian literature as she saw it twenty years earlier has become a thing of the distant past: "Once upon a time long ago, in 1972 to be exact, I wrote a book called Survival, which was about Canadian literature; an eccentric subject in those days, when many denied there was any" ("Double-Bladed"

243). Regardless of her desire to portray the book as a vague event that took place in the distant past, Survival was in no need of an introduction; it had served its purpose well, and was in no immediate danger of being easily forgotten. In fact, "[o]nce upon a time long ago," when Survival was first published, it certainly elicited a number of strong reactions. In the opening chapter, Atwood states her dissatisfaction with the inadequacy of the materials available to those interested in studying Canadian literature--a situation which, as we have seen, had been chronic. As Pacey observed, just a year after Survival appeared, it was time the necessary "hard scholarly labour" began if the study of Canadian literature was to move beyond a "state of juvenility." He called for "biographical and bibliographical research" and "the editing of texts, manuscripts and letters;" for "definitive biographies and definitive editions" ("Study" 72). But Atwood did not have this sort of material in mind when she formulated her comments on the subject. The works with which she finds fault include "all-inclusive historical surveys"--presumably like Klinck's--"individual biographies, or in-depth academic studies" that discuss obscure titles and often present "long lists of writers and book-titles, among which the prospective reader or teacher must scrabble around and choose as best as he may," given the penury of "obvious classics" (11). She is clear about the purpose of her essay:

> When I started to write this book I intended to produce a short, easy-to-use guide to Canadian literature, largely for the benefit of students and those teachers in high schools, community colleges and universities

> who suddenly find themselves teaching a subject they have never studied: 'Canlit.' (11)

The study was not meant to "survey, evaluate, provide histories or biographies or offer original and brilliant insights." Rather, Atwood intended to write

> something that would make Canadian literature, as *Canadian* literature--not just literature that happened to be written in Canada--accessible to people other than scholars and specialists, and that would do it with simplicity and practicability. (13)

From the outset, it is clear that Survival is not the result of the "hard scholarly labour" that Pacey saw as crucial to the future and maturity of the study of Canadian literature. Atwood is explicit in stating that Survival is not intended as a comprehensive reference book; neither is it directed at scholars engaged in research. Its aim is pragmatic and didactic. It is specifically written for non-specialists, and is intended to "function like the field markings in bird-books:" unlike the trend evident in high school and university teaching, which has privileged the "personal and the universal" at the expense of the "national or cultural," Survival deliberately sets out to identify "key patterns" of "Canadian literature insofar as it is *Canadian* literature"--in other words, a specific, identifiable, national literature that is "a reflection of a national habit of mind" (13).

The readiness of some professional critics and teachers of literature to subscribe to and participate in this identification project, apparently having judged, as one critic wrote (speaking for both herself and all Canadians), that "[t]o any Canadian ... the pattern [of "Survival"] seems to hold out the promise of truth" (Sullivan 7), cannot be attributed to pressure on Atwood's part,

who clearly states that her book is not addressed to specialists. However, specialists inevitably read Survival and many reacted. Thus, Canadian critics of its detrimental effect on the criticism of Canadian literature have been severe in their judgment: Survival's thematic approach has been deemed "disastrous for Canadian literature" (Cameron and Dixon 137) because it tends to reduce actual literary works to mere paraphrase (Davey 3), and thereby presents "a fundamentally misguided view of Canadian literature" (Mathews, "Margaret Atwood" 119) because it condemns more significant questions to obscurity; one critic sees Survival as a form of "critical *jeu d'esprit*" (J. Steele 75); another, as "a literary-political polemic and personal manifesto" (Powe 76);[8] others find that the book has abstracted Canadian literature from its historical continuities.[9]

Regardless of its critics, Survival remains a widely read guide. It is quoted in book-length studies, and figures consistently as a standard title in bibliographies and reference works destined for both Canadian and international audiences: Walter Pache cites Survival in his Einführung in die Kanadistik (1981), a volume intended for German-speaking students of Canadian literature in English and French;[10] writing in 1983, Volker Strunk takes Atwood's position on the Canadian national identity as presented in Survival to be nationally representative (Strunk 67). In The Old World and the New (1984), Walter Riedel cites Survival as an influential early critical text which explained Canadian literature in terms of a central cultural symbol;[11] Gaile McGregor bases part of her argument in The Wacousta Syndrome: Explorations

in the Canadian Langscape (1985) on her reading of Survival; and a recent publication of the MLA, Studies on Canadian Literature: Introductory Critical Essays (1990), lists Survival under the bibliographic rubric of "literary criticism." These few examples illustrate the acknowledged importance of Survival as a key critical text. Regardless of the unfavourable criticism it has received, Survival does not seem likely to fall out of print. Boréal published a French translation in 1987.

Survival was a remarkably successful undertaking. Much like Atwood's many novels, collections of short stories, and poetry, it is a very readable book, and bears her identifiable stylistic trademarks and mordant tone. Indeed, one reviewer, convinced that Atwood's writing is best understood as "an expanding whole," situates Survival in relation to the novel Surfacing, published in the same year. Joan Harcourt objected to the novel's "too explicit cross-reference" to the thematic guide (281). This comment is instructive because it suggests that the one explains the other and vice versa, that these works, published more or less simultaneously, are to a certain extent collapsable: the fiction completes and equals the non-fiction, while the non-fiction, or criticism, completes and equals the fiction. But literary works are sufficient in themselves; critical writing is a sort of parasitical genre that feasts on the literary host. Because a given literary work necessarily precedes the critic's commentary or elucidation of it, criticism depends on literary works for its very raison d'être, and can seldom do more than repeat them imperfectly, or offer "second words."

This relationship holds unless we are dealing with criticisms that assume more active, political functions. The project of a national literature requires such a criticism; in this case the role of actual literary production may overlap with, or be usurped by, that of criticism. This possibility introduces some pertinent questions regarding Survival and Surfacing: which is the fictional work, and how do we define "fictional"? or, which is the more fictional of the two? what are the implications of these questions for the status of Survival as a critical study, as others have so often referred to it and classified it? Atwood herself calls the book a "thematic guide," and makes the analogy with ornithology, whose enthusiasts consult the markings in bird-books in order to search out the habitats of various species and make observations on their activities. If we extend this analogy to readers of Canadian literature, we are presented with an image of them not so much as adventurers, explorers, pioneers or pathfinders pitting their wits against the rigours of the far north and struggling for "survival" against the elements, as of tame weekend birders fitted out with binoculars, rubber boots and log books. The large-scale "mapping" of the terrain has been accomplished by the professionals; now untrained observers may wander over the field and afterwards exchange views over a hot coffee about whether that woodpecker they spotted was of the downy or the hairy variety. And this is where the guide may be of help; it may not be science, but it certainly makes for some lively discussion.

For there is much about Survival that is provocative. Under the book's section entitled "Tributes," Atwood readily assumes

responsibility for her guide's "sloppy generalizations," just as she later freely admits the ahistorical character of her enterprise: "Most ... of my examples are drawn from the twentieth century, and many from the last few decades" (13). She begins with "a sweeping generalization" and goes on to argue that the symbol that best summarizes the idea of the United States and American culture is "possibly" "The Frontier;" in the case of England, it is "perhaps" that of "The Island." But by the time Canada's turn comes along, the "symbol" that speaks for Canada is "undoubtedly" that of "Survival, *la Survivance*" (31-32). This bold claim for a unifying symbol in Canadian literature was certainly an act of admirable bravado. However, the aim of this discussion of Survival, or for that matter of any other thematic studies of Canadian literature, is not to offer yet another refutation of the author's method or to disprove the observations made about individual writers. Like B.W. Powe, I do not think that the critical challenge of such commentaries is particularly great, and am more interested in the dialogue Survival generated and the effect it appears to have had on Canadian critics and on the development of the study of Canadian literature.

This is a topic that Stanley Fogel has touched on in A Tale of Two Countries: Contemporary Fiction in English Canada and the United States (1984). He sees Survival as a noteworthy document mainly because of what it tells us regarding the activities of the critical community in Canada. In particular, he notes how a specific context for the reading of Canadian literature was created by books like Atwood's. Fogel sees such works as having

contributed to the "Canadian critical legacy" that consisted of naming a national, Canadian tradition. While critics of Canadian literature were occupied with this activity, as a community they remained, according to Fogel, "impervious to the whole deconstructionist debate that has gripped academia in America." Although many arguments in favour of the neglect of the Yale brand of deconstruction might be made, Fogel implies that Canadian critics were ignorant of their very ignorance. In fact, he adds, in agreement with Frank Davey, who has made the same point on a number of occasions, that "Canlit" critics have also "given short shrift" to most other major critical approaches: "Marxist, phenomenological, and Freudian" modes of criticism have been largely overlooked "in favour of ... the sociological and more especially the nationalistic" (101). Yet I am unsure that "sociological" criticism is the appropriate category for Survival. At the very least, the use of the word "sociological" demands to be clearly defined before it is used in a derogatory way; I do not think sociologists would appreciate the implied assumptions regarding their field. It also strikes me as somewhat unfair to castigate Canadian critics on the one hand for being ignorant of the deconstructionist debate in the United States, while critics active in that very deconstructionist debate have on their part been flagrantly ignorant of debates that have raged elsewhere, and of which they have troubled to extract and to read, but most often to translate, only selected chapters. This helps to explain the North-American neglect of "sociological" approaches to literature

that have been developing elsewhere, notably in France, over the last thirty years or so.

If Survival is an example of sociological criticism, then it is so only insofar as it is "bad sociology," as Frank Davey puts it (5), or sociology in a popularly diluted sense. It has long been recognized that methodology influences the outcome of scholarly research. But the impossiblity of attaining an ideal, objective stance does not mean that the quest for knowledge and understanding must be abandoned, or the search for meaning and how it is constructed declared futile. Instead, relative knowledge may be achieved; that is, research strives not to speak absolute truths, but to establish what is certainly *not* true, and to proceed from there during a period of "normal science" during which theories are applied and tested. The field of sociology is not exempt from this process, and neither is that of poetics. But what makes for "good" sociology in sociologically oriented studies of literature? There has been progress since the days of vulgar Marxism when results were for the most part dictated by ideological imperatives. More refined strains of Marxism than those espoused by some Canadian critics have certainly developed. Today, sociologically oriented studies of literature embrace a range of approaches. These include the work of scholars such as Levin L. Schücking, Leo Löwenthal, and Pierre Bourdieu on the idea of taste; studies on textual production, or the history of the book; many different practices of reception theory; Itamar Even-Zohar's work on the concept of literature as polysystem; and studies on the literary institution. From these points of view, "Literature" as a phenomenon includes

not only the study of a hierarchy of classic texts, but the wide variety of practices that surround the activities of reading and writing in a given society, and which make possible the emergence of classic texts.

Let us consider a number of problems that might interest a sociologist of literature in the context of Canadian literature. Canada has never had an aristocratic literary class, but it has funded state organisms that stimulate creative writing through grants. Whether one approves or not of such organisms, they do play a role in determining the nature of some of the country's literary production. The relationship between text and society runs deeper than the acknowledgement of financial assistance usually found on the second or third page of a collection of poetry published in Canada. It is a relationship that bears thinking about, not necessarily so that we may summarily pass judgment either for or against it, but in order to understand the impact it has on Canadian literature. Another problem, which has been alluded to in the above discussion, would be to examine the relationship between the construction and influence of Margaret Atwood as an author, and to inquire into the effect of her reputation on the sales and authority of _Survival_. Thinking about this sort of question might reveal more about "society" and its interaction with "Literature" by informing us about the nature of the credibility attached to the name "Margaret Atwood," and why a book about Canadian literature bearing her name would be likely to command more attention than another, signed John or Alice Smith.[12]

We have only to skim the editor's note to Boréal's French translation of Survival to grasp the strength of Atwood's credibility as an authority on Canadian literature, and perhaps that of the *dialogue de sourds* that holds between the French- and English-language critical communities in Canada. In justifying the publication of the Éssai sur la littérature canadienne, the editor tells us that Atwood does not intend to provide a comprehensive survey of the literary evolution of Canadian literature, but "d'en mettre au jour la problématique fondamentale," still operative in 1987, because "des choses aussi profondes et enracinées ne changent pas vraiment en aussi peu que quinze ans."[13] In a sense he is correct. Yet there is no mention of the controversy that greeted Survival's original publication in English; no mention of its impact on the critical discourse of Canadian literature in English Canada; no effort to situate Survival for the benefit of French-language readers either within or without Canada.

The editor's second reason for publishing Atwood's Éssai is even more revelatory; it is

> la qualité tout à fait unique que confère à ce livre sur la littérature canadienne-anglaise le fait d'être écrit de l'intérieur, par une romancière dont l'oeuvre se situe aux tout premiers rangs de cette littérature, et qui a elle-même vécu et assumé, dans sa propre écriture, la problématique dont elle parle. (9)

He concludes that the Éssai is both "un ouvrage sur la littérature canadienne et sur elle-même que Margaret Atwood écrit"--and might have attributed to Atwood the corollary "j'écris, donc je suis ... la littérature canadienne," although Atwood herself professes to be more modest. In Survival she writes that even though many of the

patterns she addresses "were first brought to [her] attention by [her] own work," this does not mean that she intends to discuss her own writing (14).

Fogel's "nationalistic" mode of criticism is more appropriate for describing Survival. It is part of the sort of project that Marcotte alluded to regarding the literature of Quebec. As such, it is a work motivated more by a desire *for* a literature than by a critical inclination to reflect upon existing literary texts. Atwood is explicit about her competence in the field that interests her, emphasizing that she is "a writer rather than an academic or an expert" and that her own reading, not "study or research," has provided her with examples used to illustrate her thesis (11). This common-sense approach is gauged to ensure "simplicity and practicability," and to render Survival "accessible to people other than scholars and specialists" (13). She suggests that the question of why Canadians should be interested in their literature should hardly warrant reflection; in fact, in her estimation, it "shouldn't have to be answered at all because, in any self-respecting nation, it would never even be asked." Here we begin to touch upon the heart of the matter: "Canada *isn't* a self-respecting nation and the question does get asked. Therefore..." (4). "Therefore" Survival is a book written with a "sense of cultural mission." Somebody had to do something.

Canada may not be self-respecting, but at the very least it is unified. Yet the editor at Boréal seems to have misunderstood the nature of the cultural mission, since he sees the Éssai as "une excellente introduction à la littérature canadienne-anglaise" and

as an illustration of "la lucidité avec laquelle les oeuvres de ses écrivains expriment l'imaginaire du Canada anglais" (9), while for Atwood the theme of survival neatly applies to Canadian writing in both English and French. Although she did read some French-language authors in the original, "usually with the aid of a dictionary," she admits to having resorted to translations, such as that of Jacques Ferron's "Mélie et le boeuf" in Tales From the Uncertain Country, which she discusses in the section devoted to animal victims (14). The Éssai itself contradicts the editor's presentation of it, for it clearly deals with writing in both official languages. There is also a certain degree of ambiguity surrounding the book's title. The use of Atwood's translation for survival, "*La Survivance*," might have led to some confusion, since it constitutes a pair of highly charged words in French Canada; "Éssai sur la littérature canadienne" is certainly calculated to produce a more neutral effect. However, although the editor sees the book as a fine introduction to *English*-Canadian literature, the translated title indicates that the book's subject-matter is *Canadian* literature. It is left to the reader's discretion to decide whether or not "Canadian" includes both English- and French-language writing. Some bibliographic deletions for the French translation would appear to support the editor's view of the book: not included in the list of books of criticism Atwood deems of interest are D.G. Jones' Butterfly on Rock, which "examines various recurring motifs in both English and French Canadian literature" and Ronald Sutherland's Second Image, the "first book-length comparative study of English and French Canadian literature" (217).

If the theme of survival is politely refused as a means of rapprochement between the two linguistic communities, Survival nonetheless provides other grounds for it. In his article on nationalism and literature in Quebec, Marcotte notes that, historically, French Canadians were most free to act in "'industries' that relied on speech," and that they tend to be nominalists. He adds that

> [t]here is a good case to be made for nominalism. English Canadians are beginning to understand that; Margaret Atwood's book, Survival, and the acclaim it received, are signs that they, too, are coming to see their literature as a collective mirror and as a means of securing a collective consciousness. (8)

II: From Literary History to Literature as System

Discourse related to literature--that is, the ways we discuss writing, the aspects we tend to focus on and explore, and the classics that we identify--is conditioned by the question that we put to texts, and which we expect them to answer: "When the 'question' changes, the hierarchy of the classics is revised accordingly. And the question," as Hayden White suggests, "changes in response to the changes in the modes of *praxis* of the generations" (181). In the field of Canadian literature, the dominant question has for a long time been "what is Canadian literature?" or, "what is characteristically *Canadian* about this literature?" Some answers have been the garrison mentality; the theme of survival; patterns of isolation; the Wacousta syndrome. They have presented Canadian literature as a coherent whole, or a body of texts that may be understood collectively in terms of a

single organizing idea. This central idea--or "symbol," as Atwood put it--is said to correspond to the idea of that which is essentially Canadian; it follows that an individual text is construed as a particular expression of the general idea of Canada. Thus, in reading Canadian literature, we apparently encounter a reflection of the collective Canadian self, or identity (the latter also referred to synonymously as 'soul,' or 'spirit,' or 'imagination,' or 'consciousness'). Key themes and images in literature are understood to reveal "the features that recur in the mind, the mirror of our imaginative life" (D.G. Jones 3). The reader "looks at the mirror and sees not the writer but himself; and behind his own image in the foreground, a reflection of the world he lives in;" likewise, he encounters patterns that are also "a reflection of a national habit of mind" (Atwood, Survival 15, 13). Why should we wish to encounter these patterns? why read Canadian literature? Because

> [o]ur literature is of great value to us as the repository of memories to be confronted as we mature ... to distinguish us, not from others, but to ourselves. ... Reading it allows us to explore our own identity, to become more fully conscious of what we already are. (Moss, preface 2)

Canadian literature will reveal Canadians to themselves, and criticism will help Canadian literature make that revelation; hence the desire expressed regarding a collection of comparative essays on "Quebec/Canadian" literature that they should "focus attention on a few of the crucial changes now occurring in Canadian society and being reflected in the mirror of Canadian literature"

(Sutherland 96). Criticism becomes an "instrument" for developing a certain type of "social awareness:"

> It seeks a central role in the development of national consciousness. It aspires to the attainment of cultural coherence. No one, I think, would quarrel with aims of this sort, particularly when they intend to serve the variety and richness of Canadian experience and more fairly represent the Canadian writer than earlier aesthetic criticism was able to. (Mandel 7)

The above quotations are taken from texts directed explicitly towards a Canadian audience; the "we" designates "we Canadians;" the "our" refers to a collective, Canadian possession. They therefore prompt us to ask whether readers of Canadian literature must be Canadian in order to understand it, and to perceive the reflection of Canadianness and recognize it as such. What happens when Canadian literature is opened up to the world at large, and to potentially contradictory, non-Canadian readings of it? Would those readings be welcomed, or would they be politely refused?

Volker Strunk states that Atwood's conception of national identity could "be said to be anchored in antiquarian concepts of nationality that have not seen the light of reason" (67). This is also true of the other critics cited above along with Atwood. But the twentieth century provides ample evidence that "antiquarian concepts of nationality" are not dead yet. The symptoms of the romantic alliance between nationhood and national literature that Strunk identifies in Commonwealth countries that have emerged since the Second World War may indeed be signs of the desire for a sense of cultural legitimacy. They also provide insights into the conditions necessary to the emergence of literatures. In the

Canadian case, students may be struck by the similarity of the discourses from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries concerning the relationship between the state and its literature. Thus, in an essay of 1848 entitled "Our Literature, Present and Prospective," published by W.P.C. in the Literary Garland, we may read that

> the polite literature of a country may be considered with propriety as an infallible exponent of that country's prosperity; and as such is a subject worthy to engage the deepest interest and most devoted attention of the patriot and statesman. (245)

Here "polite literature" is judged to be a suitable subject of interest to those who have their country's best interests at heart, "the patriot and statesman." Atwood's comments in Survival suggest that she shares these thoughts on the value of literature, even if the majority of Canadians do not appear to. Her explanation for their neglect of literature is that "Canada isn't a self-respecting nation."

A like sentiment motivates a recent editorial of Lettres québécoises, "Revue de l'actualité littéraire," in which André Vanasse pleads for a more assertive stand on the part of the Quebec government's Department of Education, hoping it will have the courage to state firmly that "la littérature québécoise est notre littérature nationale et qu'elle se doit d'être enseignée en priorité et globalement;" in Vanasse's opinion, it is time to study the works of "ceux et celles qui ont construit notre imaginaire collectif." After invoking Lord Durham's assessment of the inhabitants of Lower Canada following the Rebellion of 1837-38 as a people with neither a history nor a literature, Vanasse ends with the hope that, if a more supportive policy regarding Québécois

literature were instituted, the Québécois reader would know more "de son sol, de son histoire, de sa culture" and that he would likewise learn "enfin à s'aimer et à ne pas se mirer éternellement dans le miroir de l'Autre" (3-4). Here (besides an editor's desire to entice a public) we find the same concern with the instruction of specifically national literature in schools, the same sense of a collective consciousness, and the same mirror metaphor encountered in _Survival_. The main difference is that the works Vanasse would like to see on the high school and CÉGEP curricula do not include _The Journals of Susanna Moodie_ or _Lady Oracle_. Nonetheless, the preoccupations of both Vanasse and Atwood support the idea that literature is seen as an "entry ticket" to what Strunk calls the "family of culturally established nations" (68). That family is small and tightly knit. For Canadians who write in English or French, it is not only the entry ticket that is coveted, but foreign recognition of their work, because the family of culturally established nations also has a market to offer.[14]

This sense of a state's need for a national literature in order to attain true nationhood is evident in many earlier formulations of the way in which literature is understood to express national identity. It was a popular topic during the period following World War I, when a spate of literary histories appeared in Canada. Whether the younger generation of English-Canadian critics who first became active in the 1970s were aware of these early histories or not, they nevertheless share much in common with them. Studies of the 1920s and 1930s reveal an interest in Canadian literature that stemmed primarily from the rise of nationalist

sentiment that accompanied Canada's participation in the war. Some of these early twentieth-century studies provide some points for reflection upon the nature of literary history in Canada and the movement during the 1960s and 1970s both to refurbish the status of Canadian letters and forge a sense of cultural identity. One of the first, A History of English-Canadian Literature to the Confederation, by Ray Palmer Baker, was originally written as a doctoral dissertation. In his preface Baker writes that he reformulated his study so that it could be published "for the Semicentennial of the Confederation" (n.p.). That was in 1920. Subsequently, the publication of studies would frequently coincide with significant national anniversary dates, thereby reinforcing the link between literary history and national awareness or nationalist objectives. A typical example is the reissue of Baker's book in 1968 just after Canada's centennial celebrations, and not long before Klinck's History.

Another early twentieth-century history was titled Highways of Canadian Literature (1924), by J.D. Logan and Donald G. French. The goal of the authors of Highways, like Atwood's in Survival, was to "furnish the teacher, the student, and the general reader with a 'method' of reading Canadian Literature," except that they proposed to do so "with philosophical insight or with historical and critical perspective." Readers would read how Canadian writers had "expressed in literature the slowly emerging consciousness of a national spirit and a national destiny in the Dominion" (Logan, preface 6). What follows is a baroque configuration of categories and qualifications intended to identify authors according to their

place of birth and to the moment (pre- or post-Confederation) at which they entered the literary sphere. The interest in classifying and qualifying authors as Canadian or otherwise was a second feature common to early surveys, and a major source of preoccupation for a country in which immigration has remained a constant factor.

Yet another history published in 1924 by McClelland & Stewart bore a similar title: Headwaters of Canadian Literature, by Archibald MacMechan. The author's motive in writing, which he hopes will "atone" for the book's imperfections, is "the greater glory of Canada," this time in the domains of both English and French writing (10). MacMechan understood literature to be the key to cultural memory; it tells us "how we think and feel, what we remember and what we desire. ... Literature ... is the voice of a people. Through its literature, the life, the soul of a people may be known" (17). MacMechan's conception of literature as the expression of a people's memory and soul is characteristic of a certain romantic attitude born of historical and national self-consciousness. In Canada, this attitude dates well back to the first half of the nineteenth century and Lord Durham's famous report. At that time, French-speaking Lower Canadians were quick to react, Garneau with his Histoire du Canada depuis sa découverte jusqu'à nos jours (1845-52), James Huston with his Répertoire national (1848). Their common objective was to disprove Durham by producing a narrative that would reconstitute and construct collective memory, thereby uniting the *Canadiens* and providing them with a sense of common experience and cultural belonging. That

Vanasse should strike these same chords in his editorial by recalling Durham's judgment, "animé par l'assurance de la supériorité de sa culture," is a sign of the currency these ideas still enjoy well over a century later. That they underlay the ideas of early nineteenth-century editors in the Canadas and of historians during the post-World War I period, and continue to play a role in present discussions would seem to indicate that, to a certain extent, they remain "contemporary."

M.G. Parks, author of the introduction to the 1974 edition of Headwaters of Canadian Literature,[15] praises the lack of "pious patriotism" that marred Logan and French's Highways. Parks explains how MacMechan

> establishes that Canadian writers are those whose minds were formed in Canada; mere birth in the country is no qualification, and those "denizens" whose minds were formed elsewhere are equally outside the pale. The distinction arises from his fundamental principle of the "genius of the land," his belief in a national character or soul which is discernible in a nation's literature. (ix)

Thus, "pious patriotism" gives way to a conception of national belonging that is accorded not just to those born on Canadian soil, but to those whose minds have experienced its formative influence. MacMechan, however, was not the first to link the idea of "Canadianness" with the landscape.

Carl F. Ballstadt has written of Thomas D'Arcy McGee's numerous articles on the need for a national Canadian literature published in the New Era during the years 1857 and 1858, well ahead of Edward Hartley Dewart's preface and introductory essay to his Selections from Canadian Poets, which appeared in 1864. Ballstadt

notes that McGee frequently compared Canada to other northern countries, and named

> Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Denmark and Finland as examples to Canadians of northern countries which have revealed their richness in history, poetry, and astronomy. [McGee] attributes this richness to a northern penchant for "indoor labor of the brain" and fully expects Canada to see a like richness.
> ("Thomas D'Arcy" 87)

After McGee, the proponents of the Canada First movement, established in 1868, the year following Confederation, developed a nationalist discourse based on the idea that the rigour of the northern climate "provided the core strength and spirit of Canada" (Bashevkin 7). Sylvia B. Bashevkin, following Carl Berger, remarks that this "physical and intensely landscape-oriented definition of identity retains a pivotal place in the anglo-Canadian world view" (8). She traces the elaboration of this current of thought through the Canada Firsters to the Group of Seven, then on to the writing of Margaret Atwood (particularly in Survival and Surfacing) and to that of Peter C. Newman, during the 1970s. For those who adhere to the landscape-oriented definition of identity, the concept of nationality is rooted not so much in common racial or ethnic origins, but in the mutual identification with a shared geographical location, hence MacMechan's "genius of the land." It suggests a half-hearted *Blut und Boden* approach to the definition of nationality, in which the impossibility of a common *Blut* denominator is acknowledged and a qualified, necessarily diluted version of the *Boden* element applied.

But, according to MacMechan, the "genius of the land" only became operative following certain political events. He states

that the "central event in the history of Canada is Confederation" and that, prior to 1867, "there was no Canada, only a chaos of provinces out of which a country might be created" (97). Thus, out of chaos, order; out of a disparate number of colonies, unity, which stood for a new beginning, a country. MacMechan writes his version of the origin myth of the Canadian federation, by which he justifies and lends legitimacy to the "birth" of a new situation. He goes on to note that, "[t]o the world, a Canadian was a native Frenchman speaking broken English" (97); in other words, before 1867, the world may have had a certain conception of a "Canada" and of what a "Canadian" was, but it was not the true conception, which was only embodied in, or made possible by, Confederation itself. Even though MacMechan uses the word "central" in qualifying Confederation, for him, Confederation figures as a political event that marked the "true" beginning of what he calls Canada. Events which preceded it pale in comparison, and are neither important nor memorable. If the "genius of the land" is characteristic of the Canadian soul, and if Canada and Canadians did not exist before 1867, then the "genius of the land" must have come into being at the same time as "Canada" emerged from the chaos of British North American provinces. "The new generation," wrote MacMechan, "knew nothing of separate provinces, but only Canada" (97-98). The seemingly mystical "genius of the land" was therefore clearly dependent on worldly, political events. In keeping with the same reasoning, specifically Canadian cultural memory begins with Confederation, which "marks the end of an old era and the beginning of a new in matters political. The same is true of matters

literary. Only after Confederation are the writers of Ontario distinctively Canadian" (99-100). For MacMechan, Canadians may certainly look back towards their beginnings: they are grounded in 1867, within the scope of human memory for many of those who may have read the Headwaters of Canadian Literature in 1924.

MacMechan's nationalism may be understood in the context of Canada's status following the First World War. At that time, nationalists who sought a greater degree of autonomy for Canada from Great Britain prided themselves on their country's role during that conflict and afterwards. There was a widespread desire to maintain the integrity of the British Commonwealth and, at the same time, to assume the status of an equal partner in dealing with the former mother country as well as with other states on the international scene. Political autonomy figures as an accepted, noble ideal, the result of the territory's evolution from a confusion of provinces to a country, to an equal partner in the relationship with Britain. Indeed, Carl Berger has described the intensity with which English-Canadian historians focused on this topic, and cites their chronicling of the rise of Canadian self-government as a capital example of "the tendency to write history in order to shape the present and the future" (52). In their case, the recourse to history as an authority is not made in order to return to a pure moment that would have revealed the essence of Canadian identity. Instead, history is used to trace a steady progression that culminates in the present, which is seen as the more important moment commanding our attention. The oppressive forces against which the Dominion led the struggle for political

autonomy were of course those of the mother country, Great Britain. Berger sees this "obsession" with responsible government among English-Canadian historians as a "counterpart to the theme of survival in French Canada" (2).

These separate approaches of the historians of Canada's two major linguistic communities to the writing of Canadian history, the one focusing on the winning of responsible government, the other on the theme of survival, cannot be reduced to a single coherent narrative of the story of Canada because they move in opposite directions: while the one looks forward to the glories of the future, the other looks back to the golden age of the past. These divergent visions suggest that if Canadians are "inescapably, and almost from the first, the bifocal people," as one critic has chosen to describe them,[16] then they are so only insofar as they are cross-eyed.

Two texts that illustrate this fundamental difference between the visions of the two communities are Philippe Aubert de Gaspé's Les anciens Canadiens (1863) and Dewart's "Introductory Essay" to Selections from Canadian Poets (1864), published within a year of each other. De Gaspé begins casually, without taking the trouble of formally separating his preface from his narrative, which he invites "les puristes, les littérateurs émérites" to treat as they wish: as "roman, mémoire, chronique, salmigondis, pot-pourri: peu importe!" (25) His intention is modest: "Consigner quelques épisodes du bon vieux temps, quelques souvenirs d'une jeunesse, hélas! bien éloignée, voilà toute mon ambition" (24). If these "anecdotes" strike the reader as "insignifiantes et puériles," the

blame should be directed towards "quelques-uns de nos meilleurs litteratéurs," the very same who persuaded de Gaspé that

> 'Ce qui paraîtra insignifiant et puéril aux yeux des étrangers ... ne laissera pas d'intéresser les vrais Canadiens, dans la chronique d'un septuagénaire né vingt-huit ans seulement après la conquête de la Nouvelle-France.' (24-25)

Once de Gaspé has announced the end of his preface, he begins his chapter on a more serious note with an "épigraphe inédite" in which "Québec voit ondoyer, symbole de sa gloire, / L'éclatante splendeur de son vieux drapeau blanc" and an Iroquois silently contemplates "L'étendard de la France et la croix du vrai Dieu" (25). He invites readers to look back--way back--to the days of New France, when the flag of the ancien régime flew proudly over the city of Quebec as strains of the evening's *Angelus* floated skywards. As de Gaspé reveals in his preface or first chapter, and as has often been observed, his narrative is based on his own memory of earlier days. Maurice Lemire, in his introduction to Les anciens Canadiens, concurs: "Ce que désire d'abord représenter de Gaspé, c'est un passé national, mais d'un point de vue bien particulier, c'est-à-dire tel que vécu par sa famille, mais aussi par lui" (8). De Gaspé was concerned that the past, and his family, be remembered in the appropriate light; thus, Les anciens Canadiens recounts a national past designed to defend the seigneurial class to which de Gaspé's family had belonged. Seigneurial tenure, a lingering sign of the French régime during the first half of the nineteenth century, was abolished in 1854 so that by 1860, as Lemire remarks,

> les jeux étaient faits ... mais, dans un mouvement de récupération du passé pour constituer la mémoire collective du peuple, il importait, aux yeux d'Aubert

de Gaspé, de redonner à la classe des seigneurs la
place qui lui revenait. (11)

Thus, part of Les anciens Canadiens is based on the truth of personal history, or autobiography, while part is fictional. De Gaspé's preface/first chapter points to the extent to which these two discourses penetrate each other: he does not separate them by titles or page breaks. Lemire notes that de Gaspé is aware of his debt to François-Xavier Garneau, "qui a rendu aux Canadiens la fierté de leur histoire," but that, unlike Garneau, "il ne se fonde pas sur des documents pour rétablir les faits passés, mais uniquement sur sa mémoire personnelle" (7). "Notre historien improvisé" reconstructs a whole era on the basis of memory. The past becomes a romanticized, happy era, and the seigneurial class is represented as particularly generous and indulgent towards the habitants. Accordingly, the *corvée* and *rentes*, as well as other obligations owed the seigneur (traditionally depicted as burdensome, feudally backward and exploitative by English and anglo-Canadian observers and commentators since 1760) are largely down-played. Now that it is clearly "over" and part of an age sealed off by time, the past of pre-conquest days may be transformed and transposed into the pleasing form of an historical romance.

If Dewart's formulation of the need for a national literature in his "Introductory Essay" is largely a reiteration of McGee's stance on the subject, his sense of the role of Canadian history and of historical personalities is not entirely the same. McGee originally saw historical figures such as Cartier, Sebastian Cabot, Henry Hudson, and La Salle as ideal subjects for Canadian writers

because, once immortalized in literature, they would inspire feelings of patriotism in readers and reinforce a sense of Canadian identity (Ballstadt, "Thomas D'Arcy" 91-92). He had taken this approach in the Young Ireland movement; once in his new land, it was simply a question of substituting figures related to Canada and then repeating the same formula in order to cultivate the patriotic feelings of Canadian readers. But for Dewart this role for history in literature is impossible because Canada is a "young and unromantic country" whose history is neither distant nor grand enough. He writes that things that "are hoary with age, and dim in their distance, from us, are more likely to win veneration and approval, while whatever is near and familiar loses in interest and attraction" (xv). As a result, Canadian poets are at a clear disadvantage:

> When the poets of other countries sing of the birds and flowers, the mountains and streams, of those lands, whose history is starred with deathless names, and rich with the mellow and hazy light of romance, every reference to those immortal types of beauty or grandeur commands sympathy and admiration. (xlv)

This cannot happen when Canadian poets write since their country's past is still too clear. In Dewart's estimation, Canada's history is not at all "rich with the mellow and hazy light of romance," nor is it "starred" with "deathless names." His conclusion is that if there is not much to look back upon, Canadians might as well look forward:

> if Memory cannot draw rich materials for poetry from treasures consecrated to fame, Hope unfolds the loftier inspiration of a future bright with promise. If we cannot point to a past rich with historic names, we have the inspiring spectacle of a great country, in in her youthful might, girding herself for a race for

> an honorable place among the nations of the world. (xix)

Thus, on the eve of Confederation, a French-language writer invites us to look backwards to a time when New France was still pure, while an English-language anthologist directs our gaze to the future, when Canada will proudly assume her place in the world.

Dewart confirms MacMechan's later sense that Confederation marks the beginning of cultural memory in the minds of anglo-Canadians, and that it is a point from which Canadians move forward; for French Canada, however, "notre Maître, le passé" has always referred to a past rooted in a time well before Confederation, and before the British conquest. As Claude Fohlen writes in an article outlining Québécois historiography since 1945, Quebec's historians have traditionally shown a greater interest in the history of Quebec than in that of Canada, the United States, or Europe, and that

> [on] constate encore maintenant que l'étude historique du Québec est une chasse gardée pour les historiens québécois francophones, abstraction faite de quelques intrusions. ... De leur côté, rares sont les Français à travailler sur l'histoire de la Belle Province. (189)

The nature of this concentration of interest has become more evident since 1945, when historians began to put forth varying views on Quebec's history, thereby disrupting the coherence of its presentation since the time of Garneau. Fohlen proceeds to note that earlier historians of the twentieth century show a marked preference "pour la période française, qu'ils privilégient aux dépens des périodes plus récentes, moins significatives à leurs yeux dans une perspective d'une histoire/instruction civique" (192).[17] The didactic dimension of history and its potential for

providing a common cultural narrative regarding the community's origins and its destiny are an important feature for these historians. They see the conquest as a rupture following which the theme of *la survivance* of the French-Canadian nation is fully developed, along with the role of the Catholic church, which, according to their view, provided the central support for it. In this context, survival has little to do with the wilderness or the economic and cultural threat of the United States. It refers instead to the determination to resist assimilation by the Anglo-Saxon conqueror through the preservation of the Roman Catholic faith, the French language, and a different legal code. During the second half of the twentieth century, this "Chinese box" effect has become increasingly prevalent, so that it operates not only within Canada, between "French-" and "English-" Canadians, or between "Canadians" and "Québécois," but within the province of Quebec itself, between the majority and minorities.

In her attempt to provide a single, unifying symbol to express the idea of Canada and Canadianness, Margaret Atwood paradoxically chose one which points to the centrifugal forces in Canada which make a symbol of unity and integration impossible. If in Survival Atwood revives the anglo-Canadian idea of the Canadian landscape as one of the keys to Canadian identity, she is disinclined to look too far back in the past, even to Confederation. There is no temptation to turn to the authority of the past in order to identify the "essence" of survival as it may have been apparent in Canada's earliest writers, no desire to make an appeal to history in order to "map" and proclaim the evolution of Canada's

literature. Atwood's examples of the theme of survival are all more or less contemporary, for which she has good reason. In response to a particularly hostile review article of Survival by Robin Mathews, she defends herself against the charge that she has ignored "a tradition of 'struggle'" which she senses Mathews wished there had existed in Canadian writing:

> I wanted this literature to exist in the past so that those in the present would have a tradition to turn to. What I was looking for were pieces that combine recognition of Canada--not just some group within Canada, but Canada as a whole--as an oppressed entity, plus some constructive effort directed at overcoming this condition. (Second Words 14)

The results of Atwood's search were that she did not find much of this sort of writing--that is, the sort of writing that revealed a sense of "Canada-as-colony-as-oppressed," battling to survive--which explains her decision to limit her study to the work of contemporary writers, whose work is more useful for "'consciousness-raising'." When history fails to provide the sort of germane material hoped for, then it is best left forgotten. The nationalists of the 1920s and 1930s whose reflections on the role of landscape were central to their conception of Canadian writing, and with whom Atwood shares a sense of purpose, are not mentioned as forebears in the Survival tradition or listed with the suggestions for further reading, perhaps because of their commitment to the British empire. To acknowledge one's ascendance to this group would have been to embrace John McCrae's invitation, made in "In Flanders Fields," to take up the quarrel with the foe and hold the torch high, so to speak.

Literary critics of the 1960s and 1970s motivated by nationalist sentiment were looking for a different sort of torch, one that would shed some light on the questions they put to texts: what is *Canadian* about this text? or, how is this text a "mirror" of Canada? The answer was invariably what they decided it would be.

The preceding discussion points to some of the signs of crisis evident in Canadian literary criticism. Admittedly, although they helped establish and legitimize Canadian literature as a field of study, thematic and nationalistic critical approaches have had a number of negative long-term effects. As many critics have observed from the early 1970s onward, one way of "correcting" this situation would be to turn to more rigourous modes of analysis that would treat Canadian texts as aesthetic objects of study rather than as "signs" of, or "indices" to, an elusive Canadian identity. Yet the late 1970s showed no sign of a major change of approach to indicate that these suggestions had been heeded. What could be the reason for this? Is it related to the methods of literary analysis being taught in English programmes, which leave students unequipped to deal with problems peculiar to Canadian writing? or was it because rigourous text-centred criticism was not appropriate to the questions being asked in the field of Canadian literature? Whatever the reason, it is doubtful that any number of text-centred studies dealing with "literariness" and aesthetic questions as distinguished from the "Canadianness" of Canadian literature would necessarily be of help, or better. If students of the so-called strictly literary qualities of literature are protected from

committing "bad sociology" by confining their interest to the text itself, they are nonetheless compromised by having abstracted the text from its essentially social existence. Attempts to define "literariness" as a characteristic of literary texts have mostly served to confirm that it is a quality largely dependent on fluctuating, extra-textual factors, which lead out of the text and back into the confusion of the world. Thematic criticism, or criticism motivated by nationalist convictions, is the polar opposite of intensely text-centred, aesthetic approaches to literature. Both these approaches suffer from drawbacks due to built-in imbalances.

What of the search for the best of Canadian literature, not just the works that thematic critics have singled out? Regardless of Keith's aim to focus on the "best" of the tradition, students coming from departments of English literature where courses are organized around the stars of the English literary canon will be quick to spot the chasm which separates Susanna Moodie and Charles Sangster from the Greats of the British tradition, and may well wonder why Keith included them in his book at all. If he had to begin somewhere, why not simply have skipped the nineteenth century and begun squarely in the mid-twentieth? That he does not do so leads to some confusion: if literature courses traditionally teach "the best" authors, why waste time on Moodie and Sangster, of all people? Besides the fact that the corpus of Canadian literature itself has yet to be established, and that critical editions of early texts only began to be published in 1982, it might well be argued that it is more appropriate to turn to the best writers in,

say, French and Russian, before getting around to a work or two by twentieth-century Canadian authors. How can the study of the "best" of Canadian writing be justified? How can there even be such a thing as a Canadian canon? One of the problems of Canadian literature is that it has been conceived of on the basis of the national model of English literature, already organized into periods, names, and movements, and presented at once as internally coherent and as quite distinct from any other literary activity that might have taken place elsewhere; national literatures have a habit of being unique. Much of the English canon, as well as a whole variety of literary practices, preceded the modern, industrialized era that was ushered in by the rise of Grub Street and the mass production of writing associated with economic profit, while in Canada, the beginnings of polite literature more or less coincided with those of the development of the mass market for magazines and newspapers in North America. Instead of being romantic geniuses, many early Canadian writers lived, for better or for worse, by their pens, writing for North-American publications destined for a growing mass-market. Yet in attempting to constitute for itself an autonomous, "national" domain of specifically Canadian "literary consciousness," constructors of Canadian literature have sought to reproduce the model of national distinctiveness associated with American and European literatures, while at the same time denying any interference from them.

Many critics, Metcalf among them, have derided Canadian writers and critics for being painfully outmoded--symbolism, modernism, surrealism, you name it--came late to Canadian shores;

at best, Canadians produce mimetic writing, waiting a decade or two before daring to imitate techniques developed and proven elsewhere. (As Godard asked, how can writing be "Literature" if it comes from Canada?) Metcalf makes a lively, polemical contribution to the discussion of Canadian literature. He seems to believe, however, that Canada's best writers are yet to come, that they will rise above the rest naturally, in time, in a sort of literary Darwinism, or "survival-of-the-best," just as writers in major European literatures have risen. Yet Metcalf misses the forest for the trees, for one of the most interesting features of Canadian literature is precisely that which he rails against: the signs and symptoms of its very emergence.

The study of the emergence of literatures cannot limit its focus to literary texts. It must necessarily extend to the practices of reading and writing in a given society, to the value that is ascribed to literary works, and the subsequent uses made of them. Itamar Even-Zohar's formulation of the "governing laws" for the phenomenon of interference include a set of general principles. The first of these is that literatures are never in non-interference:

> The ubiquity of interference is not always obvious ... . Yet research has demonstrated that probably all systems known to us have emerged and developed with interference playing a prominent role. There is not a single literature which did not emerge through interference with a more established literature; and no literature could manage without interference at one time or another during its history. It has been substantiated that interference is the rule rather than the exception, whether it is a major or a minor occurrence for a given literature. (59)

In the case of Canadian literature, interference is both obvious and undeniable. However, its effects imply more than the practice of identifying surface "intertextual" passages of Canadian poetry and relating them to their source in English or French literature; interference is a much broader phenomenon, and may continue for protracted periods of time--hence the discussion of English or American aesthetic norms within the context of contemporary Canadian literature written in English. One of the considerations Even-Zohar cites as necessary to the study of interference is that of literary history.

This is where the "Literary Paradigm and the Discourses of Culture" and the "Contexts of Canadian Writing, 1759-1867" come to play a role. The title of this study refers to an attempt to re-examine early Canadian writing from a systemic perspective, with the aim of describing and accounting for the nature of the interference that led to the conception of "Canadian literature." It obviously bears a relation to current inquiry into the nature of the literary institution in Canada and Quebec. In both cases, full institutionalization was belated. In this respect, however, Canada's two major cultural communities are not alone. Gregory Jusdanis' recent study on the "invention" of national literature discusses the effects on non-Western cultures which have chosen to base their national literatures on the Western-European model and attendant criteria.[18] Besides contemporary Greek literature, the main focus of his study, he also discusses many African, Middle-Eastern, and South-American literatures, pointing to their state of "radical otherness" in relation to Western culture. But how do

European models figure in the Canadian context, which does not present a case of "radical" otherness?[19] If there was so much enthusiasm for Canadian literature among English-speaking inhabitants of Upper and Lower Canada before Confederation, why was the institutionalization of Canadian literature ultimately so late in developing?[20]

In turning to the period between 1759 and 1867, my object is not to locate a time of pure origins or to engage in a documentary "dig" for latent masterpieces. It is not to produce an exhaustive inventory of publications either. Instead, I wish to adapt Even-Zohar's conception of the polysystem theory and apply it to a number of specific moments between 1759 and 1867. The period of study is bounded historically by the British conquest and by Canadian Confederation, and coincides roughly with the publication of Frances Brooke's _The History of Emily Montague_ (1769) and Thomas D'Arcy McGee's "The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion" (1867). While Brooke worked directly out of the British epistolary tradition and addressed an essentially British audience, McGee wrote at the time of Confederation, and urged his fellow-Canadians to assert their "new national character" by developing the "mental self-reliance" necessary to "political independence" (1). I propose to study the nature of the shift that takes place from Brooke to McGee, relating it to the practices of reading and writing as they developed in Quebec, and then the Canadas, before Confederation. The polysystem theory has been adopted by the Research Institute For Comparative Literature, based at the University of Alberta, in its project on the history of the

literary institution in Canada. It seems particularly well-suited to the Canadian situation, both past and present, since it allows for the study of literature in terms of a system of systems. In the context of the more modest endeavour of this dissertation, a systemic perspective allows us to describe the interference that eventually led to the conception of Canadian literature as it was articulated by Thomas D'Arcy McGee. It also enables us to come to an understanding of how some of Canada's early writing may be situated in the flow of social discourse that existed prior to Confederation, and to gain a greater awareness of the cultural complexity of these early texts.

CHAPTER ONE: THE READING AND CRITICAL RECEPTION OF FRANCES BROOKE

I: The Case of The History of Emily Montague

In 1927, reflecting on the status of literary history, Jurij Tynjanov wrote of the implications of the "theory of value" for literary studies. His main objection to the theory of value was that it paved the way for the study of "major but isolated works," which accounted for the transformation of the history of literature into "a *history of generals*" (66). This approach was not without its consequences: "The blind rejection of a history of generals has in turn caused an interest in the study of mass literature, but no clear theoretical awareness of how to study it or what the nature of its significance is" (66). For Tynjanov, together with other theorists collectively familiar today as the Russian formalists, who were endeavouring to recast the basis for the study of literary history by conceiving of literature in terms of a system, the problem with either a history of generals grounded in the concept of "tradition" or the study of a still wider range of literary works was that both undertakings produced an arbitrary object of knowledge. More recently, in a book-length study on the question of literary history, Qu'est-ce que l'histoire littéraire? (1987), Clément Moisan expands on the formalists' suggestions for a literary history based on systems theory. Moisan identifies one of the main problems that still plagues the contemporary study of literary history as that of defining its very object: what do we wish to know about literary history? what do we expect literary history to "do"? Like the formalists, he points out the

inadequacies of traditional literary history, namely that, as a discourse, it constructs its own object of study (16). This produces the "vicious circle" of literary history, in which works that are singled out as significant to the tradition are selected on the basis of a set of aesthetic norms or values; these may change over the course of time, resulting in the varying fortune of literary works that may either rise in, or fall from, favour. Yet the "literature" of traditional literary history is perceived in terms of, and constructed by, not only the objective aesthetic values of a given period, but, as Moisan observes, by a good many other values of varying sorts: these other values may be of a religious, moral, philosophical, psychological, social, or other nature (146). Thus, the selection of works included in traditional literary histories is always intimately linked with an axiology that exceeds merely aesthetic considerations. Contemporary debates regarding canonicity clearly revolve around the issue of literary value and the appropriate criteria to be taken into account in deciding which works will or will not be admitted as representative works in the literary canon, or as fit objects of study to be included in the college or university curriculum.

The varying values that might come into play through the replacement of isolated old works by the study of isolated new ones may indeed alter the shape of a given literary canon; they do not, however, eliminate the problems inherent in Tynjanov's history of generals. Mary Lu MacDonald recognized the inadequacy of this mode of literary history when she argued in a recent article for a more contextual approach to Canadian literature, which would include "as

broad a literary base as possible" ("Nineteenth-Century" 9). What Moisan described as a "vicious circle," MacDonald characterizes as a "chicken and egg relationship:"

> Anyone who has tried to teach the social and intellectual history of pre-Confederation Canada to undergraduates also enrolled in a survey course of Canadian literature has had to deal with the works of Susanna Moodie, John Richardson, Thomas McCulloch and Aubert de Gaspé *père*. The historian states in vain that these authors' views of the world they lived in are unique, because the students have already been told, or have grasped the idea in some way, that these writers' attitudes were "typical." Like most stereotypes, the literary view of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Canada based on the works of a few selected authors have a chicken and egg relationship: they conform to a perceived reality for which they themselves are the source. (6)

The problem identified by both Moisan and MacDonald leads us to a question of epistemological import: we must begin to ask ourselves about the nature of the knowledge we have of Canadian literary history, and how we came to know it. In other words, we must come to a better awareness and understanding of the ways in which we generate knowledge and the grounds upon which that knowledge is based.

With these observations in mind, I would like first to turn to the question of how works of the eighteenth century have figured in the history and discourse of Canadian literature since the 1960s, and will focus specifically on the case of Frances Brooke's novel, The History of Emily Montague (1769). Secondly, I will offer some reflections on an alternative means of approaching the relationship between literature and society in Canada during the eighteenth century.

If Moodie, Richardson, McCulloch and Aubert de Gaspé *père* are some of the authors whose works typically figure in courses on nineteenth-century Canadian literature, what would their eighteenth-century counterparts be? If we look to a number of contemporary anthologies of Canadian literature for an indication of the works that are included as representative of the eighteenth century, the selections vary, as do the number of pages and the proportion of each anthology devoted to them and to writers of this period in general. Some anthologizers concentrate exclusively on prose writing while others strive to reach a balance between poetry and prose; some include writings by the early explorers of Canada, others choose to leave them out. In spite of these different approaches, one name that appears consistently in the selections of early works made by major anthologies of the latter half of the twentieth century is that of Frances Brooke.[1] Her regular inclusion during this period which, as Barry Cameron observes, saw the "full institutionalization" of Canadian literature (124), indicates a certain degree of consensus regarding her status in the literature's history.

If we look at some of the commentary of Canadian critics since 1960 regarding Brooke's contribution to Canadian literature, two points in particular tend to be repeated. Both centre on one of Brooke's epistolary novels, The History of Emily Montague (1769). The first point is that Brooke's novel is the first Canadian novel, or the first novel to be written in Canada. The second is that it offers an accurate description or record of life in the Quebec garrison, shortly after the British won the colony.

Many critics acknowledge that the novel was first published in London and that it is undeniably a part of eighteenth-century European literature; nonetheless, they judge it fair to say that The History of Emily Montague is the first Canadian novel, given that Brooke wrote it while living in Quebec city at the time her husband was chaplain there, as well as the fact that the greater part of the novel's letters are written from Quebec. In his introduction to the New Canadian Library edition of 1961, Carl F. Klinck wrote that "Emily Montague may be described as the first Canadian novel, and indeed the first American one" (v); writing in Klinck's Literary History, James J. Talman and Ruth Talman agree with this point of view: "Emily Montague may truly claim to be the earliest Canadian novel--and, indeed, the earliest novel emanating from the North American continent" (84); a decade later A.J.M. Smith allowed that Emily Montague could "claim the distinction of being the first Canadian novel" (xx). Later critics concur.[2] Thus, Brooke's novel is recognized by virtue of its being the first Canadian example of the genre. At the same time, Emily Montague's accepted chronological "firstness" in Canadian literary history comes to be perceived as a value in itself; this value is augmented each time the point is repeated. Hence, in concluding her article on Brooke for The Oxford Companion to Canadian Literature (1983), Mary Jane Edwards is able to state that one of the main reasons why Brooke has won recognition in recent years is that she was "the author of Canada's first novel" (88). Brooke's status as such allows John Moss to justify the inclusion of Emily Montague as one of the seven works in volume II of Beginnings, an anthology of

essays on "the early Canadian tradition" (Introduction 7). Emily Montague becomes the only eighteenth-century milestone in the tradition, and is to be followed 63 years later by John Richardson's Wacousta (1832). Brooke's "firstness" makes it possible to rationalize her novel as a beginning, which in turn lends historical depth and weight to the tradition (the very historical factor that Dewart felt was lacking in 1864, when he published his anthology of Canadian poets) by extending it back to the mid-eighteenth century, to the time of the post-conquest garrison at Quebec city. For a literature that has only recently achieved its autonomy as a system and that seeks to consolidate its status vis-à-vis others, distant historical milestones such as Emily Montague play an important role in the creation of a sense of cultural legitimacy: Lord Durham said as much in his nineteenth-century report.

Statements that recognize Brooke's novel as Canada's first are invariably accompanied by observations that create links between her and Samuel Richardson, based either upon their supposed acquaintance in England, or on Brooke's apparently having adopted Richardson's works as models for writing an epistolary novel. Many of these statements are also founded on the assumption that Richardson was among the first to have exploited the epistolary form, or that he was the "father" of a certain species of novel in England, usually cited as accepted fact.[3] Let us again turn to Klinck's comments in the introduction to the New Canadian Library edition of Emily Montague for an example:

> Even in old England, the earliest group of authors

> satisfying our modern demands and definitions of the novel had not long been in their graves. Fielding had died in 1754, Richardson in 1761, and Sterne in 1768 .... Mrs Brooke ... had been sixteen when Samuel Richardson published Pamela (1740-41), and thirty-seven when he died. She had known him as a personal friend... . Her Emily Montague was constructed like one of his novels, in the epistolary fashion, made up wholly of letters passing between the characters. The novel was thus transplanted into America by a member of the second generation, writing in the manner of the first. (v)

The relationship between Richardson and Brooke provides an appealing parallel whose attendant implications may be stated as follows: Brooke is to Canadian literature as Richardson is to English literature. The transfer of literary models from old England to the New World, from one generation to the next, is smooth and direct. There is no doubt that Richardson, however much controversy may have marked the beginning of his career,[4] was certainly one of the most successful and widely read writers of the eighteenth century. Richardson's importance to that particular national tradition makes him a respectable object of comparison with Brooke, who gains in literary stature through the association with him, so often evoked by Canadian critics.[5]

At the outset of An Odd Attempt in a Woman, a book-length study of Brooke's literary career based on extensive archival research, and one chapter of which is dedicated to Emily Montague, Lorraine McMullen casts considerable doubt on the widespread assumption that Brooke and Richardson either knew each other or frequented the same literary circles. She cautions that no clear link can be made between the two authors, and that it would in fact be more accurate to say that, if there is any link at all, it is that Richardson was an acquaintance of one of Brooke's friends (6).

This new information concerning the supposed relationship has not been entirely effective in dispelling previous assumptions, however, as a recent anthology (1990) shows. Even though the editors of that anthology announce that they have "revised and updated selections and headnotes throughout" (Brown et al xv), their headnote to Brooke repeats what had already been stated so often:

> The History of Emily Montague ... is often described as the first Canadian novel (and indeed as the first North American one). ... In England [Frances Brooke] had been part of a literary circle that included Samuel Richardson, usually thought of as the first English novelist. (Brooke adopted the epistolary form of her fiction from Richardson.) (2)

The editors reproduce an accepted opinion to legitimate Brooke's literary pedigree, thereby perpetuating the perception of her as an acolyte to Richardson. Nor is there mention of Brooke's involvement in early feminist literary activity, cited by Mary Jane Edwards as the other factor, besides that of being Canada's first novelist, that has brought about "increasing recognition" of Brooke's work ("Frances Brooke" 88).[6] The editors' statement that Brooke "had been editor of a weekly periodical called *The Old Maid*" will not mean much to the headnote-reader who is unfamiliar with the nature of that publication. As a result, information regarding Brooke's profile as an early feminist is obscured and remains subordinate to that pertaining to Richardson, who is, apparently, "usually thought of as the first English novelist."

Not all associations with Richardson are as clearly misleading. That made by W.H. New in his recent A History of Canadian Literature (1989) provides an example of the distortions

that may be inadvertently cast on literary works due to the manner in which their contexts are presented. In a section entitled "Letters and epistolary form," New provides the following account of the literary events that led to the publication of Emily Montague:

> It is the transformation of letter into story that many eighteenth-century French and English writers drew on to construct the fledgling novel genre. The letters tell stories. Samuel Richardson's (1689-1761) Pamela had appeared in 1740; an epistolary novel by Mme Jeanne Riccoboni (1713-92) appeared in 1759, to be translated the following year by Frances (Moore) Brooke (1724-89). In 1769 Mrs Brooke published her own The History of Emily Montague, the first novel written in Canada. (57)

Even though New presents a simplified view of the novel genre's having been purposely "constructed" by writers of the eighteenth century, in which Richardson figures as the representative English agent and Mme Riccoboni as the French, all that is said about Richardson, Riccoboni and Brooke is true, factually speaking, as far as the biographical information, and the dates of publication and titles of the works are concerned. This is a certain type of contextual information, and it is also the type of information that one would expect from a book that is meant to be a literary history. Yet, if we were to situate the events pertaining specifically to the three writers in question on a time-line, we would be presented with four events that succeed each other: first would be Richardson's publication of Pamela; then that of Riccoboni's epistolary novel; then Brooke's translation of Riccoboni's novel; and finally, the appearance of Brooke's epistolary novel. Regardless of the subsequent information New

provides concerning Brooke, he has nonetheless, at the outset of his discussion, yoked the names Richardson / Riccoboni / Brooke together in a single sentence, thereby forging a sense of direct, exclusive connection, or agency of "influence," between them. He creates a context, but in doing so must abstract a number of discrete events from the larger social and historical contexts within which they took place, and of which they are a part.

Similarly, New imposes a relationship on the facts towards the close of the section, in which he states, first, that Brooke's "novel was neither especially popular in England nor had it any discernible direct influence on the subsequent course of writing in Canada," then proceeds to imply the opposite of the latter claim by formulating a link with the subsequent course of writing in Canada:

> In [Emily Montague's] two main lines of development, however, lie two of the most obvious traits of early nineteenth-century Canadian literature: satire and sentimentalism. Thomas Chandler Haliburton (1796-1865) may be the chief exemplar of the satiric tradition, and Mrs. Moodie of the sentimental. Both also represent a series of intrinsically conservative writers whose responses to landscape and society have their roots in the attitudes of the late eighteenth century. (60)

Aside from the fact that the six editions of Emily Montague published in England and Ireland before 1800 flatly contradicts his assessment of the book's popularity,[7] New's version of events illustrates the discourse that Moisan identifies as being characteristic of traditional literary histories. Moisan describes this discourse as being marked by a relationship that holds between elements that are given and elements that are constructed. The givens are the authors, works, and literary groups or movements

that are known to have existed in the past: together, these constitute what he calls the *hypodiscours*. Based on the distinction that Benveniste makes between *récit* and *discours*--the one composed of facts, the other more specifically narrated, or fixed in an act or situation of enunciation--Moisan opposes the *hypodiscours* of the givens to the *hyperdiscours*, a second level of discourse which accompanies the first and is constructed rather than based on given elements. This second level of discourse does not offer a critical commentary of the work or a "repetition" of it; instead, it articulates an expansion of the *hypodiscours*, endowing the chronological collection of givens with a role or function. The *hyperdiscours* may then be used to justify a set of norms, or a sense of the overall organization or characteristics of a given literature. When this second level of discourse is united with the verifiable factuality of the *hypodiscours*, it tends to assume a like status as being incontestable (Qu'est-ce que 137-43).

Let us look briefly at the way in which New's *hyperdiscours* acts on the givens and lends them a sense of organization, in the second passage cited above. In his account of Emily Montague and the epistolary form, the temporal distance that separates Brooke from Haliburton and Moodie is circumvented by establishing a link between nineteenth-century writing and the "two main lines of development" in Brooke's novel. "In" these lines "lie" two of what New identifies as "the most obvious traits of early nineteenth-century Canadian literature;" it is as if Brooke "anticipated" the major developments of the next century. The identification of these two "traits," which are satire and sentimentalism, allows New to

organize a corresponding pair of main categories of writing that will be typical of the early nineteenth century in Canada. Next, he introduces a "chief exemplar" for each of these categories, which are then referred to as "traditions." Haliburton and Moodie come to represent "a series" of writers whose collective "response" to "landscape and society" is then linked back to eighteenth-century "attitudes." Thus, early Canadian literature is to be recognized by satire and sentimentalism, which provide a link with the eighteenth century; of all early nineteenth-century Canadian writers responding to landscape and society, whether situated in Upper or Lower Canada, Canada East or West, or in the Maritime regions, the two major proponents that have been retained are Haliburton and Moodie. In a matter of lines, a continuity is established and a mass of writing organized into two main categories. New does not stop to consider why Brooke's novel had no effect on subsequent writing in Canada; he states this as a fact, then nonetheless goes on to fit Emily Montague into his historical account.

We might well ask how else New could have presented the number of givens he treats in his history, without simply providing a bare list of them.[8] New's attempt would appear to bear out Tynjanov's sense that the study of mass literature demands a deeper reflection regarding its significance, as well as a suitable theoretical formulation. If we abandon a history of generals for one based on an ideal of "empirical inclusiveness," to use Paul Stuewe's term (review 169), yet persist in adopting a 'literary-history-as-usual' approach, the result may be, as Stuewe writes of New's history, "a

disappointingly superficial adumbration of the relationships between literature and the world, expressed in prose that seems largely unconscious of its own assumptions" (170). Compared to earlier versions of the history of Canadian literature, New's approach is certainly more subtle. It is largely the nature of the history that he is writing which dictates the introduction of a *hyperdiscours* and its function.

We have examined the implications of the first point that critics of Canadian literature have consistently made regarding Frances Brooke's _Emily Montague_, namely that the novel commands their attention and is endowed with value simply by virtue of its firstness. Let us now look at the second point for which Brooke is most commonly recognized: _Emily Montague_ is valued as a record of life in Quebec city after Canada had been officially ceded to England by the Treaty of Paris in 1763. This point is of particular interest because it raises some questions regarding the way in which fictional texts, and texts in general, refer to the actual world and offer representations of it. In the case of Brooke's work, these questions are in turn rendered increasingly complex when coupled with the problem of genre. Even though acclaimed as Canada's first novel, _Emily Montague_ has been discussed in relation to travel literature, by reason of its descriptions of the country and its inhabitants.[9] Indeed, other eighteenth-century writers of travel narratives seemed to have read the work as travel literature, and were known to cite Emily Montague, whose descriptions of the Montmorency Falls were to make them a fashionable object of description. Likewise, some

contemporary critics value Emily Montague more as an objective travel description than as a fictional work, as the following excerpt from W.J. Keith's Canadian Literature in English (1985) testifies:

> If ... we still read The History of Emily Montague, it is not so much for its novelistic as for its non-fiction, documentary qualities. Brooke gives us a fascinating glimpse of the Quebec garrison that, because no longer active in a military capacity, is in the process of forming itself into an identifiable society. It is, of course, little more than a reproduction of English mores and customs, but excursions to the Montmorenci Falls and the Kamouraska region, and accounts of the necessary adaptations to the extreme climactic conditions add touches of unique local colour. (42)

A certain degree of confusion ensues as to the extent to which Emily Montague constitutes an objective description of Canada, and that to which it is a represented, fictional world based on a subjective interpretation of the actual world as it was at the time Brooke wrote the book. How can we be sure, as the question has come to be formulated, that this was the way things really were, and not the way Brooke wanted them to be? The confusion is heightened by the tendency to classify Emily Montague specifically as a novel, then to claim it as an objective presentation of fact, or of a given historical situation. If we were seeking documentary information on eighteenth- or nineteenth-century London, the novels of Richardson or of Dickens would not be the first sources of information to be consulted for an objective "picture" of their respective societies. Brooke's novel presents a number of questions for those who choose to read it as a documentary: if her information regarding the distance between Sillery and Quebec, or

the height of the Montmorency Falls, is accurate, what of that regarding the time required for the actual exchange of letters? What exactly is represented in Emily Montague? The physical characteristics of a geographical place? the social and cultural characteristics of Canadians / French people living in Canada after the conquest / Huron Indians? Or is it the *mentalité* of a specific social group, or their relations with members of other social groups? How do we decide what is or is not documentary information, especially if, in practical terms, we cannot turn to a clear-cut distinction between purely fictional or purely non-fictional texts?

Few critics have seized on this problem regarding Emily Montague. Lorraine McMullen has remarked that early Canadian critics, meaning those who wrote before 1960, "are not impressed with style, narrative technique, or any other aspects of Brooke's artistry;" she concludes that "[t]heir interest centres on Emily Montague as a report of life in Canada" (Canadian 31). As the above passage from Keith's history indicates, later critics have tended to take the same approach by reading the novel more as a non-fictional documentary than as a literary work, despite the generic and referential problems this approach brings with it. From the point of view of a philosopher of fiction, it would constitute an "integrationist outlook" regarding the relationship that holds between reality and fiction because it rests on the supposition that there is "no genuine ontological difference" to be found "between fictional and nonfictional descriptions of the actual world" (Pavel 11). The opposing "segregationalist" view of this

relationship claims a clear-cut distinction between the actual world and the world of fiction, and dismisses the latter as having no truth value. Thomas G. Pavel suggests that, as extremes, both views are inadequate because they deny not only the complexity of the relationship that obtains between fiction and reality, but also that works of fiction present mediated versions of the actual world.

The awareness that some critics have of Emily Montague as a mediation of life in Quebec following the conquest is not constant. In his introduction to the New Canadian Library edition, Carl F. Klinck initially recognizes the novel as "the principal artistic attempt to recreate life in the early northern colonies," which recognition seems to indicate his awareness of the novel as a fictional, literary work. But his later observations reveal little consciousness of Emily Montague as fiction. Instead, they emphasize the excellence of her "word-pictures of early life in Canada:" "Social life in [Brooke's] Quebec is exceptionally well described against a notable background of what Mrs. Brooke called the *great sublime* in natural scenery;" several letters "vividly refer" to Canada's inhabitants and their activities; "Emily Montague is a *tour de force* in describing, not in defining, Canadian life." Klinck insists on the novel's descriptive qualities. These lend the work a degree of authenticity because they are not accompanied by the more sensationalist devices that eighteenth-century novelists frequently drew on: "No one is seduced, harmed or persecuted; there is no villain; no one is in mortal danger" (xiii).

A similar inconsistency is evident in A.J.M. Smith's remarks about the novel. He judged that Brooke made "witty and accurate observations of Quebec," thereby gesturing to the idea that readers of the novel should necessarily be looking for a picture of Quebec whose accuracy they will be interested in measuring. He wrote that although Emily Montague is "prejudiced and conventional ... it is not superficial, and it affords us a clearer picture of the social life of Quebec immediately after the conquest than any of the sober histories" (xxi). Here he appears to accord precedence to the poet's account over that of the historian, as if the novel were a suitable substitute for historical writing. At the same time he values Quebec's "social life" over the interest of broader historical events, regardless of the relationship between the two. The political history of North America and of what was known as British North America during the eighteenth century is particularly complex; it requires a concerted effort to come to even a basic understanding of the issues that came into play during the period. It is indeed easier, as Smith suggests, to forego the "sober histories" and to limit oneself to Brooke's novel. If she does make oblique allusions to political questions regarding the government of the colonies, Brooke is careful to incorporate them into a narrative whose length is sufficient to diffuse any concentrated impact they might have.[10] As the epigraph from Horace included in the original four-volume edition of 1769 noted,

> -----------"A kind indulgent sleep
> "O'er works of length allowably may creep."

If twentieth-century readers of Emily Montague are to grasp the political allusions that Brooke does make, and to understand Quebec social life against a historical, as opposed to a sublime, background, they will have to turn to the "sober histories," or else accept the method that MacDonald deems unacceptable, namely the chicken and egg approach of reading early Canadian literature.

Despite his preliminary remarks regarding history and the picture of Quebec's social life that the novel affords, Smith's subsequent comments in the introduction to the excerpts of Emily Montague included in his anthology have a different focus. Smith writes that Brooke's novel "accurately portrays the temper and spirit of the British conquerors of Quebec, of the governing class, and reveals their attitudes towards the seigneur, the habitant, the Indians, and the New England colonists" (3). Here the novel's subject is not Canada, its social life, inhabitants or landscape, but something quite different: it is the "temper and spirit" and "attitudes" of the British who governed Canada during the 1760s. Smith sees Emily Montague as representing first one, then another object; the movement is from an exterior depiction of social life to an interior one of the British conquerors' "*mentalité*."

The more we press the point of asking just what it is that Emily Montague apparently represents, the more confusing are the suggestions of the critics. In the Literary History of Canada we read that

> Mrs. Brooke was particularly fitted to write of English-French Canada. ... she was well acquainted with France, and had published a translation of a

French romance. She was thus prepared to give a sympathetic portrayal of both facets of the Canadian scene. (Talman and Talman 84)

These statements are based on the assumption that there were two "facets" of the Canadian scene to be written of, in itself a reduction of the complex knot of factors that defined life in British North America following the conquest. In speaking of the Europeans who settled in the colony, to state that these facets were "English" and "French" respectively is to evacuate the quite fierce rivalries between the "facets" composed of the merchants, most of whom were from the Thirteen Colonies, and the military government.[11] "French" may be used--and more often than not is used by critics writing in English--to designate the French-language community in its entirety, but it obscures the distinction between individuals born and educated in France and those born in Canada. At the time of the conquest, and throughout the eighteenth century, members of this latter group were referred to as "Canadians" or "*Canadiens*;" surely if a distinction is made between the British and the New England colonists, who were not yet the Americans, then it is equally important to recognize the differences amongst "the French" in Canada. Likewise, the religious division between Roman Catholics and Protestants, which accounted for Frances Brooke's being in Canada at all, goes unmentioned.

Aside from a few rare exceptions, such as Lorraine McMullen, who takes the novel to be more didactic than descriptive, and is careful to situate it in the context of Brooke's earlier fiction and the themes (marriage, social life, religion, the role of women,

education, etc.) it treated,[12] critics of Canadian literature who write introductions, dictionary entries and headnotes to anthologies destined for the use of students continue to focus on the novel's descriptive element regarding life in Canada and the quantity of "information" that Brooke provides on this subject.[13] Hence, the Huron Indians of Lorette are "carefully described" and Brooke provides "a good deal of information about the Canadians and their language, religion, seigneurial system, and other cultural institutions" (Edwards, Introduction xli). Yet readers who choose to approach this text for its documentary qualities would do well to heed the qualification that Ed. Rivers adds at the end of letter number eleven, in which he describes his visit to the Huron village: "You will not expect more from me on this subject, as my residence here has been short, and I can only be said to catch a few marking features flying" (Brooke 38). The bulk of the "information" about the Indians and the Canadians is presented by Rivers in eight of the first 11 letters (nine of which are signed by him), after which he cedes his "post of historian" to Arabella Fermor; the rest is concentrated in a few later letters, including the handful by William Fermor to the Earl of ---. These "informative" letters also happen to be those which have most frequently been anthologized.[14] The rest of the novel--the larger part of it--is, in anthologized selections, effectively eclipsed by these letters which are perceived to contain "information." The editors of a recent, major anthology of Canadian literature designed for use in the classroom point out that the letters from Emily Montague are "relatively self-contained selections" and that,

even if they are from a book "not often read today in whole," they nonetheless "remain important to students of Canadian literature" (Brown et al xviii)--important because Emily Montague is Canada's first novel; important because the letters constitute a non-fictional report on early life in Canada.

II: Magazines and Newspapers

Given the reasons why critics have chosen to include Emily Montague as a significant fact in the history of Canadian literature, the relationship between the novel and the community living in Quebec during the 1760s and afterwards is not immediately clear. Even less so is the status of "literature," or of literary discourse itself, in eighteenth-century Canada. The isolation and elevation of Brooke's novel from the conditions within which it was embedded may satisfy a need for a suitable starting point in a given version of a culture's history, yet the reasons offered for retaining the novel are decidedly unsatisfactory. To a certain extent, it is easier to justify reading Brooke's novel today from a feminist point of view; in order to do so, however, it would also be necessary to read more than the handful of letters that deal with the Huron Indians or the climatic conditions in colonial Canada. Such an approach would inevitably dislocate the novel from a specifically Canadian context (in which Emily Montague appears as the first Canadian novel and as a source of non-fiction information concerning early life in Canada) and situate it in relation to the growing feminist discourse in eighteenth-century England and elsewhere. The values called upon to justify the reading of the

novel would no longer be those of "Canadianness." There is, however, another means of approaching the novel from a "Canadian" point of view unconcerned with either firstness or the idea of Emily Montague as a report of life in Canada. As I have suggested from the start of my discussion, this approach would consider Canadian literature as a system. It is not my intention to use the term "system" to refer to a static structure or state of ossification, or in an attempt to account for literary works as isolated events or physical "products." Instead, the term "system" is used to describe the position literary works occupy within a certain field of organized activity. Accordingly, a systemic approach understands "literature" not as a collection or hierarchy of texts that illuminate each other, but as a complex of related practices.

A key word for this approach is that of *organization*. Yet I have also suggested that Canadian literature did not achieve full autonomy--a complete form of organization--either as a discourse or as a practice until quite recently; this proposition would appear to argue against the interest of a systemic approach to Canadian literature in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Indeed, the idea of the literary system or institution as conceived of by a number of contemporary theorists requires that a certain number of conditions be present in order for it to be feasible to discuss literature from this point of view. Thus, Itamar Even-Zohar's conception of the literary system, derived from Roman Jakobson's model of communication and language, includes a number of essential

factors. Among these are literary works themselves, but they are by no means a central or privileged element in his scheme:

> The "text" is no longer the only, and not necessarily for all purposes the most important, facet, or even product, of this system. Moreover, this framework requires no *a priori* hierarchies of importance between the surmised factors. It suffices to recognize that it is the *interdependencies* between these factors which allow them to function in the first place. Thus, a CONSUMER may "consume" a PRODUCT produced by a PRODUCER, but in order for the "product" (such as "text") to be generated, a common REPERTOIRE must exist, whose usability is determined by some INSTITUTION. A MARKET must exist where such a good can be transmitted. None of the factors enumerated can be described to function in isolation, and the kind of relations that may be detected run across all possible axes of the scheme. (33-34)

If none of the factors that Even-Zohar identifies can be said to function in isolation, then they must all be present for the idea of the system to be operative. Likewise, Pierre Bourdieu's description of what he calls the "market of symbolic goods" and its division into "fields" of restricted and large-scale cultural production presupposes a certain number of conditions in a given society that are susceptible of giving rise to and sustaining such a market. These conditions are grounded in the emergence of the modern nation-state in Europe. For this reason, the autonomization of different artistic practices, be they literary, musical, or otherwise, may assume varying rhythms and rates of development, depending on the society of which they are a part. Bourdieu identifies a significant moment in the process of artistic autonomization in nineteenth-century Europe:

> This movement toward artistic autonomy accelerated abruptly with the industrial revolution and the Romantic reaction. The development of a veritable cultural industry and, in particular, the

relationship which grew up between the daily press and literature, encouraging the massproduction of works produced by quasi-industrial methods--such as the serialized story (or, in other fields, melodrama and vaudeville)--coincides with the extension of the public, resulting from the expansion of primary education, which turned new classes (including women) into consumers of culture. (15)

Regardless of the society in question, it is clear that this process depends on a number of cultural practices in interaction. It is not sufficient to name "the reader" or even a specific "public" as necessary to the system; the question of how readers are produced, and equipped with the knowledge necessary in order to be able to consume texts, must also be considered.

Jacques Dubois' conception of the literary institution, as presented in L'institution littéraire (1978), is based to a large extent on Bourdieu's ideas regarding the process of artistic autonomization. Thus, for Dubois, "le moment fondateur de l'institution est celui d'apparition d'une légitimité qui s'élabore de façon interne à la sphère littéraire et qui désigne l'activité de cette sphère comme autonome et distinctive" (44). In other words, a literary system may be said to have attained a state of full insitutionalization once it exhibits signs of auto-organization. Like Bourdieu, Dubois points to the French Revolution as the event following which the conditions necessary to the emergence of the institution began to develop in France. Unlike Bourdieu, however, Dubois does not shy away from the term "institution" in his attempt to describe the practices that organize "literature" and invest it with a certain cultural status or socially recognized value. In the case of France, Dubois states that, for the nineteenth century and even for the early part of the

twentieth, it is impossible to undertake a strictly synchronic analysis of the literary institution because not all aspects of the system are in place. For this reason, he chooses to limit his remarks to a number of moments in the historical development of the system (36).

One theorist who does endeavour to make a synchronic study from a related point of view is Marc Angenot. In 1889 : Un état du discours social (1989), he makes a synchronic cut by focusing on the printed material of a specific year. His goal is to examine what he refers to as "le discours social," for which he provides the following definition:

> Le discours social : tout ce qui se dit et s'écrit dans un état de société; tout ce qui s'imprime, tout ce qui se parle publiquement ou se représente aujourd'hui dans les médias électroniques. Tout ce qui narre et argumente, si l'on pose que *narrer* et *argumenter* sont les deux grands modes de mise en discours.
>
> Ou plutôt, appelons "discours social" non pas ce *tout* empirique, cacophonique à la fois et redondant, mais les systèmes génériques, les répertoires topiques, les règles d'enchaînement d'énoncés qui, dans une société donnée, organisent le *dicible*--le narrable et l'opinable--et assurent la division du travail discursif. (13-14)

Angenot's conception of "social discourse" may strike some as being more generally relevant to the broader enquiry known as discourse analysis than it is to the study of literature because it does not focus specifically on literary texts--novels and poems published in the year 1889. Yet his study is based on the understanding that what we might choose to identify as literary texts are not restricted to a separate category of discourse where they appear and interact independently of what is being said and written in

non-literary spheres. It is also based on a vast amount of printed matter made public in France in the year under investigation, which brings us back to the situation in Quebec during the 1760s and the present attempt to approach the study of Canadian literature of that period: how is it possible to describe either social discourse, the literary institution, a market of symbolic goods, or a literary system--call it what we like--in a colonial society in eighteenth-century North America, when these conditions were only just emerging towards realization in Europe?

If we cannot study Canadian literature as an independent literary system since it did not achieve this status until the mid twentieth century, we can at least follow Dubois' example and attempt to examine a number of moments in the system's historical development. From this point of view, we can consider the status of literary discourse in Quebec during the late eighteenth century, and attempt to discern the role that literature played in society, even if The History of Emily Montague is of only peripheral importance to it. It is likewise possible to gain a general idea of what Clément Moisan calls "literary life," understood to encompass the reading and writing of texts within a given society, and which would include "tout ce qui s'écrit et qui a un impact, quel qu'il soit, sur un certain public." The study of literary life is not defined by aesthetic conceptions of what is, or is not, perceived to be "literary;" thus, "literature" takes on a sense that is quite broad yet at the same time specific:

> Littérature ici s'entend de façon très large comme toute oeuvre destinée à la lecture; et de façon plus précise comme toute oeuvre reçue par quelqu'un(e), que

> ce soit simplement parce que quelqu'un(e) en a entendu parler, qu'il/elle l'a vue, feuilletée ou effectivement lue. (Qu'est-ce que 86)

Literature is perceived to be a public activity, in the sense that it consists in the production and circulation of texts that engage in a public dialogue: texts are written for others and are received, in one way or another, by others within a given public. If we wish to examine literary life according to these terms, it becomes clear that it will be difficult to select texts that are in any way purely "Canadian," or somehow purely "literary." At the same time, "Canada" cannot be understood in any unified sense, or in the 1990s sense of its being a modern state consisting of ten provinces and two territories. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, "Canada" amounted to a number of communities, some of which had very little contact with others, even within a given geographical territory. It is therefore not very useful to study literary life as it manifested itself "from sea to sea." Instead, in considering the activities of reading and writing, it will be more pertinent to focus on the development of the public sphere in Quebec, where Brooke wrote her novel.

Discussions of Emily Montague do not generally provide much of an account regarding the literary life of Quebec. They do note, however, that when Frances Brooke wrote her novel she did not have a Canadian or even a North-American audience in mind. In fact, The History of Emily Montague participates entirely in a literary system based in England. As it has often been observed, the novel was addressed to an English audience, and it was a commercial undertaking: besides promoting the British presence in Quebec,

Brooke hoped to generate at least some modest financial resources by virtue of her pen.[15] Clearly, the hundred or so potential English-language readers of Quebec did not strike her as a very promising market. There were certainly no printers or booksellers either equipped or willing to publish a four-volume novel in Quebec. Brooke's literary contacts were in London: the publishers and booksellers who would print and distribute her novel; the readers who had money enough to subscribe to the publication; the literary magazines and newspapers of opinion to announce it; the critics to review it, and the literary and social circles to talk about it. Although there are records proving that at least three full sets of the four-volume novel, possibly more, were sent to Philadelphia in 1769, the bulk of the press run of 2000 copies remained on the European side of the Atlantic (Edwards, Introduction xliv). That is where the literary life in which Frances Brooke engaged is to be found. There is little indication that Emily Montague was read by individuals already at Quebec; when it first appeared, its audience was not only English but also in England. It therefore reached readers who might one day during the course of their travels find themselves in Quebec, but whose participation in literary life was otherwise totally divorced from the North American colony.

From an extra-Canadian perspective, Emily Montague may be seen as part of a particularly dynamic literary system that was undergoing rapid changes towards the end of the eighteenth century, as England's population, as well as its number of readers, grew. The country's transformation into a sophisticated print society had

come about at a prodigious rate following the expiry of the Licensing Act in 1695, and the English enjoyed a degree of freedom of the press as yet unheard of in other parts of Europe. In France, for instance, there was still a great deal of suspicion surrounding books that had been banned by the religious authorities. Noë Richter notes that, in some parishes during the eighteenth century--and in some cases, up until the mid nineteenth century--zealous parishioners were known to commit spontaneous public acts of auto-da-fé by committing dangerous books to the flames, for the good of the community. In 1763, the Parliament of Boulogne instituted an instructional reform stipulating that only certain books were suitable for study; they were all religious works. It followed that reading was accorded more importance than writing, and only insofar as it permitted the common man, or woman, to lead a more religious life. Accordingly, a typical parish library of the eighteenth century consisted primarily of pious reading material: catechisms, psalms, lives of the saints. These books were not meant to provoke public debate, but to confirm knowledge of religious truths. Clearly, certain segments of the French population managed to gain access to more controversial publications. The seventeenth-century *cabinets de lecture* obtained prohibited works from Switzerland and Holland, and offered their clientèle the possibility of renting them by the hour. The eighteenth century saw the growth of more literary societies in French cities, especially after 1760, but membership fees tended to be quite high, which meant that they often amounted to no more than exclusive reading clubs for wealthy lecteurs (Richter 10-25).

In England, both the reading material and the reading public were more varied. The generalized expansion of reading publics gained in momentum as the century drew to a close, so that, by the 1790s, the Gentleman's Magazine alone was printed at a monthly rate of 10,000 copies. Its readership was probably much greater (Belanger 11).

In comparison, a like form of print culture in the North American colonies in general, and in Canada in particular, was virtually nonexistent. Books and printed news were normally exported to the colonies from Britain. Some news items were "recycled" in part or reprinted in their entirety in North American newspapers, which were more frequent than actual books. It was not until after the United States had won its independence that a North-American book trade began to establish itself in New England (Belanger 11); further north, weekly newspapers and short-lived periodicals had been printed in Canada since the eighteenth century, but actual bookstores were not viable before the 1820s (Parker, Beginnings 14).

Given this state of affairs, it would be easy to dismiss the question of the public sphere in Quebec during the 1760s; after all, the introduction of a single printing press in 1764 does not automatically translate into a network of literate producers and receivers of texts ready to promote a dynamic form of public debate. It did, however, signal the beginning of printing in Quebec. Under the ancien regime, a printing press had never been allowed into the colony, even though Jesuit missionaries, and then the Récollets, had petitioned the King, since 1665, for permission

to print certain materials in the colony. Their request was always refused (Galarneau 35). Thus, the first printing press was introduced in 1764 following the conquest of Quebec.

This event cannot be interpreted as a sign of the British authorities' greater enlightenment or benevolence towards the colony's inhabitants. The reason for introducing a printing press into the colony was so that it could be used primarily by the military and civil authorities to print government proclamations and make public certain information that was meant to contribute to maintaining peaceful conditions: the press was seen as an instrument for reinforcing law and order (Parker, Beginnings 24-26).[16] Because of this form of stable government patronage, William Brown and Thomas Gilmore were able to found Quebec's first newspaper, a weekly entitled The Quebec Gazette / La Gazette de Québec, in that same year. The newspaper had a circulation of 150, and was the only one printed in Quebec until the late 1770s. Although it may be cited as the "first bilingual newspaper in Canada," the news items were written in English first, whether the articles were original or culled from other publications, and were then translated into French.[17] Thus, the French-language share of the paper was really only a translated repetition of news originally written in English. There were actually very few items that appeared only in French, and it was not until some years later, in 1832, that the French-language portion of the Quebec Gazette was actually conceived of and written originally in French (Beaulieu and Hamelin, Presse 3).

The Gazette may have been bilingual, but it was not bicultural. Consequently, it would be misleading to think of it as a newspaper that in some way spoke for, or reflected the interests of, the larger French-speaking population in the colony. This population was for the most part illiterate, so that it is impossible to learn about the nature of its *discours social*. As the authors of the first volume of La vie littéraire au Québec put it, in 1764 there was simply no public opinion in Canada; the only way people might express themselves publicly was by singing irreverent political songs at the expense of the colony's administrators, or else by participating in a charivari. Canada's widespread illiteracy is easily explained: "dans un pays sans école, sans papier, presque sans livres et sans journaux," sans everything needed to generate and form public opinion, there is no especially compelling reason to learn to read or write (Lemire, vie 1: 81-82). Allan Greer, who has studied the question of literacy in Quebec in some detail, concurs: "'Public opinion' must have had a narrow base before the 1840s when only a minority of the population could read and only a relative handful was able to write" ("Pattern" 334).

Given this context, it becomes clear that the role Brown and Gilmore saw their paper as called upon to fulfill was ill-suited to the society they were addressing. In their "Prospectus" to the Quebec Gazette, they cite an anonymous "late celebrated author" who recognized the advantages of the press, which allowed readers who "'sit at Home'" to "'acquaint [themselves] with what is done in all distant Parts of the World.'" Accordingly, in the same spirit of

enlightenment and social utility, Brown and Gilmore are of the opinion that their printing office, and by extension their newspaper, are

> the most effectual Means of bringing about a thorough Knowledge of the *English* and *French* Language to those of the two Nations now happily united in one in this Part of the World, by which Means they will be enabled to converse with, and communicate their Sentiments to each other as Brethren, and carry on their different Transactions in Life with Ease and Satisfaction, or, as the means only of bringing to their Knowledge the Transactions of the different and most distant Nations of the World, of which they must otherwise remain almost entirely ignorant.

The printing press and printed material are seen as important tools for the promotion of understanding, and the newspaper in both English and French is meant to be educational:

> This Method will afford a Weekly Lesson for Improvement, to every Inhabitant willing to attain to a thorough Knowledge in the Language of the Place, different from that of his Mother Tongue, whether *French* or *English*.[18]

Noble as these sentiments may be, and rooted as they are in the common-place conviction that the printing press and the rise of the newspaper together would spread the light of learning and enrich the lives of all men, it was more than just a little unrealistic to entertain the hope that the greater population, or even a segment of it, would achieve proficiency in a second language thanks to the pages of the Gazette.

If the Gazette was not a vehicle of opinion for the francophone population, what was its relationship to the small number of "old" British subjects concentrated in the city of Quebec? This segment of the population was literate, and therefore

equipped to participate in a print culture.[19] However, the printers' address to the public is not formulated in such a way as to encourage public debate; at any rate, decisions relating to the colony, and to British North America in general, were debated in London amongst the English public. To a certain extent, these debates were informed by news and reports received from the colonies, but they were also influenced by, and directed according to, the interests of those in Britain. The public debate concerning Quebec took place elsewhere. For this reason, inhabitants of the colony, and merchants especially, were active in addressing petitions to the authorities in London in an attempt to promote their interests; Frances Brooke herself presented a petition on behalf of her husband in January of 1765 (Edwards, Introduction xxx). Under the circumstances, it is normal that Brown and Gilmore should state as the first objective of their paper the "design ... to publish ... a view of foreign affairs, and political transactions" so that readers may remain abreast of the political relations between European powers, and of the state of affairs in the "mother-country." Second, the printers wish to provide the public with "interesting truths" regarding the "Material Occurrences of the American Colonies, and West-Indian Islands." They recognize that the rigours of the climate will close down the channels of communication during the winter months; therefore, they conclude,

> during the season, it will be necessary, in a paper designed for general perusal and public utility, to provide some things of general entertainment, independent of foreign intelligence; we shall, therefore on such occasions present our readers with

> such Originals, both in Prose and Verse, as will please the Fancy, and instruct the judgment.

In other words, only once foreign news is scarce due to the difficulty of winter travel which makes it more of a challenge to find a sufficient number of items to fill the paper are subscribers and readers called upon to contribute "Originals." Filler material might include the "refined amusements of Literature" as well as "curious essays, extracted from the most celebrated authors." This category of writing is of secondary importance, ranking well behind political news concerning foreign parts and the mother country in terms of priority.

After literary or philosophical contributions, the printers welcome advertisements regarding goods or property for sale. (As it turns out, advertisements by far outnumber "literary" contributions to the newspaper.) They thank all subscribers for their support, and close with the following: "This one thing we beg may be believed, that Party Prejudice, or private scandal, will never find a place in this Paper." Strong views on any topic are clearly not welcome: Brown and Gilmore are anxious to avoid complications in the pursuit of their business endeavour.

Few studies of the Quebec Gazette have been made, in English, in the context of Canadian literature. As far as the newspaper's literary dimension is concerned, some bibliographical work has been done, but it is neither substantial nor complete. There is certainly no English-language equivalent to the seven-volume Les textes poétiques du Canada français, an exhaustive annotated inventory of all poems printed in French in Canada, from 1606 to

1867.[20] Some of the reference tools that are available for the study of English-language texts are not always reliable.[21]

The editors of the Chronological Index of Locally Written Verse miss the first two poems to appear in the Quebec Gazette, in the edition of 5 July 1764. They are clearly examples of locally written verse. "An ODE, on the Death of VANDANGO, by a Friend to the Snaffle" and "ELEGY on the Death of VANDANGO, kill'd in the midst of his Carreer to GLORY" appeared as testimony to "the fatal Consequence of Dogs being allowed on the Race-Ground."[22] Vandango, "the Glory of the Plain," apparently met with his end during a race held on the Plains of Abraham due to a dog that strayed into his path on the race course.[23]

Vandango's downfall was one of the few local events in Quebec that were to give rise to local poems. Since it is also the first poetry to be included in the paper, it prompts the printers to invite their French-language readers to provide a translation:

> Comme la traduction des vers, d'une langue à une autre, exige une veine poétique, on espère que cela servira d'excuse au Public, de ce que, les vers cy dessus n'ont été insérés que dans un langage. Si quelque personne d'esprit veut se donner la peine de les mettre en vers François, et de les envoyer à l'imprimerie, on aura soin de les insérer dans la première Gazette. (5 July 1764)

No one responded to the printers' invitation, or if someone did, the translation was not printed.

During the remainder of 1764, only a handful of poems appeared in the paper, despite the long winter months. This does not necessarily mean there was an abundance of important news from Europe or the rest of North America, as the printers' mission

statement for their newspaper might lead us to believe. As far as "news" is concerned, as well as the sort of information that might fall under that category, the Quebec Gazette's news stories are consistent with the species of news discourse that was common to many newspapers of the time. Accordingly, a significant number of its stories might be described, following Lennard Davis's suggestion, as "prose narrative in print" (44). These prose narratives are a composite of fact and fiction. Thus, some of the Gazette's news from foreign parts seems decidedly farfetched, and not the sort of even vaguely objective news readers might normally expect from some newspapers today. In the issue of 20 June 1765, for instance, the front-page story relates how a jealous husband in Vienna locked his wife and mother-in-law up in a room, then proceeded to remove his wife's ears, nose, breasts, and heart by means of an elaborately described torture. It appears that "foreign intelligence" is to some degree a matter of horror and exoticism: the unpopular governor of Bagdad is "attacked in his Seraglio" by discontented janissaries, from whom he escapes disguised as a woman, only later to be discovered and strangled at the hands of his pursuers (1 November 1764); a woman in Naples is so destitute that she is driven to nourish her dependent children with flesh cut from her own thigh (3 January 1765); "news from Mentz, a City of Germany" tells of how a shoemaker's wife dispatches a young female customer and boils her up into a hearty meal which she then serves her husband, bidding him to "Eat [his] Fill and be contented" (17 October 1765); in Madrid, two more Jesuits are apprehended, this time disguised as merchants and in the possession of some bills of

exchange (26 May 1768)--and so on.[24] Throughout the 1760s, the Quebec Gazette featured a fair number of such prose narratives besides the more prosaic public announcements of the authorities and advertisements for the sale of land, goods, and buildings.

Local news focuses on more immediate questions and, if not quite as exotic, nonetheless provides an indication of the topics that reveal a degree of consciousness of Quebec as a place or society in itself. There is a good deal of information regarding the infamous Canadian Bills of Ordinance, as well as frequent mention of unruly behaviour and misconduct, usually in cases of robbery or general brawls and drunkenness. Notices regarding runaway slaves, wives, and servants are common. Occasionally, anonymous letters of opinion appear in which readers air their views on religion, education, or the consumption of alcohol in the colony.[25] Coupled with local news items, these occasional contributions made by readers are tentative, irregular attempts to engage in a form of objective public discussion of conditions in the colony. Yet, during the 1760s, they rarely give rise to any sustained debate, and the printers do not intervene in any way in order to foster a public dialogue in the way that Fleury Mesplet and Valentin Jautard were to do quite purposely in la Gazette du commerce et littéraire (1778-1779). There is an example of a series of letters that appear in the fall of 1765, but which are interrupted by the suspension of the Gazette's publication due to the Stamp Act. The first of these letters is signed "Civis Canadiensis," who wishes to learn about English liberty, and requests "un recueil précis et détaillé de ces libertés" from those

able to provide it; this Canadian citizen urges those who understand the liberties in question "à ne pas nous refuser ces instructions, composant le même peuple, jouissons tous ensemble des mêmes avantages" (26 September 1765).[26] A response and its English translation appear before the end of October 1765, when the Gazette ceased operations. The discussion resumes in August 1766 and continues on till September, after which time no other letters appear.[27]

The theme of liberty is of note, given the context. Although we know that the disputes between the military and civil authorities in Quebec were at this point quite virulent, and that legal problems gave rise to growing dissatisfaction amongst the merchants who had come to the colony after 1760, little of this is discussed in the press. Formal addresses made to the governor, or petitions destined for the authorities in England may have appeared, but readers' views are not included. A number of poems that do appear in the Gazette may well sing the virtues of British liberty,[28] but the Quebec merchants had their doubts. Since they were pursuing their affairs in what they understood to be a part of British North America, they assumed that business activities would be conducted according to British laws, and would in turn guarantee them the advantages of "British liberty." The merchants' position parallels that of the Brookes, who demanded a respectable place of worship for the official church. Given this situation in Canada, it is appropriate that a poem about the Corsicans' fight for liberty, most likely reprinted from another North Amercian

newspaper, appeared in 1769 together with a preface of which the following is an excerpt:

> WHILE the whole world beholds with admiration the heroic struggles of the Corsicans in defence of their just Rights, and the no less wonderful measures of the surrounding powers that suffer them to be crushed by infamous combinations.----Is it possible that England can remain an unconcern'd spectator! Oh Liberty! Genius of Britain, hast thou forsaken her: Thou, the foundation of her Laws, of her Virtue and and Happiness--her Power and Glory! ... How is it that Great-Britain has not yet appear'd to assist the noble Corsicans, against their cruel ungenerous Oppressors? ... is it not owing to a fatal Cause? Is not her Treatment of her Colonies too near a Resemblance of that the Corsicans have received from the Genoese? & would not her assisting the Distressed be a tacit Condemnation of her own Conduct towards the Colonies?
> (26 January 1769)

This commentary on the relationship between England and her colonial possessions indicates that, from a broader point of view, dissatisfaction with the nature of British liberty in Quebec is just one aspect of more widespread discontent throughout the British North American colonies.

Readers of Emily Montague might suppose that social tensions in Canada could have been reduced if soldiers had been content to occupy themselves with rides in carrioles and outings to the falls, as Captain Fitzgerald and Colonel Rivers were wont to do in Brooke's novel. As it was, the presence of soldiers in the colony, especially when they were billeted with habitants, provoked a good deal of resentment. The sale of alcohol to soldiers was a problem, and they were also involved in illegal trading operations (Neatby 36).[29] In February 1768, in a text entitled "Pour le CARNAVAL," an anonymous citizen, likely a member of the clergy, laments the lack of public virtue evident at all levels of society, and condemns the

frequency of robbery and the "emprisonnemens à l'infini," adding, in parenthesis, "bientôt la ville ne suffira pas pour contenir les prisonniers, ce qu'on n'a pas vu ci-devant." Also under attack are "les assemblées pernicieuses qui se tiennent dans les Brelands Tripots," as well as "les repas splendides, les bals, les divertissemens coûteux, les jeux excessifs, la débauche et le libertinage toujours ruineuses" (Quebec Gazette 4 February 1768).

The persistent difficulties due to the presence of the military constituted just one of a handful of thorny issues that plagued Governor Murray. His attempts to apply British law while at the same time respecting Canadian custom invariably met with disastrous results. One of his main problems was indeed religious, but it had little to do with the construction of a church or cathedral suited to Protestant worship. Instead, he was forced to fill a number of official positions--limited to Protestants--with only a handful of eligible individuals. This was particularly vexing for Murray, since it did not leave him with much choice: the men who acted as chief justice and attorney general did not speak French, and were not familiar with French laws. It was also for this reason that Murray complained in his letter to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts regarding the chaplain, John Brooke, "this Gentleman does not understand French."[30] The people who happened to be in the colony were not always those best-suited to deal with the task at hand. As far as the performance of the chief justice, William Gregory, and the attorney general, George Suckling, is concerned, historian Hilda Neatby makes the following comment:

> The British system was not so much commended to Canadians by the lawyers who first introduced them to it. Probably Gregory and Suckling were no worse than could have been expected in a remote colony where the small remuneration was not sufficient to induce an able man to bury his reputation, although it might be very welcome to a man who was only too anxious to bury his past. (Neatby 50)[31]

Her observations indicate that, if government officials in Canada were neither political wizards nor accomplished speakers of the French language, they were nonetheless the individuals who ended up with the task of managing the colony's government. It appears that, during the 1760s, this task took precedence over any literary life to speak of.

Against this backdrop of thorny legal issues, the Quebec Gazette makes only sporadic mention of events related to reading and "literary" activites. In October 1764, a sale of English books "At Publick Vendue, at the Sign of General Wolfe in the Lower Town" is announced, and promises works in "Divinity, Law, Geography, Poetry, Travels, Voyages, History, Novels, & co." A "weekly circulating library" that offers books on "useful and entertaining Subjects" in both English and French is mentioned only briefly (18 October 1764).[32] The occasional ad is placed in order to retrieve borrowed works. One of these, in the Gazette of 8 December 1766, requests that the reader who borrowed the first volume of The Jewish Spy either return it or send for the remaining three. Such notes suggest that at least some books were circulated in an organized manner, even if the newspaper makes no regular mention of such practices.

In 1765, a note informs the inhabitants of Quebec that a "Person of considerable Eminence in the literary World" planned to use "a modern Story for the Subject of a Tragedy: General Wolfe is to be the Hero, and the Title of the Piece the Siege of Quebec" (4 July 1765). This may have referred to _The Conquest of Canada, or the Siege of Quebec_, written by George Cockings and published in London in 1766; the announcement does not provide further information, neither does the _Gazette_ make subsequent mention of this news item. Although some better-known European writers do figure in the newspaper's pages--notably Voltaire, Addison, James Beattie, and Rousseau--there is no column set aside for discussion of their work or for the announcement of new ones from the "literary World." Likewise, a heading for the "Poets Corner" appears for the first time on 14 January 1768, but it does not become a regular feature. These meagre notes on "literary" matters indicate that, as in the department of public dialogue, the newspaper's editors do not go out of their way to reproduce excerpts from the "most celebrated authors" as their initial address "To the Publick" indicated they would do. At the same time, if there were groups who met regularly for discussion or to read, their activities were not reported in the paper.

The volume of poetry included in the _Gazette_ increases towards the end of the 1760s; it is the single regular "literary" feature, aside from the curious prose narrative news items from abroad. A brief survey of the decade's few poems in English and French is of some interest. Poems in French appear less frequently and tend to be examples of occasional poetry that praise and celebrate the

power of those in authority. Thus, the "Épitaphe de Monsieur Richer" [the curé Récher of Quebec] appears on 24 March 1768, but the authorities most often named are the colony's administrators: "[N]otre Gouverneur," the "garçon imprimeur" writes to the paper's readers in his "Étrennes" for the new year in 1767, "[c]'est le Titus de ce Païs" (1 January 1767). In the same vein, once Carleton is named governor, the "Sentiment général du peuple" is addressed to "Son Excellence" by means of an ode written for the occasion. It ends on the following note, which gives an idea of the overall tone:

> En toi nous admirons la vertu, la sagesse,
> La sévère équité, la douceur, la noblesse;
> Pour tout dire en un mot, nous admirons en Toi,
> Et le bonheur du peuple, et le bon choix du Roi.
> *O Dux Magne, tuas laudes aequere canendo*
> *Non potuisse pudet, me voluisse juvat.*
> (3 November 1768)

No such poem dedicated to Carleton appears in English. The English verses by the "printers lad" on the occasion of the new year in 1767, in offering a reflection on time, allude to a power that surpasses the governor's role:

> Nations, who once their Power could boast,
> Whose Armies spread the Plain,
> By TIME are in Oblivion lost,
> And scarce their Names remain.
> ....
> Yet there are happy Men whose Name,
> Whose Glory ne'er shall die,
> But wafted on the Wings of Fame
> To Time's last Stage shall fly.
>
> To bless the Realm those Men arose,
> Sagacious, wise and just,
> The Dread and Curse of Freedom's Foes,
> Whose Pride is laid in Dust. (1 January 1767)

In their evocation of the British victory on the Plains of Abraham and how it condemned the battle's French participants to obscurity, these lines participate in the sort of rhetoric that typically surrounded the rise of Britain's commercial empire. Regardless of administrative and legal conflicts that flared up on colonial ground, Britain is celebrated as the seat of liberty and as natural heir to the virtues of classical Rome. Such poems tend to overlook actual circumstances and to dwell instead on a more general sense of military glory that envelops the state--"Albion"--on a mythical level.[33] Besides this vein of writing, there is a good deal of light verse (some of it Ovidian in nature), some verse dedicated "to a lady" whose first name occasionally appears, as well as some reflective poetry on liberty, night, friendship, etc.

One recurring topic, typical of the eighteenth century, is marriage. It is seen from all points of view including those of the bachelor and the virgin, but is not always treated with the same degree of philosophical and moral gravity as in Emily Montague. In this respect, some of this poetry is more "novelesque" than Brooke's novel. Nonetheless, it is in thematizing, rather than listing or naming, the negotiations characteristic of the institution of marriage that Brooke comes closest to addressing at least some of the pertinent social questions in Quebec during the 1760s. Many of the brief notices placed in the newspaper by abandoned husbands who refused all responsibility for their wives' debts, as well as one particularly eloquent defence made by a fugitive wife, are, however, outright violations of the rules of vraisemblance. Gabrielle Joncaire la

Miltière's description of the treatment she met with at the hands of Honoré Dubois, her husband, published in the Gazette on 22 June 1769, makes Sir George's pouting behaviour towards Emily seem trifling.[34]

In July of 1765, a short, untranslated text titled "De la Part de VENUS" appeared. It was roughly three hundred words long and urged young men to make the most of the benefits of peacetime and embrace the institution of marriage:

> Pourquoi résister plus longtems aux décrets de l'Être Suprême, aux lois de la nature, et à ce que vous devez à votre Souverain: Quels seront les fruits de vos mariages? Des citoyens que vous donnerez à l'état, des sujets à sa Majesté Britannique, qui remplaceront ceux que la maligne Picotte a impitoyablement enlevé de ce monde.---Mariez-vous, ce sera un bien pour cette Colonie, Dieu bénira ces mariages. (4 July 1765)

On the one hand, young men are encouraged to marry for the good of the colony, as both young men and women always had been under the French regime; on the other hand, following the conquest, young women are not always inclined to opt for the appropriate suitors. Mixed marriages performed by Protestant clergy--which would have included John Brooke--between Protestant men and Catholic women became, as Marcel Trudel notes, "une source d'embarras pour l'Église canadienne" (L'Église 428). Likewise, of Marie-Charlotte Guillimin's marriage to businessman and philanthropist James McGill in 1776, Pierre-Georges Roy comments that "[c]e mariage contracté devant un ministre protestant dut plaire médiocrement à sa famille" (56-57). The issue of marriage was governed not so much by financial concerns as by the question of one's faith.

A handful of other short, untranslated texts written in French are published during the 1760s. Two of these are allegorical, ending with a warning to the reader; a third is written in the form of a dialogue between two habitants. These texts are relevant to events in the colony, yet they approach their subject in a masked, roundabout way. They are not translated in subsequent numbers of the paper; neither do they meet with any printed response. The first of the allegorical texts, entitled "L'Oiseau en Cage élargi," appears on 12 September 1765, the anniversary of the capitulation of Quebec. It appears to criticize a member of the clergy--a bird "d'un plumage blanc et noir" who was perhaps tempted either to collaborate with the government in some way or leave the Catholic church for "un meilleur gîte" where "on lui fit des caresses comme au perroquet appellé Verd Verd." The bird's captors eventually tire of his song and free him, following which the bird ends up "chez un bon habitant, où il goute toutes les douceurs qu'un Oiseau de son espèce peut souhaiter dans les circonstances présentes." The text ends with an italicized moral: "*Souvent on croit être bien où on est mal; et la misère dans un état libre est toujours préférable aux douceurs de la vie dans l'Esclavage*" (12 September 1765). The "douceurs" of life are what the governor's proclamations to the colony continually claim to offer; this author clearly rejects them.

The second text of this nature is published exactly two years later, on 17 September 1767. This one is untitled; it appears under the heading "parabole" and, more hermetic than the first, delivers the following message:

> Sous un épais feuillage dormoit tranquillement sur un gazon un Berger qui ignoroit qu'à côté de lui veilloient trois de ses ennemis; c'étoient une Couleuvre, une Vipère et un Aspic; la Vipère voulant le darder, la Couleuvre par ses tortillements réveilla ce Berger pour le garantire du danger, mais elle en fut la victime, et succomba sous les coups de celui à qui elle avoit sauvé la vie: c'est ainsi que souvent l'innocent pâtit pour le coupable. *Avertissement au lecteur.* (17 September 1767)

Both texts are motivated by political concerns. Unlike the occasional poems that express a generic, ritualistic praise for the new régime, the allegorical genre of these contributions exhibits a desire to influence *readers* rather than to celebrate rulers.

The third text is a crude dialogue between Pierrot and Margot, "Paysans de ces contrées," whose "complainte" concerns "les malheurs du tems." The dialogue's message is not so much a warning as it is a recommendation to trust the colony's administration and leave the future in God's hands. As Pierrot tells Margot:

> j'avons un bon Roy et Monsieur son Représentant en cette colonie que Dieu nous a donné qui aimons bieaucoup tous ses sujets tant anciens que nouviaux; qu'avons nous à craindre; que ça ne touble pas nos plaisirs innoçans; remercions l'Être Suprême de ses bienfaits. (4 June 1767)

During the first few years of British rule, it is these anonymous contributions that, together with the rare letters concerning the nature of British liberty, point to a preoccupation with questions of public importance. The difficulty throughout the 1760s, and for some time afterwards, is that there is no print medium to welcome the expression of opinions that bear on the colony's present and future. The Gazette littéraire, which had attempted to forge a public forum, was forced to an abrupt end in 1779 when its editors, Jautard and Mesplet, were imprisoned because

of their revolutionary activities. The significant writing of the period before 1800 continues to take the form of petitions addressed to the authorities. Letters directed at the public in Quebec--limited as it is--are few and far between: Pierre Du Calvet's _Appel à la justice de l'état_ (1784); _La bastille septentrionale, ou les trois sujets britanniques opprimés_ [1791?]; François Baby's dialogue, _Le Canadien et sa femme_ (1794)--these examples of public writing are directly related to the life of the colony. Literary life in Quebec, evidently, has not yet developed a "polite" form that is divorced from the political sphere; on the contrary, writing is still almost exclusively related to political life.

This situation intensified after news of the French Revolution reached Quebec, and the _Gazette_'s reports on politics become less reserved. Indeed, in addressing the public in the first issue of the _Quebec Magazine / Le Magasin de Québec_, which appeared in August 1792, the editor recognizes that the "political World" is "pregnant with great events;" yet adds that "the warmth with which many at present enter into the subject of Politics we mean entirely to avoid; and we would recommend to our correspondents to do the same" (2). The magazine scarcely lasted a year, which seems to indicate that the public for the "innocent entertainment" it offered was not great enough to sustain its publication. The colony had just been granted a House of Assembly, and its activities took immediate precedence.

CHAPTER TWO: THOMAS CARY AND THE GROWTH OF AN INDIGENOUS PRESS

I: Abram's Plains

From the founding of the Quebec Gazette with Thomas Gilmore in 1764 until his death in 1789, William Brown earned a living as a printer in Quebec City. His services were much needed and appreciated, as one of the earliest contracts he and Gilmore undertook testifies. This was an order, in 1765, for 2000 copies of the Catéchisme du Diocèse de Sens. Given the colony's numbers, this was a respectable first run. As it turned out, there was considerable demand for the catechism, since copies ran out just five months after Brown and Gilmore's printing of it (Gundy 34), and a second edition of the same run was ordered and executed the following year (Tremaine 36). Other work typically included the production of school primers printed in English, French, and Latin (Gundy 34). That Brown and Gilmore, and later Brown alone, were kept busy with catechisms and school books points to the fact that what would be true for other printers who were to begin work in the colony at an even later date was also true for them: government publications, followed by religious works and school books, made up the bulk of the printer's fare. Without such contracts a printer could not expect to survive for very long. Hence the perception that "[t]wo of Brown's more unusual publications" consisted of a medical book and Thomas Cary's poem, Abram's Plains (Gundy 34). It is the latter of these two that will be of interest here. The following discussion will focus first on the publication of Cary's

poem, then will move on to consider his role as editor of the Quebec Mercury.

Abram's Plains (1789) was among the last of Brown's publications; D.M.R. Bentley notes that he died shortly after having printed it (xlii). In his judgment of the poem's merits, Gundy implies that the ailing printer might well have put his final days to better use: "If Cary wrote any poems in his later, more prosperous years, he never committed them to print--no great loss to English poetry as one may judge from the opening couplets of Abram's Plains" (34). If Abram's Plains has been dismissed from the ranks of English literature, it has nonetheless earned a certain place in the history of early writing in Canada. Bentley goes so far as to declare Cary's poem and accompanying Preface "probably the best-known and most important document in eighteenth-century Canadian poetry" (xi). Bentley is probably right about this. And Thomas Cary who, on the poem's title page, refers to himself as a "Gent.," might have been flattered had he known his "little poem" (1) would be reprinted and so judged nearly two hundred years after the appearance of the first edition. The ironic aspect of Cary's history and, I suspect, the point upon which Cary himself would have been inclined to disagree with Bentley (if such things are worth speculating about at all) would have been that of designating Abram's Plains as belonging to *Canadian* poetry, for Cary considered himself decidedly British.

This irony at the heart of Cary's case leads back to the questions that underlie and orient this dissertation, namely, what were the practices of reading and writing in the colony and in what

way did they constitute a basis for the beginnings of an indigenous literature? The difficulty encountered in using the qualifier "Canadian" to describe Cary's poem is that we attribute a certain identity to it long before such an identity, in the way that we understand it in the late twentieth century, was historically possible. Hence my preference for the discussion of "writing in Canada" as opposed to "Canadian literature" for this early period. This designation is intended to be more neutral at the same time that it underlines the as yet undefined nature of writing in the colony, and certainly the absence of any sense of its being Canadian in a nationalist sense. This said, Cary did have his poem appear in Canada. At the same time, it might be argued that, more so than his poem, Cary's various occupations as printer, bookseller, thespian, librarian, auctioneer, newspaperman, and teacher constitute a more important dimension of his involvement in the sphere of activity that sustained and advanced the practices of reading and writing. The point is not that Abram's Plains does not qualify as "Canadian poetry" and that, therefore, it is not worth attending to Thomas Cary at all; rather, it is that Cary and others like him played a key role in the early literary life of Canada, but that this role is obscured if we focus primarily on the single poem he had printed in 1789. Such an exclusive focus only reinforces the status of Abram's Plains as an isolated product that is accorded more importance than the network of relations in which it is situated and upon which it depended, in 1789, in order to be printed at all. This does not imply that we should dismiss the poem. In fact, before moving on to Cary's other activities, it is

worth pausing to consider this publication, the first of its kind in the colony and so unusual compared to William Brown's more typical work.

Itamar Even-Zohar's conception, or "scheme," of the literary system is useful here. Based on Roman Jakobson's model for communication and language and adapted to suit the case of literature and literary activity, this "scheme" translates into a number of elements that may be identified as "*macro*-factors" in the operation of the literary system; they are the "institution," the "repertoire," the "producer," the "consumer," the "market," and the "product" (31-32).[1] These macro-factors enable us to conceptualize the role that Cary played, and the position he occupied within the still fragmentary system. As a "producer,"[2] Cary's activity both conditioned, and was conditioned by, the other factors of the system. Of interest in his case is the fact that his activity is located at a point of cultural transposition, thereby straddling two systems at once, the one fully formed and thriving, the other in its early stage of dependence and development. One main point of difference between the colonial system and the source system relates to the factor of the "market."[3] In England, where print culture was particularly advanced and all factors of the system in place, the market was in a state of rapid proliferation, whereas its counterpart in the province of Quebec was extremely fragile in comparison. The tentative state of the Quebec market is significant, because without one, "there is no socio-cultural space where any aspect of the literary activities can gain any ground;" the effect in turn of a restricted market is that it "naturally

restricts the possibilities of literature to evolve as a socio-cultural activity" (39). Cary addresses the problem of the market more pointedly with the creation of his lending library and adjacent reading room, and with the foundation of the *Quebec Mercury*, thereby contributing to the market's expansion by promoting a certain type of consumption. But these endeavours take place at least a full decade after the publication of *Abram's Plains*. Although there is no "institution"[4] to speak of in the colonial context, *Abram's Plains* nonetheless relates to a functional repertoire. This repertoire, or "aggregate of rules and materials which govern both the making and use of any given product" (39) is borrowed from the source literature, and provides Cary with an appropriate "code" for his literary activities. Provided consumers share certain aspects of the repertoire, they may be open to his productions.[5]

In his 1986 edition of *Abram's Plains* together with its original Preface, Bentley provides a lengthy introduction that argues convincingly regarding the repertoire upon which Cary based his work. Bentley makes no claims for Cary's poetic gifts or lack thereof, but does provide a useful critical reading that situates the work in terms of the neo-classical English tradition out of which Cary was writing, as well as an appreciation of the poet's use and adaptation of a traditional form to suit the social milieu of Quebec and the physical environment of the colony. Bentley also briefly takes into consideration the readers Cary addressed and expected to reach. He sees the fact of Cary's having published in Quebec as a strong suggestion that his work was intended primarily

for the "literate, English-speaking inhabitants" (xxix-xxx) of the city, as opposed to an English, or British, audience located in Europe. Among these English-language colonial "consumers," Bentley distinguishes three social groups, each of whose particular interests is outlined and lauded in Abram's Plains: the merchants of Quebec and Montreal; the "members of the British garrison and its entourage;" and the colony's numerous administrators (xxx).

There is nothing remarkable in Cary's flattering treatment of these groups, since poets have traditionally thanked their patrons either in dedicatory remarks or by incorporating expressions of gratitude into their works themselves. As Bentley demonstrates, Abram's Plains was well calculated to glorify the military's role in winning the colony, the sage administration that ensured its inhabitants peaceful conditions under which to live, and the commercial class that exploited the province's natural resources and brought it prosperity. What is remarkable is that Cary chose to have his poem published at all; there was certainly no precedent for it in the colony. Any poetry that was written and actually printed in the province of Quebec during the eighteenth century generally appeared anonymously or under a pseudonym in the Quebec Gazette; it is even vaguely possible that occasional contributions were made to American newspapers, since these did circulate in Quebec both before and after the American Revolution. Such activity is, however, difficult to verify. Similarly, there does not seem to be any record of the practice of circulating poetry in manuscript form. Yet, if Cary had wished to do so, or if there had been a particularly active literary côterie in Quebec at the time

amongst whom he might have made his literary debut, he could easily have made his mark in society as a poet of some note. In fact, the circulation of manuscripts would have been entirely suited to the intimate nature of English-language society, whose limited numbers, compared to the French-speaking majority, were concentrated in the centres of Quebec, Montreal, Three Rivers and William Henry (Sorel). Yet Cary wished his poem to appear in print.

Here Bentley's observation seems entirely appropriate: "Poet and mercantilist that he was, Cary evidently hoped to turn a tidy profit on the sale of the fruits of his pen" (xliii). A minimum of fifty subscribers would have had to have expressed interest in the poem for Cary to recover the amount of his initial investment of £4.18.3d (xliii).[6] If we take into account that, at the time Abram's Plains was published, Cary was working as a government clerk, a position that secured him a modest annual salary of £40 (Tremaine 272), the sum he needed to cover the material costs of the printing constituted over ten percent of his fixed government income. He would have to have paid Brown for the advertisements placed in the Quebec Gazette, too. And there were a fair number of these. Besides the announcements for subscriptions that appeared before the poem was printed, Bentley documents a total of nine advertisements following publication, from mid-March until early May (xl-xli). Thus, Cary's personal investment in the poem was considerable. Since a second edition did not follow, it may be assumed that Abram's Plains did not receive as enthusiastic a reception as the catechisms published in 1765. Neither did Cary repeat this endeavour, which he might be expected to have done had

the financial rewards been significant; he and his muse may have concluded that there were perhaps surer methods of turning a profit.

Nevertheless, the fact that Abram's Plains made it into print at all is something of an achievement, for similar enterprises were not always even as marginally successful. William Moore launched the Nouvelle Imprimerie in November 1788 (Fauteux 78). He seems to have been eager to make his presence felt in the city as Brown's professional competition, for, just a month before Cary's announcements in the Quebec Gazette, Moore had placed ads in the Quebec Herald regarding the proposal to print "a Collection of original poems, written in elegant style by various ingenious Ladies and Gentlemen, who favoured a friend of the printer with copies." He invited "Ladies and Lovers of elegant Poetry" to support him in his endeavour by becoming subscribers, and promised to include "Miss Seward's Monody on the death of Major André and a list of the subscribers ... (gratis)." A final note of the advertisement warns that work would not commence before a sufficient number of subscribers had come forth in support of the undertaking. Presumably these were lacking, since there is no evidence that the work was ever executed (Tremaine 273-74). However, since these advertisements appeared during the month of December 1788, they may well have suggested to Cary the possibility of publishing his own work. He may even have been one of the ingenious Gentlemen alluded to, and his poem originally intended for the collection that Moore had advertised. One reason to account for the failure of Moore's proposal may have been that it

was simply overly ambitious in terms of its volume and cost, and that the publication of a single, shorter work was more feasible. Whatever the case, Moore's project seems to attest to the presence of a number of aspiring poets in the city. Had the appeal for subscribers been successful, it is unlikely that Abram's Plains would have been the only document of its kind for the year 1789.

The above example of the material obstacles to printing serves as a pointed reminder of the necessity for publishing by subscription. Individuals who, like Cary, wished to publish privately were obliged to come forth with the sum necessary to finance a publication before it was printed; subscription therefore constituted a means of protecting one's own capital. Under these circumstances, it would have been extremely foolhardy of colonial printers to risk their own capital, provided they had capital enough to risk, by proceeding with publications upon the assumption that, once a product was physically available, it could be expected to pay for itself with the help of newspaper ads or a display in the corner of one's stationery shop. Given the financial risk involved, Cary's own choice of form--that of a poem of some six hundred lines in heroic couplets as opposed to a novel--is more convincingly linked to the real constraints on the production of printed materials, "literary" or otherwise, than to the leisure theory of literature that Bentley invokes in his reading of Cary's Preface. It is probably reasonable to assume with him that novels require "considerable leisure time to write as well as to read" (xxix); but to conclude that Cary chose to forego the novel form due to the limited time he, together with his prospective readers,

disposed of, to devote to such pursuits is, I would suggest, to misread Cary's motives in publishing, as well as the milieu in and for which he wrote. It is worth repeating here what is perhaps obvious in the colonial situation: distribution of printed material, whether "literary" or not, by far outweighed the actual production of texts.

For the sake of comparison, a brief mention of the book trade in the American colonies during the eighteenth century is particulary instructive on this point, especially since printers and booksellers active in the centres of Boston, Philadelphia and New York were several steps ahead of their continental neighbours in the province of Quebec, both in terms of the public they served and the number of prospective writers whose work they might agree to print. Concerning the novel form in particular, Robert B. Winnans notes that the bulk of the American bookseller's trade was in imported books; he emphasizes this point since many commentators of early writing in the United States tend to refer only to indigenous American productions in their discussions of literary taste during this period (177).[7] Yet even the importation of books was no easy way to make a living, before 1776, since colonial dealers faced competition from individuals who travelled to England and purchased books directly from booksellers in London (Botein 62). As a result, booksellers in the colony suffered the disadvantage of having to pay steeper prices for their merchandise: "surviving evidence suggests that substantial colonial dealers who ordered from London were fortunate if they could obtain discounts that were equivalent of the best accorded to provincial English

booksellers" (Botein 67). One way of circumventing this problem was to print editions of the works in America, a practice that resulted in numerous American editions of novels. Again, the fact that certain novels were reprinted does not always mean they were the most popular. Winnans remarks that some of the titles most frequently mentioned in newspaper advertisements, and which might be assumed to be the product of indigenous printers, were not printed in America at all; his most telling example is that of Robinson Crusoe, no full version of which was reprinted (179).

However, one characteristic common to most reprinted novels, and which appears to have weighed quite heavily in favour of a work's potential for reprinting was not its popularity alone but also, interestingly, its length: the shorter the work, the more likely it would be reprinted (Winnans 181). Hence, Goldsmith's The Vicar of Wakefield and Sterne's Sentimental Journey are documented as having appeared, during the period from 1750 to 1800, in eight and six American editions respectively; both consisted of only one volume (Winnans 178-79). Shorter works were simply cheaper to produce and entailed less financial risk. For writers in the United States who chose to practice the novel form during the second half of the eighteenth century, concision would have been dictated by financial limitations rather than by formal or aesthetic choice.

If publishing in the United States was somewhat precarious, we can guess at the corresponding possibilities in Quebec. The feasibility of publishing a novel there in 1789 was no greater than it had been twenty years earlier, when Frances Brooke, perhaps

inevitably, chose to have The History of Emily Montague appear in London. If Cary had chosen to write a novel that he ardently wished to see in print, he would have to have done likewise; that he did not do so suggests that his literary connections in the metropole were not as substantial as Brooke's. Given the quasi-impossibility of publishing a novel in Quebec, then, Cary's prefatory claim for his "little poem" as "the offspring of a few leisure hours" (1) may be read more as a formal display of modesty than as a statement to be taken literally. There is no large sample of works from this period that we may compare with Cary's. However, a number of writers whose work dates from the turn of the century make similar remarks: Ross Cuthbert's *avertissement* to l'Aéropage (1803) refers humbly to "ce petit Poème" which is "qu'un chardon poussé par un loisir stérile ... bon à rien si ce n'est à faire du fumier"(4) (l'Aéropage is intended to be a satirical poem); and Cornwall Bayley's "advertisement" to his descriptive poem, Canada (1805), begs "the candid reader to make allowances for the inexperience of a Youth (he may almost say a School-boy)" (4). Denis-Benjamin Viger uses the same language in the *avertissement* to the earliest of his political essays (Considérations sur les effets... 1809), apparently published at the encouragement of friends; he apologizes for the presentation of his thoughts, "sans ordre," committed to paper "à la suite les unes des autres, chaque fois qu'un moment de loisir m'a permis de me mettre à l'ouvrage" (i), and entreats his readers to be indulgent towards his "petit ouvrage" (ii).

Mary Lu MacDonald has warned against the temptation of taking such prefatory information at face value ("Reading Between" 41); in her remarks concerning literary prefaces and prospectuses written in Canada during the period 1820-1850, she observes that "the stance of the apologetic amateur, *prima facie* evidence that the author was appropriately respectable, was one of the literary conventions of the period" (34). Such an apologetic stance is evident in the examples cited above, even though they appeared somewhat earlier. The unassuming tone of these prefaces, in which the authors appear to minimize the importance of their work and affect a certain degree of reluctance to make it public, would seem to be dictated by their own understanding of what may be referred to as the generic characteristics of the preface itself. In his recent study of nineteenth-century prefaces in Canadian novels, Stephen Tötösy de Zepetnek finds that the very assumptions upon which such prefaces are based, as well as the ways in which an author may refer to other works, may be quite revelatory:

> implicit or explicit references to literary theory, a literary genre, and the mention of specific literary texts and/or authors are ... useful because thus we can gain a glimpse of the authors' literary culture and of the way he is positioning himself in the canon and system of literature. (53)

In the Preface to Abram's Plains Cary readily acknowledges the authors whose voices he wishes to emulate; on this point we may take him at his word. Specifically named are Pope, Thomson, and Goldsmith, and Bentley provides a persuasive argument regarding Cary's affinities with, and allusions to, their works. He notes that Abram's Plains "looks backwards in the topographical

tradition to the sources and fountainheads of the neo-classical tradition in England" (xiii). Cary chose some solid--and respectable--literary models for his work.

So far, however, the discussion of Cary's references to repertoire has been limited to a textual level. In other words, they have been based on the idea, as Even-Zohar puts it, that "the most conspicuous manifestation of literature is considered to be 'texts'." It follows that the literary repertoire is then conceived of as the "aggregate of rules and items with which a specific text is produced, and understood" (40). Literary discourse thus begets literary discourse; or, texts arise out of, and are made from, other texts. However, if we accept Even-Zohar's scheme of the literary system, there is no justification for limiting ourselves to the text as the most important manifestation of literature. Rather, the text figures as just one type of literary product among many others; likewise, it would be inadequate to limit the concept of "repertoire" as pertaining to the production of texts alone. Even-Zohar notes that if

> manifestations of 'literature' are considered to exist on various levels, the 'literary repertoire' may be conceived of as an aggregate of specific repertoires for those various levels. ... There may be a repertoire for being a 'writer,' another for being a 'reader,' and yet another for 'behaving as one should expect from a literary agent,' and so on. All these must definitely be recognized as 'literary repertoires.' (40)

The idea of there being a repertoire attached to the function of the "writer" is interesting because it implies that certain types of behaviour might be associated with this role.

What would Cary's conception of the repertoire for being a "writer" have been? We can approach this question by reflecting on the way he chose to make his poem public. On its title page Cary announces himself as "the author" and as a "Gent.," a double identification that is sufficient to demonstrate the positive value he attaches to being a writer. This value is reinforced by the generic specification he supplies by identifying Abram's Plains as ": a poem"-- clearly not the production of the likes of a "hack," whose respective repertoire could not include the status of being a gentleman. Consequently, Cary's penchant for the neo-classical, as well as his explicit positioning of his own work in relation to it, is of interest if considered in conjunction with his status in the colony and with his own identification of himself as a gentleman.

The exact date of Cary's arrival in the colony is difficult to determine; recent work indicates that he may have reached Quebec as early as 1775 (Lemire, vie 1: 145). The general consensus is that Cary was appointed secretary to General Prescott in the year 1797, but this sheds no light on his activity during the preceding twenty years. As noted above, he was apparently working in Quebec City as a government clerk at the time his poem was published. Perhaps Cary traveled to North America in the hope that opportunities would arise once he had had the chance to make himself known to Quebec society. Such opportunities did not materialize as promptly as he may have expected, since the authors of the first volume of La vie littéraire au Québec locate Cary in L'Assomption, engaged in the liquor trade shortly after his arrival--not exactly what might be

considered a gentleman's occupation, but, perhaps to his credit, Cary did end up going bankrupt (Lemire 145).

Thanks to his literacy skills, Cary eventually did earn his position as clerk in Quebec. Once settled there, he may have concluded that one way of achieving a higher profile and of enhancing his social position would be to engage in a form of self-representation through the publication of a polite, respectable poetical work--a sort of colonial self-fashioning, to modify Stephen Greenblatt's term to describe the writing of certain Renaissance figures. For Cary, it would have been a question of exploiting the repertoire of the "writer" in order to benefit from the social prestige that would accrue to him as a result of his publication. The idea behind such a self-representation in the colony, however, would not be to impress with one's talents for innovation or to dabble in the unproven aesthetic values of pre-Romanticism, whose "fabulous" descriptions were "the sole work of imagination" and in which "fancy" had "full play" (Cary 1). Instead, such a public forum would afford a "Gent." the opportunity to include himself and his work in an already-sanctioned, publicly recognized sphere of writing, and make public his own degree of literary learning and competence as a writer. Clearly, the more popular form of the novel would have been unsuited to this sort of literary representation, especially since it lacked the formal qualities that could be exploited in addressing certain influential groups.

Thomas Cary did succeed in improving his social, and financial, status over the course of time; the authors of _La vie_

littéraire au Québec remark that "[il] est certainement un des seuls au pays à devoir son ascension sociale aux vertus de sa plume" (Lemire, vie 1: 145). They refer here more to his success as editor of the Quebec Mercury, certainly more profitable in the long run than the publication of Abram's Plains alone. During the nineteenth century, Cary would in fact become one of the most successful printers in Lower Canada. Gilles Gallichan attributes this to the diversity of his activities, since printers who managed to keep a newspaper in circulation and who had, at the same time, a stationery shop and a form of lending library attached to their printing business, generally tended to be the most prosperous in their trade (35). Cary opened his library in 1797. Its books were made available not only to local borrowers but to readers outside the city, thanks to the postal system Cary introduced for this purpose (36). Thus, even in the administration of his library, we see Cary's entrepreneurial spirit at work. In 1805 it led in turn to the founding of the Quebec Mercury. This in itself was no negligible undertaking, since his major competition was the Quebec Gazette, owned at the time by John Neilson. As noted, the Quebec Gazette enjoyed the patronage of the administration; all government proclamations and announcements appeared in its pages, thereby guaranteeing it the steady revenues so sorely needed to ensure its viability. Although during the closing years of the eighteenth century numerous attempts had been made to establish a rival publication, these did not generally last long.[8] Hence, Cary's success with the Mercury is all the more remarkable.

It is well known that the opinions Cary and a good number of his contributors expressed in the Mercury regarding Lower Canada's French-language population, during roughly the first year and a half of its publication, were so offensive in the eyes of certain readers that they retaliated by establishing the Canadien, a newspaper whose mandate was to counter what its editors deemed to be Cary's abuse. It is in the pages of the Canadien, in 1808, that some allusions to Cary's less illustrious occupations are proffered. They are provoked by remarks Cary made on 29 August in his "Quebec" column, a section of the newspaper usually reserved for Cary's personal observations regarding world politics in general as well as those pertaining to city events. It seems that the Montreal Gazette had defended him against the insinuations of a contributor, and Cary graciously acknowledged the paper's support:

> It must be confessed that there is nothing so grateful to men who write for the public eye, as praise. It has been courted by the first wits of our Augustan age. He that has read the letters of Pope and Swift, with any attention, cannot fail of being struck with the frequent repetition of *Orna me*. (279)

Cary then proceeds to berate the author of the offending letter, first because he calls himself an "Englishman," which Cary condemns as a "counterfeit signature," then because of his perceived attempt to obstruct the freedom of the press:

> from his egotism and dogmatic stile of writing, we should take [the author] to be a man cloathed with certain censorial authority, not confined to the district of Montreal, but extending to the extremities of the province, whose duty it is *ex officio*, to knock down all literary aspirers who have not sucked his mother's milk. His great misfortune is, that he has mistaken his weapon, having taken up a pen instead of a pestle or syringe. (279)

These excerpts provide an example of how Cary is quick to draw a parallel between his own activities and those of his literary idols, and to identify himself as a "literary aspirer." His understanding of "literature" is, of course, as a broad, inclusive category, in accordance with which his role as newspaper editor and commentator qualifies him as a man of letters.

However, Cary's pretensions do not go unnoticed by a contributor to the Canadien, who, writing under the pseudonym "le Pilon," handily deflates Cary's self-representations. On 3 September 1808, he addresses Cary personally: "en dépit de vous, je voudrais voir la littérature plus encouragée ... vous n'êtes *ni* littérateur *ni* instruit" (174). Cary may have been able to brush off such unflattering remarks, but le Pilon's subsequent words must have proven more damning:

> Si je voulois écrire, Mr. l'Éditeur du Mercury, je trouverois facilement des sujets beaucoup plus intéressans que les sottises que vous publiez contre un peuple auquel vous êtes redevables d'une bonne partie de ce que vous êtes. Rappellez-vous le temps où vous couriez de porte en porte, pour y trouver des petits babouins à faire lire; et si de plus on y joint celui où le marteau vous faisoit vivre, n'auroit-on pas bien droit de vous dire: *you have mistaken your weapen* [sic], quoique vos écrits, à dire vrai, se sentent encore beaucoup de cet outil.

If, as implied, Cary earned his living at one time by wielding a hammer, then le Pilon "lui cloue le bec," since Cary refrains from defending himself on this point in subsequent numbers. Similarly, le Pilon's revelatory accusations regarding Cary's lack of instruction and what are perceived as laughable literary pretensions would seem to be confirmed by Cary's silence. If we add to this the hint that Cary's earlier "literary" undertakings

included that of knocking on doors in quest of pupils he might instruct in reading, the portrait that emerges at the hands of le Pilon is one of an arriviste and charlatan. Cary's posturing as refined gentleman of letters and distinguished editor of the Mercury is exposed and ridiculed by allusions to his former menial pursuits in the colony. However, on 19 September 1808, Cary does make a half-hearted attempt at attenuating the charges made against him by printing a response regarding his teaching activities. He does his best to enhance their value by contrasting them with "idleness," the "mother and nurse of every folly and every vice." In comparison, his work constitutes "decent and reputable efforts, to gain a livelihood," and is an example of "the very virtue that is most meritorious, and that most adorns the character of man, the strife to rise above want" (302).[9]

This embarrassing public confrontation provides further grounds for believing that, aside from any strictly financial gains Cary earned by lending or selling books and printing his newspaper, he also enjoyed an enhanced social position thanks to his being literate. Like Abram's Plains, the Mercury may be seen as an instrument that Cary used to lend himself a certain air of respectability in the colony. If we turn again briefly to his poem, we can see how Cary's pitch to Quebec society corresponds to his own "reading" of the milieu he is addressing. This reading will later underlie the opinions expressed in the Mercury, especially in Cary's "Quebec" column, and most eloquently foreshadows his infamous clashes with contributors to the Canadien. We need only read the poem's title to gain an insight into Cary's

understanding of the colony; what other landscape could have been more fitting for this topographical poem than "Abram's Plains," the site of Wolfe's defeat of Montcalm? Cary accords central importance to this historical moment because it symbolized, to the English-language community he is addressing and to whom he wishes both to sell his poem and to introduce himself, the founding event that justifies their political stance in the colony: "the Plains of Abraham ... where the poem begins and ends [is] where the central event of Lower Canadian history and of the poem, is located" (Bentley xiii).

It may seem pedantic to note that, in 1759, "Lower Canada" did not exist; yet one of the aims of the present discussion is to point out the historical transformation that terms are subject to, and indeed the conflicting ways in which they may be read. It is worth recalling, then, that the Battle of the Plains of Abraham in 1759 took place in Canada, and led to the creation of the "Province of Quebec," in 1763; not until 1791 did "Lower Canada" become a reality. As a result, the most significant event in the history of Lower Canada is more likely to have been the granting of a House of Assembly, regardless of how flawed the new constitution may have been. That Cary's poem is structured around the site of battle in 1759 is a perfect illustration, in a poetical text, of the divergent conceptions, or "readings," of Canada's history that were current then and which persist to this day. Commentators who side with the "British" argument tend to emphasize the importance of the battle of 1759, while those who identify with the "Canadian"

reading are more inclined to refer to the legal date of 1763, when Canada was officially ceded to Britain by the Treaty of Paris.[10]

II: The Quebec Mercury

We gain a fuller sense of Cary as a "cultural pioneer" (Bentley xxxviii) or, at the very least, as a cultural agent, by turning to the Quebec Mercury, perhaps better known to historians, sociologists and political scientists than to students of literature. Yet there is much to learn from its pages about the beginnings of writing in Canada. To a certain extent, the status of the newspaper in Lower Canada at the outset of the nineteenth century may be likened to that of news and literary magazines in England. Although there is no comparison where the actual number of publications and their respective circulations are concerned, periodical publications in both colony and metropole were nonetheless dominant print forms, a fact that tends to be eclipsed by greater concentration on the work of individual writers. Jon P. Klancher discusses the English periodical during the years following the French Revolution in terms of "a paradigm of audience-making" (4). Likewise, political and social developments in Lower Canada saw the beginnings of sustained journalistic activity that came to overtake what had formerly been a less politically engaged "newspaper" activity, thereby making possible the emergence of different audiences or groups of readers. Once the colony had been granted its long-awaited House of Assembly, political debate invevitably intensified and began to affect the role of the press (Beaulieu and Hamelin, "Aperçu" 309). The

appearance of the Mercury in 1805 is one of the events that contributed to the emergence of clearly discernible editorial opinion in newspapers, and to the promotion of public debate through print media.

This outcome may not necessarily have been one of Cary's conscious goals from the outset. His paper may be seen as an alternative or supplement to the Quebec Gazette, the bilingual weekly printed and owned by John Neilson. It was designed, however, to be a distinctive publication. Above all, the Mercury was to be an exclusively English-language paper. Its name also signalled a difference in content. For the period in question, a "gazette" was "concerned mostly with public affairs" while a "mercury" was conceived of "more on the order of an almanac or olio of information in a form less permanent than a book" (Fetherling 1). Hence, the Quebec Gazette, dependent as it was on the publication of official government information and announcements, was more or less geared towards serving the colony's administration. This situation may have guaranteed financial stability, yet it left little room for editorial independence (Beaulieu and Hamelin, "Aperçu" 309); in fact, if we were to read through a couple of months' worth of numbers, it would be difficult to find any trace of an editorial voice at all. The choice of foreign news items reproduced from European and American papers is clearly based on Neilson's judgment of what was likely to be of interest to his subscribers, but the actual volume of foreign news is nowhere near that published by Cary. Because it was a bilingual publication, the Gazette's scope was limited: the same news items,

announcements, and many advertisements appeared twice in each number. There is no doubt that the Gazette was always an important paper; this is especially true where advertising was concerned. Besides information regarding goods and services available in the city, it also published the comings and goings of ships in the Quebec port, noted the marriages and deaths of prominent citizens, and reported the occasional accident, suicide, or crime. However, although some essays, poems and theatre reviews do appear, there is no steady cultural or literary ingredient that proceeds from the paper's editorial orientation. This is another of the main points of difference from the Mercury.

Upon Cary's death in 1823, the Mercury remained in family hands and continued to appear throughout the nineteenth century. Although the general development of the paper has yet to be studied, discussion of it here will be limited to the early years (1805-1809) of its history, when Cary's attempts to launch it as a distinctive publication are most evident and the results of his editorial choices most clear. As alluded to above, in comparison with Neilson's Gazette, what is most striking about the Mercury is the consistent presence of Cary's own voice and the sense of his guiding hand behind its operation: one editor chooses to efface himself, while the other accentuates his own role. The Mercury's mixture of international news, periodical essays, poetry, anecdotes, and letters to the editor is reminiscent of the wide-ranging, selective nature of well-known successful British periodicals of the eighteenth century that gathered and condensed materials for discerning readers, and suggests that Cary modelled

his *Mercury* on their example. Where Neilson tended to make sporadic inclusions of poetry in the *Quebec Gazette*, Cary set aside the left-hand column of the *Mercury*'s final page as a permanent forum for "Poetry," as its heading announces--a sign of the genteel character his sheet is intended to project. This inclusion signals Cary's assumptions regarding the inherent value of "poetry" and the consequent legitimacy of according it a regular space in the paper, especially during the early years, regardless of the relative merits of the poetry itself: excerpts of Scott's *Lay of the Last Minstrel* and translations of Horace appear under the same heading as denigrating epigrams directed at Napoleon, political attacks on the *Canadien*, and an address made by the Reverend Strachan's class in Upper Canada. "Poetry" exists, then, as a broad category to which Cary applies inconsistent criteria when it comes to including or excluding individual pieces.

Besides some of the paper's designated divisions, in themselves a sign of the transformations occurring within the discourse on "literature" as it developed elsewhere, Cary's own personal reflections on cultural and social matters and questions of literary taste included in the *Mercury* give some indication of the character he wished to impose on it. Especially during the first few months of publication, his own contributions reflect more of a preoccupation with literary and belletristic matters than a determination to establish himself as an independent political critic. Cary's literary references, approving reviews of theatrical performances, and acknowledgements of "communications" allow us to identify his voice as embodying a kind of extension or

transposition of the English literary institution to Lower Canada; Cary happily assumes the role of "propagator of taste" (Schücking 89) in the colony, praising one contribution but declining to print another for fear that it might offend his readers' sensibilities, often prefacing the "Poetry" column with an explanatory or laudatory note, and chiding the public for not having attended theatrical performances in suitable numbers. Even though his personal contributions account for a relatively small proportion of newspaper space, if we were to excerpt them all, the nature of their "literary" bent would be immediately discernible.

In giving his newspaper this literary orientation, Cary is once again acting as a producer of literature, even though he personally pens very few literary pieces.[11] However, Cary does not act alone in this function. In order for his publication to be successful, he is dependent not only on the subscribers or "consumers" of the Mercury, but on those people who take on a role as fellow-producers by contributing submissions for publication. It is fair to say, then, that besides collective patronage, Cary's vision of the Mercury depends on collective production. Many contributed items reveal their authors' familiarity with the genre of the literary periodical, as well as the extent to which their behaviour is formulated on the example of the English models with which they are acquainted. Hence contributions in the form of letters or short poems are followed by literary pseudonyms ("Tabitha Bramble;" "Owen Ossian") or by mock-Roman epithets ("Caduceus;" "Phlegmaticus"). Likewise, certain topics that contributors turn to, seemingly naturally, belong to the

periodical's repertoire; bachelors and old maids are therefore discussed, although Cary rejects an "ironical instruction to Loungers" because it "is inapplicable to this country" (2 March 1805, 71).

Besides providing a sense of the occasional arbitrariness of Cary's evaluations, this last example illustrates his reliance on submissions in order to be able to exercise his aesthetic judgment. Since, as Cary notes, "[o]ur poet's corner is generally filled early in the week" (16 February 1805, 56), there is ample opportunity for him to share his thoughts regarding the merits of the pieces sent him. Accordingly, beneath Caduceus' contribution of an "Arabic" poem given him "by a friend, lately from India," Cary writes that "[w]e should ill relish the beauties of poetry did we not express our particular acknowledgement for the above; or did we omit to pray a continuance of *Caduceus's* favors" (26 January 1805, 31). Another correspondent is advised, under the heading "Acknowledgements," that

> The *Fire Side* is under consideration. It is tediously long, and wants the liveliness with which we wish to fill our poet's corner. The ideas, however, we cannot find fault with, nor have we any thing to say against the versification. (2 March 1805, 71).

Cary also takes advantage of his editorial license to improve upon the items he receives:

> *Lawrence Lively*, we hope, will excuse our publishing his *Poetry*, as he terms it, or the greater part of it, in a different dress, from the one he sent it in. We must be allowed to apprize him that all *rhime* is not *poetry*. The greater part of his lines, tho' the whole are but few, are not only unpoetical, but they offend in the measure; and more so in the incongruity and flatness of the two last lines. (9 March 1805, 80)

Cary is not always so conciliatory, especially to those who may not take the paper seriously enough: "*K. Zickabuk* shall not appear. He has doubly taxed us for the worst trash we have ever been condemned to read. First by a loss of time in reading it. Secondly, by a loss of pence, for postage" (23 March 1805, 96).

Where local productions are concerned, Cary is generally confident of his own ability either to reject or accept what readers send his way, and to offer suggestions for improvement. Yet there is at least one occasion upon which his judgment is implicitly called into question. It concerns a series of poems by an inhabitant of Quebec City who goes by the pen-name "Omicron," and whose contributions are not favourably received by another, who signs "Incognito." Omicron's first efforts appear in the poetry columns of 17 August ("The Happy Charge" 262) and 14 October 1805 ("A Fable" 328); they receive no comment. Buoyed by the Mercury's tacit encouragement, the local poet submits a third poem, "The Moon and Dogs," which Cary acknowledges on 28 October: "Omicron is received, we will, if possible, publish it, but we are much staggered by the length" (343). Cary does end up printing sections of the poem each week from 4 November through to 2 December. However, this monopoly of the column prompts a rare response in the form of a verse epistle, dedicated to Omicron, in the Mercury of 16 December. "Incognito," a "non-admirer" of Omicron, dedicates his poem to the

> Prince of Poets, and pride of this province ... on his incomparably incomprehensible poem or fable, intituled the Dogs and the moon, as well as his other rare and stupendous poems, which have appeared in the Quebec Mercury, as well as those which have graced former

> periodical papers or publications, with which the public have been pestered, persecuted, overpowered & at length fairly put to sleep; tho' now to be found only in the hands of trunk makers & pastry cooks, to the eternal disgrace of anglo American literature[.] (400)

The epistle that follows begs Omicron to "Save pence & paper" and abandon poetry; "The world complains, your fables quite fatigue her, / And prays each *Omicron* may be *Omega*" (400). In this case, Cary bows to Incognito's judgment by announcing, the following week, that he will refuse subsequent submissions by Omicron on the grounds that their publication merely provokes attacks. By appearing to wish to spare his readers the unpleasantness of such conflicts in the Mercury's pages, Cary also ducks the necessity of having to exercise his editorial judgment regarding Omicron's submissions, and the consequent risk of its being found lacking.

Indeed, Cary is on safer ground where more "canonical" literature is concerned. His sense of what Even-Zohar would term a "static canon" (19) of works belonging to English-language literature is a reflection of the gradual definition of the literary sphere which occurred throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. According to Even-Zohar, the existence of a static canon is one of the primary conditions "for any activity to be recognized as a distinct activity in culture;" a work becomes part of the so-called static canon when it is "accepted as a finalized product and inserted into a set of sanctified texts literature (culture) wants to preserve" (19). Cary's references to Shakespeare, Milton, and Pope are inspired by his recognition of them as the authors of "sanctified texts," and therefore as sure literary values, while, for different reasons, it is not yet

possible for him to claim Chaucer as a model, or to pass judgment on the recent poetical works of Walter Scott and Thomas Moore--except when glossing the opinions of English critics.[12] Likewise, since the novel form has yet to be fully sanctioned, it is safe for Cary to preface the inclusion of a poem entitled "The Wreck of Reason" (16 Febrary 1807, 56) with the following remarks concerning a contemporary writer:

> Those, who have been entertained with the "bewitching" novels of Mrs. Radcliffe, will receive with interest the account of her insanity. We are tempted to account this a providential dispensation of retributive justice. Mrs. Radcliffe's works have wrought more mischief by bewildering the imaginations of thoughtless youth, than the most *sane* exercise of her talents could produce good, during a life as long as Methuselah's.

As a rule, novelists hardly figure at all in Cary's sense of the literary, and novels are never mentioned as being worthy of respect or as recognized canonical works.

This short examination of Cary's discourse on literature shows the extent to which his dependence on the English literary system may be understood in terms of what Even-Zohar calls "interference," or "the relation(ship) between literatures, whereby a certain literature A (a source literature) may become a source of direct or indirect loans for another literature B (a target literature)" (54). For our purposes, the fledgling literary culture of Lower Canada (or what "Incognito" refers to as "anglo American literature"), in which the Mercury and its editor and readers are involved, becomes the target literature for which the English system is the source literature. Again, Even-Zohar emphasizes that

borrowings from the source literature are not limited to texts or textual models alone; rather, the

> role and function of literature, the rules of the game of the literary institution, the nature of literary criticism and scholarship, the relations between religious, political, and other activities within culture and literary production--all may be modelled in a given culture in relation to some other system. (54-55)

The Mercury provides ample evidence that its producers model their literary behaviour--even if it does not always consist in the production of "literary" texts--on that of the source literature. This situation would seem to confirm a number of Even-Zohar's "laws" of interference (58-72). At the same time, where the consumption of actual texts from the source literature is concerned, it is, in the pages of the Mercury, invariably achieved through the textual fragment as opposed to the integral text. Only a relatively small number of the poems printed in its "Poetry" column are signed by recognizably "literary" figures; a single poem each by Pope and Cowper are reprinted; there is an ode dedicated to the King on his birthday in 1807, by Henry James Pye, England's poet laureate; excerpts from Robert Bloomfield, Scott, and Goldsmith appear; and a handful of poems by Burns, Robert Spencer, Thomas Moore, and Thomas Dermody are included. The large majority of poems consist of light verse and patriotic stanzas praising the virtues of England's fight against Napoleon, "the Corsican elf."[13] In this way, although some works do appear in this marked space, they are more often evoked in fragmentary form elsewhere in the paper's pages, and are frequently used to reinforce or illustrate a

line of argument, as if they were a "literary" form of rhetorical commonplaces.

Hence "Jemima Fondlechild's" response (26 January 1805, 31) to a bachelor's letter of complaint regarding children's table manners, in which she chastizes him for his marital status and cites the virtues of marriage, is delivered with the help of a dozen lines or so from Paradise Lost ("Hail wedded Love, mysterious Law, true source / Of human offspring ...," etc.); "Gulliver" articulates his criticism of the House of Assembly's rampant factionalism in a short poem that alludes to Gulliver's Travels ("O' think what combats Lilliput sustain'd, / What endless toil, and bloodshed unrestrain'd, / Whilst two gigantic empires dar'd pretend / To break their eggs each at a diff'rent end!") (9 December 1805, 391); and, in a riposte to the Canadien, Cary invokes Pope, who "says 'There's nothing blackens the ink of fools'" (18 July 1808, 230). These examples illustrate the fragment's utility as "a ready-made inventory for daily communication, or as a permanent *background* against which new texts and fragments can be generated and compared" (Even-Zohar 44). Coupled with the fragment is the simple allusion or reference to literary figures. In this case, it is the significance of the author's name alone that lends importance and meaning to a news item or anecdote. The cumulative effect of the inclusion of fragments from, and references to, the more stable texts and figures of the source literature is that it tends to produce a static sense of available models. This is apparently typical in cases of literary interference; it stems from the target

literature's tendency to ignore "the contemporary elements of a source literature" and to go back instead "to an earlier diachronic phase, often outdated from the point of view of the center of the *source* literature" (Even-Zohar 71). Yet, as Even-Zohar observes, this is not as important as the position borrowed elements come to occupy within the target literature.

Not surprisingly, in spite of the symbolic value Cary accords to literature, his early declarations regarding the Mercury follow a more pragmatic line. In the first of his addresses to subscribers, which appeared in the paper's inaugural number of 5 January 1805, he indicates that the Mercury is intended to be an "open periodical paper," and that submissions from subscribers are therefore both expected and welcome. Here he speaks to what he perceives to be subscribers' various motivations for supporting his undertaking:

> All are anxious to see themselves in print. The parliament man, in his debates, the lawyer in reports of his arguments; the soldier in a list of promotions; the merchant in details of his exports and imports. (1)

Without troubling to invite local littérateurs to share their writings with the public, Cary assumes here that local professionals will wish to take advantage of the paper's pages, and of the immortalizing quality of print, for the purposes of self-representation and to promote their own interests; as it turns out, only the city's merchants actually act on Cary's suggestion. To the "european" subscriber Cary promises news of the "marriages, births, deaths, and all that relates to his friends at home" and, though "[o]ne says 'let your paper be a prop to government'" and

another, "'we do not want a government paper; we must have a free paper'," he pledges to do his best to gratify all. He does beg "mercy" and "indulgence," however, due to "our immured and peculiar situation; and the difficulty of procuring intelligence." It is clear that the paper is not in the least expected to fuel itself on local matter alone: "the necessary publications" must be ordered "from England;" this is an unquestionable condition of its subsistence. Along the same lines, Cary assesses the potential interest of Lower Canadian politics as negligible (even though parliamentarians may wish their debates to appear in print), and implies, not without humour, that the real stuff of a periodical publication is lacking:

> The want of a minister to bait; of a party to support or asperse; of local revolutions, insurrections, frequent earthquakes, hurricanes, inundations, hangings, drownings, horrid murders, and such accidents, is to be sure matter of much lamentation and regret, to an editor, who wishes to interest his readers. To fabricate both them and political events, might, perhaps, be no very arduous task; but it is to be apprehended that, in such case, Quebec currency might sink, in value, even below New-York currency. However, if we cannot have them on the spot, nor fabricate them, without hazarding our reputation, we must be content in purloining them, wherever they are to be found. (2)

Though Cary is well aware of the power of sensational material to draw readers, and jokes about it here, the news items he actually selects for the Mercury are hardly represented by the list of likely topics enumerated by him in this first address: little space is accorded to the goings-on in the harems of eastern princes or to grisly tales of widows' vengeance. Instead, Cary's relaying of international news maintains a more sober focus on diplomatic relations and military and naval movements, amongst which British

politics figures prominently. These news items he extracted from a wide variety of sources, some of which were undoubtedly obtained for his reading room, others provided by friends and subscribers.

Quebec was in fact well-supplied with periodicals and newspapers, as the examination of the records of John Neilson's accounts has shown (Hare and Wallot 95).[14] As the colony's most important bookseller and agent, Neilson dealt regularly in a wealth of printed material, but he does not seem to have been interested in reproducing more than was necessary to fill the pages of the Gazette. Since anywhere from 50 to 60% of the paper was devoted to advertising (Hare and Wallot 105), there was no real need to seek out supplementary material. Subscriptions to the Gazette were stable if not growing in number, and the paper was, as Hare and Wallot point out, the most important in Quebec until 1820. This suggests that readers turned to the Gazette in a pragmatic spirit, looking to it for commercial news and to keep abreast of the colony's legal and administrative matters. Given the nature of Neilson's publication, Cary must have counted on there being sufficient interest in more substantial doses of foreign news to support an additional local paper, especially since his revenues from advertisements alone cannot have come close to Neilson's, judging by their number. News of the continuing escalation of Britain's conflict with France, coupled with the ever-present threat to the Canadas of war with the United States, provided an abundant supply of reading material.

It is in brief commentaries of such foreign news that Cary quite readily reveals his own political position and, perhaps

unwittingly, under the mistaken assumption that his readers must inevitably share his opinions, plants the seeds that were to generate his own journalistic adversaries, thereby increasing competition in the newspaper business and jeopardizing his own affairs. Cary's seemingly straightforward activity of producing a weekly periodical, to which he added a literary dimension, actually ended up contributing to the fragmentation of the literate population into various publics.

This outcome had been unanticipated by the *Mercury*'s editor. A willingness on the part of both Cary and his subscribers to play the literary "game" is certainly clear in the first few months of the *Mercury*'s publication. Yet the discussion of public issues--the preponderance of beggars and destitute individuals in the city; the pressing need to introduce improved agricultural techniques; the demand for a bank in the colony; proposals to set up an educational system--gradually came to predominate. Local submissions of poetry dropped all "literary" pretence and assumed a baldly political character, promoting the cause of Nelson, Britain, and the *Mercury*, denouncing those of Napoleon, France, and the *Canadien*. Indications are that none of this poetry recommended itself on the basis of aesthetic criteria. Once there is significant competition to be reckoned with and polemics to be engaged in, the paper sheds its stance of disinterested politeness.

Generally speaking, Cary's comments of a political nature are grounded in his own identity. At the root of the disparaging remarks he directed at all that smacked of the republican or the democratic is Cary's own spirited, sincere espousal of the cause of

imperial Britain. Accordingly, he frequently made vigorous rejoinders to articles in papers from the United States. For Cary, it goes without saying that the only conceivable position one could take regarding the United States was to stand adamantly against them and what they represented in relation to Britain. It follows that, in accordance with Cary's perception of what it means to be a British subject, it is quite natural for him to promote English as the state language and Protestantism(s) over Roman Catholicism as more appropriate to the expression of religious belief, besides being safer politically; these questions are, for Cary, not open to debate. In the same way, given the context of the European wars of the period, French manners, the French language, French fashion, and especially "French education" are conventional objects of criticism and suspicion.

Although these sentiments only attained their full intensity once news of Nelson's victories reached Lower Canada in early January of 1806, there was nonetheless a parallel current of "anti-French" feeling in the colony that had been fed by the dissatisfaction of English merchants for years. This was due to the forces that had come to shape the House of Assembly, in which Canadians naturally formed the majority, and proved to be a perpetual source of frustration to the merchants, who saw their own interests as being forever compromised by men who failed to recognize their importance to the colony. By 1805 the power struggle that gripped the three branches of the Legislature was resulting in the steady polarization of Lower Canadian politics that would only worsen in the course of time until it deteriorated

into the full-blown crisis of 1809. Under these circumstances, even casual observations on Cary's part were liable to strike a dissonant chord in some readers.

As a result, Cary is almost immediately confronted with the first negative reactions to the Mercury. He responds to them in a front-page column in the paper's third number, on 19 January 1805, in which he must acknowledge that the reading public is composed other than he had conceived of it. This discovery seems to come as a surprise, and is forced upon him from an unexpected quarter. Speaking of himself in the third person, Cary states:

> He has declared that it is not his wish to hurt any man's feelings. He has already been charged with a deviation from that declaration. But he will venture to assert that the charge is unfounded. That some men's feelings possibly may be hurt, by insertions in this paper, is what he is ready to admit; because it is impossible for him to ascertain the degree of sensibility, or irritability of temper, of every individual. It by no means follows that, because a reader's feelings may be hurt, by a passage in this paper, that it was so intended by the editor. If a pleasantry inserted for the purposes of raising a smile, should have a contrary effect, it is an effect different from what was meant to be produced. Particular habits may be attended with particular sensations, which persons, not in those habits, can form no idea of. The same object will be seen by different men in different points of view, and, of a number, perhaps no two will feel alike. (17)

The "pleasantry" in question appeared in the newspaper's inaugural number, and was in the form of an editorial observation:

> *Rhetoric*, we understand, is considered here an essential part of a seminary education. Is it to this we are to attribute the very general and free use of the *hyperbole* in this country? In common language, this figure is called *a manner of speaking*, *une façon de parler*. (7)

Laughing with or laughing at? As Cary concedes, it all depends on one's perception. However, as far as the Mercury is concerned, its

editor shall ultimately judge as to "what is fit and what is unfit for the public eye" since the "whole responsibility attaches to him ... not on the score of public and private defamation only, but also with respect to its literary reputation, and its character as a vehicle of intelligence" (17). Thus, Cary judges that his pleasantry is no slight to the Mercury's literary reputation, and is not meant to offend, but draws the line, in the same number, where a communication signed "Timothy Truelove" is concerned, on the grounds that its "nature is unsuitable to this paper" (23). Cary's own scale of cultural values enables him to protect subscribers, on the one hand, from what may have been a mediocre love poem, while exposing them on the other to his own witticism made at the expense of one of the colony's most respected institutions. It is certainly not typical of Cary, otherwise so attentive to opportunities for reinforcing his business interests, to prove so insensitive to the danger of alienating actual and potential subscribers and advertisers. Yet his position can be understood better if we look more closely at the paper's composition.

To do this, it is useful to refer here again to Neilson's Quebec Gazette for the purposes of comparison. We have already seen that some of the major differences between the papers are that the Mercury relies much less on colonial advertisements, and almost not at all on government-related material, while opting to reproduce a greater volume and variety of foreign news, and to assume a self-consciously "literary" stance. But we can also consider these two newspapers in terms of the extent to which they

played a role in promoting a sense of cohesiveness and community in the colony. In his discussion of the relationship between print-capitalism and the emerging possibility of conceiving of, or "imagining," the modern nation, Benedict Anderson points to the importance of the newspaper to the development of a national consciousness. He first takes the example of the novel form's presentation of "simultaneity," or the depiction of a multiplicity of events that take place in different places at the same time (30-31), and extends this to the newspaper, whose "essential literary convention" is taken to be the imagined "linkage" of arbitrary events or disparate news items (37). It is therefore through the regular performance of the "mass ceremony" of "the almost precisely simultaneous consumption ('imagining') of the newspaper-as-fiction" that individual readers are bound together in the knowledge that, somewhere, somebody else, perhaps unknown to them, is repeating the same operation (39). It might be argued that newspapers were more significant as vehicles for the development of national or group consciousness in those parts of the world, such as Europe, where literacy was more widespread and the reading public greater in number, and that as a result, their impact could not have been that great in Lower Canada. (According to Hare and Wallot, circulation records for the Quebec Gazette put the "mass" of its subscribers anywhere between 500 and 850 between 1806 and 1812 [105].) Yet Anderson specifically signals the role of the newspaper in the "creole states"[15] of the Americas, whose nationalisms pre-dated European movements of the nineteenth century, and were quite different from them on the whole (50). What he identifies as the

characteristics of early colonial newspapers throughout the Americas will sound familiar:

> They began essentially as appendages of the market. Early gazettes contained--aside from news about the metropole--commercial news (when ships would arrive and depart, what prices were current for what commodities in what ports), as well as colonial political appointments, marriages of the wealthy, and so forth. In other words, what brought together, on the same page, *this* marriage with *that* ship, *this* price with *that* bishop, was the very structure of the colonial administration and the market-system itself. In this way, the newspaper of Caracas quite naturally, and even apolitically, created an imagined community among a specific assembly of fellow-readers, to whom *these* ships, brides, bishops, and prices belonged. (62)

This general description of newspapers in North and South America certainly applies to both the Quebec Gazette and the Mercury, although to a lesser extent in the case of the latter.

How might these two colonial papers be seen to promote an "imagined" community in Lower Canada at the beginning of the nineteenth century? Because a greater percentage of its space is devoted to advertisements and items pertaining to the colony's administration, the Quebec Gazette necessarily provides a focus that is more clearly centred on Lower Canada. This does not mean that it omits European news altogether or fails to include information regarding English political life or the latest developments in France, but that these spheres receive less attention simply because of the material limitations of the paper. At the same time, the Quebec Gazette united English- and French-speaking readers in its communication of matters relating to the colony, thereby providing an opportunity for both linguistic groups

to "imagine" the existence of the other together with its own, if only due to the fact that half of each page was printed in the other group's language. The paper's bilingual arrangement had the potential to represent an integrated colonial community to itself.

On the other hand, the unilingual Mercury is explicitly directed at English-language readers; as Cary enumerates them in the first of his addresses, they include, in his mind, "the parliament man," "the lawyer," "the soldier," and "the merchant"--and presumably their wives. These readers, in subscribing to the Mercury, would be able to participate in the dual nature of the paper's "imagining" of both the colonial *and* the imperial communities. On one level, like the Quebec Gazette, the Mercury contributed to a sense of awareness of Lower Canada as a community through the weekly gathering together and publication of news items that were of immediate concern to it. But at the same time, it promoted a parallel sense of belonging and adherence to the metropole, and allegiance to the imagined community of the empire. Just as Bentley observes in Abram's Plains a "Janus-like quality of facing in two directions"--backwards to the neo-classical tradition in England, forwards to the colony's promising future, guaranteed by the St. Lawrence river system (xiii-xiv)--, so might we perceive in the Mercury a similar, seemingly untenable, stance vis-à-vis the colony, where the paper's "feet" are planted, and the metropole, where its "head" resides. For Cary assumes an unmistakable position of loyalty to Britain that automatically sanctions his publication, printed not so much in the interest of serving a given segment of the colonial community, but to make a clear imperial

point by linking that colonial group with the larger community of fellow-Britons. Depending on the circumstances, "we" and "our" may make inclusive reference to the colony's inhabitants, or it may refer exclusively to English-language people who "rightfully" belong to the British community. Hence, for Cary, to be "British" is to be English-speaking; if one is "Canadian," then one speaks French.

For Cary and some of his readers, this sort of distinction is straightforward, yet the question of identity is not so clear cut. A good example of the shifting vocabulary commonly used to identify the colony's inhabitants is to be found in John Lambert's Travels Through Lower Canada, and the United States of North America, in the Years 1806, 1807, and 1808 (1810). Even a cursory reading of the first volume reveals the ambiguity surrounding Lambert's use of the words "French," "English," "Canadian," and "British." The "Canadians" are identified at one point as "children of France" (154), which implies that Lambert takes Canadians to be French-language creoles. Yet in explaining the composition of the House of Assembly, he distinguishes between "French" and "British" members (187), then notes that "English members" understand French, while "French members" do not have as extensive a knowledge of English; some pages later he speaks of "French Canadians" (194). Even though the Canadians/French/French Canadians inhabit the British empire, they are not included by the designation "British," which seems to be reserved for speakers of the English language. Yet Lambert claims that, "among all the British residents in the two colonies [of Upper and Lower Canada], not two hundred

Englishmen, perhaps, can be found" (151). Thus, "British" would seem to include English, Scottish, Irish, and American inhabitants, whose children, if born in the colony, would become "British Canadians" (278). In his infamous comments regarding the state of the theatre in Lower Canada, Lambert refers to "Canadian theatricals," the "Canadian audience," and "Canadian performers," yet, in deploring the "drunken Belvideras, Desdemonas, and Isabellas" of "an old superannuated demirep," one of the female actresses, he is clearly referring to the *English*-language performances staged by local players in conjunction with a troupe from Boston (302). However, on this occasion, the theatre is neither "English" nor "British." This sort of confusion permeates Lambert's observations, although, depending on the context, one can often guess which of the two linguistic groups is intended in his descriptions.

Similarly, some contributors to the Mercury suggest a fluid conception of identity that is evident in the diversity of their signatures ("an Old Loyalist;" "a young Canadian;" "an Upper Canadian Subscriber;" "a French-Canadian-Englishman;" "Amicus;" "Anglo Canadiensis;" "a Farmer;" "Anglo Americanus;" "Johny Bull;" "Cosmopolitus;" "a Bedford Farmer;" "a Canadian;" "a Canadian Farmer"). Although the more extreme opinions of "Anglicanus," "Touchstone," and "Akritomuthos," who share Cary's distinct sense of what it is to be "British" or "Canadian," are most often cited in discussions of the Canadien's response to the Mercury, it appears that Cary's readership is not unanimous on the question of identity. Again, given the larger context of hostilities in

Europe, it is easy to understand the temptation to collapse the French identity with that of the French-speaking Canadians in Lower Canada, thereby eradicating the difference that had distinguished creoles from "metropolitans" during the era of New France and afterwards. However, by collapsing these identities, Cary only ends up exacerbating the already tense climate that reigned where questions of identity and language were concerned. As mentioned above, his insistence on the primacy and exclusivity of the English language flatly contradicts his own business interests, yet this is the principle upon which his publication rests. "This paper was originally set on foot as an english paper. As such it must be continued," he tells "Un vieux habitant de la Chine" in the Mercury of 28 April 1806, advising him that his letter shall only appear the following week--in translation.[16] Within the imperial context, the Mercury's motives are deemed unquestionable, yet news of proposals to create an exclusively French-language paper elicit Cary's opinion that the "Quebec Gazette answers all the necessary ends of a french paper. The tendency of any other must be to excite trouble, or to pick the pockets of the public" (10 November 1806, 359).

The idea of "exciting trouble" was indeed a preoccupation. In enquiring into the extent of the impact of French revolutionary discourse on the political language of French Canada, Louis-Georges Harvey and Mark V. Olsen observe that, since Great Britain and France were in a state of almost constant war between 1793 and 1815, the consequence in Lower Canada was that "the expression of revolutionary sentiments could and indeed was construed as treason

to the crown" (376). In some circles, then, the mere act of speaking the French language in Lower Canada--let alone actually "disseminating" it in the form of a periodical publication--was in itself perceived to be dangerous. On this point, "Anglicanus" provides a clear illustration of the line of thinking that persistently focused on the Canadians' undesirable linguistic link with Britain's most formidable adversary. The following is excerpted from his comments of 27 October 1806 regarding the rumoured publication of a French-language newspaper:

> To *unfrenchify* [the province] ... should be a primary object, particularly in these times, when our arch-enemy is straining every nerve to frenchify the universe. Gladly would he exterminate every vestige of the english language and the english name. (...)
>
> Be it war or be it peace the times render it indispensably necessary that, far from encouraging, we should, by all fair means, oppose every effort, direct or indirect, having a tendency to multiply frenchmen or to add to french influence. ... Whilst France is labouring, with all her power, to frenchify the world, it becomes our bounden duty to counteract her, by manifesting no less zeal to *anglify* it. (...)
>
> A french system is an arbitrary system, because it is a military one; it becomes therefore the interest, not of englishmen only, but of the universe to raise mounds against the progress of french power. To oppose it is a duty. To assist it is not only impolitic, it is criminal. It is to help to forge chains for the many to add to the splendor of the few. (...)
>
> To counteract France, we must be englishmen. (337)

Given the perceived global import of this struggle against "french power," it is not surprising that the first series of the Canadien (22 November 1806 - 14 March 1810) "defined itself as a *defensive* paper" (Faucher 251). At the same time, in performing its "defence" of the colony's French-language inhabitants against insinuations that they will prove disloyal to Britain because of the language they speak, the Canadien provides another vehicle for

imagining a community, this time composed of Canadians rather than "Frenchmen," as its title implies. In replying to the Mercury, then, the Canadien provides an alternate example of how the discourse of a newspaper may promote the sense of a common identity and of belonging to a group. Even though the first series of the Canadien cannot be described as nationalist, its reply to the Mercury nonetheless constitutes a totalizing conception of a community that aims to establish itself as "the" legitimate conception through the elimination and rejection of others (Reid 13). Thus, in response to the Mercury's imagined community of the British empire, the Canadien's expression of a collective subjectivity makes a parallel attempt to achieve a similar end: "faire triompher son interprétation de la totalité sociale, de la rendre officielle" (Reid 13). In the eyes of the Canadien's editors, the collectivity for whom they spoke constituted "une communauté distincte" whose members shared "une langue commune, des intérêts communs et une même identification à la société britannique" (Reid 15).

At the helm of the Canadien's first series are Pierre Bédard and François Blanchet. Together with a team of regular contributors,[17] they promote a new approach to the "imagining" of a community, which in turn results in quite a different editorial set for their paper in comparison with the Mercury. This difference in editorial orientation is apparent in the prospectus announcing the paper's publication, in which there is no mention of gratifying subscribers' desires to read of their own exploits in print, nor any promises as far as international news items are concerned.

Instead, the _Canadien_ is consciously conceived of as a medium for educating its readers regarding the nature of the constitution and the role of the press in ensuring its proper application. Its editors write that they have long regretted that "le trésor rare que nous possédons dans notre constitution, demeure si longtems caché, faute de l'usage de la liberté de la presse, dont l'office est de répandre la lumière sur toutes les parties" (Prospectus 1). The _Canadien_'s proclaimed mandate as a newspaper is therefore narrowly linked to the political and administrative life of the colony; where the _Mercury_ devotes the greater part of its pages to foreign news and designates a "Quebec" column for matters of immediate interest to the colony, the _Canadien_ reverses this formula by focusing almost exclusively on Lower Canada. Very little space is accorded to advertising, while foreign affairs are covered summarily, usually in a single column of the paper's final page. At the same time, the _Canadien_ is presented as a forum for responses to what its editors describe as black "insinuations" made in "un papier publié en Anglois," which, they claim, then refused to print certain responses to its offending articles (Prospectus 1). Thus, the new weekly offers Canadians "le moyen de venger la loyauté de leur caractère" (Prospectus 1).

Indeed, the _Canadien_'s first number contains translations of submissions originally made to the _Mercury_ but which Cary declined to publish. One of these consists of a complaint regarding the discussion of certain political questions, and in which its author, "Caius," deplores the apparent polarization of political debate along so-called "party" lines:

> Nous entendons trop souvent les expressions de Parti Canadien, et de Parti Anglois. Y a-t-il une guerre civile dans le Pays? Tous les habitans de la province ne sont ils pas Sujets Britanniques? Les Anglois ici ne doivent pas plus avoir le titre d'Anglois que les Canadiens celui de François. Ne serons nous jamais connus, comme un Peuple, comme Américains Britanniques? (22 November 1806, 1).

The Canadien's editors evidently share Caius' views, since they, too, refer to "cette détestable distinction entre Anglois et Canadiens" in the same number (3). In inviting subscribers to assist them in compiling a history of the "parti Anti-Canadien" (4), however, they do appear to prefer to distinguish between those who are "for," or "against," Canadians.

Just as Caius would have been deemed to have belonged to the first of these camps, so would "Akritomuthos," writing in the Mercury of 24 November 1806 in response to the first number of the Canadien, have revealed his allegiance to the second. He resents "the whole drift of this gasconade upon the liberty of the press," and "would be extremely happy to discover the honor of Canada, or what is meant by so bombastic a term" (370). Although prepared to recognize that the Canadians have proven their loyalty in the past, he nonetheless scoffs at their idea of the colony and what it represents in the context of the empire:

> Are these champions so unfortunate, or so puffed up with the consequence of Canada, as to imagine England could derive any great benefit from enslaving the country? ... Is it to be supposed America would involve herself in useless difficulties with the mother country, for a tract of bleak forest contiguous to the Hudson's Bay, for the sake of a little trifling fur trade? Canada, in itself, in whatever light the intelligent champions of this super-eminent honor may view it, is in the sight of Great Britain almost a *nihilium*, hardly worth keeping, and altogether burdensome. Were it not for the sister provinces, the islands in the gulph, and the Newfoundland fisheries, the principal support of our West India Islands,

> Great Britain would freely make a present of it to the first that would accept of so onerous a charge. (371)

These remarks leave little doubt as to where Akritomuthos' loyalties lie, while also providing an example of the more extreme stance taken by those who sided with what has been referred to as the "British" party. In the "Quebec" column of the same date, Cary joins Akritomuthos in dismissing the Canadien as a negligible publication:

> We have seen the first number of "Le Canadien" and are ready to acknowledge our regret at having ever deemed it worthy of one serious thought. From its contents, and from what it holds out in prospect, we can no otherwise augur of it, than that any thing issuing from the garrets of Grub Street, must suffer in comparison with such a publication. (375)

Such observations do not go unnoticed at the Canadien's headquarters; what ensues is the infamous vituperative exchange between the two papers. In this war of words, however, the Mercury's share of invective works oddly to the Canadien's advantage, since it only serves to reinforce the editors' thesis regarding the existence of a "parti Anti-Canadien," active since the days of Murray's administration in misrepresenting the Canadians and still determined to jeopardize their chances for survival.

The main strategy adopted by the Canadien in order to prove the party's existence is that of reproducing written documents relating to the colony's history and administration. These tend to discredit the province's Protestant population and the motives of the merchant class, and to emphasize the British parliament's support of the Canadians. The editors' conception of the role of reading and writing therefore takes the form of a concerted effort

to trace and construct the history of the "parti Anti-Canadien," thereby endowing it with a certain continuity. At the same time, by giving their adversaries a common name, the Canadien's editors fashion a composite portrait of their *anti-sujet* in relation to which they are able to position themselves and the group they wish to represent. The Anti-Canadiens are those who press for the anglification of Lower Canada, oppose the practice of the Roman Catholic faith, encourage the indiscriminate immigration of "Yankees" in the Eastern Townships, wish to administer all land on the basis of free and common soccage, support the interests of the North West Company at the expense of those of the colony's majority, and seek to resist any move towards what is referred to as ministerial responsibility. By directing their attacks not only at the Mercury but at the "parti Anti-Canadien," the Canadien's editors effectively extend the consideration of some of the major points of contention of the House of Assembly to the pages of their paper. In fact, they liken the paper to a tribune through which the public may be addressed:

> celui qui écrit dans un papier public doit se regarder comme un Orateur, qui adresse la parole à tout le pays, et qui ne veut pas qu'un seul de ses auditeurs sorte de son auditoire sans avoir profité de son discours.
> (27 December 1806, 24)

This vision of the periodical's role underlines its primary function as an instrument for educating its readers and developing their awareness of the political means by which the collectivity's interests, as conceived of by the editors, may be promoted or ignored. Thus, House debates and votes are reported on a far more regular basis and therefore granted more importance than in the

Mercury. Perhaps the major dimension of this approach to "imagining" a community is the paper's emphasis on the group's existing by virtue of the representative political system, so new and unfamiliar to the colony's majority: the community's life, or action as a group, comes to be embodied by its involvement in the deliberations of the House of Assembly. Given this focus, a regular "literary" column does not emerge as a priority for the *Canadien*, although short epigrams and ditties in reply to the *Mercury*'s poetical gibes do appear.

Neither does profitability seem to have been foremost in the minds of the *Canadien*'s editors, whose principal occupation was not in the domain of printing. Their newspaper is quite modest in comparison with both the *Mercury* and the *Quebec Gazette*, and its revenues from advertising cannot have been very significant. In fact, one of the reproaches Cary directs at the *Canadien* is what he judges to be its amateur status. It follows that, in his editorial message customarily delivered at year's end, Cary resents "the opposition of a new press and french paper" on the grounds that it has been

> set on foot by men who are not obliged to, and do not look to the press for a maintenance; whose avocations are of a very different nature; and whose emoluments from those avocations, are more than adequate for their livelihood. (29 December 1806, 409)

He adds that "[s]ome of them are in a state of affluence," but nonetheless "strain every nerve to snatch the stuff of support from those whose principal dependance is on the press" (409).[18]

Here Cary points to the main knot of differences between the *Mercury* and the *Canadien*. He certainly is more preoccupied with

the financial returns of his enterprise than are his rivals, and wishes to exploit the opportunity of enhancing his social status by representing himself as a man of letters. The imperial community that Cary imagines and the identity he espouses are in no need of defence or apology, while the editors of the Canadien are faced with quite a challenge on this point. On the one hand, they must emphatically distance themselves from the heritage that linked them with Britain's major enemy, while attempting on the other to rally their countrymen to the conception of a community whose full emergence relied on political means and action. The Canadien's subscribers did not always agree with what they may have perceived to be the paper's somewhat radical stance.

Given the nature of the political tensions that gave rise to the journalistic wrangling between the Mercury and the Canadien, it is not surprising that Cary's attempts to imbue his paper with a neutral "literary" element were quickly subsumed by more factional social and political commentary and polemics. As the exchange between the papers intensified, their common literary ingredient, which took the form of short poems, came to merge with the predominant discourse. This discourse is political and, as such, plays a major role in orienting the practices of reading and writing in the colony. This situation does not diminish Cary's importance to the system as a producer; rather, it serves as a reminder that the status of literary discourse in the colony during the early years of the nineteenth century was closely linked to political life.

CHAPTER THREE: THE MULTIPLE ALLEGIANCES OF HART, STRACHAN, AND BIDWELL

If political life and the emergence of political parties provided a central focus for the practices of reading and writing in Lower Canada during the early years of the nineteenth century, conditions in the neighbouring province were not yet conducive to comparable developments on a similar scale. Both Upper Canada's population and the nature of its colonization differed significantly from those of Lower Canada; consequently, true party politics were not to be a political reality until the 1830s. Upper Canada's inhabitants, whether "legitimately" Loyalist or not, were largely from the United States, and were thinly dispersed throughout the townships. This meant that, although the province may indeed have come into political being as a result of having been granted its own Assembly by the Constitutional Act of 1791--contrary to the wishes of merchants and the "French party" alike in the Province of Quebec (Craig 17)--its coherence as a community was not immediately apparent, and its inhabitants' sense of their "communal distinctiveness" (Wise, "Peculiar" 37) not particularly intense. At the same time, the upper province may be seen to have existed, in many respects, more as a colony of Lower Canada until 1817 or so (Ouellet 157).[1]

This appears to be the case particularly as far as literature is concerned, since, as Mary Lu MacDonald has found, prior to 1830 almost all separately published literary works by residents of the Canadas were published in Lower Canada (_Literature_ 10). Given this

situation, it might seem that the question of the development of literary life and the beginnings of the literary institution is even less appropriate, when posed in the context of Upper Canada before 1820, than it was in the case of Lower Canada at an earlier time. However, as has been suggested up until this point, such a conclusion would be based on the supposition that individual texts are the main products of the literary system, and that the study of literature should have literary texts as its main focus.

Instead, the question that lends itself to colonial societies is that of how texts and the technologies of writing and printing are used, and how the practices of print culture are adapted to suit colonial needs and ends. In this context, the concept of what is to be considered "literary" necessarily exceeds aesthetic criteria; any text which presents an argument, be it overt or implicit, and that might invite a counter-argument or be challenged, may be termed literary. Thus, advertisements for farming equipment are not deemed literary, while critical letters to the editor, didactic newspaper articles, and political commentaries, pamphlets and sermons, as well as poetry, do fall into this category.[2] Here it must be emphasized again that the early practices of reading and writing, however fragmentary, are nonetheless pertinent when considered as necessary to the subsequent elaboration of the literary system. As the preceding study of Thomas Cary and his _Quebec Mercury_ has revealed, before literary life is possible on a broad scale, and before it becomes manifest in the (perhaps more recognizable) form of numerous individual publications, literary clubs and readings, reviewing

practices, and ultimately as an autonomous field of study, there must first be some awareness of the social function of texts in a given society, whose members engage in the practices of reading and writing before these become specialized in one way or another. Thus, the emergence of "literary" products always depends on a complex of related activities.

This chapter will discuss the publication of Julia Catherine Beckwith Hart's novels, and will contrast them with other reading and writing practices that were gaining ground in Upper Canada at the outset of the nineteenth century. These practices will provide the context for considering the writings of Bishop Strachan and of politician Barnabas Bidwell. Having examined the conditions in the former Province of Quebec which made the publication of a novel almost impossible for Brooke during the 1760s and for Cary in 1789, it is instructive to reflect on Hart's success with this form.

Hart's first novel, St. Ursula's Convent, or The Nun of Canada (1824), has been recognized by some as "the first work of fiction written by a native-born Canadian and the first to be published in what is now Canada" (Bailey, "Julia" 38). However, as Leslie Monkman has shown, it is only recently that critics of Canadian literature have taken much notice of Hart, and of the fact that she published a second work of fiction, entitled Tonnewonte, or The Adopted Son of America, in 1825. Some of this critical attention has consisted in the republication of St. Ursula's Convent,[3] an event that prompts Monkman to speculate on the reasons that might account for such reconsideration, and for what he refers to as the "sources of amnesia" that made it possible to overlook Hart's novel

for so long and to pronounce John Richardson's _Wacousta_ (1832) the real first Canadian novel instead (74), even though this novel, unlike Hart's, was conceived of primarily for a British audience, and was originally printed and sold in Great Britain. Monkman suspects this oversight may be explained in part by the fact that _Tonnewonte_ was published in the United States, which would account for the major difference in Hart's presentation of her works:

> as Hart's prefaces to _St. Ursula's Convent_ and _Tonnewonte_ attempt to 'name' the texts that follow, they also inscribe two different models of literary beginnings in a colonial culture, two contradictory versions of nationalism which are simply left in suspension by Hart. (72)

Yet it is important that these models of "literary beginnings" be recognized as ideological, especially if they are to be equated with divergent forms of nationalism in colonial cultures. If we think of the literary beginnings of both American and Canadian literatures in systemic terms, they are of course alike. Both began as dependent literatures for which English literature was a main source. Thus, many aspects of the American system--regardless of the United States Declaration of Independence, and long after it was made--were modelled directly after those of the source literature. Here nationalist readings of literary history would have us subscribe to the idea that to political and ideological scission necessarily corresponds a literary or cultural "independence." But this was not entirely the case for either the United States or for Canada. Emerson may have urged the independence of the American scholar, yet Henry James bemoaned his country's cultural dependence, still prevalent despite nearly a

hundred years of nationhood: "it's a complex fate, being an American, and one of the responsibilities it entails is fighting against a superstitious valuation of Europe" (Seymour-Smith 23). In the eyes of some critics, it was not until after the First World War that American literature and its historians turned away from Europe and promoted an autonomous literary institution--perhaps in itself another example of activity modelled on that of other systems. This definitive break may be attributed to the realization in the United States that European culture was fallible: it had been completely undermined by political events. In other words, and in terms of Even-Zohar's laws of literary interference, the prestige of the source system was seriously diminished; English and French literature had lost something of their "cultural power" (66).[4]

But in the early nineteenth century, when Hart wrote her prefaces, this cultural power still held sway, both in Upper Canada and in the United States. It is evident in both of Hart's prefaces, regardless of their differences. In the preface to St. Ursula's Convent, which is dedicated to the Countess of Dalhousie, Hart is quick to acknowledge that the literary "*attempts*" of a "*British American, on the threshold of her humble career of authorship*" can "*hardly hope to enter into competition with the finished products of the old world,*" and asks that readers excuse her work's "*defects*". Hart sees her novel--apparently written when she was seventeen, at the time of the War of 1812--as an example of "*native genius in its humblest beginnings*" and hopes that its success may "*elicit others of real and intrinsic merit*" (3-4).

Monkman perceives in this preface a marked distinction between youth and age which functions as an "organizing trope" (74): the deferential writer of the awkward, inexperienced colony begs indulgence from her sophisticated European parent.

Such obvious deference is absent from the preface to Tonnewonte, written roughly a year later, once Hart and her husband had relocated to Rochester, New York, on the southern shore of Lake Ontario. While the dedication of St. Ursula's Convent mentions "THE AUTHOR," the title page of Hart's second novel declares it to be "By an American." Thus she chooses to identify herself as an American from the United States, as opposed to a British American from Upper Canada or any other British North American colony. Instead of making an age/youth distinction, Hart proclaims the United States' imminent adulthood and, tacitly, its cultural equality. The preface to Tonnewonte takes the form of a metafictional exchange between the author and a "Mr. Noxbury," to whom she has mentioned her publisher's request for some prefatory remarks to her manuscript. Hart's author-persona responds unequivocally to Noxbury's doubts:

> America is young, but is fast verging towards maturity; and the country that in its infancy produced a WASHINGTON, and a FRANKLIN, may in its riper years, become a luminary, whose effulgence shall extend to all parts of the globe (...)
> Even in America, are there not many living persons who are proofs, that the literary character of America is fast rising in eminence? How many men distinguished for their acquirements in literature? How many eminent for their skill in the arts and sciences, now residing in all our principal cities? (n.p.)

This stance clearly contradicts that of the first preface, yet the very idea of being "equal to" Europe suggests a subordination

European standards. This is evident in Hart's choice of epigraphs for the title pages of her novels. On the one hand, as Monkman suggests, the epigraphs do seem to support the idea that Hart's prefaces "name" the texts according to contradictory versions of nationalism; that from St. Ursula's Convent is taken from Thomson's Seasons,[5] and emphasizes the novel's moral purpose, whereas Tonnewonte's focuses on nationality and is borrowed from Goldsmith (77). However, it is ironic that Hart's "American" novel cites an Anglo-Irish, European poet's verses on this subject when it could have quoted "a FRANKLIN."

This irony aside, the ambivalence of Hart's novels and their prefaces remains. Where Douglas G. Lochhead takes Hart's patriotism to be the aspect of St. Ursula's Convent that critics have most overlooked (xxxiv), Monkman's consideration of both her prefaces suggests otherwise. In his view, the fact that English-Canadian critics have either acknowledged Hart, and focused primarily on St. Ursula's Convent in doing so, or excluded her, thereby skirting the questions raised by the two works, is an indication of a possible awareness of the problems Hart poses where "patriotism" is concerned, and what this implies about "*their* quests for literary beginnings" (72; Monkman's emphasis) in relation to Hart's.

Thus, if we accept that St. Ursula's Convent

> is, most importantly, a significant early attempt by a Canadian of French and English heritage to articulate a vision of Canada that united the best of England and France in a bilingual and bicultural nation located in North America but linked through family, social, and and religious ties to its European origins (Lochhead xxxv),

it becomes awkward to address Hart's other novel. Tonnewonte not only fails to provide the endorsement of Canada that is often demanded of, or sought in, early works, it flatly contradicts the "vision" of Canada articulated in Hart's first novel, thereby undermining it. When the novels and their prefaces are considered together, Tonnewonte's epigraph may be read as a tempered reconsideration of Hart's former patriotism:

> Such is the patriot's boast, where'er we roam,
> His first, best country, ever is at home.
> And yet perhaps, if countries we compare,
> And estimate the blessings which they share,
> Though patriots flatter, still shall wisdom find
> An equal portion dealt to all mankind:
> As different good, by art or nature given,
> To different nations makes their blessings even.
> (Goldsmith, The Traveller [1764] ll.73 ff)

Once in Rochester, Hart may have become more appreciative of the "blessings" of the United States. But if Cary's Abram's Plains may be judged remarkable for its attempt to "fuse its old-world, neo-classical conventions with its new-world, Canadian subject matter" (Bentley xvi), the same may not be said of Hart's Tonnewonte, even though it seeks to adapt the novel form to the social context of the new world.

Tonnewonte may be seen to testify to a sense of multiple allegiances. Such allegiances were more typical of early Upper Canadian inhabitants than was a tendency to identify oneself as "Canadian"--a designation still narrowly associated at the time with the French-speaking inhabitants of Lower Canada--or even as "Upper Canadian," for that matter. In spite of the fact that the narrative is set mainly in the United States and France, and that the novel was published in Watertown, New York, it could be argued

that the "American" half of Hart's oeuvre speaks more authentically of the "Canada" of the time. Although in the preface to Tonnewonte Hart may ally herself with "a nationalism dramatically unlike that articulated in the preface to St. Ursula's Convent and [find] a basis within that nationalism for a greater fulfillment of the promise of scenes of 'real life'" (Monkman 77), the actual narrative that follows is more careful than bold in its thematization of Hart's "American" nationalism. Accordingly, her "adopted son" of America is an orphaned French aristocrat, Theodore de Clermont. In choosing to make this main character French rather than English, Hart avoids the potential pitfalls of having to draw any direct comparisons between the United States and its former mother country. The contrast she sets up makes it possible to support the "democratic" mode of life of the American frontier without having to take a stance "against" Great Britain.

Yet this neutralized contrast does not entail a wholesale condemnation of the "aristocratic" way of life in favour of Napoleon's revolutionary forces. Instead, after being reunited with his family in France, Theodore happily accepts what he had formerly termed the "prejudices of birth, and the pride of remote ancestry" (106), and eagerly takes up arms in the name of the Bourbons. His democratic education in the United States has no effect on his loyalty to the French king, for, once Napoleon's return is announced, Theodore proves incapable of transferring his allegiance to the emperor and must flee in peasant disguise. In this instance, the "naturalized American" (113) chooses aristocratic, royalist values over those of the republican camp.

Given these two extremes, Theodore's choice is more or less consistent with a federalist position. In attempting to portray American values in a positive light, Hart chooses the more moderate alternative. As it turns out, the aristocratic values to which Theodore objects most are the "prejudice, dissension and despotism" (143) which prevent him, as a second son, from inheriting his father's estate, thereby thwarting his plans to marry. To his loved one he declares, "'Were I in America, I would exert the faculties of a man, and maintain you independently'" (161). More so than political freedom, it appears that one of the main attractions of the United States is the freedom of the heart from barriers of class; there, marriages are based on love rather than social standing, name, or fortune.

While Theodore lies recovering from his wounds in France, Tonnewonte's narrator returns to the Marvin family in New York State, where the hostilities of the War of 1812 are about to break out. It is in her depiction of these circumstances that Hart reveals her Anglo-American allegiance. She has already hinted at her adherence to a federalist position in her depiction of William Parker, a character who is associated with the southern "Patriot" states, and whose values are portrayed as negative in comparison with those that Theodore and his adoptive American sister, Evelina, have grown up with. This "southern youth" (25) and his family seem to be representative of a less virtuous, less "true" sort of American. Whereas the Marvin slaves live in harmony with their owners, the Parkers from Maryland "exercised the most unbounded despotism" (73) over theirs. When he is out hunting and faced with

the prospect of a lightning storm, William's bravery is questioned: "'Surely,' said Theodore, 'the countrymen of the immortal Washington, ought to be familiar with danger'" (78). It is also suggested that William is somewhat decadent. After having taken refuge overnight in a cave, Theodore tells his companion that he will have to manage a meal without being attended by his slaves, and the narrator remarks that William had slept on a surface far ruder than that to which he was accustomed (79). This suggestion of aristocratic decadence is reinforced when William and his mother comment on the lack of genteel families in the area of Tonnewonte (80). The final condemnation of William occurs when he abducts Evelina. This comes about as a result of her having refused to encourage him as a suitor, on the grounds that she does not love him. In this way, William is portrayed as being opposed to the characteristic American freedom that Theodore had come to value while in France: the freedom of choosing to marry for love.

The drama of William's underhanded attempts to force Evelina's consent are played out against a wartime backdrop. Interestingly, the two sides involved in this conflict are not immediately named; there is no mention of the United States having to defend themselves against either Great Britain or the Canadas, nor are any reasons for the outbreak of war mentioned. Instead, the fighting is simply underway somewhere else, and the role of enemy and attacker is projected onto "British Indians." As one American character comments, "'them deuced Indians is the plague ... [but] we will yet take the Canadas... . Yes, that we shall, we will be up with those red scoundrels'" (203), as if the war were being waged

primarily against them. As it so happens, it is a pair of Indians "of terrific appearance" (198) who first think to kidnap Evelina and hold her prisoner, one standing guard over her "erect as the pine tree, with his tomahawk and knife in his girdle, and his rifle in his hand[,] ... the other savage, scowling at his defenceless captive, as the moon beams rested on his vindictive countenance" (199-200). Fortunately William arrives in time to save Evelina, yet he delivers her from her captors only to take their place. The young woman finally escapes, at which point Hart puts a stop to the background hostilities:

> And now the furious blast of war ceased to resound through the land ... . The eye no longer beheld villages in flames, houses consumed, and the industrious farmer, in one fatal night, deprived of the produce of many years of toil, by the crafty aborigines of the wilderness. Peace was signed between Great Britain and America, and the industrious inhabitants of Canada and the United States slept in safety. (225-26)

In this description of the suspension of war, it is as if the common enemy of both the United States and "Canada" were the "crafty aborigines," whose destructive activities are brought to a stop thanks to a seemingly abstract, administrative intervention involving "Great Britain and America." Once again, the introduction of a third party allows Hart to sidestep the thorny question of having to take sides for or against Great Britain, as well as that of having to acknowledge the United States' loss. By imputing the evils of war to the Indians, she sets up an us/them dichotomy that pits "the industrious farmer" of whatever political allegiance against the enemy who lay waste to his civilizing entreprise, the "crafty aborigines of the wilderness."[6]

Just over thirty pages of _Tonnewonte_ (193-225) represent events that are supposed to have taken place during the War of 1812. Obviously, these do not constitute the heart of the narrative, but they are nonetheless of interest if we take into account the importance this war was to take on in popular Canadian history. In Upper Canada, "the manner in which the war was remembered was fundamental to the formation of the Ontario political culture and hence an intrinsic element in later Canadian nationalism" (Wise, "War" 107). If we look to the representation of the war that Hart provides in her fictional narrative, there is very little that might be used to bolster a myth of "Canadian" heroism. If any myth is nourished at all in this portion of _Tonnewonte_, it is that of "how the west was won," which involved the settler of the American frontier who braved the terrors inspired by the Indian opposed to his progress. Indeed, the war scenario seems to be chosen primarily with the aim of heightening the sense of danger surrounding Evelina's abduction. However, it is in her superficial treatment of what might be called a "non-representation" of the war that Hart paradoxically comes closest to evoking the circumstances that prevailed at the time: the border separating the United States from Upper Canada was more of an abstract administrative reality than a social division that might have corresponded to the inhabitants' conception of their distinct identities.

The border's relativity has been emphasized in much recent work on both the War of 1812 and the history of the Loyalists in Ontario. In her study of a developing colonial ideology in Upper

Canada, Jane Errington goes even further than Fernand Ouellet in describing the province's dependent status by stating that "Upper Canada between 1784 and 1828 was a colony of both Great Britain and the United States" (Lion 5). Even though the province's inhabitants of European origin included speakers of German, Gaelic, Dutch, and French, its leaders were "consciously Anglo-American" (Lion 21). Quite naturally, then, if the colony's English-speaking administrators had any sense of belonging to a "bicultural" community, it would have been due to their dual British and American heritage. Indeed, up until the 1820s, "there seems little doubt that prominent loyalists and other Upper Canadians still considered themselves an integral part of a North American community which spanned the border" (Lion 37).

As Errington has observed elsewhere, it is important to underline the ambivalence that was perhaps the trademark of Upper Canadian attitudes towards the United States, particularly since the myth of Upper Canada's loyalty to Great Britain during the War of 1812 has persisted well into the twentieth century.[7] The inhabitants of Upper Canada still had personal contacts with the United States, where friends and family lived, and with whom business was conducted.[8] Consequently, anti-American sentiment was not prevalent during the first two decades of the nineteenth century, although Americans would later constitute the out-group against which Canadian nationalists would attempt to construct an identity. The foundation for these later feelings of community was laid during the 1820s, when the colony's economic and demographic development was more pronounced. At this time,

> the War of 1812 became an increasingly important symbol to many Upper Canadians of the colony's unity and loyalty to king and country. All the public figures who fought in the war had the advantage of this growing myth. (Errington, Lion 92)[9]

This conception of the war and its attendant expressions of loyalism in Upper Canada may go further in explaining Hart's seeming reluctance to provide a more precise account of events in the novel she published in New York.

While she was still in Kingston, an awareness of the developing sentiment of community in the colony may have been enough to convince Hart that it was an opportune moment to attempt to have St. Ursula's Convent published by subscription. Hence her rhetorical appeal to feelings of shared experience and heritage in her preface: "*Can the patriotic Canadian ... refuse a kind reception to his own kindred?*" she asks, then hopes that "*the lover of his country will receive*" the work "*with native hospitality and characteristic kindness*" (4). The fact that Hugh C. Thomson agreed to publish Hart's novel has been attributed not only to her husband's contacts in the book trade (Bailey, "Julia" 38), but also to Thomson's own status as "a patriot and a person much involved in the development of the spiritual and intellectual life of Upper Canada" (Lochhead xxii). Similarly, a sense of duty towards local literary endeavours seems to have motivated the reviews by emigrant British editors that appeared in three Montreal-based literary periodicals.[10] Their judgments were mixed. One concluded that, despite the work's misleading title, its Canadian scenes might be of interest to Canadian readers; the second was decidedly negative, and mentioned the novel mainly because it was written and published

in Upper Canada; the third was largely sympathetic, due to the work's local origins (Lochhead xxvii-xxx). The measured reactions to St. Ursula's Convent aside, these reviews provide examples of a growing tendency to use the word "Canadian" to refer to inhabitants of the Canadas who were not French-speaking.[11]

That it was possible to publish a novel that cost roughly half as much as a year's subscription to the weekly Kingston Chronicle,[12] and the fact that it was reviewed by three different literary publications is certainly an indication that the Canadas' population was growing, and that it was becoming more capable of supporting such activities. Yet what is noteworthy in the story of the publication of St. Ursula's Convent are the references made to the "patriotic" dimension of publishing, prefacing, sponsoring, and reading such a work. Hart must have deemed this prefatory call to patriotic feelings appropriate to the Kingston-based audience that she addressed in 1824. Her use of this rhetorical strategy draws attention to the preface as an example of a type of literary behaviour, whose implication is that the repertoires of the writer and of the reader are understood to include a patriotic dimension: Hart anticipates the day when "*British America will be as noted in* 'song' *or* 'deeds,' *as any kingdom of Europe*" (3). Besides the traditional functions of entertaining and instructing, St. Ursula's Convent is used to provide an opportunity for "acting out" one's patriotism: to publish, purchase, read, review, and discuss the novel is to be patriotic.

As noted above, such appeals to the "*patriotic Canadian*" would not always have seemed appropriate. Nonetheless, one familiar

figure of Upper Canadian history who was entirely conscious of the social function of texts and how they might be used to promote a sense of community was the Rev. John Strachan. In the form of newspaper articles and published sermons, Strachan's writing was meant to have a specific effect on readers and to induce a certain pattern of behaviour in them. Amusement may have been an occasional by-product of some of his writing, but instruction was its primary aim. If, as Douglas G. Lochhead suggests, St. Ursula's Convent was intended for the education of the young (xxxiii), then Strachan shared Hart's concerns, if not her means. His condemnation of novels was typical of his day; he scorned "giddy young men ... who never read anything beyond a novel" (Spragge, Letter Book 5) and refused to reprint in his "Reckoner" column "dissertations ... interlarded with the cant of modern novels" (Kingston Gazette 30 April 1811).[13] It is doubtful that the moral example Hart made of Mother St. Catherine in St. Ursula's Convent would have been sufficient to win Strachan's favour.

Strachan's particular distrust of novels is easily explained. To begin with, he is wary of the emotional reactions they elicit in their readers because they are based on false or affected sentiment, which induces too great an involvement in fabrications, and renders readers insensitive to real situations.[14] The real situation that concerns Strachan most is the one he shares with other inhabitants of the province. For this reason, his use of writing was fundamentally "public": it may be seen as an attempt by Strachan to extend his own voice, as if he were addressing the public collectively from a tribune--or from a pulpit. In contrast,

novel-reading is suspect because of its dangerously private nature.[15] Strachan's aim is to produce in readers a sense that, together with others, they are being addressed by him, his texts serving as substitutes for his spoken words. Likewise, his writing is intended to be of public--that is, collective--utility. This conscious use of a print medium to bring about public action resembles the way in which the editors of the Canadien attempted to educate their readers, with the difference that the motivating force for Strachan was his religious conviction and its accompanying vision of Upper Canada's future.

Of course, the idea of addressing the population "together" through print depends on something of an illusion in itself, since printing technology and print culture have tended to produce reading practices that result in the separation of readers:

> Writing and print isolate. There is no collective noun or concept for readers corresponding to 'audience.' ... To think of readers as a united group, we have to fall back on calling them an 'audience,' as though they were in fact listeners. (Ong 74)

By addressing the public through print, Strachan paradoxically seems to promote a private form of reading. Nonetheless, his goals--the results he hopes for in disseminating his writing--remain public. Indeed, not only his writing, but his undertakings in general were dedicated to building a certain type of society. Strachan was remarkably active in a public capacity from the time of his arrival in Upper Canada, in 1799, until his death in 1867. Historians have often judged him to be a vain and ambitious man, especially in his later years. But there is a stronger case for

concluding that his religious vision provided the grounds for his actions (MacRae 5-6; Wise, "Peculiar" 56).

In her study of the sermons Strachan wrote and delivered over a sixty-year period and of how his religious beliefs underpinned his social and political ideas, Norma MacRae finds that Strachan's thought remains consistent: it rests on a hierarchical vision in which man, as a rational animal, is privileged because he is accorded the possibility of knowing God; one of the ways in which God is revealed to man is through the Bible (22-24). How one chose to read the Bible was of course the factor that accounted for the various kinds of Protestantisms current at the beginning of the nineteenth century, although these may be organized to fit into one of two basic categories: on the one hand was the established church view which "relied on 'nature' as a metaphor to understand the character of God, man, and the universe;" on the other hand were the dissenting groups who turned primarily to the Bible and a religion of "intense personal experience" (Westfall, "Order" 8-10). For someone like Strachan who valued the rational hierarchy of the world and the universe, dissenting religion was dangerous in the same way that novel-reading was: both were based on the doubtful ground of emotion.

For Strachan, after the Bible,

> the second and perhaps the more important source of revelation concerning God is through His providence and moral government. God's providence is a divine and uniform plan for the restoration of the human race. (MacRae 26-27)

MacRae goes on to explain that this restoration was to be achieved by spreading God's word, a task delegated to the individuals,

families, groups, and nations that God chose to carry out his plan (27). Strachan's steadfast promotion of the Church of England in Upper Canada corresponds to his belief in this idea of a "chosen nation" designated to accomplish God's work on earth (24); for anyone who held this belief, it followed that the colony's future was guaranteed by its relationship with Great Britain. Certainly, when the estimated numbers of adherents to different religious dominations are considered, divine faith would have been necessary to have imagined that the so-called established church could ever have become the chosen faith of the majority in Upper Canada.[16]

Nonetheless, during roughly the first two decades of the century, Strachan was persuaded that in time the established church would prevail. Both his sermons and published writings sought to promote the global social good through moral and religious improvement. His involvement in the sphere of education was motivated by the same aim. Even though Strachan had taken English orders, it cannot be said that he adhered to the general view of English Churchmen who believed at the time that the education of the masses would lead to civil unrest (Hubert 67). Instead, the exact opposite might be said of Strachan's endeavours to promote the establishment of schools and the spread of learning in Upper Canada. It was clear that before social order could be threatened, some kind of order had first to exist:

> It took considerable imagination to defend harmony and order in nature and society when the colony was still a wilderness, when the lands of Upper Canada were not distinguished by cultivated fields surrounded by well-kept hedgerows, or when the institutions of the state were at best in embryo form. (Westfall, "Order" 13)

In the fall of 1803 Strachan assumed a position at the head of the Cornwall Grammar School, and his work there testifies to his belief that the appropriate sort of education would contribute to the establishment of a desirable social order. In his view, it was crucial that this order reaffirm Upper Canada's link with Great Britain.

Having been educated in Scotland, Strachan was one of the earlier "exporters" to Canada of Scottish attitudes regarding education (Hubert 41).[17] The practical results of a Scottish education are evidenced in Strachan himself, since his background was far from privileged. As schoolmaster of the Grammar School, where "Arithmetic, Book-keeping, Elements of Mathematics, Elements of Geography, [and] of Natural and Civil History" were taught in addition to the "Latin Classics" (Quebec Mercury 28 September 1805, 307), he was able to demonstrate what could be achieved in such an establishment. Strachan's competence must have been generally recognized, since the legislature "appropriated four hundred pounds for the purchase of a philosophical apparatus" for his "Academy," by which means it was judged that "a more complete and finished education" would "be obtained under his tuition than [could] be acquired at ordinary schools" (Quebec Mercury 15 September 1806, 294). When necessary, Strachan took it upon himself to create and disseminate his own didactic material: in 1809 he published his own arithmetic text, A Concise Introduction to Practical Arithmetic For the Use of Schools. He defends the project in his preface, in which he remarks that a knowledge of arithmetic is "essential to the man of business, highly requisite to the Scholar and ornamental

to the Gentleman" (vi), and he hopes the book will be "more useful for [the] country" (iii) than others on the subject. To this end Strachan goes to some trouble to adapt the presentation of the material in order to suit the needs of colonial society:

> Multiplication is applied to the measuring of Timber in all its varieties, because many who require this knowledge are not able to remain long enough at School to reach Duodecimals which are generally taught at the end of Arithmetic. ... for the same reason an account of household expences is introduced in Subtraction; & in Division, Book-debts and forms of Bills and receipts ... .
>
> In a new country like this, a variety of branches must be taught in every respectable School. --Young Men coming from a distance at a very considerable expence are anxious to get forward as fast as possible and even those destined for the learned professions are seldom allowed the time requisite for acquiring the knowledge previously necessary. (iv-vi)

Strachan seems sensitive to the need for dispensing practical, applicable knowledge.

At the same time, he also had a certain understanding of the ideological role that state institutions play in the development of the individual. His determination to succeed as a schoolmaster is in part due to his realization that, for settlers close to the United States border, as well as those in the more remote corners of Upper Canada, the abstract guarantees of the province's constitution alone would not suffice to bind them to the British Crown. The need for a more tangible institutional presence was pressing, especially in light of the fact that a number of school teachers from the neighbouring States had established themselves in Upper Canada, and were suspected of spreading the seeds of democracy and republicanism through their teachings (Craig 54).[18] Equally distressing to some was the prospect of allowing the sons

of the colony's elite to frequent educational institutions nearby in the United States. Strachan's reaction to this perceived danger was to set up a school that would be self-consciously British in its orientation. His clientele consisted largely of the sons of "leading emigrants" who "were bound to become the colonial elite, the merchants, the legislators, the judiciary" (Henderson, Strachan 13). Hence Strachan was well placed to establish contacts with those who would later occupy positions of power, and it was his intention that they should be educated in the full awareness of their identity as British youth. There was no question of indulging in the idea of an Anglo-American identity since, in Strachan's eyes, Upper Canada's merits resided primarily in the fact that it was separate from the United States.

Here it is evident that Strachan's stance regarding identity is quite different from that discernible in Hart's works. Even though his writing seeks to promote the development of the local community and might therefore be described as patriotic, his religious beliefs dictate an overriding sentiment of loyalism.[19] The result is that, without being blind to Upper Canada's particularities--and Strachan is in fact quite sensitive to certain of them--he consistently subsumes local identity to a sense of belonging to what he takes to be God's chosen nation, Great Britain.[20] Rather than admit the possibility of multiple allegiances, and in spite of the province's demographic reality, Strachan's view of the world and of Upper Canada's place in it is based on a rigid scheme of categorization that opposed the realm of order against that of chaos or revolution. Whatever was

inconsistent with the first category was automatically relegated to the second; there was no middle ground. But this mind-over-matter assertion of Upper Canada's British identity brought with it certain problems. These are evident in some of the early occasional poems written for the Grammar School's annual general examinations.

Before examining some of these poems in any detail, it is worth noting that, at the same time that they point to the difficulties Strachan encounters in declaring Upper Canada to be British while recognizing the contradiction of its fundamental un-Britishness, they also provide an idea of the extent to which he promoted the literary institution in his capacity as school master. When the examinations took place, "[p]oems and essays, adapted to the occasion, either written by Mr. Strachan and his pupils, or selected from the best authors, were spoken as interludes between the recitations of the different classes" (Quebec Mercury 15 September 1806, 294). Poetry and essays are accorded an ornamental, diversionary role in this public context. Strachan is active as a literary producer since he not only wrote poetry and essays himself but encouraged his students to do likewise, so that they, too, in developing a literary "habitus" or behaviour, became producers as well as consumers. The newspaper reports indicate that the examinations took the form of a prestigious public event which occurred in the "presence of Clergymen, and the magistrates and gentry of the neighbouring counties" (Quebec Mercury 15 September 1806, 294). By lending the public ceremonies a literary character, Strachan and his students encourage a certain type of consumption of literary products. Thus the market that Strachan

helps create within the context of the Grammar School is given a wider range through the inclusion of a literary element in the examination ceremony. Once again, this oral performance of texts is consistent with Strachan's conception of the primarily public uses to which writing may be put. The poems that appear in the Quebec Mercury confirm his sense of poetry's public role. Although his use of literary texts in the context of the public examination ceremony seems to indicate an acknowledgement of literary writing as a separate field of discursive practices, in the long run, Strachan will not accept the autonomy of the literary sphere since for him this amounts to the renunciation of the public function of writing.[21]

These early poems are worth our attention if only for the insight they provide into Strachan's outlook on Upper Canada's situation. The first poem is described in the Mercury as taking the form of "lines ... introduced by way of prologue" to the Grammar School examination (Quebec Mercury 28 September 1805, 307). They are based on the assumption that the youth of Upper Canada share the ambitions of British youth of the old world:

> shall not British youth with ardour glow
> To hurl destruction on their country's foe;
> Their happy isle, which, free herself, disdains
> To crush a conquer'd foe with galling chains,
> And dares a purple tyrant's schemes withstand,
> While passive Europe bows at his command.

A common identity entails "their" opposition to the same out-group, constituted by the French led by Napoleon. The barrier that prevents the British youth of Upper Canada from joining more actively in this opposition is not designated in concrete terms to

be the ocean that separates them from their compatriots in England, but is portrayed instead in terms of their being as yet intellectually unprepared to do so:

> O, that our nerves a proper strength could boast,
> Away we'd fly to meet the Gallic host
> But since the public spirit is refin'd
> By knowledge bright, the med'cine of the mind,
> We yet must haunt the shades where science roves,
> And those bright paths which virtue's voice approves,
> That when our sires their glorious race have run
> We may defend our freedom nobly won.

The lines close with the promise that "when this day again comes round" the students shall have made greater progress in the quest to "reach the realms of philosophic light."

A year later, the poem recited by one of Strachan's scholars takes a different approach in thematizing the relationship between Upper Canada and Great Britain. This time, a definite contrast is set up between the old world and the "western climes" of a "younger world" (Quebec Mercury 15 September 1806). It is figured in poetic terms: Apollo, in the wish to "spread the glories of his name," sends the muses "o'er the'Atlantic waves" to the place where "deep St. Lawrence winds his tedious course" and "silence claims a solitary reign." The muses are disappointed at the desolate prospect presented by the new world until they catch sight of an inhabitant. This person does not turn out to be one of Strachan's fledgling scholars busy learning the rudiments of poetic composition, but is described as a "native maid:"

> Her feather'd robe, with coral sprigs inlaid
> On ev'ry side fantastic splendour shed:
> Through shining plumes that on her head she wears,
> A frightful eagle's crooked beak appears:
> Vermillion lines, with tattoo'd spots, in rows,
> Contrast the ring dependent from her nose.

She vaunts no lily skin or flowing hair,
Her taste prefers a copper hue to fair.
A Warrior's bow in her brown hand she bore,
And at her back a spangled quiver wore.

She begs the muses to dispel the "mental darkness" of her "children" and grant them a "portion of ... heavenly light." Since she asks so humbly for their help, Phoebus promises that the muses will comply with her request:

Erato's simple genius will repress
The striking wildness of your antic dress.
Your rugged stile, sweet Clio, shall remove,
Your taste the chasten'd Thalia shall improve.
The rest their various graces shall impart,
Reject the wrong, and Nature guide by art.
Bright Science here in future times shall reign,
And vot'ries of the song, a brilliant train.
The song of death no longer shall be heard
Nor savage manners, learning's steps retard.

In these lines, the principal difference inherent in the circumstances of the new world are epitomized by the "native maid," represented as the willing pupil of the arts of civilization. The muses act on her by repressing, removing, and rejecting what is inappropriate, and by imparting graces to, and improving and shaping what is salvageable in "Nature." In other words, they correct difference by eradicating it. This poem, which begins with an apparent recognition of the separation of the two worlds, finishes with an assimilation of the new world into the old. At the same time, its figurative beginning is cut off as Phoebus's voice is abruptly superseded halfway through the text by that of one of Strachan's scholars. This new voice is grounded in the context of the examination, and proclaims the values it has learned to uphold:

Sweet independence here we learn to prize,
The ch[oi]cest gift below the circling skies.

Our heedless passions wisely to control,
To raise, and purify the human soul.
That virtue, bound to wisdom can bestow
More solid joy than vice can ever know.
We learn our anxious parents to revere
Our friends to love, to bless our country dear;
The vile, tho' powerful, always to despise,
Tho' poor, to court the virtuous and the wise.

The introduction of this second voice refocuses attention on the situation at hand and suggests that the previous scene concerning the muses and the "native maid" is to be taken as a metaphor for the young scholars' position in relation to their goal of achieving "wish'd perfection" thanks to the help of "fair Science" and "[f]irm Reason." In this way, the aestheticized acknowledgement of difference is merely a figure at the service of the scholars' greater task, which is to maintain "the dignity of man."

The third poem bears the title "The American Language Defended" and is specifically identified as being "written by the Rev. J. Strachan, of U. Canada" (Quebec Mercury 7 September 1807, 284). In this poem Strachan ridicules American usage and neologisms, thereby setting up an us/them opposition that separates "true" speakers of English from those who speak a corrupt, Americanized version of it. The attack mounted against the "American" language translates into a mockery of the sentiment of attachment to the United States:

For hear a great Grammarian from the States,
How boldly for their language he debates.
Our government and country both are new,
Our manners, sir, why not our language too,
(...)
To have a sep'rate language of our own,
Must give our glorious feats a lasting crown.

According to Strachan's categories, the "glorious feats" by which the United States divorced themselves from Great Britain also imply

that the new country has deliberately chosen to ally itself on the side of chaos. This heady rejection of the realm of order accounts for the "revolutionary" transformations in their English. Thus, the "great Grammarian" continues:

> With substantives we adjectives confound,
> We change the meaning but retain the sound.
> A band appears of great Scriblerus' race,
> Who "*guess*" a language we shall soon possess,
> That haughty Britain's sons shall understand,
> No better than the talk of Negroe land [.]

In their rejection of the link with Great Britain, Strachan suggests that Americans lower themselves to what he perceives to be a more primitive level of existence. Their chaotic use of language corresponds to their moral and cultural inferiority:

> Instead of that ungracious verb possess,
> We use "*improve*" a word of nobler grace;
> We say not, I possess a pig or dog,
> But rather "I *improve*" a slut or hog.
> That old word *navigable*, so complex,
> That no Grammarian it might longer vex,
> Is chang'd to many words more capable,
> "*Canoeable*, *scowable*, *boatable*, *shippable*"
> For brook we borrow "*creek*" with anxious care
> For wilderness we use "*creations bare*."
> (...)
> Thus spoke the curious orator, and sure
> No english ear such language could endure.

To emphasize his point, Strachan provides another forty lines or so filled with examples of "faulty" American usage. In his mind, the border that separated Upper Canada from the United States was as absolute as that which divided proper English from what he deemed its degenerate American form. Indeed, these three poems show Strachan's tendency to make an abstraction of certain material differences in order to focus more intensely on those that seemed clearer to him.

In 1810, Strachan resumed an anti-American theme but the tone he adopted was far from light-hearted. There was good reason for this. Errington states that, "[a]t best, four-fifths of Upper Canada's population in 1810 were apathetic to the British government and cause, and at worst, they had been and continued to be supporters of the Republican government in the United States" (Lion 59). Strachan's strategy was to remedy the situation by addressing it in writing. This time, the gravity of the political circumstances and the nature of the public's sympathies called for a less humourous approach to the subject of American peculiarities. Accordingly, Strachan published a pamphlet entitled A Discourse on the Character of King George the Third in an attempt to rally British subjects of the Canadas to their sovereign while at the same time discrediting the United States and its government.[22]

But the mistake Strachan made--and which he was to repeat--was in assuming that it would be easy to win readers over to his sense of the United States as an obvious out-group. Once again, his religious convictions help to explain this apparently obstinate refusal to accept the reality of multiple allegiances. In the Discourse Strachan makes no apology for his stance on the American government, and although he concedes that there are some fine citizens of the United States, he warns that "the reputation of the nation is sinking" (iv). As proof, Strachan cites the as-yet untried freedom of the United States; the general corruption of democracy and its implications for trial by jury; the dangers of factionalism; and the practice of slavery, based on "a trade which outrages the principles of christianity, and tramples on human

nature" (30).[23] Yet by far the greatest blemish on the American character is the relationship of the United States' government with France's. Worse, Strachan sees the Americans as partly responsible for what he judges to be the most terrible event of George III's reign: "The revolution in France has been the scourge of the world since its commencement. This dreadful convulsion was accelerated, if not entirely produced, by the rebellion in America" (32). In Strachan's mind, America is synonymous with France. All nations are judged according to their relationship with this country, since it came to represent the polar opposite of all that stood for Great Britain:

> What has Spain gained by her patient alliance, her humiliations and sacrifices? What the King of Prussia for his temporising and insidious policy? What the Dutch for their meanness and condescension? Has Switzerland itself, formerly so virtuous and free, escaped the rage of conquest and revolution? (34)

asks Strachan. In proffering an answer to what "we" have gained, Strachan addresses his readers as if they shared his own unshakable sense of adherence to Great Britain:

> we have gained security, we have preserved our happy constitution, we have maintained the purity of the public morals. Yet, that probity which seems on the continent of Europe to be lost, still distinguishes the British character. That abhorrence of fraud and falsehood, that dignified independence which every person feels, who is conscious of the equal protection of the laws--that disdain of all fawning servility and meanness, which the slaves of tyrants must put on, still adorn the British nation. (34)

This passage justifies Strachan's staunch loyalty on the basis of a perceived moral superiority that he cannot imagine any subject would willfully and consciously refuse. In his view, it is Upper Canada's good fortune to be connected with Great Britain.[24]

In his Discourse, Strachan sketches a portrait of George III's personal merits and portrays him as the living symbol of all that Great Britain stands for. He attributes the "flourishing" state of the arts and sciences in Britain to the king's protection, citing as successful examples of his patronage the Royal Academy of Painting, composed of some forty artists, and the "Royal institution in London" where lectures on the sciences are delivered (38-39). If these state institutions seemed remote from life in Upper Canada, Strachan nonetheless insists that the king's goodwill extends to all of his subjects:

> Though far distant, we are no less the objects of his paternal care. To us as well as to the inhabitants around him, he is the faithful guardian and dispenser of all the benefits flowing from the most perfect form of government. (39)

More importantly, as "an affectionate husband" and "tender parent," the king presents a model of moral behaviour that is worthy of emulation by all subjects (9).[25]

At the time he wrote his pamphlet, Strachan was aware of the differences of opinion that divided American Federalists and Republicans (Errington, "Friends" 71), yet his overall verdict condemns the United States. Errington suggests that the Kingston elite, who obtained the bulk of their information regarding American opinion from federalist sources south of the border, would have shared Strachan's views to a degree. This was because, like him, they attributed the deterioration of diplomatic relations between the United States and Britain during the months immediately preceding the outbreak of the War of 1812 to Napoleon's influence on the policies of the Republican administration ("Friends" 72).

However, the members of the Kingston elite were unlike Strachan in their reluctance to condemn American society as a whole. Because of this major difference of opinion, some saw the publication of Strachan's pamphlet as particularly ill-timed; its seemingly straightforward presentation of political circumstances was liable to work as an irritant and only exacerbate the situation ("Friends" 79). In 1810, Strachan's stance was not representative. It would not be until the time of the Canada Firsters that his construction of Americans as an out-group would be widely acceptable and generalized, with the difference that this perception would serve as the basis for the affirmation of a "Canadian" identity.

After the publication of the Discourse, it may have seemed more prudent to limit commentary to less overtly political topics. This Strachan did by promoting the praiseworthy behaviour he admired in George III without actually naming the king as a model. Beginning in January 1811, Strachan contributed to the Kingston Gazette some seventy columns signed "The Reckoner." These constitute another of Strachan's means of contributing to public discussion in the hope of influencing the colony's course, since the improvement of public morality was expected to have a positive effect on the overall development of Upper Canadian society. While the greater "literary renaissance" (Wallace 8) attributed to the proliferation during the 1820s and 1830s of presses and weekly newspapers in the province was yet to come, the use Strachan made of the pages of the Kingston Gazette at an earlier date emphasizes the centrality of the newspaper press in the colony. As W.S. Wallace observes,

> While in England the newspaper was the offspring of the book and pamphlet, in Upper Canada, at least, the book and pamphlet were the offspring of the newspaper. Before the union of 1841, there was published in Upper Canada virtually nothing which did not emanate from a newspaper printing-press. (4)

Before the War of 1812 when only a handful of presses were in operation,[26] the newspapers that issued from them were a precious source of printed material at a time when books were relatively scarce.[27] Given the context, the medium of the newspaper proved to be well-suited to Strachan's purposes since it allowed him to diffuse his writing to a greater number of readers while at the same time avoiding the onerous cost of printing an individual publication. The Kingston Gazette allowed Strachan to write in the service of his sense of the public utility of the word. At the same time, the essays, anecdotes, and poems he wrote as "The Reckoner" provided an inexpensive source of didactic material for use in the classroom (Henderson, Strachan 14).

But Strachan's writings as "The Reckoner" should not be thought of only as dourly moralistic. A twentieth-century biographer goes as far as to say that some of the columns "suggested that another frontier humorist and observer of colonial ways was developing," even if the moral essays were more common (Henderson, Strachan 14). Indeed, the jovial, urbane persona Strachan cultivates, especially in the earlier columns, gives the impression that he saw himself as something of a littérateur. In this respect he may be likened to Thomas Cary, except that Strachan was more concerned with the diffusion of his own writings through print than he was with the task of animating and managing literary

discussions in the pages of the Kingston Gazette. Like Cary, Strachan was acutely conscious of the virtual absence of any institutional factors to provide a context for literary activity. As he wrote apologetically in the "Advertisement" to his Discourse on the Character of King George the Third, "*[l]iving in the woods at a distance from books and from literary society, [my] situation is not favourable for the composition of a work of this kind*" (iii). Given that Strachan had already initiated the process of soliciting an honourary degree from the University of Aberdeen in the aim of enhancing his status in the colony, we might question the sincerity of his apology in the "Advertisement," and ask if it was not simply an act of condescension on Strachan's part. Yet upon being awarded the solicited degree in 1811, he expresses his sense of isolation in a letter to Dr. Brown, whom he had known in Scotland and with whom he had continued to correspond: "You will be entertained at all this, and I should laugh at myself, were I with you in St Andrews, but here I have nobody (I mean no literary person) to laugh with" (Spragge, Introduction vi).[28] Strachan would reiterate these feelings in the "Reckoner N° 14," in which he regrets the lack of clubs and societies in Upper Canada, and the opportunity they provide for intellectual exchanges:

> That a periodical publication emanating from the woods should give general satisfaction, unassisted as it is by any society of literary men, is not to be expected, since so many who have attempted this species of entertainment in more favourable situations have totally failed. (9 April 1811)

Strachan is only too aware of the fragmentary nature of the literary system in the Canadas. However, if conditions were not

yet ripe for a periodical publication, then he would at least attempt to provoke discussion by writing his weekly column.

Like Cary, Strachan looked to the repertoire of the source system for a literary model. He fashions his columns after the example of eighteenth-century periodical essayists, as "Reckoner N° 1" makes clear in its discussion of the author's search for "a name by which to characterize" his "lucubrations." Strachan alludes to _The Tatler_, _The Guardian_, _The Spectator_, and _The Rambler_ before adopting the name suggested by his "father," who also states his expectations for the column:

> I wish to see the honest Farmer reading your paper, while his children are eager in their attention; and from a warm delineation, or an affecting tale, discovering new charms in virtue, new beauties in religion, viewing the latter not only deprived of those forbidding looks with which she is represented by her false friends, but smiling sweetly on her followers. ... Your entertainments may be continually varied. ... All this may be accomplished by assuming a title which delights in balancing the mind. ... A title that will not suffer them to forget their guilt who have wasted their youth, their talents, their health or their independence; nor prevent you from enlivening your remarks with strokes of humor. And should your critics tell you that such a name has a strong mathematical affinity, you may answer that to reason accurately is the glory of the RECKONER.

In choosing this title Strachan deliberately evokes his "more popular predecessors" (9 April 1811), thereby lending his writings a similar "literary" cast, but at the same time his aim of influencing his readers' behaviour is implied. In "Reckoner N° 14" he answers criticisms to the effect that the title he has chosen is "a vile mercantile name," and in doing so reveals his persistent emphasis on the rationality of moral behaviour:

> That debtors to money or good morals should be displeased with the name I have assumed, does not surprise me. ... I do not know a title so well suited to my design; it is synonymous with reasoner. ... No person therefore can find fault with my name, who is desirous of acquiring any knowledge in morals, literature or business, who is desirous of obtaining those flattering distinctions claimed by superior understanding, or avoiding the disgrace attached to ignorance and stupidity. To reckon is to reason; and to reason is the glory of human nature. They who despise my name despise themselves, for we must all be Reckoners, as we have all at last an account to give in.
> (9 April 1811)

Strachan relies on a number of conventions in writing his "Reckoner" columns. Instead of using an individual heading for each, he adopts Samuel Johnson's practice of numbering his essays. Most begin with a short one- or two-line epigraph from a Latin poet. Some columns are presented in the guise of letters supposedly addressed to "Mr. Reckoner" in response to certain topics. These either praise the author and thank him for his excellent advice, or challenge his views, thereby allowing Strachan to expand on a given issue. Some take the form of Oriental tales, while others develop the typical themes of marriage, temperance, and education.[29] A greater number dwell on topics immediately related to life in the colony, such as the question of maintaining burial grounds, the difficulty some inhabitants apparently had in finding and retaining good servants, and the harm done by fraudulent would-be physicians who had overrun the province.[30]

But the greatest by far of "Mr. Reckoner's" concerns is the promotion of Christian virtues in the sphere of everyday life. Strachan saw religion as "essentially practical," and frequently developed this view in many of his sermons that emphasized the importance of day-to-day behaviour (MacRae 45). As the "Reckoner"

he therefore encourages parents to see to their family life since it "is impossible for a father to spend his leisure hours in the company of his children without becoming a better man" ("Reckoner N° 2," 8 January 1811), and has a character opine that "[a]ll virtue and happiness must commence in the domestic circle" ("Reckoner N° 50," 18 February 1812). Young people are necessarily indebted to their parents, as Strachan notes in a letter signed "ATTENTUS." Without their care, this youth supposes that he "might have acquired bad habits, become the sport of [his] passions, and incapable of relishing true and rational enjoyment" ("Reckoner N° 54," 24 March 1812). The passions, when unchecked, become the prime source of earthly misery, and are consequently cause for concern: "There is no person so foolish as not to perceive the vast increase of felicity, which must be enjoyed by mankind, were all the wicked passions and appetites put under restraint" ("Reckoner N° 60," 5 May 1812). Unregulated, the passions threaten the established order of things. Strachan urges his readers to channel their energies positively and look to the future. Hence he rejects the "favorite topics" of moral writers--"[t]he helpless situation of man, and the dangers to which he is exposed"--and prefers to see in "every necessity a blessing, and [in] every want a source of enjoyment." This means recognizing the rigours of the climate as the very factor that guarantees improvement:

> In a country like this, where industry is sure to be rewarded most bountifully, we have less reason to complain than the Otaheitan who can live upon the spontaneous production of his island. Our industry gives us moral habits. ("Reckoner N° 20," 21 May 1811)

Strachan assures his readers that work makes them better people by keeping indolence at bay. If any should doubt, the Reckoner refers them to God,

> who is every where present, and without whose permission nothing can happen. ... Are [readers] poor and obliged to act in the quality of servants to others? Such is the will of God; he is pleased to place them in this low station. This thought enobles the meanest employment--it shews them that they cannot be obscure, so long as they are counted worthy of the notice of God[.]
> ("Reckoner N° 28," 16 July 1811)

Here we reach the heart of Strachan's teachings on Christian morality, which "produces heroes in the lowest paths of life," yet "smiles upon and encourages the acquisition of knowledge" (16 July 1811).

The "Reckoner" columns represent a sort of catalogue of the values Strachan defended as those that would promote the province's well-being and overall development. For the most part they focus on issues related to everyday life without making any overtly political statements. But on the eve of the declaration of war between the United States and Britain, Strachan writes more boldly of the political assumptions that underlie the values he upholds. Once again, his polarized apprehension of the situation blinds him to the fact that few of his readers share his monolithic sense of identity:

> Among the political problems resolved by the American revolution, the utility of religious establishments is one of the most important. I believe there is no person who has witnessed the almost total extinction of christianity in this republic, and the consequent degeneracy of the people, who will not in future approve of an established form of public worship. ... By a general toleration without any establishment, the American nation will soon reach the lowest sink of human

> corruption. ... [I]n many places the public worship of God is unknown. ... [T]he people with some general knowledge, and some political sagacity, are fast approaching the most general depravity of morals.
> ("Reckoner N° 58," 21 April 1812)

Strachan's suggestion that the inhabitants of Upper Canada will be spared from the social demise prevalent south of the border if they embrace Christianity, particularly in the form of the established church, would have been offensive to some.

The escalating tensions that were to culminate in the declaration of war prompted members of Upper Canada's cultural elite to take up their pens in defence of the colony. As had been the case in Lower Canada, it was primarily the urgency of the political juncture of events that spurred prominent Upper Canadians to try to influence public opinion: the fact no other issue had called forth so many unsolicited contributions to the Gazettes argues as much. It was also at this point that Strachan abandoned the polite didacticism of his "Reckoner" column to engage in political activity on a broader scale and in a more engaged way: moral improvement alone would not suffice to repulse the enemy. By the summer of 1812, he had relocated to York where he acted as rector and chaplain of the garrison and the Legislative Council, and became involved in the extensive propaganda campaign that sought to mobilize support for the British cause.[31] As Brock had discovered shortly after his arrival in Upper Canada in late 1811, the colony's characteristic Anglo-American ambivalence did not bode well for its defence. As late as February of 1812, the House of Assembly refused to pass bills conferring emergency powers on the government in the event of war. In his study of the use of

propaganda during the conflict, R. Arthur Bowler notes that the Assembly refused to cooperate with Brock's measures yet again, in July 1812, despite the fact that American General William Hull had issued his proclamation on the twelfth of the month, upon having crossed the Detroit River with his forces (83).[32] Hull promised liberation from the "tyranny and oppression" of British rule, reminding "the peaceable unoffending inhabitant" of the ties that united them:

> I promise you protection to your persons, property and rights. Remain at your homes--Pursue your peaceful and customary avocations--Raise not your hands against your brethren--Many of your fathers fought for the freedom and independence we now enjoy. Being children, therefore, of the same family with us, and heirs to the same heritage, the arrival of an army of friends must be hailed by you with a cordial welcome. ... If you tender your services voluntarily, they will be accepted readily. (Kingston Gazette 18 August 1812)

By the same token, "[i]nstant destruction" was threatened to those "found fighting by the side of an Indian." According to Bowler, Hull's invitation to Upper Canadians to stay at home rather than take up arms was a resounding success. Members of the Upper Canadian militia "deserted by the hundreds" to join the Americans or return to tend their farms (80). Here was proof of the power a text might have in inciting its readers to action.

However, Brock's subsequent victory over Hull earned the American general the ridicule of federalist newspapers for having waged "war by proclamation" (Bowler 80). In Upper Canada it lent credence to the repeated assurances made public in the Kingston Gazette and in various handbills that the Americans were deeply divided on the question of war against Great Britain and that those

in favour of it were the unruly partisans of the "Virginian oligarchy" led by Madison (Errington, Lion 72-77). Stephen Miles of the Kingston Gazette made the most of Brock's victory by printing news of it on 18 August 1812, on the page facing Hull's proclamation, which he had hitherto withheld from publication in his paper. To enhance its impact, the notice is printed in large characters and vaunts the fact that Hull's forces, "consisting of *two thousand five hundred men*, with *twenty-five* Pieces of Cannon" surrendered "without the loss of a man" to Brock's army. As Errington has shown, Miles made a careful selection of the news items he chose to reproduce; in this case, his presentation of the items in question was calculated to discredit the military strength attributed to the American side. The overall effect of the campaign to influence the public's perception of the war produced the illusion, in writing, that Upper Canada stood as a united front against the invading enemy. Coupled with Brock's praise of the militia's performance, these texts provided the basis for the myth of loyalty that would begin to take root in the 1820s.

Regardless of his awareness of the generalized ambivalence to the war, Strachan saw in its outcome a confirmation of the idea of God's moral government on earth. His view would later become that of the consensus that considered Upper Canada's preservation to be proof of the role that morality played in history (Duffy, Gardens 8). In a sermon addressed to the Legislative Council and the House of Assembly at York on 2 August 1812, Strachan had spoken of the Americans' having allowed their "malignant passions" to

"triumph" by declaring war (5). He had contrasted the invaders' attack with the defensive position of Upper Canada:

> the justice of our cause is the greatest advantage to us, it is indeed half the victory; a man that is embarked in a good cause has only to contend with exterior difficulty and danger. ... [H]e can never be deprived of the approbation of his conscience. ... [H]e may be oppressed by men, but God is with him. (6)

Strachan's "essentially practical" conception of religion emphasized the Christian's duty to take up arms in the knowledge that God was on his side. The defeat of the Americans would later persuade him of the accuracy of his interpretation of events, even as he had expressed them at such an early point in the conflict, when Brock had yet to capture Detroit. The other of his sermons published during the war was far bolder in spelling out the implications of the anticipated victory. In his sermon preached at York on 3 June 1814, Strachan was exultant in concluding that the signs of "a superintending Providence" were being confirmed "hourly" by events: "Great Britain has been chiefly instrumental, through the blessing of God, in bringing about the happy changes which we now contemplate" (3, 22). Thus, Strachan's early understanding of the conflict, and its vindication of Upper Canada's survival, is fundamental to the subsequent "Loyalist myth" that "took on the configuration of the Christian agony, defeat, and resurrection" (Duffy, Gardens 23)--resurrection ensured by God's hand in the workings of history, coupled with a military victory. The more neutral restraint of the "Reckoner" columns was abandoned in this address that has been described as "a political manifesto couched in the trappings of providentialism" (Wise, "Peculiar" 54).

From 1815 onward, Strachan's name is inextricably linked with the history of Upper Canada. Through his writing and actions, he continued in his attempt to cultivate a sense of community by affirming the colony's relationship to what he conceived to be the most promising source of positive feelings of identity: the British empire. However, more so than for his activity as a pioneering cultural agent, Strachan is remembered for his role as a key player in the Family Compact, a group that, regardless of how it is defined, has not generally won the favour of historians: "the evil repute in which Compact Toryism is held has made it difficult for Conservatives ... to own that anything in their tradition could conceivably derive from a period prior to [Macdonald's] coming" (Wise, "Upper Canada" 169). S.F. Wise points out that, as a result of this reluctance to trace conservative party roots to an earlier time, there has been a tendency to overlook the continuity that underlies the conservative stance in the nineteenth century. Likewise, the one-sided memory of Strachan as "the quintessential Upper Canadian Tory" (Errington, "Friends" 71) effectively disqualifies him as a figure who might be of interest for any other reason than for his unpopular brand of conservatism. Yet, as Wise observes,

> Strachan did not speak for all conservatives, probably not for a majority of Anglican laymen, and certainly not for the Tory politicians whose first concerns were to win elections and to keep their local supporters satisfied. ("Upper Canada" 175)

Strachan was unwavering in his promotion of an integrated system of education for Upper Canada, unabashed in his anti-Americanism, and played an important role in confirming the perception that Upper

Canadians had indeed joined arms during the War of 1812 in order to repel the enemy. Seen from the retrospective point of view of the late twentieth century, there is an aspect of Strachan's activities that lends him a quality of being more "Canadian" than the so-called indigenous "Upper Canadians." Besides his purposeful use of texts, many of his most cherished projects were aimed at fostering--some would say imposing--unity in (on) the colony. His plan for a general union of all the British North American provinces, presented in London in 1824, (Craig 104), might even make of him a sort of "uncle" of Confederation, or perhaps another of the significant early examples of English Canada's determination to diminish Quebec's political power. From a certain perspective, it might even be argued that the roles Strachan played were typically "Canadian."

We have seen that Hart's appeal to feelings of community or patriotism was a matter of convention, whereas Strachan's sense of the public use of writing conceived of the text as a means creatively to realize a specific end. Because he tended to stress the importance of developing the individual's moral virtues, however, there is a sense in which Strachan's vision of the province is based on an inner, spiritual state that must underlie all action, and which guarantees progress in more practical spheres. In the Strachanian order of things, the unity of church and state on an institutional level finds its parallel in the individual; thus, it follows that the development of society is seen to proceed from the inner life of the individual to the exterior world of the community. This correspondence is at the

heart of Strachan's stance, as has been shown; however, his promotion of it in Upper Canada ultimately leads to a form of "Loyalist deadlock" insofar as questions of community and identity are concerned. This is because Strachan makes a number of efforts to adapt the practices of print culture in order to suit colonial needs and ends, yet finally subordinates these to what was, for him, a higher level of belonging and duty to the imperial community and its institutions, particularly that of the state church.[33] His conception of the role of the established church and its necessity for the community's well-being clearly came to bear upon his sense of Upper Canada's identity.

Strachan's role in the War of 1812 is perhaps the best example of how he devoted his energy to combatting the growth of "American" or "republican" influences in Upper Canada, since his wartime activities reveal not only his tendency to assert the colony's British character, but also his eagerness to construct the population of the United States as a clear out-group. In time, this construction would come to be shared by many, for, as it has been suggested, "[i]f there were such a thing as a Loyalist mentality, one aspect of it would have been a certain hesitancy about acknowledging one's American roots" (Duffy, Gardens 25).[34] For Strachan, born a Scot, "American roots" were never a problem. In his mind, there was no "confusion" surrounding "the emotional orientation" (Bell 30) of Upper Canadian society: it was unequivocally British, even if such an assertion may have depended on the ability to overlook the colony's material situation. In Strachan's case, the sentiment of loyalism, or attachment to the

parent, inevitably won out over that of patriotism, or attachment to the soil; consequently, the "retention of symbols of colonial status" which "serve[d] as symbols of a national status" (Bell 30) would not have been disconcerting to him. Strachan's imagined community was based on a British identity. In the face of American invasion, this stance may have seemed the most promising, if not the only one possible, for those who wished to preserve Upper Canada's political separation from the United States. Of course, one of the major drawbacks to this position over the long-term was that it hindered the development of a local identity, one that was rooted in the history and experience specific to Upper Canada.[35] Thus, the sentiment of patriotism, as opposed to that of loyalism, was delayed in its development.

This is not to say that promoters of patriotism did not exist. One of these is most certainly Barnabas Bidwell, though he is not usually recognized as such. James J. and Ruth Talman do make short mention of Bidwell in their contribution to the "Settlement" chapter of Klinck's History, "The Canadas 1763-1812." They allow that a tragedy published in 1784 while Bidwell was still at Yale "can scarcely qualify [him] as a Canadian playwright." However, they go on to note that the sketches Bidwell contributed to Robert Gourlay's Statistical Account of Upper Canada (1822) "surely would stamp him as a Canadian writer"(87)--presumably because Bidwell had been a resident of Upper Canada since 1810, and because of the book's subject matter. Perhaps even more noteworthy, however, is Bidwell's series of essays signed "The Prompter," published in pamphlet form in Kingston in 1821, and which had previously

appeared in the Upper Canada Herald (1819-1851).[36] The general concept developed throughout the essays is that of "practical patriotism" (Bidwell 32). By this Bidwell understands the adoption of concrete measures that would contribute to the province's overall productivity. For Bidwell, "patriotism" or loyalty to the land is taken in a literal sense: one is patriotic in raising high-quality crops and in striving constantly to improve them, in planting apple trees and hops, and in fencing one's land in an effective way. Instead of focusing primarily on issues related to morality and Christian virtues as a means of improving society, the "Prompter" encourages Upper Canadians to concentrate on transforming the colony's material conditions. In his view, loyalty to the land consists of investing oneself in a given locality through one's physical labour. As a result, the improvement of the community is seen to begin in the outer, material world. This decidedly pragmatic approach is diametrically opposed to Strachan's; though both men use writing in the aim of its serving a public or collective utility, their understanding of that utility is quite different.

Bidwell's use of printed texts differed from Strachan's in that it was not grounded in a moral, providential vision of the Upper Canadian community. In the first of his "Prompter" essays, he exposes his views on the usefulness of reading, and emphasizes the advantage of this activity in that it allows readers to gain access to, and make use of, "sources of information" (5). Besides books, which are not always easily obtained, Bidwell recommends

that families turn to weekly newspapers in order to develop their reading habits:

> These weekly vehicles of intelligence, if properly conducted and well-supported, ought to be read in families, not merely as the immediate means of learning the passing events and news of the day, but for the further purpose of cultivating a habit of reading and a taste for information. Such a taste, when once acquired, "grows with our growth, and strengthens with our strength." This has been experienced in almost every family, in which a periodical publication has been, for any considerable time, taken and read. (5)

Much of the information made available in newspapers had to do with agricultural techniques and practical tips on how to care for certain crops and transform produce. While the "Reckoner" column was addressed to the farmer in the hope that he might discover "new charms in virtue, [and] new beauties in religion," the "Prompter" hopes that same farmer will use his reading skills in order to enhance the results of his industry. In the same interest, the newspaper is a document to be "filed and preserved" so that it is available for "reperusing ... as leisure, curiosity, or any particular occasion may prompt" (5). Access to practical information, rather than the improvement of the individual's moral character, becomes the basis for subsequent action.

Bidwell's "philosophy of common life" is quite simple: self-interest is equated with the common good, so that in seeking to develop one's own land, one is performing simultaneously a civic duty that will benefit the community as a whole. As a result, the farmer who works his land will develop feelings of "attachment" to both community and government; such an attachment

> will then be an extended application of that love of self, which, without such liberalizing extension, is

> sordid and unjust. In this enlarged view of the subject, the patriot will agree with the poet, that "self-love and social are the same." (22)

Thus, the expression of patriotism is linked to the duties that inhabitants owe to the society in which they live.

In taking this approach, Bidwell emphasizes the importance of active contribution to the shared economic life of the province. This is evident in his discussion of the need to improve Upper Canada's inland travel and transportation, an area of development in which the neighbouring state of New York seems by far to have outstripped the British colony. Bidwell evokes New York's progress in the hope of encouraging Upper Canada's inhabitants to pledge their support by subscription for similar "practical improvement[s]" to their community: "Those who cannot pay money, should contribute labor, to be applied, under the direction ... of some judicious superintendent of the work" (9). By contributing their physical labour, inhabitants will

> more effectually prove their attachment to [their country], and do more to guard against the boasted superiority of our neighbours on the other side of the lake, than by the loudest profession of patriotism and loyalty, or the most eloquent invectives against our national rivals. (9)

In the attempt to prove one's attachment to the British colony, Bidwell contends that actions speak louder than words.

At the same time, Bidwell stresses the performance of one's duty "*to benefit and improve the society of which he is a member*" (21) over one's origins. Thus, he states that

> [w]hether the township, district, or province, in which you reside, is the place of your nativity, or another which you have adopted and chosen for your residence, you are, by birth or choice, or both, an actual member of these civil and political societies; and, as such,

> are bound in duty, and should be stimulated by an honorable emulation, to contribute, by your personal exertions, to their improvement. ... Reader, whoever you are, wherever you dwell, or were born, let this be an object of your ambition, a point of honour, as well as a principle of duty. (22)

This stance is significant because it makes no distinction between earlier and later settlers of the province; provided one is committed to developing one's land and participating in economic life, one is serving the greater community and being patriotic. The importance accorded to such patriotic behaviour is characteristic of the assimilative, as opposed to the exclusive, conception of loyalty that would provide the basis for the Reform movement (Mills 32-33).

By committing oneself through concrete duties, one is, in a sense, choosing to root oneself and one's family in Upper Canada. The idea of having a personal stake in the province is raised when Bidwell exhorts his readers to undertake the cultivation of fruit trees. He recognizes that some might object to planting orchards because there are no immediate gains to be made from such labour, but then appeals to the farmer as a landowner who may best promote his family's prosperity by investing in its future:

> No class of people can live with more independence and comfort than our farmers, who own the soil which they cultivate, and expect their children to inherit it after them; and one would think they needed no Prompter to point out to them the benefit of providing themselves and their families with apples and cider. (11)

He thus points out how farmers may contribute in a concrete way not only in the present, but in years to come.

Bidwell's philosophy of common life is also intended to promote the community's prosperity by attracting immigrants. This

is to be achieved not by invoking Upper Canada's providential destiny, but by improving "every thing which may increase the wealth, the comfort and accommodation of the inhabitants of the Province, and render it a desirable place of residence" (12). By ameliorating material conditions, Upper Canada will be on a better footing to compete with the United States in attracting potential settlers. The best way to achieve this more competitive status is by providing material proof and demonstrating clear economic progress rather than simply stating that Upper Canada is a superior place of residence, and that it is so in particular thanks to its British connection.

As a matter of fact, Bidwell seldom refers to the role of government in his "way to wealth." His recipe for practical patriotism is addressed specifically to individual inhabitants, who are encouraged to take the initiative and responsibility for improvement upon themselves (32), regardless of their social status. Individuals "must first do [their] duty" and put their "shoulder to the wheel" before asking "for legislative aid" (38). Bidwell readily concedes that not all settlers can "be magistrates, or legislators; reformers of abuses, or founders of institutions," but that, nonetheless, "in some way or other, more or less effective, every person may, by actions or opinions, by precept or example, benefit the place where he lives" (22). Besides the basic ingredient of individual industry, however, Bidwell also emphasizes the imperative of frugality. In simple language he sketches out the negative consequences to Upper Canada of heavy imports coupled with a low level of export activity, and provides some suggestions

on how the individual farmer may demonstrate his patriotism in helping to remedy the situation:

> Pray stop a moment, if you please; and tell me candidly, if you do not consume more, in various ways of expenditure, than you produce by all your earnings? If so, then the present scarcity of money is your fault, as well as your misfortune; and, whatever your rank of profession may be, the Prompter will not consent to your wearing the name of a patriot, or a loyalist, until you shall have made reparation for your share of the public evil. If you ask how it is to be done, the answer may be contained in two brief propositions; *earn more, and spend less*. Cause two blades to grow where one grew before. Increase the quantity and improve the quality of the marketable produce of the country. At the same time retrench your surplus expenses, and save all you can of your earnings. (33)

It follows that Bidwell questions the cultivation of barley at the exclusion of that of hops, since the latter "useful article," if made available locally, would save brewers from having to turn to imported supplies. "Reader, do you drink beer?" asks Bidwell; "[t]hen cultivate Hops, as well as Barley" is his advice. By raising such crops farmers "will have the satisfaction of performing an act of patriotism" (38). Here again, civic duty and personal interest go hand in hand.

It is clear that the question of public morality is of secondary concern to the Prompter. Whereas Strachan saw industry as a means of fostering one's moral nature, Bidwell places far more emphasis on the economic returns of one's activities. In this way, if the cultivation of "the raw materials of beer" results in "promoting the manufacture and use of that healthy drink," thereby enabling the farmer to "contribute to another object, most devoutly desired by the patriot and philanthropist," namely that of "the gradual disuse of ardent spirits, so pernicious to the health and

morals of any people," (38-39) then so much the better. But the incentive to raise hops remains chiefly economic, in that exchanges between local farmers and brewers are encouraged, while imports are discouraged. When Bidwell mentions Providence in this context, it is to urge farmers to avoid being guilty of neglecting "the means" with which they have been "blessed" and which allow them to supply the local market (38); there is no reminder of the favour of a superintending Providence that is contingent upon the unity of church and state.

This latter point relates to Bidwell's conception of the province's identity. Clearly, his attempt to promote what he calls the philosophy of common life and a sense of civic duty through the shared project of economic development and prosperity is meant to rally inhabitants and give rise to a feeling of community and common interest among them. As the Prompter's writings reveal, the feeling of shared identity develops through an increased sense of attachment to the soil, or patriotism. Bidwell writes of "our national rivals" (9), "our interest as individuals," "our duty as patriots" (12), "our own market" and "our circulating medium" (38), indicating his desire to promote a common group identity through the use of the collective pronoun. This pronoun, however, is limited in its reference to the inhabitants of Upper Canada; it does not include British subjects in general or the economic sphere of Great Britain and her empire. Accordingly, Bidwell shows a marked preference for designating Upper Canada as "this Province" (5) rather than "this colony" or "this part of the empire," and his discussion of rural economy relates to farmers, inhabitants and

individuals as opposed to British subjects. There is no mention whatsoever of the parent state, of the mother country, or of the imperial context. Though Bidwell occasionally uses the words "loyalist" and "loyalty," he understands these terms as synonyms for "patriot" and "patriotism" (9, 33).

Hence, in discussing the question of "national character" Bidwell refers specifically to the local context. The two traits he identifies as typical of Canada's "national character" have to do with practices that are disruptive and detrimental to the province's growth:

> One of the peculiarities of Canada is the custom designated by the term *Charivari*. The practice itself, as well as the name, is of French derivation. It has long prevailed in Lower Canada, and was thence transplanted into this Province. (46)

He likens the charivari to the custom of "riding skimmington," which is apparently still known in some areas of New England (46). Yet Bidwell frowns on the charivari because it invariably culminates in riotous behaviour of some sort; to prove his point, he informs readers of the unhappy occurrences that came about during a charivari in the Midland District, when someone opened fire on the rioters (47). Likewise, he deplores the fact that in Upper Canada "more ardent and stimulating spirits" than cider or beer tend to be the norm:

> A change in this custom of the Canadians would be a salutary reform, conducive alike to the preservation of their health, the amendment of their morals, and the advancement of their prosperity and happiness. (54)

He concludes that "habitual intemperance" is the "sin which most easily besets" (55) Canadians.[37] In Bidwell's mind, the national

character that is defined by disorderly charivaris and the consumption of hard liquor is a national character that is sorely in need of redefinition.

Bidwell's generalized call for increased self-sufficiency in economic matters requires the modification of certain aspects of identity if these interfere with the "practical patriotism" that he advocates. With this point in mind, his "Prompter" columns and pamphlet may be understood as a conscious attempt to impose a specific orientation on the development of a common identity in the province. As we have seen, Bidwell's writings are as significant for what they assert outright as for what they leave unsaid. The fact that he studiously avoids connecting Upper Canadians with Great Britain in any way speaks loudly for his position on such matters; indeed, the Prompter's recommendations more or less epitomize all that is anathema to someone like Strachan. This comes as no surprise, given that Bidwell hailed from Massachusetts, where he had been a member of the Senate from 1801 until 1805, then state representative to Congress for two years, and finally attorney-general of Massachusetts in 1807. Bidwell had been particularly skilfull in advancing the interests of his party, associated with "a native, patriotic, non-European republican tradition," against those of his opponents' party, perceived as heir to "an alien, decadent, monarchical, British tradition" (Patterson 55). To achieve his objectives for the party and inform the public of its position, Bidwell abandoned the dramatic genre that he had favoured briefly during his Yale days and turned instead to a sort of writing that was aggressively political and

more immediately effective in the dissemination of information having to do with his party. He tried his hand at pamphleteering and at the partisan press, and in this regard became quite adept as "a party organizer and a manipulator of public opinion at the grass roots;" Bidwell's views have been judged to be the "genuine expressions of an early form of American nationalism" (Patterson 55). By the time he reached Upper Canada, then, Bidwell was no stranger to the potential uses of print technology in the political sphere, and was ready to put his expertise to work. Self-love and social may well have been the same for him, but one suspects that Bidwell would not have subscribed to the idea that, in Upper Canada, "whatever was, was right."

Barnabas Bidwell is in fact the archetypal "American" or "republican" so feared by many of Upper Canada's tory elite both before and after the War of 1812, although he is hardly an example of the typical immigrant to Upper Canada, nor of the average reformer. There was a time when Bidwell was clearly *not* included by the collective pronoun "our," in the eyes of some observers.[38] This was certainly the case at the time of his arrival in the province in 1810, when he represented a formidable threat to tory leaders in Upper Canada due to his past political experience and his recognized intellectual stature (Patterson 55). Even at this early date, some of Bidwell's opponents attempted to cast doubt on his character by stating the reasons for his flight from the United States. While treasurer of Berkshire county in Massachusetts, he was apparently accused of embezzlement and forgery, a crime that, according to his critics, would "be punished by an ignominious

death" in Upper Canada (Kingston Gazette 16 April 1811). It was later discovered that Bidwell's clerks had been responsible for the mismanagement of accounts, and that he had actually been absent from the county at the time the crime was committed; nonetheless, he complied with the Berkshire court and paid all penalties eventually charged against him (Patterson 56, 58). A friend of Bidwell's did attempt to exonerate him in response to the early accusations made in the Kingston Gazette, explaining that Bidwell had left Massachusetts "*unfortunate and embarrassed*," and that he had left his estate to his creditors so that the question could be settled (Kingston Gazette 23 April 1811). Yet in the eyes of many, Bidwell remained an untrustworthy fellow. Subsequently, upon swearing an oath of allegiance to the Crown, in 1812, his remarks to the effect that the oath was in no way binding since it was not uttered voluntarily, did little to enhance his repuation among certain circles (Romney 80).

For some, Bidwell exemplified the enemy. The Prompter's suggestions regarding the development of a "national" identity and its relation to growth in the rural economy would have been interpreted as bald republican propaganda, clearly directed at undermining, if not severing, links to Great Britain.[39] As such, he was seen by many as an importer of a dangerous republican model, the application of which threatened the colony's future, as the precedent of the United States eloquently showed. Bidwell conveniently provided his opponents in turn with a potential model for constituting an out-group against which to define themselves. They made good use of it.

As Paul Romney has argued in a detailed discussion of the alien question--a question that arose directly as a result of Bidwell's election to the House of Assembly in 1821 and the opposition it raised--, this particular moment in the history of Upper Canada led to the re-articulation, or "re-invention" of the past in order to assert a hierarchical difference between Loyalists and so-called "late Loyalists," thereby justifying the move to disenfranchise the latter group.[40] Romney shows how this "re-invention," initiated by John Beverly Robinson's petition to oust Bidwell from office, sought to deny the rights of those who had emigrated from the United States since it ignored the fact that, under Simcoe, who was governor at the time, Americans had been actively encouraged to colonize Upper Canada. Indeed, from 1792 until 1812, "American immigrants had readily been granted lands by the Crown and had been unchallenged in their exercise of the political rights that went with proprietorship" (84). Romney goes on to observe that this welcoming attitude on the part of British officials, despite the outcome of the American war of Independence, was coherent in that it was based on their hopes that the Americans would, in the near future, "return ... to the imperial fold;" such hopes explained the statute of 1790 that "encouraged American emigration to Upper Canada" (91-92). Of course, by the time Bidwell was elected in the early 1820s, the War of 1812 had been fought and there seemed little chance of reconciliation:

> it no longer made sense to Englishmen to maintain that United States citizens of British ancestry had retained, as individuals, their allegiance to the Crown; but if they had forfeited that allegiance, when could they have done so but in 1783? [with the Treaty of Paris] (92)

Hence Bidwell's nationality came under attack; "loyalty" was defined retroactively; and the term "late Loyalist" came to assume its somewhat pejorative meaning, regardless of legal practice during the extended period of immigration.[41] Romney is wary of interpretations of the alien question that are based largely on Upper Canada's government papers of the time, and goes to some length to demonstrate the extent to which these are heavily weighted against Bidwell. He summarizes the outcome of his research into the matter:

> In addition to its obvious political importance, the alien question altered the way Upper Canadians conceived of their community and its relationship to the empire. The legal controversy evoked two incompatible visions of Upper Canadian history. The Bidwellite case rested on the premise that the late Loyalists formed an integral part of the community: to use a concept deeply engrained in the political culture of Whig constitutionalism, the invocation of the imperial statute of 1790 and the name of Simcoe was an appeal to the founding compact of Upper Canadian society. The anti-Bidwellites' refusal to acknowledge a distinction in law between Americans resident in the United States and those who had settled in Upper Canada reflected an urge to read the latter out of Upper Canadian history--to achieve a unilateral revision of the compact, so to speak. Similarly, the anti-Bidwellite efforts to discredit the Bidwellite appeal to history were the corollary of an attempt to install an alternative vision of the origins of Upper Canadian society: that of a providential boon to Americans who had proved themselves loyal to God and King in their hour of trial. (98)

The anti-Bidwellites were determined to make sure that that hour remained exclusive. In so doing, they "re-invented" Upper Canadian history and created a version that confirmed their own role in it while discrediting that of others. Yet, in having recourse to precedents based on contemporary cases in English law concerning the right of American-born individuals to inherit property in

England, in order to bolster their arguments, "Robinson and his supporters were forced to assert the superiority of British over Upper Canadian experience in the determination of an Upper Canadian legal question" (100).

The Loyalist version of history that ultimately prevailed would serve as the foundation for feelings of identity that would reach beyond the borders of Upper Canada. In time, the inhabitants of Canada West attributed growing importance to the "Loyalist generation" for their role as "initiators of a national tradition," and "Upper Canadians came increasingly to encompass all of British North America in their vision of the national future" (Allan Smith 205, 209). Barnabas Bidwell, who died in 1833, did not live long enough to follow the progress of a national ideal that had been spawned in part due to his election. It has been said that "no reform politician of Upper Canada ever inspired as much political hatred as did he," and that, although he expired in Kingston, "it is clear that he remained an American patriot until his death" (Patterson 58). This "Canadian writer" left behind a son who persevered in the ranks of the reformers, as well as his Prompter columns emphasizing the importance of one's concrete actions and contributions to Upper Canadian society over one's origins. This single example of his conception of the uses of print reveals his determination to provoke action through the diffusion of useful information. Reading and writing are divorced from belletristic or moralistic ends and are harnessed to the pragmatic cause of material improvement. Whether one agrees or not with the political stance that underlay Bidwell's suggestions, it is nonetheless clear

that his approach to colonial development differed substantially from that advocated by those at the colony's political helm. At the very least, the intensity of the political struggle that characterized the period is proof of the urgency that fuelled the debate, and of the forces that contributed to subordinate the creation of aesthetic, "literary" writing to texts of a more immediately political nature.

CHAPTER FOUR: MAJOR JOHN RICHARDSON AND THE RHETORIC OF BELONGING

Given the prominence that the debate on patriotism occupied in Upper Canada's political circles in the early 1820s, together with the growing importance attached to the profession of one's loyalty, Julia Catherine Beckwith Hart's call to patriotic feelings in the preface to St. Ursula's Convent in 1824 comes perhaps as no surprise. While the imagined communities of John Strachan and Barnabas Bidwell may have provided the impetus for some of their public writings, neither man showed any interest in applying the values of loyalty or patriotism as aesthetic criteria, nor did they court or thank subscribers by touting the patriotic tenor of their patronage. Similarly, it is difficult to imagine Thomas Cary calling on Canadians to subscribe to the Mercury in order to affirm their adherence to a Canadian community. By contrast, Hart's prefatory appeal to the "patriotic Canadian" and her critics' measured appreciation of its patriotic dimension, suggests a common acknowledgement of the value of "nationality" where imaginative writing was concerned. We have seen how, following her move to the United States, Hart proved capable of tailoring her writing and her presentation of it so that both would meet the expectations of critics whose reception of her work might have been based in part on its degree of nationalism.

These assumptions concerning a work's national value signal a shift in literary discourse: it is now concerned with the articulation and promotion of nationalist sentiment and belonging--what systems theory would deem a new product.[1] Thus, a work's

perceived "national" value comes to play an important role in the discourse that constitutes the literary field and attempts to determine which texts are to be understood as "literary." The idea of national value elicits new critical questions for the work's evaluation, and generates additional repertoires of behaviour for both producers and consumers, who may demonstrate or "act out" their patriotism by writing, printing, reading, discussing, and subscribing to, literary works. There is no physical labour or alleged goal of spiritual improvement attached to such repertoires. Indeed, the value of nationality may become so important to the discourse on literature that it may at times supersede other evaluative criteria; this seems to have been Hart's hope in the case of St. Ursula's Convent, judging by her preface.

Seen in light of the preceding discussion of Bidwell and Strachan and their approaches to the task of instilling a sense of community in Upper Canadians, the problems regarding Hart's invocation of patriotism in her Canadian novel will be immediately apparent. Which nation or nationality does Hart associate with "*this country*"? As a self-proclaimed "*British American*," not native to the Canadas, how does she see her relationship, in terms of nationality, with her "*kindred*," the "*patriotic Canadian*" (v-vi), to whom her preface is primarily addressed? How does Hart conceive of the community of readers who might show some interest in her work? Once the value of nationality is applied as an aesthetic criterion in Upper Canada and the literary system is understood to contribute to the process of what may be termed "nation-building" (Parker, Beginnings 91), the question that

inevitably arises is that of how an Upper Canadian, or Canadian, "local" nationality and attendant identity are to be produced within the larger framework of the British empire. The contradictions inherent in this situation serve as an apt example of "the inner incompatibility of empire and nation" that were to become increasingly apparent in England's dealings with her colonies, especially after mid-century (Anderson 88-89). Though his position was admittedly extreme in that few reformers would have shared his stance on the matter, Bidwell side-stepped the issue of articulating the colony's "national" identity within the empire by simply ignoring the imperial connection altogether. Strachan, on the other hand, embraced that same connection, despite his own apparently unconscious recognition of the contradictions it brought with it; hence he may extoll his sovereign's liberality in establishing and protecting the Royal Academy of Painting in London, an institution of which all British subjects may be proud, while at the same time lamenting the absence of literary societies and company available to him more immediately in Upper Canada.

One figure of the mid-nineteenth century whose involvement with the literary institution in the Canadas invites further investigation into the status of literary discourse is that of John Richardson. There are a number of arguments that militate against the choice of Richardson as a main focus of this chapter, especially since his oeuvre has so often been supposed to be in some way representative of writing in Canada in general in the nineteenth century, a supposition which resulted in the distortion of our conception of the literary field of the period, as observed

earlier. A recent comment on the part of Dennis Duffy regarding a contemporary "excursion" into the world of Richardson's novels, Wacousta (1832) and its sequel, The Canadian Brothers (1840), expresses a sense of irritation at the excessive attention these works and their author have received:

> Richardson as Lord of the Marches, of the borderlands between fact and dream, has now been given sufficient treatment. Are there other ways of reading him, or must he remain the purveyor of a nightmare about a historical frontier that our current practices have idealized into a cultural and psychological one?
> ("Beyond" 113)

Indeed, one aim of the discussion at hand has been to attempt to bring about a shift in the attention customarily accorded to individual writers and their works, and to redirect inquiry along the lines of the emergence of the literary institution and of the role of the practices of reading and writing in Canada before Confederation. Given this aim, a prolonged consideration of Richardson might seem not only redundant but particularly out of place. Yet he is of interest on a number of levels.

One aspect of Richardson's case that deserves mention is the very nature of the importance that has been assigned to his fictional works, especially in recent years, as Duffy's comment suggests. There is no doubt that students of literature are more likely to be familiar with "the colonial Major," as T.D. MacLulich has called him,[2] than with the likes of Strachan, Bidwell, or even Hart; it might be said that Richardson and his works have become literary fragments of Canadian letters. Whether we trouble to read Richardson's fictional works or any of his historical, autobiographical, or political writings, we may nonetheless be

intrigued by the fascination he seems to hold for a number of critics, whose *hyperdiscours*, most often in connection with the novels, lends Richardson an imposing array of functions in the field of Canadian literature. Of particular interest is the novel Wacousta, if only due to the amount of commentary it has generated and the number of claims made for Canadian culture and identity based on readings and interpretations of it: why has this title been singled out over the others? Why, in light of the twentieth-century reception of Hart's St. Ursula's Convent and the relative silence regarding Tonnewonte, has Wacousta, conversely, received more sustained critical attention than The Canadian Brothers, the only of Richardson's novels to appear first in a Canadian edition? To what extent are perceptions and interpretations of Richardson and his works "culture-bound," to borrow Mary Lu MacDonald's expression? ("Canadian" 152)

Some possible answers to these questions are to be found by considering the uses critics have made of Richardson and his works, and what their discussions suggest regarding the literary discourse in which they actively take part, and through which they have asserted Richardson's importance. While many are prepared to admit that Richardson's works are riddled with imperfections, these admissions do nothing to detract from the position they create for him. Curiously, this determination to confirm Richardson's importance to Canadian literature appears to be indicative of a desire for a national literature in itself--one that would include a given number of "seminal" or nationally significant works that

may be related to the culture as a whole and used to establish a set of defining characterstics for it.

Indeed, it is in their concern with the "quest" for a national literature and their desire to fix its foundations that many contemporary critics share a portion of the discursive field with Richardson. For, in his own time, the many efforts Richardson made to gain recognition as the Canadas' first and leading man of letters--perhaps the North American colonies' only one, in his view--say much about the assumptions he brought with him from England regarding the way in which he understood the literary institution was supposed to operate. He was quick to seize on the norm or value of nationality and its application in the literary sphere, and to promote the idea that civilized countries took pride in their national literature and venerated their authors accordingly. Likewise, his reaction to the status of literary discourse in the Canadas is revelatory of the discontinuity that characterized literary life in the colonies in relation to that of the metropole.

Richardson's expectations not only correspond to the dynamics of a different system, they also provide an indication of his ignorance of the society whose acclamation and veneration he eagerly sought. His complaints appear to testify to a desired cultural and social continuity between colony and metropole, even though such a continuity would necessarily complicate his simultaneous call for a national literature specific to the Canadas. His sense of frustration regarding the reception of his writing stems in part from the fact that literary discourse in his

native land had not yet achieved the degree of discursive autonomy that he had come to take for granted. Richardson's experiences in North America prompt him to approve of "the *reading* Americans" and to deplore what he takes to be the deficient reception of "*non-reading* Canadians" (Eight Years 172) where both his person and his writings are concerned; yet his judgment does not seem to take into account the remarkable growth in the number of newspapers being produced in the Canadas during the 1830s and 1840s.[3] Likewise, imaginative literature was growing ever more popular during the same period, provided that it was available in inexpensive editions (Parker, Beginnings 94). It would seem, then, that Canadians, in both Upper and Lower Canada, were not as uniformly "non-reading" as Richardson perceived them to be, and that his criticism might have been more accurately formulated had it been directed specifically at what Canadians *did* tend to read, rather than being expressed exclusively in relation to his own works and how they fared.

The question of discontinuity and how it is evident in Richardson's evaluation of the circumstances is also intriguing if we consider it together with the somewhat confused rhetoric of belonging that is frequently present in his works. Many twentieth-century critics have commented on Richardson's apparent failure to identify himself with, and find a place within, a given society or culture.[4] His various writings appear to support this to a degree; consequently, his novels have been said to articulate a criticism of "civilized" European culture, in particular given his own experience within the British military system, while in a number of his other writings he engages in a good deal of griping at the lack

of "civilized" values in the Canadas. At the same time, Richardson's conception of his readership seems fuzzy, since some writings appear to be addressed specifically to readers living in the Canadas, while others attempt to interpret Canadian life and politics to an audience that is assumed to be unfamiliar with his subject. As a result, Richardson seems to contradict himself on a number of levels.

At this point, it is useful to contrast Richardson's rhetoric of belonging with Hart's. The latter's appeal to the value of nationality in her prefaces takes on a more formal nature; Hart simply adjusts the emphasis on nationality in accordance with each novel's place of publication. Though she promotes the United States in the preface to _Tonnewonte_, the novel's content cannot be construed as an unconditional endorsement of an identity based primarily on republican values. As the preceding discussion has shown, certain aspects of _Tonnewonte_ seem more indicative of Hart's flexibility regarding the idea of multiple allegiance. Yet Richardson, in his amplification of Hart's use of rhetoric, is not content to pay lip service to the concept of multiple allegiance on a strictly abstract level, or as a measure of mere expedience. Instead, he seems to act on the conviction that a direct correspondence exists between the rhetoric of identity and the reality of it, as lived. His desire to experience a unified, imperial identity, which he acts on by joining a British regiment in the War of 1812 and accompanying it when it returned to England, meets inevitably with disappointment over the course of his years abroad. Conversely, once in the Canadas again, Richardson's

assumption that his Loyalist background will be recognized and valued by all--especially by those who hold political power--comes into conflict with competing conceptions of Upper Canada's identity. By the late 1830s and early 1840s, though the question of loyalty was certainly a constant in public discourse, simply to proclaim one's Loyalist ascendancy was not enough to secure regular employment. Just as his military experiences led to disillusionment insofar as the notions of glory and honour were concerned, so too would his years in the Canadas come to reveal to him the gap that separates rhetoric from reality.

This chapter will focus largely on how the discourse on literature and the values that underlie it serve to construct their object, thereby fixing the limits of the literary field. The literary discourse of a given moment tends to lend a certain unity to the literary field, and to invest it with a degree of legitimacy; it attempts to impose an order in accordance with its own values, and attributes functions to individual works and writers. Richardson's writings do not lead us to believe that he engaged in any significant literary exchanges with other literary agents, be they members of educational institutions, groups of writers, clubs or critics. His contributions to the discourse on literature are offered as if his were a single voice alone in the wilderness. Accordingly, he more or less elevates himself to the position of sole arbiter of literary taste and voice of the literary institution. From this exclusive position, he makes his judgments monologically, dictating his conception of the norms governing taste and behaviour to a readership that is largely

unknown to him. Richardson is not so much interested in engaging in any wide-ranging literary discussions or in initiating measures to allow for the propagation of the literary sphere, as he is in attributing importance to his own works and endowing them with value based primarily on the criterion of nationalism. If we compare this aspect of his literary discourse with his discourse on politics, however, it becomes apparent that the one relies on the articulation of a sense of unified nationhood, while the other, in defending a political position, is polemical and promotes factionalism.

As we have seen, by studying the literary discourse typical of the literary agents of a given system, we may gain an insight into their conception of that system as well as their own literary culture. While there is some consensus among critics of the latter part of the twentieth century as to Richardson's importance to Canadian letters, Richardson's comments regarding literary life in the Canadas in his own time would urge us to conclude that it was an entirely lost cause. The twentieth-century discourse provides evidence, on the one hand, of the autonomy of the literary institution, while that of the nineteenth-century writer may help us to understand the interdependence of institutional factors, just as it illustrates the point that "literature" is not made up solely of authors who produce texts. The following discussion will deal briefly with twentieth-century criticism on Richardson, and will then consider his case, in more detail, in the context of the nineteenth century.

But first, a word on the circumstances in which Richardson found himself in his native land, in order to gain a better understanding of his frustration with Canadian society. It has been said that Richardson earned a place for himself in Canadian "seminal mythologies" through "his complaints about the hard life of a writer in Canada" (MacDonald, "Canadian" 152); these are explained by "the indifference which he experienced at the hands of his fellow Canadians in the decade following the Rebellions of 1837" (Bailey, "Overture" 66). David R. Beasley, Richardson's biographer, implies that Richardson cannot be reproached for choosing "exile" in the United States in 1849 since "Americans, after all, celebrated him as an author while Canadians showed little interest in his work" ("Richardson" 746). Yet we might well ask if merely to celebrate and read was enough, given that Richardson reportedly died of starvation in New York, not three years later. It seems that his fate there was in no way exceptional:

> Richardson was not alone in his poverty. Two-thirds of the literary men, like Richardson, were not listed in the city directory, in fact had no fixed living quarters; they drifted about principally as tenants-at-pleasure in boarding houses, or chance lodgers at third-rate hotels.
> (Beasley, Don Quixote 195)

Like him, they had probably been unsuccessful in finding work that would provide a stable income; literary activities alone clearly did not do so.

Besides his abrasive personality and the "disease" of being "a colonial,"[5] Richardson's failures may be attributed in large part to chronic bad timing: he was simply never in the right place at

the right time. Beasley has documented Richardson's repeated efforts to obtain a government post in Upper Canada once his employment as correspondent for the London Times had been terminated. It seems that one of Richardson's major handicaps was the unenviable reputation that he had recklessly made for himself among military circles by dealing out heavy criticism to certain officers, first in his Movements of the British Legion (1837), published in London, then in his Personal Memoirs (1838), which appeared in the Canadas.[6] In a society in which military service figured as one of the few building blocks upon which to base a government career,[7] Richardson's criticism was particularly unsuited to win favour with those who might have aided him in securing a position:

> How could Richardson expect that after attacking the sacred cow in his Personal Memoirs that the high priests could feel any friendship for him behind their colonial facade? He wanted it all on his own terms, a trait which was exemplified by Byron whose defiant life style seems to have served as a model for Richardson. ... [T]he task of defending his reputation in communities dependent on the favour of the military for their prosperity was insuperable.
> (Beasley, Don Quixote 114, 126)

It seems that Richardson's repeated public defence of his honour was not particularly timely. Equally inappropriate were the recommendations he was to make in Eight Years in Canada (1847) regarding the mother country's interest in broadening the garrisons of her standing army in Canada, since, as of 1815, the policy of the colonial office had been "the gradual extinction of its responsibilities" in the North-American colonies (Buckner, "Colonial" xxxvi).

Beasley observes that, by the spring of 1840 when he was living in Brockville, Richardson had taken steps to launch a newspaper in the aim of making known his political views and preparing the ground for his candidacy in the elections slated for March of 1841 (Don Quixote 128). It seems that he was ready to abandon his professed ambition of participating exclusively in the specialized discourse of aesthetic writing that he claimed to prefer, and to adapt to the predominantly political, public discourse that was to be found in the province's newspapers. Susanna Moodie was to point out that such newspapers were not without their uses: "The editor of a clever Canadian paper is on the high road to office and preferment; but he must be a party man, and go the whole hog, or he cannot long enjoy the patronage and favour of the public" (292). We have already noted that Richardson had alienated a good part of the public who might have supported his paper, either by subscribing to it or by placing advertisements in it, yet this was not his only difficulty.[8] Besides the fact that the type he intended to use arrived too late, Richardson's bid for political power was ill-fated due to its hasty conception. By the time he returned to the Canadas, it took a certain degree of effort and preparation to launch one's political career.

In a detailed study of the members of the House of Assembly (MHAs) during the Upper Canadian period (1791-1841), J.K. Johnson suggests that, to be elected, one's social profile played a significant role. It appears that MHAs who were born in North America and whose families had established themselves in Upper Canada before 1800 held a certain advantage over latecomers; this

was because it took time to accumulate wealth and to consolidate one's social standing (52). It would thus seem that Richardson's first mistake had been in leaving the province following the War of 1812. Had he remained, his chances of personal advancement would have been significantly better; in fact, his brother, Charles, had been elected as a MHA in Niagara (221). As it happened, by 1841, when Richardson considered presenting himself as a candidate, the proportion of native-born MHAs elected to the House of Assembly was actually on the decline (104). Another error was his failure to acquire any legal training, which would have prepared him for a number of occupations related to government (23). We have only to think of the career of a MHA like John Beverly Robinson--"a man of high professional attainments and cultivated taste in literature" whose "unswerving loyalty to the Crown and ... love for British institutions" (Richardson, Eight Years 27) Richardson admired--to understand how one's early arrival in the province, coupled with the appropriate studies, could combine to produce a promising formula for those who were interested in climbing their way to political power and, with luck, a stable source of income. Indeed, this was the exact profile of Richardson's brother, Charles, who was born in Upper Canada and who studied law with Robinson (J.K. Johnson 220-21).

Johnson's information regarding the wealth and standing of MHAs shows that the "mainstream career pattern" consisted in the combining of occupations. The most common of these was farming, followed by public service posts, merchandising, milling, law, and distilling (11). Generally speaking, agriculture was the major

factor in the creation of wealth in the province (Noel 38); as Bidwell had anticipated in his Prompter columns, the development and improvement of farming practices eventually led to Upper Canada's economic independence. Half of all parliamentarians during the Upper Canadian period had been farmers for some time during their lives; this was especially likely to be the case of MHAs born in North America (J.K Johnson 15, 26). Although Johnson notes that, in time, farming lost its popularity among the province's MHAs--perhaps due to the fact that it "was back-breaking work," that is, "not the work of a gentleman," and because "it represented for some a lower status compared to former stations of life" (16)--by 1841, farming nonetheless remained a "basic occupation" (25). In his study of the culture of clientelism in Ontario, S.J.R. Noel concurs with Johnson's findings regarding the economic returns of merchandising: one of the most effective ways of generating personal wealth was by setting up a store and running it with a shrewd eye. He adds that some of the more successful storekeepers were those who brought little or no previous experience to their business enterprise (76).

The widespread practice among the province's leaders of combining occupations suggests that, contrary to Richardson's apparent assumptions, a government post alone was no sure guarantee of a stable income. Under these circumstances, though farming and merchandising may not have been "gentlemanly" occupations, they were certainly not shunned by the fledgling society's leaders. In comparison, journalism, which may have been a springboard to preferment for some, as Moodie remarks, does not figure as a common

choice of occupation among the province's prominent citizens, nor was it perceived to be a source of reliable income. Johnson adds that most reformers and radicals were journalists or doctors, and guesses that this is the reason why these professions were considered to be less respectable than a background in law (23). Yet Richardson, recognizing the "necessity for self exertion," chose journalism over farming and merchandising. In accounting for this choice in Eight Years in Canada, he seems to attempt to lend his occupation a semblance of gentility by describing his project as that of a gentleman amateur:

> The mode of conducting a newspaper in Canada is very different from that at home. There an editor, as we all know, invariably enjoys a fixed salary for the management of a journal in which he has no immediate interest as a proprietor, but in Canada ... the Editors are the sole proprietors of their papers, and of the mechanical mysteries of the craft necessary to produce them. I therefore resolved, like Benjamin Franklin, and, more recently, the King of Bavaria, to purchase a press and take lessons from my own people, in an art which proved to me to be full of interest and amusement, and in which, although I could never perfect myself in it, I subsequently made progress enough to satisfy my own not very ambitious desire of excellence. (160)

He further confesses that he "had neither the habits, taste, nor aptitude to become any thing that had not some connexion, more or less, with literature," and adds that his projected newspaper would support so-called responsible government, though it was to be "rather literary than political" in its orientation (160).

Richardson may present himself in the above passages as something of a journalistic dabbler to a readership at "home," yet other sections of the account of his fortunes in Canada tell another story. While working for the Times, he enjoyed the

the distinction that may have accrued to a correspondent of a periodical based in the metropole, but his abrupt dismissal gave him cause for concern. He writes that it was "a source of great regret" that his letters to the Times were incompatible with the paper's editorial stance, and adds that he "would far rather have continued in favor with it, and been entrusted with its private correspondence, than have accepted any situation in Canada which Lord Durham, or any other Governor, could have bestowed upon [him]" (Eight Years 50). For one thing, Richardson had not yet acted on the project he had entertained before returning to Canada of setting up a newspaper in support of "the political interests of the mother country" once he had arrived in the colony; for another, he and his wife had assumed that the London paper would finance their return to England once his work in Canada was done (Beasley, Don Quixote 99, 102). Thus, Richardson alludes to his "pecuniary embarrassments" and the "altered position of [his] circumstances" due to the interruption of his employment (Eight Years 51). His dismissal came at a time when he was not yet active in any other significant occupation, so that his predicament provides a good example of the precarious conditions of employment for those who desired to earn a living by their pen, and of the prudence of combining occupations if one could manage to do so.

Richardson was hardly alone in his difficulty, which meant that he faced a good deal of competition for a limited number of government positions. During the 1830s, these had ceased to grow in number, while men eager to take on government functions were more numerous than ever (J.K. Johnson 20). Consequently, if only

where prospects for professional men were concerned, Upper and Lower Canada exhibited a degree of uniformity: financial stability was difficult to attain in both provinces.

In his flirtation with the possibility of entering the political arena, Richardson seems to have been motivated by the opportunity to improve his material situation. However, in his attempts to do so, he inevitably became more involved in the political life of the colony. Likewise, the second of his newspapers, the Canadian Loyalist, & Spirit of 1812 (January 1843-July 1844), marks his wholehearted entry, as a newspaper editor and political commentator, into the public sphere of the community. Thus, Richardson's "other writings while in Canada," which critics are inclined to dismiss as "more ephemeral, being mainly journalism" (MacLulich, "Colonial" 79), when they mention them at all, are perhaps equally pertinent as his "literary" efforts, in the sense that they constitute a contribution to what was then the predominantly public discourse of common, political life in the colony. These writings, coupled with his autobiographical and historical works, make up the bulk of his writings while in Canada. Indeed, Beasley attaches a good deal of importance to Richardson's journalistic activities, and notes that the Canadian Loyalist enjoyed support to the degree that, during the winter of 1843-44, "members of the Assembly complained they were not receiving copies." He even goes so far as to credit Richardson with "the resurgence of the Conservatives," thanks to his many editorials

in support of Metcalfe. These apparently "began a strong movement of sympathy for the man throughout the country," and earned Richardson a number of enemies in the world of journalism, one of whom was Francis Hincks (Don Quixote 139-40). Thanks to his newspaper, Richardson was finally attracting readers. His efforts as a political journalist allowed him to participate in practices of reading and writing that were most common, at a time when literary practices were beginning to gain ground, but still had some way to go before they could be described as constituting an independent field of discursive activity, or suffice to provide a source of adequate financial support for "professional" men and women of letters. The shift in reading and writing practices from an essentially public function that was to allow for the emergence of a more private, aesthetic, and specialized, literary function on a broader scale, was slow and difficult.

Richardson did not venture to attempt the publication in Canada of any novels after his experience with The Canadian Brothers; it is well known that this work was, "in [his] view at least, ... not a publishing success" (Stephens, Preface lvii). Yet Richardson's negative opinion of the book's success shows little appreciation for the context in which it appeared; his high expectations were more suited to the literary market in England, where he had published all of his other imaginative works. To agree with Richardson's oft-quoted estimation that his novel might as well have appeared in "Kamtschatka" as in Canada is to "ignor[e] the fact that the 250 copies of The Canadian Brothers sold was a very respectable number for a book published in Montreal in 1840,

and that Richardson was charging double the going price" (MacDonald, "Canadian" 152).[9]

In his own time, there were others who disagreed with Richardson's pessimistic views on the fate of literary culture in Canada. John Gibson, in his introduction to the new series of the Literary Garland in 1843, confidently "hail[s] a new era, more favourable to the diffusion of polite and useful literature." He rejoices "that the Garland has met with ... generous support and approbation," which success he takes to be "an ample proof that [its readers] are not indifferent to the literature of their rising country" (32-33). The Garland's many years of publication are certainly impressive and would tend to confirm Gibson's view, except that a number of factors prevented his "new era" from developing in quite the way he had hoped. Susanna Moodie's observations ten years later regarding the Garland's demise, in 1851, name competition from American monthlies as the major obstacle. These publications,

> got up in the first style, handsomely illustrated, and composed of the best articles, selected from European and American magazines, are sold at such a low rate that [they are] to be found in almost every decent house in the province. (290)

While recognizing that cheap literary periodicals from the United States made for stiff competition, Moodie nonetheless recognizes the virtues of the availability of inexpensive reading materials:

> cheap American reprints of the best European works enable [readers] to gratify their taste, without drawing very largely on their purse.
>
> The traffic in books from the United States employs a great many young men, who travel through the country,

> selling and taking up subscriptions for new works; and the astonishingly low price at which they can be obtained is an incalculable benefit to the colony. (289)

Yet, despite the growing availability of works and the reading public's apparent demand for them, Moodie's own experience as editor of the equally affordable Victoria Magazine in 1847 leads her to conclude that native-born Canadians were to be converted to appropriate literary discourse with difficulty. The "literary taste and capacity of the public" were measured against norms that were typical of the source literature, in England, and Moodie contends that the most interesting contributions submitted were from "persons born and educated in the mother country" (291). Such persons were familiar with a discourse that Moodie understood, and possessed a literary culture that equipped them to duplicate the practices they had learned elsewhere. The "native-born authors" whom the Moodies wished to encourage apparently showed little enthusiasm for the production of "literary" texts. The writing they did produce was of another kind, which the Moodies considered unsuited to the readership they wished for their magazine:

> we were not a little disappointed that the few articles we received from Canadian writers were not of a character to interest our readers. The Canadian people are more practical than imaginative. Romantic tales and poetry would meet with less favour in their eyes than a good political article from their newspapers. The former they scarcely understand, the latter is a matter of general interest to the community. (291-92)

What Moodie forgets is that romantic tales and poetry are not "natural" forms of discourse; instead, their composition depends on the acquired knowledge of repertoires, which include the conventions that govern production and reception, as well as literary behaviours. The characteristics of the literary

institution, its practices, and its conception of taste, as known to certain readerships in England at mid-century, could not automatically be reproduced in Upper Canada. Though reading itself was gaining ground and literacy was on the rise, there is little to suggest that the development of literary culture and the production of literary texts were widely seen as important functions of reading and writing practices.[10]

As a literary producer, Richardson appears to have accepted this state of affairs by the time he opted to become a predominantly political writer with the Canadian Loyalist. (Indeed, in so doing, he tends to confirm Moodie's assessment of Canadian writers as more inclined to write political articles than romantic tales.) Richardson's experience with his first newspaper, the New Era (June 1841-August 1842), may have convinced him of the importance of political articles. As noted, the New Era had been conceived as "rather literary than political," even though its name was intended to mark "the important political changes which had taken place in the country, and the new principle of government then being followed up, on the recommendations of Lord Durham, by Mr. Poulett Thomson" (Eight Years 179). Yet, as a newspaper editor, Richardson failed to diversify his activities in order to strengthen his position. Unlike the example of Thomas Cary in Lower Canada or numerous other successful newspapermen and printers working out of Kingston in the 1820s, Richardson did not become involved in parallel operations: he established no lending library or reading room, sold no stationery or other paper products, operated no post office. Coupled with this limited activity, the

newspaper's narrow focus on things literary entailed a high degree of risk: the New Era did not contain much local news, but concentrated instead on literary news from Great Britain and the United States--and reprinted a number of Richardson's own works (Morley 52-54).[11] Shortly before the appearance of the paper's last issue in August, 1841, Richardson had petitioned Baron Sydenham for support, arguing literature's usefulness in maintaining law and order. No doubt with the late rebellions in mind, Richardson stated his wish

> to introduce into [Canada] that spirit of refinement, through the instrumentality of literature, which is the first indication of moral superiority in a people, and the surest guarantee of order and well regulated submission to authority. (Gerson 12)[12]

Sydenham did not respond as hoped to this plea for literature's political utility, and the New Era came to a halt. Accordingly, with the Canadian Loyalist, Richardson cast off the primarily literary approach to the appeasement of political unrest and to the advancement of his own condition in favour of an openly partisan stance in his endeavour to form opinion.

As the second paper's title suggests, Richardson chose to align himself with the more exclusive definition of loyalty that had been formulated at the time of John Beverly Robinson's provocation of the alien crisis in the early 1820s. Thus, the fourth and final page of each number of the Canadian Loyalist repeats the paper's mandate:

> This is the prominent ground on which the political principles of the "Canadian Loyalist" will be based. To hold the loyalist up to honor, and to visit with scorn and contumely the apostate to duty: to advocate the invaded rights and privileges of the

> old inhabitants of this Country, and to condemn the dangerous policy pursued by those who had so long, and so sedulously, sought to exclude them from all participation in Office. (...)
>
> It now remains to be seen whether the early inhabitants of this country will submit much longer to be deprived of their birthright; nay, whether the country itself is to continue to be governed wholly by comparative strangers and adventurers, or by men of intelligence and merit (long sojourners in the land) such as we have seen dispossessed of every shadow of that power and influence in the councils of the nation, to which they had originally been called by their Sovereign, as a reward for their enduring gallantry and their allegiance.

Of course, Richardson counted himself in the latter group, despite his own background as something of an adventurer outside the country; indeed, in an earlier publication he had referred to himself as "[a]lmost a total stranger" in his "native land, from which [he] had been absent upwards of twenty years" (Memoirs 139). The Canadian Loyalist's mandate permitted him to foreground the value of his Loyalist pedigree. In so doing, Richardson went "the whole hog," for the above formulation of the Loyalist's grievances against those who had usurped their supposed rights is unequivocal in its adherence to the political principles of the more conservative strain of all degrees of conservatism in what had become Canada West. Thus, Richardson's participation in the public, political discourse of his day obliged him to adopt a more nuanced, if sometimes confused, position on the question of identity. If his attempts to impress upon "Canadians" in general his importance as a "Canadian" author had not brought gratifying financial returns, Richardson was prepared to incarnate himself as a staunch Loyalist in the political field. In so doing, he substituted a discourse based on the ideal of a cohesive, imagined

community for one that dwelt consistently on questions that were politically divisive.

Richardson's success in the field of journalism came to an end with the end of the Canadian Loyalist, which ceased publication in the summer of 1844. After his long-awaited, albeit none-too-profitable, government appointment as Chief of Police on the Welland Canal ended in disaster--and his subsequent dismissal--in January, 1846, he settled in Montreal and made a final attempt to launch a paper. The Weekly Expositor scarcely lasted a few months (August 1846-January 1847). One of Richardson's last publications before leaving Canada definitively for the United States was his Eight Years in Canada (1847), most often referred to as an autobiographical work, although its complete title specifies that it embraces "a Review of the Administrations of Lords Durham and Sydenham, Sir Charles Bagot, and Lord Metcalfe," and that it includes "Numerous Interesting Letters From Lord Durham, Mr. Charles Buller, and Other Well-Known Public Characters." As the work's epigraph quite rightly states, it is "[d]e omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis." Thus, besides political commentary, Richardson provides reflections on his travel experiences in North America, including observations on North American eating habits, Niagara Falls, the role of the military in Canada, and the characteristics of its inhabitants. In this work, when not engaging in political observations, Richardson foregoes the opportunity of insisting on his Loyalist heritage. Instead, he presents his remarks as those of a man of letters: the title page of the work identifies him as the "Author of 'Ecarte,' 'Wacousta,' 'The Canadian Brothers,' &c.

&c. &c," and he makes occasional allusions to other literary works, such as Fanny Kemble's travel writing, the novels of Eugène Sue and James Fenimore Cooper, and Mary Shelley's Frankenstein. The literary culture he displays through the evocation of such literary fragments is not, apparently, a result of his schooling; for, in reminiscing about his boyhood, Richardson recalls that he was a reluctant pupil who "had always hated school." He blames frequent floggings for having instilled in him "a disgust for Virgil, Horace, and Euclid," so that he greeted with great relief the interruption of his studies that was entailed by the outbreak of hostilities with the United States (87). Given Richardson's satisfaction upon being delivered from the "shackles of scholastic life," it seems odd that he should proceed to berate Canadians, in the pages of the very same work, for not being "a reading people." Indeed, a fair portion of Eight Years in Canada is devoted to this topic, which Mary Lu MacDonald identifies as Richardson's contribution to the "seminal mythologies" of Canada. He lists England, France, Scotland, Ireland, and even the United States, as countries that display the civilized trait of priding themselves on their writers. According to Richardson,

> Canada, alone, in the wide universe, forms the exception. ... [A]nd so far has this apathetic feeling been carried, that in my own case it was left to the people of the United States to inform them that they possessed a writer not less favorably known in Europe than among themselves, of whose existence they (the Canadians) were ignorant, and to whose success they were indifferent.
>
> As this is the last time I shall ever allude to the humiliating subject, I cannot deny to myself the gratification of the expression of a hope, that should a more refined and cultivated taste ever be introduced into the matter-of-fact country in which I have derived

> my being, its people will decline to do me the honor of placing my name in the list of their "Authors." I certainly have no particular ambition to rank among their future "men of genius," or to share any posthumous honor they may be disposed to confer upon them. (95)

Critics of the latter half of the twentieth century have not complied with Richardson's wishes as expressed in Eight Years in Canada, for he figures prominently in many lists of authors, though his status as a "man of genius" is not agreed upon by all. While Carl F. Klinck finds Richardson's "autobiographical and documented history" of the War of 1812 to be "better reading than [his] uninspired effort in fiction, The Canadian Brothers ... or his early metrical romance, Tecumseh; or, The Warrior of the West," he deems "Richardson's masterpiece" to be Wacousta, "his best work" ("Literary" 137-38). For his part, A.J.M. Smith finds that "it is not in his fiction but in his historical writing of a more sober sort that Richardson's true merit is to be found," and that his "most valuable book is his fine military history, The War of 1812" (Century 123). Likewise, Carole Gerson judges that Richardson "showed more talent for autobiography and chronicle than for fictitious plots and characters," and that "much of his vigorous and convincing writing appears in his descriptive non-fiction," of which she mentions The War of 1812, Eight Years in Canada, and "The Story of a Trip to Walpole Island and Port Sarnia" in particular (83). Dennis Duffy is most blunt in his judgment when he states that "[n]o critic should write of John Richardson as if he were John Keats;" he sees Richardson as "a writer whose production betrays little evidence of forethought, reflection, or meditation on the poetical character" ("Richardson" 109). In Duffy's view,

> [f]or all its faults, Wacousta remains of interest still and seems virtually the sole reason for the survival of its author's name. ... Richardson proved a man of one book; his other fiction appeared in small and obscure editions. ("Richardson" 108, 114)

Any attention paid Richardson's other works "remains no more than attention bestowed by an academicized literary culture upon the author of Wacousta" ("Richardson" 114).

It is in making this last point that Duffy touches upon the heart of the matter. By the time he discusses Richardson, literature has become a distinct activity that is related to a distinct discourse: the literary institution in Canada no longer exists in a partial, fragmentary state. This distinct discourse is generated in part by academics, whose work contributes to the constitution of the literary field itself. Duffy participates in the act of constituting this field by writing an article on "John Richardson" which appears in a series called Canadian Writers and Their Works. Such writing is instrumental to the constitution of the field because it selects certain writers and certain works, and endows them with cultural and symbolic value. In Duffy's somewhat self-conscious estimation, Wacousta is the only of Richardson's works that rightfully belongs in the field of literary discourse; we shall later examine the reasons he gives in justification of his choice.[13] For the moment, it is enough for us to observe that Duffy's remarks on Richardson play a role in fixing the limits of the literary field. With other critics, he helps structure the field and organize the thing that is referred to as "Canadian literature." This sort of critical activity is just as important to the literary institution as are individual works. Besides

Wacousta, part of the reason for the survival of Richardson's name is surely the critical activity that has so often chosen him as an object of its discourse. In according him such posthumous attention, the discourse of the literary institution is only displaying one of its typical characteristics, which is that of exercising a good degree of caution in the attribution of distinction.

Without entering into an exhaustive analysis of the commentary that has grown out of Richardson and his oeuvre, we may illustrate the constitutive role of literary criticism by focussing on a portion of the *hyperdiscours* that typically accompanies historical commentary on Richardson, as well as the functions this discourse has defined for him and his writing. Some criticism on Richardson attributes value to him on the basis of his "firstness"--a quality that he apparently shares with Frances Brooke and Julia Catherine Beckwith Hart where the novel form is concerned--while other criticism seeks to identify Richardson's value in similarly national terms, except that its arguments are perhaps somewhat more developed. In this way, for example, Richardson may be portrayed as a writer who articulates a number of issues and themes that critics conceive to be characteristic of subsequent writing in Canada. Sometimes the attribution of functions to Richardson's works is based on, or accompanied by, an interpretative reading; what is more significant is the fact that these functions are then said to extend beyond the limits of Richardson's works alone, and are applied to the literary field in general.

Among those who emphasize the quality of "firstness," Desmond Pacey names Richardson as "the first Canadian novelist to achieve an international reputation" ("Colonial I" 20), while A.J.M. Smith sees him as Canada's "first professional man of letters" (Century 122). Recovering Canada's First Novelist (1984), the title of the published proceedings of a conference devoted to Richardson, is still more specific. One of the contributors chooses to refer to Richardson as "Canada's first professional literary artist" (Cronk, "Americanization" 33). Another, familiar with Richardson's parting words in Eight Years in Canada, sees him as "our first expatriate writer, one of our first literary nationalists, and one of the first writers to lament the philistinism of Canadian readers" (MacLulich, "Colonial" 82), while a more recent study credits Richardson with having written "our first national prose epic" (Hurley 4). As was the case with Brooke, Cary, and Hart, Richardson's name is often associated with certain "beginnings" of Canadian literature, and derives some of his literary value from this association alone. Again, though hesitant to attribute some measure of aesthetic value to Richardson while at the same time recognizing his firstness, Duffy sums up: "it is the accident of historical sequence--the fact that [Richardson] is present at the creation--that grants him his importance" ("Beyond" 111).

Yet Duffy's explanation of Richardson's importance neglects to mention some of the other claims that have been made about this writer. They are both numerous and varied, and do not tend to describe Richarson's presence at the time of the "creation" of Canadian literature as a mere accident of history, but come to see

it as a necessary, determining factor in the founding of a specifically national literature. In situating Richardson historically, some critics ascribe a definite role to him and his works. Thus, Beasley looks to Richardson as a model for future writers:

> [He] pursued the meaning of life by faithfully recording it from all sides; and it is this dimension which serves as the foundation stone of Canadian literature to which Canadian writers may look back for guidance. (Don Quixote 198)

James Reaney articulates this relationship in simpler terms by stating that he "had always been searching for a father figure to reverence as the progenitor of our tradition" (541). In other words, Richardson filled a certain need or desire by providing a foundational figure who could be invested with symbolic value.

In discussing Wacousta and The Canadian Brothers, Duffy ascribes a like foundational role to Richardson's work; however, he takes things one step further by suggesting that Richardson's writing initiates the beginning of a continuity in Canadian writing by thematizing certain questions which are to recur. Thus, Richardson's work "will last because it touches upon enduring issues and motifs that will form the basis of a national literature" ("Beyond" 111). Duffy names some of these issues and motifs elsewhere; in his view, Richardson's work illustrates the

> extent to which a preoccupation over such matters as the conflict between liberty and order can be embodied within the forms of imaginative literature. To study Richardson is to realize how these questions cast themselves repeatedly before the Canadian writer. (Gardens 44)

Although he may not be Keats, it seems that Richardson is nonetheless indispensable to our understanding of Canadian literature. Duffy presents _Wacousta_ as a text that provides the basis for one of the major debates regarding this literature:

> _Wacousta_ has become a battleground for the question of whether the sweep of Canadian literature lies towards the renewal of community or the avoidance of it. (...)
>
> The century and a half of critical and public attention paid to _Wacousta_ has not only confirmed the enduring qualities of the work, but it has made of Richardson's imagination a powerful force to be dealt with when outlining the shape of our literary experience. ("Richardson" 117)

It appears that Richardson's importance is central to an appreciation of Canadian writing.

Others have also described the role of Richardson's "issues and motifs." John Moss sees _Wacousta_ simply as "the exemplary novel of frontier exile" (_Patterns_ 42); this is an idea that T.D. MacLulich expands upon:

> Richardson's sustained effort to become part of an established culture makes him the first author to express a theme--the quest for a homeland, the search for a feeling of belonging--that has remained a central concern of Canadian writing to the present day. ("Colonial" 82)

Michael Hurley is in turn able to elaborate on the theme of exile and quest for a homeland at length by conceiving of Richardson as a writer who, along with his characters, is located on the "borderline" of identity. Hurley suggests that Richardson thus inaugurates a paradigm that was subsequently to include an impressive number of contemporary writers.[14] From here it is a short step to the conclusion that "Richardson's border doubles

take on an iconic character which permits a grand staging of our collective Canadian neurosis, our notorious fractured psyche" (18).

The above examples should help to make clear the way in which discourse on literature serves to construct its object; according to these critics, Richardson's _Wacousta_ is a foundational, key text in Canadian literature. It is not so much the possible meanings of _Wacousta_ that are at issue as the role this text and its writer have come to play in conceptions of the history and tradition of Canadian literature. However, Hurley's last observation extends the discussion beyond the limits of the literary field. In so doing, he modifies the nature of the role attributed to Richardson's novels. They become important not just because they serve to organize the subsequent development of the literary field by lending coherence and continuity to the works it is said to include, but because they provide a means of expressing and identifying key aspects of a national identity. In other words, Richardson's works are important because of their "national" significance: "it becomes clear that Richardson's epic plumbs deep-seated cultural fears and prolonged national anxieties" (13). Where Richardson sought acclaim based on the belief that any self-respecting, civilized nation possessed a national literature and consequently honoured its authors, Hurley suggests that Richardson merits some measure of recognition for having articulated truths regarding the collective Canadian psyche.[15] In this way, literature is understood to produce national identity: its role is to tell people who they are in collective terms.

Hurley is not alone in adopting this position. For his part, after having justified his interest in Wacousta by citing "the belief of many critics that Richardson is the first important Canadian novelist and Wacousta the seminal Canadian novel" (Preface xiii), Douglas Cronk augments the symbolic value of Richardson's "most highly acclaimed work" by pronouncing it "an important national symbol for contemporary Canadians" (Introduction xvii). Similarly, Donald Stephens conceives of The Canadian Brothers as a book that not only "revealed the psychology of the author" but "helped create seminal mythologies about this country" (Introduction xvii). Again, one must ask whether it was the text titled The Canadian Brothers that helped create such mythologies, or whether these arose from the discourse that surrounded the novel's presentation and critical reception. Here, Cronk links literary value with national significance. Thus, on the basis of a work's "national" value, we are led back, in a roundabout way, to Richardson and his understanding of the literary institution of the mid-nineteenth century.

Criticism of the twentieth century may elucidate Richardson's imaginative writing by situating it within the context of the debate on romanticism versus realism, or by describing it as inappropriately "aristocratic" rather than more fittingly "democratic," or even as a commentary on "the Canadian ability to reconcile cultural inheritances" (Crawley, Introduction xviii);[16] but, in his own times, Richardson's discourse on his works presented them clearly in terms of their national and historical utility and importance. In discussing the study of reading

practices, Roger Chartier draws attention to the basic tension that exists between what he calls "creative" and "authorized" readings:

> D'un côté, la lecture est pratique créatrice, activité productrice de significations aucunement réductibles aux intentions des auteurs de textes ou des faiseurs de livres. ... D'un autre côté, le lecteur, toujours, est pensé par l'auteur, le commentateur, l'éditeur comme devant être assujetti à un sens unique, à une compréhension correcte, à une lecture autorisée. (13)

The study of the authorized reading entails the identification of the "strategies" employed by editors and authors in their attempt to orient the reader's comprehension and reception of the text, or to impose what Chartier refers to as "une orthodoxie du texte, une lecture obligée" (13).

Richardson's authorized reading of Wacousta and The Canadian Brothers, insofar as Canadian readers are concerned, is evident in his presentation of these works: his strategy is to assign them a role in defining national identity. The "furtherance of CANADIAN NATIONAL LITERATURE" that Richardson proposed in an advertisement that appeared in the New Era is based on romantic conceptions of nationalisms, the discourse on which he had learned elsewhere.[17] Accordingly, Richardson does not present his works as novels, fiction, imaginative writing, or as intended simply for amusement, but as "NATIONAL AND HISTORICAL WORKS" whose value is also based on their instructive potential:

> The two sets will be neatly and separately bound, so as to make two books, which as volumes of reference, it cannot but be supposed, will find their way into the library of every Canadian Gentleman, desirous of knowing any thing connected with the early history of his own country.

In the same vein, Richardson's earlier preface to The Canadian Brothers stresses that, because of the work's "historical character," it was "deemed of sufficient importance not to be confounded with mere works of fiction" (4). The instructive, useful role of historical writing is valued more than "mere works of fiction;" this helps explain Richardson's desire to include his works in the more serious category. The "orthodox" reading he wishes to enforce would count these works as important historical documents. Furthermore, in dedicating The Canadian Brothers to John Harvey, who had distinguished himself in the War of 1812, Richardson reinforces the work's historical pertinence. In a letter to Harvey dated 20 December 1839, Richardson presents The Canadian Brothers more specifically as a tribute to those who fought in the War, and writes that by advertising the work "in towns, no matter how small" it shall be

> gratifying ... to think that in so doing, I shall at the same time be the means of bringing before the more vivid recollections of its population, the debt of gratitude Canada owes to her most prominent defenders.
> (Stephens, Introduction xlvi)

In this way, Richardson portrays his enterprise as a service that he renders to the public by immortalizing former acts of military glory of which a nation might be proud. Many editors who promoted the work in newspapers before its publication in 1840 took the same approach by emphasizing the work's historical dimension and consequent national relevance. They note approvingly that the work is based on real events, and that its characters include the illustrious Brock, Tecumseh, and Barclay, figures who in themselves justify interest in Richardson's writing.[18]

Curiously, neither Richardson nor the newspaper editors mention pleasure or enjoyment as possible motives for reading. One exception is John Gibson, editor of the Literary Garland, whose observations regarding Wacousta contradict those made by Richardson himself in the New Era advertisement. Though he finds the work "too painfully intense," Gibson nonetheless recognizes that this quality

> will be considered by many, as only adding to the value of the book, affording, as it does, a never failing source of pleasurable excitement, when the reader would be relieved of graver studies, which, being too assiduously followed, disease the mind as much as the want of exercise debilitates the body. ("Our Table" 144)

Without ever alluding to the work's national or historical significance, Gibson implies that Wacousta provides the reader with a healthy alternative to more serious fare. He even accords Richardson the compliment that "no author has ever more efficiently attained one of the principal objects of a novel writer--the delightful employment of an idle hour--than the author of 'Wacousta, or the Prophecy.'" Thus, Gibson recommends Wacousta primarily for its entertainment value, and classifies the work clearly as a novel. His hopes for Richardson's success in his plan to republish Wacousta do not urge Canadian gentlemen to support a useful work of reference; rather, they anticipate the day when the novel "will be found in every boudoir from the Atlantic to Lake Erie."

If we contrast Gibson's comments on Wacousta with Richardson's New Era advertisement, the latter's strategy in presenting his companion works is laid bare. The promotion of reading for

amusement is not an attractive prospect for Richardson, since a reading practice so directed would not see the necessity of differentiating between available editions. Given that his goal is to interest readers in purchasing both Wacousta and The Canadian Brothers, which he characterizes as national and historical works, Richardson argues further that the edition he offers shall be the legitimate one:

> it must be borne in mind, that the English Edition of Wacousta, sent for to this country, EXPRESSLY FOR CANADIAN READERS, is the only correct one that has ever issued from the Press. The piratical reprint in Waldie's Circulating Library, is incorrect, several of the most forcible passages in the book, being left out altogether.

Richardson reinforces the superiority of the "correct" edition for Canadian readers by stating that it will be accompanied by a copy of the "autograph letter" sent to the King, and that all subscribers will secure for themselves the privilege of purchasing a copy of "Tecumseh" at half-price. He adds that

> the last English number of ["Tecumseh"] is to be placed under the foundation stone of the Monument to be erected to that celebrated Warrior, yet which, it is intended to reprint from the original MSS.--thus completing the series of CANADIAN WORKS.

The assumption that underlies Richardson's offer is that Canadians are interested in their "national" history and will wish to support his undertaking, thereby aiding him in assuming the "weighty responsibility incurred in the furtherance of CANADIAN NATIONAL LITERATURE." However, for those who read for mere pleasure, one edition might arguably be as good as another. It is clear that such readers would not share the same conception of the reader's repertoire of behaviours that Richardson tries to impose.

At this point it is worth pausing to elaborate briefly on the repertoires that underlie Richardson's discourse. These repertoires, borrowed from the source literature, pertain not only to the textual models that come into play in Richardson's works, but also to the type of behaviour he may exhibit as an author and expect from his readers. His New Era advertisement underlines the fact that his works have

> been got up at great expense and serious inconvenience to the author, without that remuneration from the Canadian public, which as a Canadian writer, he has had a right to expect from the more liberal portion of the community.

Here, Richardson's emphasis on the quality of being "Canadian" is an appeal to the community's sense of its national or patriotic duty to support his endeavours; he simply takes this obligation to be straightforward. He is not so much interested in concretely and humbly promoting practices of reading and writing at a grassroots level by opening a school or organizing local reading clubs and libraries; instead, he assumes that certain practices and behaviours are well-established and will be "applied" by a sufficient number of "Canadians" to the case of himself and his writings. Likewise, he takes for granted that his idea of the role and function of literature, as well as his understanding of the "rules of the game" of the literary institution, will be largely shared, valued, and acted upon.

Although Richardson seems somewhat ignorant of the interdependence of institutional factors where literary practices are concerned, his remarks in Eight Years in Canada reveal his understanding of "literature" as consisting not only of a

collection of texts, but also of a repertoire of behaviours. In this publication he reiterates his views regarding the admiration that is owed the author, regardless of his perceived degree of talent:

> It has been the custom in all ages, and in all countries, for men of education and acquirement to join in testifying regard for their authors, however mediocre their talent; and even in the United States --the last country which has given birth to men of genius and literary accomplishments--we find the caterers to the republic of letters treated with that consideration which the civilized world has agreed in according to them. In Canada, they have this yet to learn and practice. (93)

According to Richardson, "caterers to the republic of letters" should command respect and admiration regardless of the quality of their works, and however these may be judged. What is important is the very fact of their existence and perceived relation to the value of "nationality:" such works are significant because every civilized country boasts a literature. It follows that the inhabitants of a country should be grateful to authors for endowing them with one of the recognized trademarks of civilization. Such recognition is one of what Richardson calls the "*convenances* of life;" it constitutes seemly behaviour.

Richardson often notes favourably that Americans tended to accord him the marks of distinction and respect he felt he deserved, despite the fact that they were not his countrymen. Interestingly, in his account of a trip to New York where some gentlemen familiar with his writing honoured him with a gratifying degree of attention and hospitality, Richardson no longer expresses himself in the conventional terms of nationality and historical

importance that had accompanied his remarks to Canadian readers of the New Era or The Canadian Brothers. Instead, he acknowledges the diversionary aspect of his writing, and portrays its historical moments as pertinent to the American past. Thus, his hosts pay their compliments

> not so much [to] the man as [to] the author, who had been the means of presenting them with a picture illustrative of an important epoch in American history, and of amusing and interesting their minds, albeit only for a brief hour, and therefore sought to render to him that return, for the bestowal of mental recreation, which they felt, perhaps more than was necessary, was his due. They offered that meed of homage to literature which the cultivated mind is ever prompt to tender, and investing one of its humblest disciples with all the attributes which are properly those of its grand masters, thus proved their readiness to sacrifice unrestrainedly at its altar. (172-73)

This passage provides an example of the curious mix of humility and vanity that characterizes Richardson's discourse on literary behaviours. On the one hand, he assumes the stance of a humble, gentleman-writer--"the last man in the world to herald the announcement" of his being an author whose "publications ... have commanded the attention and, in many instances, met with the unqualified approbation of the American people" (172)--as if he were reluctant to acknowledge recognition of his work, or his part in providing reading entertainment. On the other hand, he participates fully in the romantic conception of the artist, which opposes the status of the "author" to that of the mere "man." This conception also implies that the realm of literature is perceived to be wholly divorced from the everyday world, as if it existed on some higher, more worthy plane of existence; it is a cultural practice that connotes distinction, and is invested with a kind of

religious value. Hence, gentlemen of "cultivated mind" are prepared to "sacrifice ... at its altar," and Richardson portrays himself as a literary "disciple." Needless to say, this discourse provides little room for the discussion of economic questions involving copyright, profit, or piracy, or the right to government patronage or privilege of some kind. However, it is precisely regarding such questions that Richardson seems to experience some misgivings, though he is hesitant to address them outright.

Richardson's discussion of his lack of "recognition" in Canada displays little inclination on his part to "sacrifice" at the altar of literature by continuing to write, regardless of what he took to be his limited readership. As noted above, he was not particularly moved by the prospect of posthumous recognition. The arguments he uses to justify his claims for acknowledgement where Canadian readers are concerned are of interest because, although he reproduces some of the humble discourse that he employs in describing the flattering behaviour of his American admirers, he is hard-pressed to articulate an explanation of literature's inherent value. He begins thus:

> No man less than I do, possesses the vanity of authorship. I look upon the art of ingenius writing, not as a merit, but a mere incidental gift, for which one is more indebted to nature than to judicious application.
>
> (...) If ... therefore, I regard painting and sculpture as requiring far less ingenuity than certain complicated operations in mechanicism, how much less in the scale of comparison must I necessarily class literature, and particularly that lighter literature which is embraced in works of fiction. The power so to weave together the incidents of a tale that they may be made comprehensible and attractive to the reader, is a mere gift, which some persons possess in a greater or less degree than others; and can reflect

> no more credit upon him who is endowed with it, than can reasonably be claimed by any man or woman who has been, by nature, fortunately gifted with personal beauty or attraction superior to that enjoyed by the the generality of their kind. ... It costs him no effort, and therefore cannot be said to be much merit. (93-94)

Here, in contrast to his New Era advertisement, Richardson counts himself as a writer of fictional works, and goes to some length to express his conception of the accidental nature of "genius." Because authorship demands little effort, in comparison with various other undertakings, Richardson implies that the author of fictional works deserves no special attention. Yet he then poses the obvious question in connection with his reception in Canada:

> [why is it] that I allude, in a spirit of censure and complaint, to the absence of honoring notice by their countrymen, of the literary effusions of the few Canadian writers we have? The answer to this is very simple: Because it is the custom of the civilized world, and has been such for ages; and however I may differ from that world in my estimate of the lighter literature of the day, still as *all* are agreed in in rendering honor to those whom they have invested with an overrated merit, the exception is so gross and so glaring as to form a proper subject for animadversion. (94)

Thus, though he accepts no responsibility for having established the "rules" of the literary game, and even claims to doubt their validity, Richardson nonetheless appeals to them because they exist, apparently by consensus, and must therefore be observed. Authors are to be honoured simply because "it is done."

Much as he professes to be at odds with the practice of "overrating" authors' merits, Richardson employs the argument of national value in order to justify unqualified support for the "literary effusions" of Canadians. As a result, he returns to the idea of literary behaviours based on nationalism, which he had

invoked in his attempts to promote Wacousta and The Canadian Brothers:

> Where nations unite among themselves to elevate their men of letters, and when it is universally admitted that their efforts reflect favourably upon the land of their birth, and tend to raise it in the scale of civilization, any deviation from a principle so sacred and acknowledged, can only be regarded as a slight, whether originating in ignorance or in wilfulness.
> (94-95)

According to Richardson, it is in the interests of individual nations to admire their men of letters because such recognition both confirms and enhances their degree of civilization; furthermore, the veneration of authors as practiced among civilized nations serves as a common, unifying factor. It therefore follows that one of the products of the literary system, as Richardson conceives of it, is not only the articulation of national identity, but also, on another level, the eradication of national identity within the world community of civilized nations. These conflicting aspects of his conception of literature and its national value serve once again to highlight the contradictory nature of his discourse, and bring with them a number of questions: As a colony of the British empire, do Canadians not already participate in the "national" literature of the mother country? If, as Richardson suggests, Canada should provide a market for the "consumption of home manufactures" (91)--that is, for goods produced in the mother country--should cultural products not be included in this category? If they are, and if cultural products such as books and periodicals are distributed and consumed in Canada, even if certain behavioural repertoires are not widespread, are Canadians not showing their

loyalty in consuming such goods? Would such cultural products not serve to reinforce the identification of Canadian inhabitants with the British empire? Is not the desire for a separate Canadian literature as dangerous as the demand for some form of responsible government? Would Canadians be judged to be civilized if they were to praise the works of Fenimore Cooper? Why is it that an author may be appreciated outside his country for the entertainment value of his works, while in his own country, his countrymen must recognize his specifically national importance?

Such questions become all the more intriguing if we ponder them in the light of the different approaches to identity that Richardson espouses. As noted in connection with _Eight Years in Canada_, his conception of identity depends on whether he addresses his reader as Richardson, man of letters, or as Richardson, political commentator. If we examine this work, which includes discussions relating to both literature and politics, we may perceive the extent to which these two fields are associated with variant approaches to the problem of identity. When Richardson deals primarily with literature and his quest for national recognition, he refers to "Canadian literature" and "Canadian readers." In these cases, the qualifier "Canadian" would seem to apply to a unified space and population; indeed, Richardson appears to confirm this impression when he complains of having attracted only two hundred and fifty subscribers for _The Canadian Brothers_ among the "Canadian people," whose population he describes as "little exceeding a million of persons" (108). This number would include the inhabitants of both Canadas at the time. We might

construe this inclusive reference to the Canadian people as a sign of Richardson's version of an imagined Canadian community. As such, it certainly might be described as constituting a case of "community in anonymity" (Anderson 40), since the community Richardson has in mind remains quite vague. What are the geographical borders of his Canada? Does "Canadian" apply to both Upper and Lower Canada, or to the united Canadas, after 1841? Does he hope to be the founder of a national literature that will be pertinent for both English- and French-speaking Canadians? Or does he see himself as more representative of Upper Canadians, especially if we consider the geographical territory depicted in his novels? If so, how does he see his relationship to English-speaking Lower Canadians? More to the point, what is his understanding of French-speaking Canada's historical experience? These questions suggest that what is unclear in his call for a national literature is Richardson's conception of the Canadian nation, which he does not trouble to define for readers of Eight Years in Canada. Indeed, his call for a national literature takes on a conventional quality: his discourse as man of letters presents literature as a desirable attribute because it confirms the existence of nationality. Since the affirmation of nationality is taken to be an undisputed goal of any nation, it therefore makes sense to exhalt literature, which plays a unifying role in its representation of national history. The "national" writings thus provide a sense of common ground and serve to rally the nation; they are understood to articulate a shared sense of belonging.

However, Richardson the political commentator of Eight Years in Canada repeatedly contradicts this position, much as he did when writing as editor of the Canadian Loyalist, & Spirit of 1812. While Richardson the author claims recognition from the "one" nation, his parallel political discourse betrays the troublesome existence of the many, thereby undermining the cohesion of his imagined community. Indeed, as he points out in the opening pages of his work, the reason he returned to Canada at all is as a result of the "misguided violence" (5) of the rebellions, just as one of his goals in writing Eight Years in Canada is to discuss some of the political measures that had been taken to redress the situation. Not surprisingly, the discussion of political circumstances must take into account the presence of contending factions whose very existence speaks for a considerable degree of disunity in the colony, in spite of the Act of Union.

Richardson's praise for Lord Durham's recommended political changes acknowledges the competing interests and outlooks of French- and English-speaking inhabitants in no uncertain terms: the changes envisaged "must be valueless as long as the chasm which separated the British from the French Canadian population, as well in interest as in feeling, should remain open" (34). Though Richardson hopes that "the day may never arrive when either the French language or the French Canadian people will become as remembrances of the past" (102), he nonetheless shares the widespread opinion among English-speaking politicians that the political power of French-speaking Canadians, who form the majority of the population, must be curbed in order to "give a prepondering

power to British interests" (34). Under Durham's proposed federal union "the French ascendancy would necessarily be swamped, and thus a vast change in the political condition of the country be effected" without "in the slightest degree wounding their national pride" (34). Once again, we encounter the confused use of qualifiers that are called upon to distinguish between different groups who occupy a geographical space that has been united politically; as soon as political leadership is at issue, "Canadians" are no longer understood to form a homogeneous national group. Thus, in discussing politics, Richardson does not hesitate to use the word "British" as opposed to "Canadian," the term that he prefers when dealing with literary questions. Similarly, he allows for the existence of "the French Canadian people" and "their national pride" (34), thereby providing another indication of his acknowledgement of the fragmented, plural nature of the population.

Yet the group of Canadians that poses the greatest threat to Richardson's community are members of the same "British population" whose political ascendancy must be ensured. This group is composed of reform politicians of all stripes whom Richardson lumps together in a single category. To his mind, there are a total of two clearly defined positions that may be assumed on political questions: one involves entire dedication to, and support of, the connection with Britain, and tolerates only those modifications to the functioning of government as mapped out by Durham, while the other seeks to subvert that connection and break all ties with the mother country. The programme related to the first of these positions embodies what Richardson takes to be legitimate political

aims, while the second incarnates the essence of republican rule. For Richardson, there is no viable "Canadian" compromise open to those who support one or the other of these stances. Consequently, he shows no small degree of irritation in his assessment, in Eight Years in Canada, of Sydenham's years as governor. Sydenham's "irreparable evil" (188) was the willingness he showed to name "Radicals" (192) to the executive council. Richardson took exception to this practice not only on the basis of any purely political principle, but also because he considered it an affront to the group with which he identified himself, and which, in his opinion, should have been justly rewarded for its loyalty:

> By this palpable leaning towards the rebel party, who styled themselves reformers, [Sydenham] finished by disgusting every loyal man in the Colony. It was an insult to these latter to ask them to cooperate with men whose every act had betrayed their aversion to British dominion. (189)

To Richardson, it was unacceptable that loyal men "who had come nobly forward to the rescue of the Crown" were asked

> to take their seats at the same Council Board with those who had assailed the dearest privileges of that Crown. ... [T]o attempt to form a Council in which these two parties should have equal ascendancy, was virtually to dispossess of all power those whose devotion to the Monarchy had saved the country. (191)

Here, Richardson speaks clearly in terms of loyalty to the Crown, the monarchy, and the British connection; there is no mention of patriotism, of serving one's country, or of defending the Canadian nation. The values he upholds are those that honour the colony's allegiance to the mother country. Hence, he suggests that Sydenham could have made nominations to the executive council that would have seen it composed of suitably "loyal" individuals, and that his

choices might have been easily justified to the population in a straightforward address, such as that which follows:

> 'People of Canada, Her Majesty, yielding to the desire you have expressed, consents that the boon of Responsible Government shall be conferred upon you; but, just as she is gracious, she cannot admit to domination over the great mass of her Canadian subjects men who have been suspected if not absolutely attainted with treason--whose principles have been decidedly hostile to British connection, and whose actions have had a direct tendency to sever it. ... They who have continued loyal to their Sovereign will now receive the reward of their fidelity, by being placed in a position to remove abuses.' (189)

This is the sort of language that Richardson had been awaiting from a governor, in respect to himself in particular, ever since he had arrived in Canada and defended Durham's recommendations. Other sections of Eight Years in Canada detail his efforts in seeking some tangible sign of preferment, first from Durham, then from Sydenham and Bagot, each time without success. Richardson apparently based his claims to patronage not only on his status as a national author who deserved some sort of recognition, but on past services rendered to Great Britain. These included the "serious sacrifice of an engagement of much pecuniary importance" (184) that he had made in supporting Durham's political plans; the fact that he was working towards the population's moral improvement by publishing his newspaper; and the history of his family's military services to Britain (Beasley, Quixote 130). Thus, when it came to petitioning governors, allegiance to the mother country was an argument that carried as much weight, if not more, as contributions to the cause of nationalism in Canada. Richardson prided himself on his Loyalist heritage, and had defended his

status in the colony in the pages of the Canadian Loyalist on this basis:

> It has ever been the custom--and we can see no good reason why the principle should be departed from in Canada--to hold the oldest families of a country in a certain degree of esteem, and to reward and honor the descendants of those particularly who have been known to have done good service to their Sovereign, in the hour of need. ... [W]e claim to be the oldest British family in this Province, and we moreover claim that the services performed by the head of that family take precedence, both in date and importance, of any others which has been rendered to the Crown.
> (12 October 1843) [sic]

As far as a subject's duty and its rewards are concerned, Richardson has a clear sense of the hierarchy of inhabitants in the colony and of how this order ought to be respected. The fact of having borne arms in the colony's defence is, in his view, a distinction that cannot be claimed by the "Radicals of Western Canada." He therefore observes that "[t]he Conservatives *do* know the use of arms, and twice have they proved it by preserving this Colony to the Empire; whereas their enemies cannot even handle a musket as a soldier should" (29 June 1843). Once again, we may conclude that there are varying degrees of being Canadian, the result of which is the division, rather than the unification, of the community.

Given Richardson's view of the justness of this social hierarchy, we can easily imagine his outrage, in 1841, so soon after the rebellions, at his having been denied the job of Queen's Printer in favour of Stewart Derbishire. As member of the House of Assembly for Bytown, Derbishire was also known to Richardson as a reformer who, together with Richardson's enemy, Francis Hincks, had

assumed the editorship of the Kingston Chronicle and transformed its orientation so that it became an organ for spreading the message of reform. Richardson was finally successful in uncovering his rivals' partnership in the paper, which they were obliged to sell in November 1843 (Beasley, Quixote 130, 134, 139). However, it is unlikely that this small victory was much comfort to Richardson, who simply could not tolerate the thought that the interests of the loyal were being marginalized in order to accommodate those who had threatened the colony with "civil war." Likewise, there was no forgiving Sydenham for having thrown himself "into the arms of the extreme Radicals" (Eight Years 192).

Richardson's language in Eight Years in Canada may strike us as somewhat strong, yet it is considerably more moderate than the habitual tone of the Canadian Loyalist. As a newspaper editor, he participated wholeheartedly in the virulent polemics that were typical of the nineteenth century, and appears to have taken his task as a spokesman of the opposition press quite seriously. This weekly newspaper of four pages included accounts of political debates and speeches; a column dated at Kingston and titled the "Canadian Loyalist," in which Richardson shared his political commentary with readers; excerpts from other newspapers on political questions; and, more occasionally, some literary works and articles related to historical subjects.[19]

As suggested above, Richardson's contribution to political debate and the shaping of public opinion prompted him to articulate a more specific conception of identity. As in the political assessments made in Eight Years in Canada, he proclaims his

Loyalist roots in the Canadian Loyalist with some vigour. Accordingly, the illustration that figures at the head of each number depicts a monument to Brock, dated 13 October 1812. It is flanked, on the one side, designated "1812," by a soldier on one knee who looks up to the heavens, and on the other, designated "1837," by a man digging, whose actions are accompanied by the word "Rebellion." These dates refer to the two key moments in the Loyalist history of Upper Canada when Loyalists answered the call to defend their province; as a result, other newspaper editors did not fail to seize on the reference. Shortly after the Canadian Loyalist's first appearance in January 1843, the Montreal Courier questioned the wisdom of looking back to 1812, a date which it took to be potentially divisive for the population at a time when circumstances urged that inhabitants be brought closer together. Consequently, the paper's editor criticizes the

> very original engraving which is intended we suppose to illustrate the motto ["in hoc signo spes"] and throw light on the proceedings of the Loyalist. Two stiff-looking military heroes standing on each side a monument, convey to our minds nothing in keeping with the actual state of things in this Colony at present whilst the drawing is in itself so ridiculous as to be a perfect caricature. (Beasley, Quixote 135)

This criticism implies that Richardson's conception of loyalty is behind the times. Indeed, Richardson had been absent from Canada for the better part of the 1830s, during which time Toryism had begun to admit more moderate views of loyalty, so that there was "less unquestioning acceptance of imperial governance and increasingly loyalty was expressed with colonial nationalist rather than Loyalist rhetoric" (Mills 72). Richardson's political

adherence to his version of loyalism might be seen as something of an early example of a variation on the idea of a "limited identity" in Canada.[20] His habit of resolutely refusing the broadened concept of loyalty that Reformers had been promoting since the outbreak of the alien question in the 1820s suggests that Richardson attributed a type of exclusive "ethnicity" to his Loyalist heritage, and that, at least where the rhetoric of his newspaper was concerned, he was reluctant to abandon his staunch support for the imperial connection.

Besides the basic opposition that pitted "loyal" Tories against "Radicals," Richardson's political discourse relies on some other pairings of antagonistic parties. One of these is that which sees the interests of the population of "Western Canada ... chained ... to a majority which they already feel to be an incubus around their necks" (7 September 1843). The circumstances that prompt such reflections include the threat that the legislature will be moved from Kingston to Montreal. This leads to another pairing, which divides representatives from Canada West according to their position on this question. Hence, Richardson criticizes Robert Baldwin for having "pledged himself, to the French party, to take the birth-right of Western Canada--the Seat of Government--to the opposite section of the Province" (5 October 1843). Richardson is even moved, in a column devoted to the subject of "The Seat of Government," to speak out against British government for its approach to this question:

> no man in his senses can for one moment believe that the Imperial Government will be so insane or so impolitic as to disregard the remonstrances which have

> been conveyed against the removal of the Seat of Government from the limits of Upper Canada--remonstrances made not only by means of public meetings and addresses, got up in almost every section of the country, but through a powerful opposition. ... [W]e can never bring ourselves to credit (until it should actually occur) that the British Crown hold so cheaply, either the interests or expressed wishes of the Saxon population of this country, as to reject what is now so universally--and without distinction of Tory or Reformer--demanded as a right. (9 November 1843)

Richardson's expectations of the imperial government were to lead to disappointment; in the meantime, members of the House of Assembly from Canada West who support the move to Montreal appear on Richardson's "Black List." They are described as having "'sold their birth right for a mess of porridge,' or, in other words, sacrificed the interests of the Western Section of the Province to the magical influence of Executive power," and Richardson sees it as his duty to denounce "their public apostacy" (16 November 1843).

Members of the "Saxon population" in Canada East are not spared in Richardson's contributions to this debate, and are threatened for failing to recognize the rights of British descendants in Canada West. He warns that if the seat of government is moved to Montreal and London approves of the measure, Canada West might very well respond by demanding that the union be dissolved:

> when this takes place, let the Lower Canada English, now so desirous of a change, be prepared to fight their own battles against the gradually increasing domination of the French Canadians, for assuredly they will find little sympathy in Western Canada, after having so wilfully contributed to the power of these latter. (26 October 1843)

This passage provides an example of how questions of political interest serve as a means of distinguishing between differing segments of the population.

In the case of Canada West, Richardson suggests that the "Saxon population" may also be further broken down. Thus, in a comparative discussion of the functioning of government in England and in Canada, he makes the following remarks:

> No strong jealousies exist [in England], arising from the attempt of one party to revolutionize the Kingdom, and place it under the dominion of a Foreign power; neither is there to be traced any of that painful distrust, amounting almost to hatred, which naturally springs from the struggle of two races--we allude to the Yankee Radicals and the Anglo-Canadians--for the possession of power. (4 January 1844)

"British;" "Saxon;" "Loyalist;" "Western Canada;" "Anglo-Canadians;" "French Canadians;" "Yankee;" this mix of terms is used to reflect on the various oppositions Richardson perceives in the political life of his countrymen. One day sees "the monster Republicanism" as the primary threat as it "stalk[s] with giant steps throughout the land, prostrating before it all the dearest and most cherished institutions of our forefathers" (30 November 1843), while the next, it is the non-British majority of Canada East whose political domination is to be feared.

On the whole, this latter group appears more benign in Richardson's discussions. This is because the conception of French Canada as encountered in a number of his political articles, is primarily romantic. Radical politicians and their politics may receive hyperbolic treatment at Richardson's hands, but he does not recommend they be tolerated due to any romantic, literary

ingredient they might add to the quality of being Canadian. This tolerance is reserved solely for French Canada. As the group who first gave "a character of poetry to the soil," French Canadians are to be valued for the degree of folklore that they bring to the general Canadian identity that Richardson extolls when discussing things literary as opposed to things political. Thus, the pragmatic, utilitarian, "pounds, shillings, and pence" mentality of the Saxon is leavened by the French Canadian's poetic nature:

> Take from Canada the interest which is thrown around it, by the peculiar character of the French Canadian, and it is at once reduced to the condition of a naked and a barren Colony. It is the French Canadian who gives to it an *ancienneté*. He is, to this country, what the Norman is to France and the Basque to Spain. What character of Romance could Moore, with all his poetic ingenuity have given to his descent of the Rapids, had he been rowed by a crew of tame and matter-of-fact Englishmen; instead of men whose national, simple, yet picturesque manners and costume, and whose mirthful song, contrasting with the seeming perils which surrounded them, formed a striking feature, *per se*, in the *tableau*. Who, that has seen a fleet of batteaux as we have, in the days of our boyhood, manned by sturdy and *capotée*d Voyageurs, on their route for the North West, rowing to the wild strains of their measured voices, and infusing a spirit of exhiliration even into the bosoms of those who simply beheld them, would even desire to see the usages of the French Canadians discontinued? (4 April 1844)

Richardson is less impressed by whatever the reality of French Canada might be than he is by its "picturesque" qualities, though he does go on to urge its "conciliation," presumably in a political sense. And, although he agrees that the French language should be preserved, he makes it clear that the administrative life of the colony requires "a full and correct knowledge of the English language." In other words, the language of political functions and the colony's officialdom shall be primarily English. The French

language may co-exist with it, preferably as an aesthetic element in the poetic, decorative *tableau* of the Voyageurs. As such, the French language belongs to Richardson's literary discourse on Canada, while the English language is associated with political power, and is best-suited to the matter-of-fact disputes of that field. French Canada's linguistic difference goes unrecognized and unvalued on the political level, while at the same time being assimilated to the all-encompassing, "Canadian" identity that Richardson refers to when discussing the literary field. As soon as French Canada is admired for the poetic qualities it brings to the Canadian identity, it is no longer seen as presenting a political threat.

Once again, we are faced with the gulf that separates Richardson's discourse on literature from his political commentary. Though both discourses are concerned with the question of identity, they contradict each other since the unified culture that Richardson seeks and promotes in the literary field does not correspond to the culture he discusses in political terms. He may be a Canadian author, but he is a Loyalist politician.

Richardson's discourse on literature reveals his desire, and impatience, for the emergence of an autonomous literary field that would respect and value his literary works--and also provide him with more of an income. In other words, he wants the cultural and symbolic value that he attributes to his work to be accompanied with commercial value. Yet his experience shows that there is no guarantee that these two types of value go hand in hand.[21] His

expectations regarding the status of the literary system in Canada are consistently disappointed as he comes to realize that his conception of reading and writing practices and the literary market simply do not coincide with the situation he finds there.[22]

In this way, Richardson's disappointment at his lack of acclaim reveals the extent to which the elements of the literary system are interdependent. As he learned, it was impossible to obtain the type of success he sought by appealing to an assumed sentiment of nationalism and lecturing Canadians at large on the seemliness of supporting native-born writers. He may well have taken it upon himself to embody the literary establishment and speak as the authority on literary matters, but to state the way that things ideally should be is seldom sufficient to bring them into being.

As we have noted, Richardson's determination to name the existence of the literary field and impose a sense of order on it constitutes a point of intersection with the literary discourse of critics of the latter half of the twentieth century. Like Richardson, these later critics are active in establishing the limits of the literary field by deciding which texts will form a part of it and why. Ironically enough, Richardson and his works have come to occupy an important role in the twentieth-century discourse on nineteenth-century writing in Canada. By neglecting the greater bulk of his writings and choosing to focus primarily on Wacousta and, to a lesser extent, The Canadian Brothers, this century's critics are free to construct Richardson as a representative figure in the Canadian tradition they wish to

recognize. From this perspective, it is impractical to dwell on his other writings since these do not confirm the role they assign him and his works. Just as Richardson used the term "Canadian" in an inclusive sense in his literary discourse, so do twentieth-century critics confine themselves to those of his works that allow them to distill a general "Canadian" function for them, without having to account for the contradictory conceptions of identity that become evident if all of his published writing is considered.

CHAPTER FIVE: THOMAS D'ARCY MCGEE AND THE DESIGN OF PROVIDENCE

During the summer of 1842, while Richardson's New Era was on the wane, a newcomer who was later to found a more successful paper of the same name, set foot in North America for the first time. Thomas D'Arcy McGee's career in the new world began in the United States when he was just seventeen years old, and largely took the form of a defence of the Irish and of Roman Catholicism in North America. The history of McGee's gradual disillusionment regarding republicanism as he came to know it in the United States and his subsequent conversion to the conservative, monarchical form of government to be found in Canada might well have qualified him in Richardson's eyes as a "comparative stranger" and "adventurer"--the type of immigrant mentioned with resentment in the Canadian Loyalist's mandate. Indeed, McGee's success in politics and his role as a father of Confederation seem cruelly ironic when contrasted with the miserable fate Richardson met with in his native land; while the ruined author of Wacousta emigrated to the United States in the hope that life would prove more agreeable amongst the reading Americans, McGee headed north and busied himself with the task of fostering cultural and political self-consciousness in Canada. It is unlikely that he had Richardson in mind when he launched *his* New Era in Montreal in 1857. Ten years later, in his frequently quoted "major cultural statement" (Ballstadt, "Thomas D'Arcy" 93), "The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion" (1867), McGee failed to mention either Richardson or his works in his brief assessment of Canadian books. Just as

Richardson had been ignorant of the literary efforts of his predecessors, it would seem that McGee was unaware of Richardson's activities in relation to the colony's literary life; at the very least, if he knew of either Wacousta or The Canadian Brothers--or any other of Richardson's works--he did not make a point of praising, or even mentioning, them.

McGee's discourse on Canadian literature narrowly links the project of establishing a literature with that of creating a new state out of the disparate British colonies in North America. Thus, for McGee, the importance of a national literature lies not so much in its "civilizing" or ornamental qualities as in its capacity to proclaim the nation's very existence. As such, the aims of McGee, the literary man, coincide with those of McGee, the politician, and may be seen as different, yet complementary, means of achieving the same end. While Richardson adopted variant approaches to the question of identity depending on whether he was discussing literary or political matters, McGee consistently stressed the objective of creating a new, united nationality; where Richardson made a formal, rhetorical appeal to the value of patriotism in emphasizing the national significance of his works, McGee saw the main function of literature in quite pragmatic terms. A national literature's primary role was to help constitute and consolidate political identity. Practices of reading and writing associated with the project of such a literature therefore served to concretize the idea of the state itself. At the same time, McGee's conception of a national literature as a necessary element in the creation of the "new nationality" that he envisaged also

assigned literature the task of distinguishing Canadians, or British Americans, specifically from Americans:

> Every country, every nationality, every people, must create and foster a National Literature, if it is their wish to preserve a distinct individuality from other nations. If precautions are not taken to secure this end, the distinctive character and features of a people must disappear. ... The popular mind must be trained and educated according to the physical appearances and social condition of the country; and the people who are so unfortunate as to possess no fountain from which they can procure the elixir of their existence, will soon disappear from the face of the earth, or become merged in some more numerous or more powerful neighbor. ("Protection for Canadian Literature," New Era 24 April 1858)

Elsewhere, his focus on "mental self-reliance" ("Mental" 1) partakes of the same fear that Bishop Strachan felt in the face of the perceived threat of reading materials and textbooks from the United States. Like Strachan, McGee had a strong personal stake in the promotion of a North American political formation that was distinct from the United States, and destined to remain so. Having "burned his bridges" south of the border, he must have been anxious to help to preserve a political sphere in which he might play an active role.

It has often been noted that McGee's earlier involvement in the Young Ireland movement acquainted him with the nationalist theories and literary models that he applied to Canadian circumstances. However, the difficulty McGee met with in North America was in having somehow to relate past historical events to a "people" that did not exist, and to a heterogeneous population for some of whom those events would not be meaningful. Hence, in prophesying a "new nationality" he was compelled to look to the future, and to what might potentially come to be, while his adapted

literary model demanded that he focus on the past, and what had been. This difficulty helps explain why McGee may alternately value and ignore the colony's history. If we return to Benedict Anderson's description of nationalist sentiment as being invested in an "imagined community," then the national community to be forged out of colonial union and celebrated by poets was doubly imagined in the sense that the union remained an amorphous thing of the future.

McGee's synthetic vision of a future Canada was coupled from the start with the project of continental expansion and schemes to attract greater numbers of immigrants. It was hoped that if the monarchical form of government could be so extended and the population augmented, the territorial growth of the United States would be thwarted and its "universal democracy doctrine" (Two Speeches 30) counterbalanced, if not held in check. Thus, he writes with enthusiasm of the prospect of colonizing still more territory:

> Vast forests await but the axe of the woodsman to make way for the corn field, the hamlet, or the populous city. The path of empire is westward, and fate promises for the moment a glorious future for the Provinces of British North America. Care must be taken, however, to attract the stream, or else it may wander through some other bed. Emigration must be encouraged by Canadian statesmen.
> ("Protection to Emigrants," New Era 20 April 1858)

Yet this vision of a "great new Northern nation" ("American" 37) to be achieved in part through the attraction of a greater number of emigrants seems in turn to have "blinded" McGee to a parallel nationalist movement that had been afoot for some time, and whose goal it was to unite and distinguish French Canada as a

community--or to distinguish *Canadiens* from Canadians or British Americans. This movement gained momentum following the Act of Union in 1840, and was one step--or a couple of decades--ahead of McGee in its task of fostering a sense of identity:

> L'Union conduit à une transformation décisive du champ de l'opinion publique : il n'est plus question, comme auparavant, de revendiquer en faveur d'un projet de société progressiste. Il s'agit plutôt de défendre une collectivité menacée de disparition. Le travail entrepris durant les années 1820 et 1830, pour donner des bases documentaires sûres à l'histoire nationale "canadienne", va servir à l'affirmation identitaire par la construction d'une mémoire collective. Les chercheurs ne se contentent plus d'accumuler et de classer les pièces : ils commencent à les rendre publiques par l'édition et à les réinterpréter. Ils s'emploient par là au projet urgent de fonder le pays par la parole, de décrire et de faire connaître la nation.
> (Lemire, vie 3:249)

For a literate individual interested in embarking upon a political career, it would have been difficult to remain wholly unapprised of such a development. Perhaps one of the most significant ways in which McGee emerged as a "prophet of the new nationality" (Ballstadt, "Thomas D'Arcy" 85) was in his very disinclination to acknowledge this other nationalist movement, preferring instead to collapse French Canada's identity into that of the greater colonial union that he advocated: some one hundred years later, Margaret Atwood was to take much the same approach in equating 'survival' with '*la survivance.*' Although McGee may turn to historical figures of New France for the purposes of some of the poems included in his Canadian Ballads, he is loath to comment on those of his French-language contemporaries who are engaged in a campaign similar to his own, yet wholly at odds with its objectives. While he wrote his numerous articles on the need for a national

literature and on the impediments that prevented one from flourishing, his French-language counterparts were busy tending to *la littérature canadienne* which, in their opinion, already existed and preserved the "elixir of their existence," to use McGee's phrase.

Indeed, French Canada's elite had covered a good deal of ground in the process of "naming the nation" well before McGee ever set foot in North America. Thus, as feelings of national identity grew from 1830 until 1845, "ils se donnent un patron, une fête, un drapeau, un hymne, un emblème (feuille d'érable) dits 'nationaux'; ils rendent 'nationales' l'histoire, l'éducation, la littérature" (Lortie 265). In the words of Charles Daoust, member of the *Institut Canadien* of Montreal in 1853, this nationality "à laquelle le peuple se cramponne comme par instinct" was not characterized by "la carriole à l'antique, la pipe et le curé" as a newspaper of Upper Canada portrayed it; rather, it was "un sentiment plutôt qu'une pensée définie; un souvenir plutôt qu'une réalité tangible ... c'est le culte de la patrie--c'est la religion des tombeaux" (Lamonde, Gens 62-63). Attempts to form public opinion and raise consciousness regarding this national identity already had a long history of their own. They emphasized the nation's past and its roots, and set about imagining a community by means of a discourse that was to have little in common with McGee's new nationality and its westward expansion. The following excerpt from a lecture given at the *Institut Canadien* by Guillaume Lévesque on 27 January 1848 provides an example of the competition McGee was up against:

Notre pays n'est ... que la création du grand fleuve;

> il en est l'âme et le foyer vivant.
> (...)
> Aujourd'hui...notre pays, à nous Canadiens, ne comprend que le Bas-Canada et s'étend, sur le grand fleuve, jusqu'à Saint Régis seulement.
> (...)
> Je veux parler de cette uniformité de moeurs, d'habitudes et de langage qui s'est établie et se maintient dans tout le pays ... . Le Canadien de Gaspé est le même que celui des bords de l'Outaouais, celui de Beauharnais le même que le montagnard du Saguenay. Et cette uniformité dans les moeurs, les habitudes et le langage ... est d'autant plus admirable qu'elle entraîne cette unanimité de sentiment et de pensée, qui font de tous les Canadiens pour ainsi dire un seul homme. C'est un peuple qui semble n'avoir qu'un même coeur et qu'un même esprit, et c'est là le plus beau trait dont il puisse s'enorgueillir. C'est à la fois sa vertu et sa force et sa sauvegarde, c'est là le principal avantage que nous retirons de cet ordre admirable[.] (Lévesque 296, 302, 311)[1]

This discourse adheres to the idea of a cohesive, homogeneous Canadian community that is rooted in a specific geographical territory. Its apparent uniformity of *moeurs*, *habitudes*, and *langage* is perceived to be the key to its strength and its identity. This is the Canadian community whose writings James Huston collected in his Répertoire national (1848) and whose history Garneau set out to tell in his Histoire du Canada depuis sa découverte jusqu'à nos jours (1845-1852). It does not include the literary works of Thomas Cary or of John Richardson, or of any other English-language writers, be they poets, editors, novelists or political commentators; instead, Huston and Garneau identify an alternate constellation of writers and texts that relate to the collective identity they wish to constitute and reinforce through the written word. Thus, while one fragmented system was emerging gradually in the English language, another emerged alongside it in French. Despite McGee's ballads on Jacques Cartier and his admiration for Garneau, an "historian of an undoubtedly high order"

("Mental" 5), there were few points of contact between these increasingly separate literary spheres. McGee's writings tend to confirm this state of affairs.

This chapter will examine McGee's discourse on literature within the context of the larger discussion of political and cultural identity at the time of Canada's Confederation. It will allow us to see how a writer who has commonly been perceived as a defender of political and cultural difference actually espoused a programme based on the desire to eliminate difference in the name of a greater political body. If we accept the idea that Confederation, "itself the product of great imagination and well-directed energy, nevertheless took place in an ideological void" (McDougall 63), then we may come to appreciate the difficulty McGee had in fashioning a compelling nationalist literary discourse. This difficulty was of course compounded by the persistent problem of having to advocate a specific, national identity for Canada within the contradictory framework of the British empire. Ultimately, it may be argued that the vague quality of "northernness" that he often evoked in his attempts to characterize "a region, hard, iron-bound and cold" with its "potent frigid air," "frozen plain" and "stormy pines" did not provide a strong enough basis for the articulation of a common identity.[2] The challenge McGee faced in adapting his nationalist theories of literature to a nationality that was yet to come into being, prefigured the dilemma that would perplex later generations who were to grapple with the idea of a "Canadian literature." (Alternatively, we may choose to agree with Peter J. Smith's argument to the effect that

"Canadian Confederation ... was not without ideological underpinning" and that "the commercial ideology of Canadian Tories was predominant politically in 1867" (29). If we do, then McGee's challenge was that of translating those unpoetic, unheroic underpinnings--which Smith takes to be the elaboration of a credit instrument, the creation of an outlet for men's ambitions, and the supposed guarantor of political stability--into a national literature; likewise no mean feat.)

Since the days of the confident literary nationalism of the 1960s and 1970s, contemporary critics have come to reflect on the nature and place of a national literature in a country fragmented by regional, cultural, political, and linguistic differences. For some, this has led to the study of Canadian literatures in the plural, of Québécois literature, or of hyphenated-Canadian literatures. For others, like W.J. Keith, it has entailed the use of qualifiers, as seen in the title of his Canadian Literature in English, along with a brief recognition of how the "linguistic complication" helps perpetuate the cultural "two solitudes," and the conclusion that, "[a]t the present time, English- and French-Canadian writing are best discussed separately" (7). Philip Stratford's work in the field of comparative Canadian literature clearly contradicts Keith's position, yet he, too, expresses certain reservations regarding his own research on English- and French-language writing in Canada:

> together with the phenomenon of parallel growth one must also register the fact that there has been little direct sharing of experience between the two literary communities. This does not invalidate the principle of parallelism but emphasizes another of its

> characteristics: that parallel lines never meet, or meet only in infinity. (3)

As a result, he is obliged to admit that "there is something artificial about treating the two Canadian literatures comparatively" (5). Others are more provocative in their assessment of the situation; thus, Milan V. Dimić states that "[o]ften the first insight about Canadian literature that scholars and critics alike arrive at, is the conclusion that there really is no such thing" (144). This observation finds implicit support in some of E.D. Blodgett's remarks on the question. In his opinion, "[t]he central issue is political" since "Canada is not a unified country in either a political or a cultural sense, and therefore to seek some common thread in its literatures is a vain enterprise indeed" (8-9). However, he adds that

> despite the fact that Canada is at least two nations whose federal jurisdiction is still in the process of definition, literary critics continue to behave ... as if Canada were one country with literatures in two different languages. (17)

Thus, the dilemma regarding the definition of Canada's "national" literature remains, continuing to challenge today's critics just as it challenged McGee.

At the time of his arrival in Canada in 1857 and throughout the 1860s, McGee worked on behalf of Canada's immigrant Irish by representing them in the House of Assembly and defending their right to a Catholic education. Because of this aspect of his political career, he is certainly known as a champion of the Irish cause in Canada. Likewise, his efforts to promote Confederation and to foster an indigenous Canadian literature have become something of a commonplace. Indeed, like Richardson, he

constitutes a literary fragment in his own right, and is remembered for his role as visionary of Canada's future.

In his own time, the prophetic words of McGee's Address at Quebec of May 1862 were quoted on the title page of Henry J. Morgan's encyclopaedic Bibliotheca Canadensis: or A Manual of Canadian Literature (1867):

> All we have to do, is * * * each for himself--you and you, gentlemen, and all of us--to welcome every talent, to hail every invention, to cherish every gem of art, to foster every gleam of authorship, to honour every acquirement and every natural gift, to lift ourselves to the level of our destinies, to rise above all low limitations and narrow circumscriptions, to cultivate that true catholicity of spirit which embraces all creeds, all classes, and all races, in order to make of our boundless Province, so rich in known and unknown resources, a great new Northern nation.

Following McGee's assassination, Fennings Taylor was quick to note in Thomas D'Arcy McGee: Sketch of His Life and Death (1868) that McGee "initiated a phrase as descriptive of his object, which has since become familiar alike from use and criticism," and adds that "the proposed confederacy was in [McGee's] mind and writings associated with the idea of a 'new nationality'" (15). Regarding the nature of McGee's contribution to the cause of Confederation, Alexander Brady opines that "[h]is work was not that of a constitutional architect giving expression to political needs in the legal terms of a constitution;" instead, "McGee's task was that of inspiration. His position was that of a prophet and a guide" (159). In a note to readers of McGee's collected speeches, Charles Murphy confirms Brady's assessment: McGee becomes the "Prophet of Canadian Nationality" (xi). For his part, Carl F. Klinck deems

McGee the "chief orator and literary man" and "advocate of Canadian culture" among the fathers of Confederation ("Literary Activity--1841-1880" 169, 170). The title of Carl Ballstadt's article, "Thomas D'Arcy McGee as a Father of Canadian Literature" (1976), makes clear his understanding of McGee's role. The entry on McGee in the Dictionary of Canadian Biography notes that the "new nationality" that he envisaged would be distinguished by its connection with Great Britain and by the eventual "development of a distinctive Canadian literature" (Burns 492). Finally, in the Oxford Companion to Canadian Literature Charles R. Steele observes that McGee garnered "fame as an oratorical proponent of Confederation in the years immediately preceding its establishment in 1867" (485).

Together, these observations emphasize McGee's anticipation of a future Canadian nationality, as well as his awareness of the need for a literary class to play a conscious role in creating a cultural and political identity to go with it. McGee had a firm grasp of the potential products of the literary system. He expected that literature would confirm nationality, just as the nation would provide the grounds for literature:

> What then do we need? ... the co-operation of all our forces, the Colleges, the Churches, the Government, and the popular favor, to produce a literature. How and when is this co-operation to be obtained? When we see a national spirit penetrating all these orders and ranks, we shall see a national literature, and not before. To literary men, and lovers of letters, here at least, is *one* irresistible argument in favor of nationality.
> ("On Nationality--Literature," New Era 26 January 1858)

Generally, a favourable appreciation of McGee may be derived from the observations quoted above; as one historian has remarked, talk of "forming a 'new nationality'... strikes chords with late twentieth century Canadians" (Martin, Introduction 11). Specifically, Carl Ballstadt's article, which focuses on a handful of editorial columns on literature in the New Era and on "The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion" (1867), values McGee as "an early advocate and explorer of Canadian literary culture" (95) who deserves recognition. Ballstadt also notes that previous assessments of McGee's career tend to concentrate exclusively on his political activities at the expense of the "literary aspect of his career" (85), and therefore proposes to examine the latter. Yet his own understanding of McGee's thought concerning things literary suggests that, for McGee, "there could be no new nationality without a national literature" (86). Hence political and literary questions cannot be easily separated in discussions of McGee's place in Canadian literature. Indeed, McGee's writings more or less condemn literature to the "social servitude" that Bourdieu sees as typical of the literary or artistic field before it achieves the autonomy necessary to disengage itself from such uses, be they associated with "the moral censure and aesthetic programmes of a proselytizing church, or the academic controls and directives of political power, inclined to regard art as an instrument of propaganda" (15).

It may therefore be argued that McGee's role as a producer of Canadian literature--or as one of its fathers--is not only intertwined with his political endeavours, but is ultimately

subordinate to them. In other words, the product McGee expects that the reading and writing of literary texts and the elaboration of the literary institution will generate, is the state itself. In this way, the practices of print culture are to be adapted to meet the colony's need of distinguishing itself from other states. This means that literature is not limited merely to the promotion of nationalist sentiment and belonging, but is called upon to support the ends of a given political platform. For McGee, this platform aims, first of all, at bringing about the union of the British colonies, and second, at expanding the union westward to the Pacific ocean.[3] It is clear that his expectations of the literary institution in Canada do not coincide with Richardson's for an autonomous literary field that would value his own works in particular and enhance his personal reputation as a man of letters; neither is McGee interested in "sacrificing" at literature's altar. Instead, literature is to sanction and eulogize a political idea.

In comparison with his other writings, however, McGee has relatively little to say about literature. His Canadian Ballads and Occasional Verses appeared in 1858, soon after his arrival in Montreal. It was the only volume of poetry he was to publish. The New Era (25 May 1857-1 May 1858), whose prospectus announces it as a tri-weekly "devoted to News, Literature, and General Politics," certainly exhibits a sustained interest in the literary arts. Fairly regular literary features include a column devoted to "Literature and Literary Men on Both Sides of the Atlantic," in which McGee provides an informed commentary on contemporary writers and their works; serialized fiction and the work of local poets;

and book reviews, often of works published in, and about, Canada. As was the case with Thomas Cary and the Mercury, McGee figures as a literary producer by virtue of the amount of space he consistently devotes to literature and the discussion of it. However, his announcement on 29 April 1858 of the paper's suspension, barely a year following its first appearance, more or less put an end to the literary component of McGee's programme. In other words, aside from public lectures he may have given for diverse societies or for Mechanics' Institutes, the greater part of McGee's writing from the 1860s onward was devoted largely to the political steps necessary to the creation of a new nationality.[4] Before moving on to consider some of these more political works, it is worth considering his poetry and his editorial articles in the New Era.

In the presentation of his Canadian Ballads, it is clear that McGee is following the literary programme as set out by the adherents of the Young Ireland movement: his goal is to inspire feelings of patriotism through a familiarity with history, as rendered in the form of ballads. Thus, he addresses his readership specifically as "the younger generation of Canadians," and reminds this group that "we shall one day be a great northern nation, and develope within ourselves that best fruit of nationality, a new and lasting literature" (vii). In the absence of a pending opportunity to distinguish themselves on the battlefield, he invites his young Canadian readers to take up their pens and style themselves cultural warriors for the good of their country:

> It is, indeed, glorious to die in battle in defence of our homes and altars; but not less glorious is it to live to celebrate the virtues of our heroic countrymen, to adorn the history, or to preserve the traditions of our country. (vii-viii)

McGee's own ballads serve as an example, since they turn to the past for subject matter, and settle on explorers (Sebastian Cabot, Jacques Cartier, Henry Hudson, and Sieur de La Salle); an idealized, generic Amerindian ("The Arctic Indian's Faith"); landmarks of Lower Canada (the chapel of Notre-Dame-des-Neiges and "St. Annes," the spot where Thomas Moore is said to have written his "'Canadian Boat-song'" (63)); legend ("The Sea Captain"); the "Founder's spirit" ("Arm and Rise" 46); and the War of 1812 ("Along the Line!"). Carl F. Klinck suggests that the reading public responded enthusiastically to these patriotic ballads:

> [A]s if to justify [McGee's] Irish formula, a number of them became immediate and lasting favourites, especially "Sebastian Cabot to his Lady," "Jacques Cartier," "The Arctic Indian's Faith," and "Our Ladye of the Snow." McGee's ballads became the fashion.
> ("Literary Activity--1841-1880" 170)

Indeed, the handful of patriotic poems under the pen name "Donnacona" [J.F. McDonnell] that appeared in the New Era, as well as others by "Mrs. J.L. Leprohon" and "M.A.S." [Mary Ann Sadlier], suggest that some of McGee's readers and friends were eager to follow his example.[5] Klinck and Watters chose "The Arctic Indian's Faith" and "Jacques Cartier" as representative ballads in their Canadian Anthology, citing the former for its recognition of "myths of the aborgines," the latter for its celebration of "heroic events of the distant past" (61).

As previously noted, it is the question of the past that poses a problem for McGee's use of this literary "formula," as Klinck chooses to call it. Certainly the very idea that such ballads embody a formula or recipe that may be applied by writers engaged in the invention of the nation, make McGee's poems seem somewhat awkward and contrived. Thus, on one level we may cringe at the opening lines of "Sebastian Cabot to his Lady," the first of McGee's "Canadian Ballads," in which he introduces the theme of the cold ("Dear my Lady, you will understand / By these presents coming to your hand, / Written in the Hyperborean seas / (Where my love for you doth never freeze)" (9)), while on another, we may be puzzled by the selection of "Occasional Verses" that follows the Canadian material. The first of these is titled "Home-Sick Stanzas," and details the speaker's painful "exile in the west." Its second stanza reads thus:

> I felt a weight where'er I went--
> I felt a void within my brain;
> My day hopes and my dreams were blent
> With sable threads of mental pain;
> My eye delighted not to look
> On forests old or rapids grand;
> The stranger's pride I scarce could brook,
> My heart was in my own dear land.
> (68)

In the final stanza it becomes apparent that "my own dear land" is not that of the chill northerly climes, where "On the round Canadian cedars / Legends high await but readers" ("Arm and Rise" 45), but that of Ireland, where the exiled speaker wishes he were instead:

> Where'er I turned, some emblem still
> Roused consciousness upon my track;

Some hill was like an Irish hill,
 Some wild bird's whistle called me back;
A sea-bound ship bore off my peace,
 Between its white, cold wings of woe;
Oh, if I had but wings like these,
 Where my peace went, I, too, would go.
(68)

Given McGee's prefatorial remarks on the value of "a wise, public-spirited patriotism in literature," the honour of celebrating "the virtues of our heroic countrymen," and the great northern nation that both he and his readers will build together, it would seem that the Ballads and the Verses make for imcompatible reading material. While the Ballads strive to promote the idea of a Canadian nation by focusing on the colony's history, the Verses abound in expressions of nostalgia and love for the land of McGee's origins. How aware is he of the problems that such dual allegiance entails where the creation of a "new nationality" is concerned?

If we consider McGee's use of history in the Canadian Ballads, his New Era editorials, and his subsequent publications, it appears that the question of divided loyalties was one of the major stumbling blocks that his political vision of a united, extended Canada was to come up against. In the Ballads, he begins with the safely distant pre-conquest past of the explorers and the French régime, then devotes a few poems to Lower Canadian folklore before moving on to commemorate the War of 1812. McGee therefore shies away from recounting the conquest in ballad form. It is not difficult to understand why he avoids this particular historical moment; after all, in turning to the past, his goal is to create a sense of shared history, community, and identity, and such a goal would inevitably be compromised were McGee to dwell on an event

whose memory tended rather to underline differences within the population.[6] Yet, on the other hand, the very moment McGee prefers not to "adorn" is precisely that which accounts for the presence of the descendents of the two colonizing European powers within the united Province of Canada. As such, how can it possibly be overlooked?

McGee attempts to overcome this difficulty by making passing reference to the conquest in "An International Song," a poem that proposes a neutral toast to "the Brave Man's Memory." Its jovial speaker wishes to honour men for how they fought, rather than dwell on whether they are to be remembered as "victors or vanquished." "What! shall we then at Waterloo / Deny to either, honor due?" he asks, before the final stanza:

> Who looks on Abram's storied plain
> May honor most one hero's name;
> But we conjoin to-night the three--
> Here's Wolfe, Montcalm, Montgomery.
> (52)

In this way, the speaker invites readers to disregard the specifics regarding the battle's outcome and its consequences, preferring them to rally to the more general principles of courage and bravery. Not surprisingly, this unmemorable poem was not seized upon by anthologizers.[7] It might be argued that such "internationalism" has little to do with the desire to promote a *Canadian* nation. The least that may be said is that "An International Song" seems out of place within the context of the Canadian Ballads, whose aim it is to inspire patriotism through the celebration of the specificity of Canada's history. The problem of "Abram's storied plain" is that it gives rise to divergent

conceptions of nationhood, patriotism, and "our heroic countrymen." While McGee would have his newly adopted countrymen "close their old accounts with the Past" and look to the task of recording "the birth and baptism of a new North American nationality" ("The Past and the Future," New Era 23 January 1858), his own ballad scheme more or less demands that he reckon with the dealings of the past.

McGee's New Era articles suggest that he is far from ignorant of Canada's politics and history. They also show that he tended to be more forthright in the writing of his editorials than he was in formulating his collection of national poetry. The New Era does not dodge the political legacy of the conquest; therefore, just as McGee is outspoken in his condemnation of militant Orangeism, so too does he frown on what he takes to be the assimilationist attitude on the part of the western part of the province regarding that of the east. This question arises most frequently in connection with McGee's ideas concerning the political framework to be elaborated with a view to federal union. Hence, he speaks disapprovingly of the "[a]dvocates of the 'innate superiority' delusion" who "may desire a linguistic invasion of Canada east, to commence where the military invasion did, and to complete Wolfe's work" ("The Capital of All the Provinces," 6 August 1857). Likewise, in the second part of an article devoted to "The Future of Canada" (22 October 1857), the "one practical difficulty" that he sees regarding the proposed "territorial representation in the upper house of Parliament" is "a foregone determination on the part of the British portion of the West, socially to subjugate and

incorporate the French-Canadians of the east."[8] He sees a simple solution to the situation:

> Supposing such an arrangement [for federal union] as I have described, I humbly conceive the autonomy of Lower Canada ought to be cheerfully conceded by the English-speaking Provinces. To live in outward peace with a distinct people, while daily desiring their obliteration from the map, as a people, is not honorable dealing.

After considering the likely expansion to the west, McGee reiterates his point:

> The descendants of the original occupants of the region over which we have cast our eyes, do not ... claim too much, in my humble opinion, when they ask Lower Canada as an heir-loom. Their pride is radicated in the soil, and they are, as yet, the only race in Canada who can justly boast that patriotic past. They have a Canadian History, which we who speak English may well envy, or better still, try to imitate. Their ancestors held this soil as sovereigns two hundred years before Wolfe landed at Quebec. They reverence the intrepid Cartier, the devout Champlain, the lion-hearted Frontenac, and La Salle, the Columbus of our inland waters. To them *Canadian* is a sacred name ... . Their tenacity is equal to their pride of patriotism. For two centuries they held the Valley against the Puritans, the Hollanders, and the Iroquois; for the greater part of another century--until "responsible government" was conceded--they preserved their language, their religion, and their social life, against all attempts at Anglican assimilation ... . Though first planted by France, they owe their present position rather to themselves than to France. ... We must take them as we find them, and while professing to consider them fellow-citizens and fellow-subjects, we must not dishonestly seek to undermine that which they hold dearer than life itself--their social life, their historical rank, their language, their religion, and their nationality.

Here was the inspiration for a national poetry. McGee puts to good use the research he undertook in order to write his Canadian Ballads: this is the stuff of historical depth that is so necessary to the literary "formula" he applies to Canada. In his

description of the situation, he leaves no doubt as to where his own sympathies lie. In addition, it seems that "Anglican assimilation" is at work where religious matters are concerned. Thus, McGee goes on in his article to comment in some length on Ryerson's non-confessional public school system, criticizing the "Protestant majority of the Upper Province" for maintaining "uniformity in teaching to be a duty, while they consider dissent in worship a sacred right."[9] We might surmise that he writes of "Anglican assimilation" with an eye to the upcoming elections and the possibility of a future "Catholic" alliance to be built with French-Canadian politicians; at any rate, his defence of French Canada did not go unnoticed.

A week later, McGee printed a letter from the Port Hope Atlas of 28 October 1857 in response to his remarks, and describes it as "another evidence of the spirit of Anglican assimilations." The letter does indeed articulate a point of view that is diametrically opposed to that which McGee expresses:

> The French Canadians are a subjugated race and have been for about a century ... . It is true they have to a very considerable extent isolated themselves from the inhabitants of Eastern Canada of British origin and that isolation has been the great curse of the country inasmuch as it has been an insurmountable barrier to improvement. One of the best things that could happen to Lower Canada would be the thorough amalgamation of the French-speaking and the English-speaking inhabitants of the country, instead of which everything is double--two languages, two modes of legislation, two ways of feeling and of thinking in every municipality and even in the supreme legislature itself, not excepting the cabinet, and the double majority theory, as respects the actual carrying out of the system of Responsible Government. The greatest objection to a Federal union of the Provinces is that the English-speaking population of Lower Canada, its bone and sinew, would be like a drop in the bucket compared with French influence, were it

> consummated as Mr. McGee suggests. The great commercial houses, all, or nearly all English, would be subject to the positively ignorant control of the Lower Canadian *habitant* or peasant, who does not understand railways, and rarely uses canals. ... Lower Canada must, in the natural course of things, without either legislative or federal union be socially incorporated with the English-speaking race in Canada, which are multiplying even now more rapidly than, without a French immigration into Lower Canada, it is possible for the French Canadians to multiply.

Here we see the sentiment that unabashedly militates against the comradely harmony of "An International Song," and identifies French Canada as a major impediment to the commercial progress of the more populous half of the colony. The speaker is convinced that demographics will eventually carry the day, coupled with the effects of the railway age:

> The system of railways which has recently been introduced cannot fail to have the effect of ultimately completely Anglifying eastern Canada. Every station master, every conductor, every railway clerk or employee of British ancestry, once settled in Canada East, must gather around him British blood which will either be incorporated with Franco-Canadian blood or have the effect of driving it back to such places as Lake St. John ... . In the towns of Montreal and Quebec even now there is less of the French element, although that little is at present making itself, in its dying struggles almost too much felt, than there was twenty years ago. Then, French was the predominant tongue in these towns; now, every French Canadian must be not only able to understand but to converse in English. No attempt, however, has been made--worthy of the name--except immediately after the conquest, to take from the French Canadians their social life, or to deprive them of their historical rank, their religion, or their nationality, if they ever had a nationality. The incorporation will be the result purely of the more rapid increase of the English speaking population, than of the French speaking population in Lower Canada, and will as surely come as the incorporation of the Louisianians with the Anglo Saxon element of the United States. (31 October 1857)

It is worth quoting so extensively from this letter because it allows us to form a clearer idea of the opinions that McGee opposed

with vigour in the New Era at the outset of his Canadian career. At this point leading up to the December elections, he appears to be quite sensitive to the circumstances of Lower Canada and eager to dissociate himself from the "Anglican assimilationists." Thus, McGee states unequivocally that "[w]e do not at all share that [assimilationist] spirit, and shall do our utmost to combat it" (31 October 1857).

This stance seems to be based on the understanding that Irish interests in Canada will be best promoted by siding with the French-speaking, Roman Catholic majority of Lower Canada. The "Testimonial" presented to McGee on behalf of his Montreal subscribers on 5 November 1857 names the New Era's editor as "a trustworthy advocate of Irish interests and opinions," while McGee's response focuses on the need for further rapprochement between the two Catholic communities:

> It is my duty to Canada, and to you, Gentlemen, to soften asperities between the various races and religions composing this population, as far as one journal can do so, without a sacrifice of principle. In this respect I feel that I am particularly under obligation to cultivate a cordial understanding with our French Canadian friends. I know there have been occasional collisions of temper and feeling between the French and Irish populations; I know, too, that many who belong to neither, and who love neither, have rejoiced over such collisions as their own gain and our loss; but I believe, (in fact I may say I *know*,) that the great majority of both nationalities feel mutually disposed to aid and assist each other, in every common effort for the maintenance of principles dear to both. (7 November 1857)

Characteristically, what follows is a call for the suppression of the Orange Order, and for Orangemen to be denied the privilege of holding office. Again, it appears that the strongest argument for

co-religionists to band together is that their cooperation will help to thwart the advance of Orangeism in Canada.

Once elected, McGee continues, in the New Era, to defend this Catholic alliance in Lower Canada against attacks made in Upper Canadian newspapers. In response to the article of "a Briton" in the London Free Press of 5 January 1858, which raises the spectre of a "French majority" in the House of Assembly, McGee places the blame for increased sectionalism on the inhabitants of "the Upper Province:"

> He--the aforesaid Briton--occasionally advocates a Canadian nationality; but all the while he refuses to recognize the older Canadian population as the *nucleus* of that nationality. If it is not a nationality moulded on the Anglican type, he will have none of it.--The Frenchman, in his humble British judgment, is only good to be absorbed,--from all which it is plain, that there is a growing aggressive intolerance of race, as well as of religion, in the minds of the majority of men in Upper Canada.
> ("Lower Canadian Influence in the New Parliament," 7 January 1858)

Here, as he does in his Canadian Ballads, McGee suggests that the future Canadian nationality, and therefore Canadian identity, is rooted in the historical experience of French Canada. He advances this view boldly and unapologetically, thereby situating himself, and the Province that he defends, in an antagonistic position vis-à-vis Upper Canada. McGee's vision of Canada's future is apparently still based at this juncture on an acknowledgement of, and appreciation for, the past of New France as evident in the Canadian Ballads, and the desire to see this community persist within the context of a new political framework:

> The Franco-Canadian, whether *rouge* or *bleu*, must alike resist the extinction of his race. And nothing

> less is in prospective. The Irishman in Canada, equally with him, will resist the establishment of an intolerant Anglican nationality. Here, then, is the natural nexus of the two populations. Here is the bond we have sought to bind, and which is, for Montreal, typified in the joint triumph of Dorion and McGee.

Yet in subsequent articles there seems to be some confusion as to the nature of this "natural nexus" of the two groups. In describing it, McGee falls victim to the terminological pitfalls that others had encountered before him in their efforts to characterize the colony's inhabitants. He alternately emphasizes questions of "race" and questions of religion in his discussions, so that it is not always clear if he privileges one over the other. Thus, he opposes the anti-clerical stance of Lower Canada's *Rouges*, stating that their political setbacks have obliged them to "respect that ancient and vigorous social system ... which *does* educate, instruct, and direct the consciences of the majority of all the inhabitants of the united provinces" ("The Past and the Future," New Era 23 January 1858). Here, religion seems to form the basis of alliance between French Canadians and the population of Irish origin in Lower Canada; but McGee has previously evoked the threat of the "extinction of [the French Canadian] race," an eventuality that he takes to be undesirable. Without troubling to define his terms, he uses the words "race," "people," and "nationality" in referring to Canada's French-language inhabitants. This concurrent emphasis suggests that McGee supports religious distinctions and "racial" or "national" distinctions alike. However, when a contributor to the Toronto Colonist takes him to task for his simultaneous advocacy of an inclusive Canadian

nationality on the one hand, and of specifically Irish interests on the other, McGee provides an intriguing rejoinder:

> We find no inconsistency in our theory on these points. Should the nationality we desire draw near in a short time, distinct Irish*ism*, like every other *ism* founded on race, will gradually dissolve in it as drift ice does in the gulf stream. ... We believe the fragments of all old nationalities are and ought to be politically absorbed in the new, but we believe the new patriotism itself must perform the part of solvent, and by its genial and generous atmosphere mould the materials already existing on the soil. (New Era 26 January 1858)

Here, McGee would appear to favour the political absorption of "old nationalities"--a position that implies that the French-speaking inhabitants of Canada, whose nationality, or status as a people, McGee had previously defended, should, together with the Irish, "dissolve" into the new nationality. How are we to reconcile these ideas with his former plea, expressed in "The Future of Canada," that the "autonomy of Lower Canada" be "cheerfully conceded by the English-speaking Provinces" and shielded from the threat of "Anglican assimilation"? What might he mean by "autonomy"? And how is this position on the new nationality to accommodate Garneau's history, which provided the founding myth of the Canadian nation and set out primarily to prove Lord Durham wrong in asserting that Canadians were a people without either a history or a literature? (Lemire, vie 3:250, 513).

One way of making some sense of this confusion is to suppose that McGee's main role was "that of a true patriot who lived and died for Ireland, for Irish liberty, for the advancement and prosperity of the Irish race" (Clarke 24). One significant dimension of this cause involved the defence of Catholicism in

North America. As we have seen, McGee is particularly wary of what he perceives as the growing political strength of Orangeism in Upper Canada, coupled with the threat to the Catholic religion that he sees in the public school system being established there. It seems that the Macdonald-Cartier administration was aware of McGee's position on Orangeism, and that he had been a "rebel" against the Queen only a few years ago; Alexander Brady's biography of McGee suggests that his former political activism explains why the ministry was not interested in having him occupy a government post (51). Bearing this situation in mind, it is easier to conceive of why McGee was to celebrate the "joint triumph" of the election of Antoine-Aimé Dorion and himself in Montreal; he had little choice but to ally himself with the *Rouges* in order to further his cause.

As a member of the opposition, McGee attempted to raise awareness of the threat of Orangeism and prevent the movement's spreading to Lower Canada.[10] His stance on this subject was that "Irish interests ... are, in one phrase, the great, general, permanent interests of all Canada;" according to McGee, these include the need to maintain the Union, to pursue friendly relations with the French-language majority in Lower Canada, and, perhaps most importantly, to give steady resistance to "American aggression in the Upper Province." By "American aggression" McGee means "the infiltration of American ideas, through common schools, kindred sects, an increasing commerce, and near neighborhood on the shores of the great lakes" ("Irish Interests: The Ministry and the Opposition," New Era 19 January 1858). Here again we see the

importance that McGee attaches to the American common school system and the danger of its being adopted in Upper Canada. McGee was obliged to live with the lesser of two evils when he sided with the *Rouge* leaders, for whose party he had little respect:

> The advanced wings of [the] opposition, east and west, have, during the last two years, moulted their best feathers. They are bare to the pinions, diseased in the vital joints, and incapable of any vigorous effort. ... The *Rouges* do not grow. Like children dwarfed by strong meats and liquors, they are hopelessly stunted by their early indulgence in extreme theories. They have abandoned all hope of becoming a Canadian party, and will be well content if they can continue to fill the part of a respectable faction. The old "Reformers," so far, show no sign of combined action.
> ("The Coming Election," New Era 15 September 1857)

The threat posed by the absence of a common front on the part of the reformers is that the Orangemen "may ... achieve a triumph through their unity and secresy," since their organization is "rampant" in the west and, for the time being, "couchant" in the east. McGee urges his readers not to dismiss the import of Orange influence:

> This is not an enemy to be underrated, and for us, we confess, all other issues become secondary and insignificant compared to this overwhelming question--is Orangeism to become in Canada as it was in Ireland from 1798 to 1828, a political power overawing the highest judicial and executive authorities?

If the task of thwarting Orangeism is McGee's main preoccupation, then it becomes acceptable to work with the *Rouges*. Besides, according to McGee, this political formation, whose "name [is] synonymous with all the follies and abominations of Parisian socialism," has already paid the price for its anti-clerical tenets: "They commenced to undermine religion preparatory to the emancipation of their country, and in their evil preliminary work

they have become exhausted of their strength and shorn of their promise" ("The Past and the Future," New Era 23 January 1858). In what sounds increasingly like an apologia for his association with the *Rouges*, McGee proceeds to expound on what may be learned from "this experience of the young Canadian party:"

> It teaches that the Catholic Church is an immovable social power in Lower Canada; it teaches that it must be so recognized and so respected by all who would leave or serve the country.--It does not teach despair of legitimate progress or improvement.

If we take into account the suspicion with which the ministry regarded McGee, coupled with the importance he attached to the question of religion, it becomes easier to explain why he would join forces with "the *Rouge* party, the Radicals of Canada, with whom he had little or nothing in common," as one of his contemporaries put it (Sadlier 30). It appears that, at this early stage in his Canadian career, McGee's desire to protect religious rights led him to assume a political stance that he tried to adapt to suit his own aims. Hence, in an editorial dealing with the "Re-opening of Parliament--The Double Majority" (6 April 1858), he clearly states his views that "we are here two nations equally represented," and that the future of the colony hinges on its ability to settle the constitutional questions related to the problem of the double majority. In so doing, he tends to share the perception of "the French Canadian majority" in the House, who "contend that [the] union was essentially federative in nature:"

> The main incentive to excitement and danger in such a discussion [of the double majority] is, as we said, the struggle of races. We are in Canada two nations, and must mutually respect each other. Our political union must to this end be made more

> explicitly federative, if we are to continue, even for the most general purposes, a united people.

However, as his subsequent observations make clear, "race" has not always been the dividing issue within the population; rather, he construes religion as a factor that may well tip the balance in favour of one nation or the other:

> Now one of the strongest motives in the minds of the Lower Canadian British in 1822--when the Union was first mooted, and in 1840 when it was accomplished--was to unite Upper Canada, with a view to outnumber the French Canadian population. Well, the Union took place; and on the whole muster the British (if we include the Irish under that denomination) are largely in the majority. A succession of coalitions has for 18 years staved off the evil--the inevitable hour. But it has come round at last; and in this very Parliament the struggle of the two races for power may be forever decided. If the Irish and the Highland Scotch--such as the Glengarry McDonalds--were to join heartily with the other English-speaking members, there is no doubt the French Canadians would be outvoted and legally subjugated; but this, the latter will not do; and in their hands, therefore, for the moment at least, rests the destiny of the Canadian Union.
>
> ("Re-opening of Parliament--The Double Majority," New Era 6 April 1858)

McGee advocates a political relationship that is more "explicitly federative" in order to accommodate Canada's "two nations," and, arguably, to "provide for the survival of French Canada" (Burns 492). This position aligns McGee squarely behind the *Rouges'* platform for constitutional change. Yet, as McGee's observations regarding the "Irish and the Highland Scotch" suggest, the common front that he proceeds to identify is one that transcends the so-called racial division by focusing on shared religious practices. His assumption seems to be that a federative union is the most effective means of ensuring that Lower Canada's Catholic

inhabitants remain free to practice their religion, without fear of encroachment from Upper Canada.[11]

Later, in the fall of 1859, McGee would even go so far as to sign a manifesto, with fellow-members of the opposition hailing from Lower Canada, in favour of a federal union of the two Canadas. This document was the result of a meeting held by the opposition in Montreal on 13 October 1859. Regarding discussions pitting the advantages of a federation against the unwieldy legislative union then in place, Luther Holton wrote that "Dessaulles, Dorion, McGee, Drummond, Laberge & Papineau pronounced themselves emphatically and unreservedly in favor of Federation."[12] Indeed, McGee's name appeared alongside those of Dorion, Dessaulles, and Drummond in the version of the manifesto made public in Le Pays on 29 October 1859. Together, they called for "la substitution d'un gouvernement purement fédéral à l'union législative actuelle," claiming that it offered a solution to the current difficulties plaguing the colony's government:

> en restreignant les fonctions du gouvernement fédéral aux quelques sujets d'intérêt commun qui peuvent clairement et facilement se définir, et laissant aux différentes provinces ou subdivisions, un contrôle complet sur toutes les autres questions, les habitants de chacune d'elles auraient toutes les garanties pour la conservation intacte de leurs institutions respectives, que la dissolution pure et simple de l'Union pourrait leur procurer.
>
> (quoted in Bernard, 173-74)

Here, if we take the Catholic church to be one of the respective institutions referred to, we can understand how McGee might support such a proposition. Otherwise, it is difficult to see how he could have endorsed a project that seemed so obviously to have been

inspired by the neighbouring government of the United States (Bernard 174). As McGee had written earlier in the New Era concerning the "fathers of the first American Republic,"

> we do not advocate copying after their pattern. Their democratic Federal republic is still a magnificent experiment, and its administrative and moral results, so far, whether in its oldest States or newest territories, are not altogether to be envied. ... [T]he period of solidity is still remote--the experiment is incomplete, and the example is imperfect. ("Canadian Nationality--Sovereignty." 19 January 1858)

It is equally difficult to reconcile McGee's support for a federative union given his call, in the same article, for "a monarch and an aristocracy, as well as a full and free parliamentary representation of the whole people." His view here is that a monarch will act "as a safeguard against assimilation, absorption and subjection to and by American*ism*," and thereby help to "preserve the individuality of the British North American Colonies until they ripen into a new Northern nationality." He concludes by saying that Canadian nationality is "a cause, the greatness, justness, and generality of which, will swallow up all sectional causes, as the rod of Moses swallowed up the rods of the Necromancers of Egypt."

At the end of April 1858, McGee announced the suspension of the New Era. Carl Ballstadt attributes this decidion to the "weight of [McGee's] political duties" ("Thomas D'Arcy" 86), which probably did occupy a fair amount of his time. But a contemporary and friend offers a different opinion regarding the termination of the newspaper. In her "Bibliographical Sketch" of McGee included in the posthumous edition of his collected poems (1869), Mrs.

Sadlier is anxious to defend the "calm conservatism" (23) that characterized his later years. She suggests that the New Era was not overly successful "owing to the fact that its editor was as yet but little acquainted with Canadian affairs, and was obliged ... to feel his way before he ventured to take his stand amongst the publicists of the province" (29-30). Alexander Brady offers a similar explanation: "McGee, as a newcomer, was of necessity feeling his way amid the shoals and narrows of Canadian politics, and was unable to discuss local issues with intimacy" (40).

These latter two observations lead us to wonder what it was about the New Era's editorial stance that grated on McGee's readers. Was it his strident opposition to Orangeism? Perhaps. This theme is absent from his later writings, though he continues to champion the cause for separate schools, and was to break with George Brown over this question. It certainly was not his call for a union of the British American colonies that proved an irritant--at least not in the eyes of later generations, who remember McGee for "the alacrity with which he began to articulate this vision after his arrival in Montreal" (Ballstadt, "Thomas D'Arcy" 86). Brady contends that this political opinion is responsible for the New Era's "outstanding significance in Canadian history:"

> It was the first newspaper in the British colonies dedicated to the course of the colonial union and the establishment of a British American nationality under the rule of a royal prince. It advanced the chief arguments for union employed eight years later at the conferences of Charlottetown and Quebec. (40)

What seems more likely is that McGee's adversarial stance vis-a-vis the Upper Province and his spirited defence of French Canada were not particularly appreciated.

If we consult his subsequent political publications, it becomes apparent that McGee adjusted his opinions on these issues after having acquainted himself more thoroughly with Canadian affairs. There are no more references to the valourous past of French Canada or to the designs of Anglican assimilationists. Neither is there much talk of a national literature, or any attempt to kindle feelings of patriotism by focusing on history and "our heroic countrymen." McGee is silent on these issues, and on literature in general, until his address to the Montreal Literary Club some nine years later, in 1867 ("The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion"). If we are to recognize McGee as "an early advocate and explorer of Canadian literary culture," as Ballstadt suggests, we might also ask why this "father of Canadian literature" was so quick to abandon these pursuits after having been in Canada only a year.[13]

A possible answer to this question might be that, as time passed, McGee became increasingly aware that the literary behaviour modelled after the Young Ireland movement was, after all, unsuited to Canadian circumstances, given the political goals he had adopted. The past could not be effectively used to provide a sense of shared experience in Canada; on the contrary, references to it only emphasized divisions between the colonies' inhabitants. Since the "new nationality" that McGee envisioned was to be a thing of the future, there was every reason to eschew the attractions of a

romantic, nationalist past that was not easily adaptable to the potential state he had in mind. The _Canadian Ballads_ were something of a false start, for McGee came to realize that if reading and writing practices were to be used to consolidate the state, they were to be exploited not in order to construct a collective memory, but rather to focus on a collective vision of the future.

This vision included territorial expansion and a more vigorous approach to the issue of immigration, a condition upon which expansion depended. These two subjects had been favourites of McGee's since he arrived in Canada, and he returns to them with increasing enthusiasm after the demise of the _New Era_. Indeed, one of McGee's most often-quoted speeches, which refers to the "one great nationality bound, like the shield of Achilles" ("Constitutional" 175), is an early call for such expansion. In this address to the House of Assembly of 2 May 1860, McGee refers to the "march towards nationality" that cannot be halted: "we have advanced, and must continue to advance. The law of our youth is growth, the law of our growth is progress" (173). He does not explain how this view of the "incipient Northern nation" (175) fits in with the scheme to establish a federal government that he had signed his name to only months earlier in _Le Pays_.

A year later, at a dinner organized by his constituents in Montreal, McGee considers some of the more practical difficulties faced by the new nationality he promotes. He observes that "there is nothing to be more dreaded in this country than feuds arising from exaggerated feelings of religion and nationality;"

consequently, he argues for the need to "rub down all sharp angles, and to remove all those asperities which divide our people on questions of origin and religious profession" ("Policy" 165).[14] It may be to his advantage to wish to maintain and reinforce a distinction between the United States and Canada, but internal divisions must be attenuated in the interests of the expansion that McGee upholds:

> We have acres enough; powers mechanical and powers natural; and sources of credit enough to make out of this Province a great nation, and ... I trust that it will not only be so in itself, but will one day form part of a greater British North American State, existing under the sanction, and in perpetual alliance with the Empire, under which it had its rise and growth. (167)

In this address, McGee points to the value of natural resources and money in creating the nation. The subject matter of the Canadian Ballads is no longer turned to in order to heighten feelings of patriotism because, by this time, in addressing his constituents, it seems that McGee has a better grasp of his audience and its interests.

In time, he was to embrace those interests as his own. Bruce W. Hodgins describes McGee, known as the "great orator and prophet of Confederation," as "really an apologist for the Montreal business community:"

> Yet better than any other he caught the vision of a new nationality, of a future greatness for a transcontinental, monarchical and non-American New Britannia of the North. He used the word federation but virtually explained it away in centralist British terms which saw the units as subordinate municipal entities. (52)

As the British character of the union came to be emphasized, its Canadian aspect faded. Though McGee may have continued to extol the future greatness of the new nationality, his equally frequent references to "perpetual alliance with the Empire" led critics of British-American union to question the nature of the political project he supported. Ged Martin suggests that calls for a new nationality "may have been mere rhetoric and probably went little further than envisaging the kingdom of Canada as a co-equal jewel in a British crown, alongside the kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland" (Introduction 11).[15]

McGee did not take the time to dwell on the semantic details of his vision. Instead, he set about persuading the House of Assembly of the need to attract emigrants and see to the "settlement of our waste lands" (Emigration 5). At this time he was president of the council under the moderate reform government of John Sandfield Macdonald. One of the goals McGee had set for himself was to focus on the need for a more organized system for handling immigration (Burns 492). In his speech he praises the Americans for their success in attracting settlers and providing for them adequately once they arrive in the new world, and notes with envy that the people of the United States have realized that "emigration is one source of national wealth" (10). Although McGee admits that he opposes "some traits of American life," he concedes that "in working up the raw material of a country into populous and prosperous communities, it would be well for us to imitate their sagacity and their system" (10-11). On this question, the American

example is a healthy one. He therefore urges that the right man be chosen to manage this task in Canada:

> I say this in no spirit of party--give us an able man, let him be ever such a partizan! Give us a man able to originate--to direct--to check--to control--to command the entire field of settlement--the whole staff of agents and employees--give us a man to inspire respect, and to effect salutary changes,--and let him be, I repeat, as staunch a partizan as you please. (13)

The published version of this section of the speech is followed by the note "Hear, hear," but there is little likelihood that McGee's former political allies from Lower Canada were doing much cheering. Though most of the French-language press supported the Macdonald-Sicotte ministry, this was the sort of speech that was not particularly well received. Many papers were quick to react to rumours over the course of the summer of 1862 that gave them further grounds to believe that McGee wished to become involved in questions related to immigration: this task belonged to the minister of agriculture, a post occupied at the time by François Evanturel, a French Canadian (Bernard 215). McGee had ridiculed Evanturel in the House--"to put a man of mean abilities in such a position, at such a time as the present ... is a wilful and deliberate surrender of a golden opportunity for this country" (13)--and had also suggested that the most obvious means of rectifying the disparity in numbers between the populations of Upper and Lower Canada would be to pursue an aggressive policy of immigration. The two regions he targeted were "the St. Maurice country" and the "Eastern Townships" (21). This was the sort of talk that made some French-Canadian politicians nervous. Immigration might solve the demographic imbalance between the two

provinces, but it also meant introducing half a million strangers into Lower Canada. Who could guarantee that they would be French-speaking immigrants from France or Belgium? If they were not, what would prevent them from aligning themselves politically with the Protestant, English-language politicians of Montreal, Quebec, and Upper Canada?

If McGee had been sensitive to the political concerns of Lower Canada's French-language majority during the days of the New Era, other issues commanded his attention by 1862. He had warmed to the project of constructing a railway to link the colonies, and chaired the conference on this question in September of 1862. In supporting this endeavour, he opposed the ministry's position, but was true to his own ambitions for British North America. These stressed the importance of western expansion, so that a railway must have seemed a step in the right direction to further settlement. Thus, in replying to a toast at a dinner in Ottawa in October 1862, McGee refers to the example of the trains used in inland European countries, citing the railway from Vienna to Trieste because "[i]t teaches the lesson of empire" (Speeches 53-54). Immigration, expansion, and the Grand Trunk were linked in McGee's thought.

Bearing in mind the new emphasis that McGee's politics had taken, we may speculate on the nature of his unpubished public lecture, "Les quatre Révolutions," delivered before the members of Montreal's *Institut Canadien* on 20 January 1863 (Lamonde, Gens 156). Although we know nothing of its content, we do have access to that of the lecture pronounced there a week later by Arthur

Buies. Given its insistent emphasis on the history of the French Canadian nationality, "L'avenir de la race française en Canada" may be read as a blistering response to McGee's ideas on an alternate, future nationality, the need to attract immigrants, and the project for financing the Grand Trunk railway. Buies begins by asserting the significance of the past to future endeavour:

> Les peuples sont comme les monumens; le passé est leur base ... . Pour qui veut comprendre les destinées d'un pays, retourner en arrière, c'est avancer dans l'avenir. Il serait inutile d'avoir des espérances si elles n'étaient pas justifiées par l'histoire : il serait insensé d'avoir des convictions qui ne seraient pas basées sur l'expérience. Et comment oserions-nous parler de notre nationalité si nous n'avions pas derrière nous un siècle de luttes qui l'ont consacrée et affermie.
> (Le Pays 27 January 1863)

He goes on to characterize the nature of this struggle for his audience by stating that it is

> celle d'un peuple qui se forme contre un autre peuple qui semble se détruire; c'est celle d'une volonté contre une violence, d'un désir contre une ambition, d'une espérance contre un intérêt, de la faiblesse unie et conjurée contre une force agressive et aveugle.

"Violence," "ambition," "interest"--such words are not very flattering, and may well translate the reaction to the imperial aspirations associated with the project of an intercolonial railway and the future prosperity that was to be achieved through it.

What of the "new nationality" that McGee was so fond of heralding? Buies answers this by evoking the power of history to inspire feelings of patriotism:

> Il est bon [que le peuple] sache qu'il est une chose qui ne se perd pas, c'est le souvenir; une chose qui ne se détruit pas, c'est notre histoire; ... une chose

> qui lui appartient, qu'il peut revendiquer, qu'il peut agrandir, qu'il peut ennoblir, qu'il peut éterniser, c'est sa nationalité.

He goes on to link this sense of nationality to the land, and observes regarding the Eastern "townships" that "toutes les meilleures terres sont prises, et prises par nous; l'émigration se dérobe à vue d'oeil et se réfugie dans le Haut-Canada." In Buies' opinion, McGee's project for settling this region is doomed to fail.

It is in Buies' second installment (29 January 1863) that he appears to attack McGee and all he stands for, without ever mentioning his name. This part of the article begins with a discussion of the importance of unity, and a call for French Canadians to be more unified than ever. Buies identifies the need for such singleness of purpose:

> [C]e qui nous regarde plus spécialement, nous, Canadiens-Français, ce qui arrête notre progrès, ... c'est le frottement des races qui toutes apportent dans le sein de l'Assemblée Législative des intérêts le plus souvent étrangers au pays, ... des idées qui ne sont pas en rapport avec notre état particulier, des tendances qui n'ont aucun but précis, aucune forme nationale; et surtout, et ce qui pis est, une langue qui n'est pas la nôtre.

Here the very presence of McGee and immigrants like him is under attack. The project for uniting all British American colonies is opposed because it is vague and devoid of a "national" character. Buies proceeds to explain the reason why such newcomers prove to be inadequate representatives:

> Un Anglais établi en Canada depuis longues années voit encore les choses au point de vue anglais. Est-il élu par une majorité canadienne, il n'a pas le même passé que le leur : c'est que leur histoire n'est pas la sienne, c'est que ses espérances ne vont pas au même but, c'est enfin que n'ayant pas la même langue, il

ne peut se dévouer à son triomphe et à son établissement uniforme.

In Buies' lecture, the history that McGee tries to relegate to the past, returns with a vengeance. Buies points to the sense of a shared history and to language as the elements that unite the nation. Finally, in this installment he situates French Canada on morally superior ground and contrasts the life of the nation with that of "les Anglais," who come to Canada merely to further their own interests:

> Ce ne sont des intérêts seulement que nous défendons, ce sont ceux du peuple; il est nous, nous sommes lui. Chaque député canadien a sur son siège devant lui la nation, derrière lui la nation, à ses côtés la nation; elle le suit, elle le presse, elle l'[en]toure partout; elle se résume en lui, ils se pénètrent l'un l'autre. Mais les députés anglais! Que peuvent-ils nous opposer à nous, le peuple, à nous l'ensemble?

Whether or not Buies was reacting to McGee's address, he clearly sets out the position of those who are unwilling to see their "nationality" dissolve like drift ice in the gulf stream. Just as Buies invokes the past to justify his argument, so does McGee tend to diminish its importance, thereby revealing the extent to which he had adjusted his opinions since the publication of the Canadian Ballads.

Indeed, in The Crown and the Confederation. Three Letters to the Hon. John Alexander McDonald (sic; 1864) by a "Backwoodsman," McGee makes some statements regarding the "British American character" that are difficult to reconcile with either the Canadian Ballads or many of his New Era editorials, including those that called for a Canadian literature and a new nationality. He claims that these traits are discernible in conservatives and reformers

alike, and concludes that "our national character is still substantially the same as that of our ancestors, and that therefore our national institutions need not necessarily be otherwise than British" (10).[16] This is a thing of some convenience, since it means that British institutions may be contrasted with those of the neighbouring United States. He adds that his analysis does not "exclude from its compass our French-speaking population:"

> That population has never been tainted, except on the very borders, with the bitter infusions of modern democracy. They were drawn off from Old France, like the pure waters intended to feed cities, at a point too remote for contact with the infidel sophists who attempted, towards the end of the last century, 'to reconstruct society' ... . [T]hey approve themselves a monarchical rather than a democratic people. (10-11)

But this population is not only to be valued for the fact that it is "untainted" with the fever of revolution. This "race" is valuable because historically it has mixed with the population of the British Isles, and has therefore contributed to the make-up of the British character:

> They are the [r]eal descendants of those Normans and Bretons whose blood has entered so fully into our British reservoir. Their two centuries' habitation in the new world has not obliterated the strong lines of character, which we have but to turn to our own history, especially under the Plantagenet kings, to see illustrated at every page. We, Sir, should never forget that to a race almost exclusively of this origin, and language, we owe the Great Charter[.] (11)

In this way, the group that McGee initially recognized as a people and a nationality is handily incorporated into the larger British identity--thanks, this time, to history. It seems that Normans, Bretons, and Britons are of the same family; therefore, "our

French-speaking population" can easily exhibit the British American character.

At the close of 1864, in a speech made to promote the idea of colonial union at Cookshire in the County of Compton, McGee was capable of noting vaguely that Dorion, his former political ally, was "opposed to all union, except some sort of Federation of the Canadas" (Two Speeches 4), as if this position were wholly unfamiliar to him. He goes on to discuss the importance of asserting "distinct principles of government" in order to guarantee that a British American federation remain distinct from its "republican neighbors" (7). Although he recognizes that both populations have much in common, McGee is convinced that

> we will also have enough left of our ancestral system to distinguish permanently our people from their people--our institutions from their institutions--and our history (when we shall have a history) from their history. (8)

Perhaps he refers here to a common history as a united political body. At any rate, it cannot be the history that served as the basis for the Canadian Ballads.

By this time, McGee is distancing himself further and further from the idea of a specifically "Canadian" history. Instead, the past is linked to the imperial histories of France and Britain. Thus, he writes of the French régime as a time when "Canada was the theatre of action for a whole series of men ... eminent for their energy, their fortitude, their courage, and their accomplishments." Under England, Canada's "great names are interwoven with some of the best and highest passages in the annals of the Empire." This

thought is comforting because it helps raise local, colonial history to greater heights:

> We have not ... a history simply provincial, interesting only to the Provincials themselves; but a history which forms an inseparable and conspicuous part in the annals of the best ages of the two first Empires in the world, France and England. (Speeches 94)

In this speech made upon the occasion of convocation at Bishop's College in 1864, there is no longer any effort to cultivate feelings of patriotism related to a specifically Canadian identity; instead, inhabitants of the British American colonies are exhorted to take pride in their connection to empires whose greatness saves them from obscurity and guarantees them a place in the annals of "real," as opposed to merely provincial, history.

An attitude that tended to trivialize local, provincial history had been typical of the Tories since the 1830s. In adopting such an attitude, McGee aligns himself quite clearly with this Tory tradition. Instead of the "factious, encroaching assemblies" of provincial politics that "thwarted their dreams of economic development," the Tories wanted "a state they could control, one capable of providing political stability, promoting economic development and serving as an outlet for the ambitions of public men" (Peter J. Smith 19). Hence, McGee anticipates the day when "local prejudices ... will fall more and more into contempt, while our statesmen will rise more and more superior to such low and pitiful politics" (Two Speeches 10). McGee states that

> it is for the young men of all the provinces we who labor to bring about the Confederation are especially working; it is to give them a country wide enough and

> diversified enough to content them all, that we labor; it is to erect a standard worthy to engage their affections and ambition[.] (10)

The theme of ambition as it is discussed here confirms Peter J. Smith's contention that the Tories who pressed for union did so in the belief that it would provide "worthier offices and outlets for the ambitious few." Such offices would function like "a safety valve for colonial discontent" by attracting "men of greater talent to political office." It was also believed that these elevated posts would have the beneficial effect of calming "political passions," thereby reducing the tendency to factionalism (22).

Elsewhere, in an address to "the Maritime Provinces" in Halifax, McGee remarks that some nations must sacrifice their youth in war in order to secure religious and secular liberty, and contrasts this with the situation of the colonies of British North America:

> But what are we called upon to sacrifice? A few sectional prejudices, a few personal prejudices, some few questions of etiquette and precedence! These we are asked to place upon the altar of general union for the benefit of the whole. (Speeches 98)

Consistent with the Tory view in favour of union, McGee shows little patience in this speech for the "sectional prejudices" of the union's critics.[17]

McGee repeats this theme before the legislature within the context of the Confederation debates, in his speech of 9 February 1865. Here he expresses his surprise at the animated, elevated level of debate that has surrounded the question of union in the "Lower Provinces," as the Maritimes were called:

> It is astonishing how active has been the public mind in all these communities since the subject has been

> fairly launched. ... I am rejoiced to find that even in the smallest of the provinces I have been able to read writings and speeches which would do no discredit to older and more cultivated communities--articles and speeches worthy of any press and of any audience. (Two Speeches 15)

It appears that the subject alone of British American union has had a salutary, civilizing effect on the quality of public dialogue. He expands on this point:

> The provincial mind, it would seem, under the inspiration of a great question, leaped at a single bound, out of the slough of mere mercenary struggles for office, and took post on the high and honorable ground from which alone this great subject can be taken in, in all its dimensions--had risen at once to the true dignity of this discussion with an elasticity that does honor to the communities that have exhibited it[.]

Peter J. Smith aptly observes that "McGee, like Macdonald, thought federation a worthy object of ambition for public men and an escape from the narrowness and pettiness of provincial life" (26). Macdonald's hope was that the supervisory role of the central, federal government would retain its importance, and that the weight of local governments would gradually decline; the result of this development over time was to be that men would be more eager to serve in the central government than in the local bodies (Hodgins 45). As Phillip Buckner points out, the opponents of the Quebec Resolutions--so staunchly upheld by McGee in his address to the legislature, in which he insists that "[t]here is not a sentence--aye, or even a word--you can alter without desiring to throw out the document" (Two Speeches 23)--were critical of them because they recognized that the project for union "went further in the direction of centralization than was necessary or desirable in the 1860s" ("Maritimes" 109). As things turned out, the plan never

evolved as Macdonald had hoped, since the local, provincial governments remained strong after Confederation (110).

McGee's contribution to the Confederation debates constitutes the best expression of his change of politics since his arrival in Canada and the publication of the Canadian Ballads. In his address of 9 February 1865, he once again denies the history and traditions upon which his early collection of poetry was based:

> We have here no traditions and ancient venerable institutions; ... here, every man is the first settler of the land, or removed from the first settler one or two generations at the furthest; here, we have no architectural monuments calling up old associations; here, we have none of those old popular legends and stories which in other countries have exercised a powerful share in the government; here, every man is the son of his own works. (Two Speeches 33)

With these few lines he wipes the slate clean. This is not the place to recall the two hundred years of French-Canadian history previous to Wolfe's arrival. Instead, McGee evokes the names of Chief Justice Sewell, Sir John Beverley Robinson, and Lord Durham as men instrumental in the "antecedent history of the union" and praises their preliminary consideration of the question:

> If we have dreamed a dream of Union ... it is at least worth while remarking that a dream which has been dreamed by such wise and good men, may, for aught we know or you know, have been a sort of vision--a vision foreshadowing forthcoming natural events in a clear intelligence. (13)

Yet these men that McGee wishes to honour are the very men who epitomize the spirit of the "Anglican assimilationists" that McGee found so objectionable in the days of the New Era. A noteworthy development here is that he likens them to great leaders of the Bible:

> A vision (I say it without irreverence, for the event concerns the lives of millions living, and yet to come) resembling those seen by the DANIELS and JOSEPHS of old, foreshadowing the trials of the future; the fate of tribes and peoples; the rise and fall of dynasties. (13)

Indeed, he introduces a familiar idea at this point: that which supposes that Providence has approved the formation of a "great northern nation" through the union of the provinces.

McGee takes care to cite the Archbishop of Halifax, Dr. Connolly, at length, observing that the archbishop is "known as one of the first men in sagacity as he is in position" (20). The section of Connolly's speech that McGee wishes to draw our attention to is that in which he evokes the role of Providence in the plan for union:

> After the most mature consideration ... these are my inmost convictions on the necessity and merits of a measure which alone, under Providence, can secure to us social order and peace, and rational liberty, and and all the blessings we now enjoy under the mildest Government and the hallowed institutions of the freest and happiest country in the world. (21)

McGee himself will repeat this idea more explicitly in the House of Commons on 6 April 1868:

> I believe that it is the design of Providence that there shall be established on the northern portion of this continent, a nationality and system of government different from that other nationality existing to the south of us, whose system of government has not yet approved itself by the test of time[.] ("Extract")

Thus, McGee reiterates and reapplies the old Loyalist contention that Providence played a role in the establishment of the British American colonies, and had a hand in sanctioning their union.

But let us return briefly to the Confederation debates. Not surprisingly, McGee's remarks excited some reaction among certain French-Canadian politicians. One of these was his former political

ally, Antoine-Aimé Dorion, who was taken aback by McGee's position, and said as much on 16 February 1865:

> I am astonished to see the honorable member for Montreal West helping a scheme designed to end in a legislative union, the object of which can only be to assimilate the whole people to the dominant population. In that honorable gentleman's own country the system has produced nothing but a dissatisfied and rebellious people. (264)

Dorion went so far as to threaten the possiblity of public unrest if a legislative union were imposed.

The following Monday, 20 February 1865, H.G. Joly, member for Lotbinière, addressed some remarks of his own to McGee. His comments raise the very points that McGee had discussed seven years earlier in the New Era, but which he now disregarded entirely. Joly is incredulous that the "honorable Minister of Agriculture" should remind the House that "this new form of government was recommended successively" by Chief Justice Sewell, Judge Robinson, and Lord Durham:

> The names alone of these three men ought to suffice to open our eyes; their avowed object always was to obliterate French-Canadian nationality, to blend the races into one only, and that the English; and to attain that end they recommended ... the system of government now submitted for our approval. (361)

Joly proceeds to muse aloud on the subject of the aspirations of French Canada:

> I have always imagined, indeed I still imagine, that they all centre in one point, the maintenance of their nationality as a shield destined for the protection of the institutions they hold most dear. ... The French Canadians hold a distinguished position in the commerce of the country ... . We have a literature peculiarly our own; we have authors, of whom we are justly proud; to them we entrust our language and our history; they are the pillar of our nationality. Nothing denotes our

existence as a people as much as our literature. ... We possess all the elements of a nationality. (361-62)

Curiously, during these important discussions regarding the political form of the new nationality that McGee had anticipated for so long, and of whose literature he has since been named a father, it is not McGee who raises the issue of the importance of the nation's literature, but M. Joly of Lotbinière. As he notes, French Canada's literature constitutes the greatest sign of its nationality; it confirms the nation's existence. In the face of the proposed project for union, however, "all aspirations are ... only empty dreams:"

> we must give up our nationality, adopt a new one, greater and nobler, we are told, than our own, but then it will no longer be our own. ... Let us not give to the world the sad spectacle of a people voluntarily resigning its nationality. (362)

From the historical perspective of the late twentieth century, we might well wonder who was more of a visionary--McGee, or Joly. Even though this examination of McGee's literary and political career in Canada is admittedly condensed, we might also be justified in wondering why he retains his status as a "father of Canadian literature," especially since he dissociated himself from the political vision upon which his conception of literature rested, as articulated in the New Era.

To conclude this chapter on McGee, a brief consideration of "The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion" may be of some use in renewing our sense of his place in Canada's literary history. To be sure, this address made before the Literary Club of Montreal includes a number of ideas characteristic of McGee's writings of the 1860s on Canada and the new nationality he envisaged: he

chastizes the press for its "provincial narrowness" and "localism" (2), asserts that the Dominion is "to represent British ethics and British culture in America" (7), and makes much of the opportunity afforded him to warn against American influence where books, morals, politics, and forms of nationalism are concerned. Perhaps more significant on this occasion is his assessment of Canadian books. McGee may regret that he is unable to name any great number of titles, since the Dominion has "as yet but few possessions in this sort that we can call strictly our own" (5), yet he does mention authors of some variety. Their writings extend to the fields of history, geology, science, and politics, and include biographical sketches, poetry, and works of humour. (Novels are conspicuously absent from his inventory.[18]) In making this assessment, McGee takes a broad approach to writing that is typical of his times, and one that students of literature might return to as better-suited to the exploration of the literary paradigm of the nineteenth century. In addition, McGee comments on questions of distribution and sales, on reading practices, institutions of higher learning, the establishment of public libraries, the growth of the press, and the role of the cultural elite and the "professional classes" in literary life. In so doing, he recognizes various elements of the literary system and their function in producing "literature;" these elements also open up further research perspectives related to the discourses of culture and early practices of reading and writing in Canada. The reminder made in "The Mental Outfit," of the network of relations that gives

rise to literary works, is surely as good a reason as McGee's status as poet and visionary, to continue to read his works today.

* * *

It is my hope that this dissertation has indicated an alternative perspective on early Canadian writing, and has successfully eluded the extremes of order and chaos sketched out by W.J. Keith and John Metcalf. This was the dilemma alluded to at the outset of this investigation. I did not intend this study primarily as a detailed portrait of the figures who contributed to literary discourse in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Instead, it constitutes an attempt to view those centuries as if through a kaleidoscope, thereby taking into account the ever-shifting, ever-changing actions and interactions of the emergent literary system in Canada. In so doing, I have tried to emphasize the dynamics at work in this handful of literary case studies. They may include instances of uncertainty and contradiction, but these are aspects of the literary system that cannot be dismissed if we wish to come to a better understanding of its beginnings and subsequent variations. Our challenge is that of attempting to view early literature as a process in motion, rather than a sparse collection of "literary" texts. If we take this approach, it is evident that there is much research and analysis still to be undertaken--and perhaps more to rotten romanticism than first meets the eye.

Notes

Preface

1. George Parker states that we have "shed our narrow preconceptions about eighteenth and nineteenth-century prose, particularly the myth of its supposed dullness and gentility" (Introduction vii).

2. Such calls have recently been made by Mary Lu MacDonald ("Nineteenth-Century Canadian Literature as a Primary Source for the Study of Canadian Social and Intellectual History," 1988) and Germaine Warkentin and Heather Murray ("Introduction. Reading the Discourse of Early Canada," 1991).

Issues and Research Perspectives I & II

1. This quotation, as well as other information mentioned here concerning Thomas D'Arcy McGee, may be found in J. G. Snell, "Thomas D'Arcy McGee and the American Republic," Canadian Review of American Studies 3 (1972): 33-44.

2. Robin Mathews, Canadian Literture: Surrender or Revolution, ed. Gail Dexter (Toronto: Steel Rail Educational Publishing, 1978); J. Wilson Clark, "The Line of National Subjugation in Canadian Literature," Literature & Ideology 7 (1970): 81-88.

3. This independent status has provided the basis for organizing separate departments for the study of literatures ever since they became an integral part of the university curriculum. In the case of English literature, more than a hundred years went by before it came to be seen as a legitimate subject of interest, rather than a "poor man's Classics." When the study of English literature did begin to gain ground as a result of the implementation of a national examination system, its status and the possibility for future growth were compromised, in the words of one chronicler of the rise of English studies, "for want of proper academic standards and of trained teachers" (Palmer vii).

4. Marcotte admits to having exaggerated in order to make his point regarding the importance of critical activity. According to Robert Estivals, the reality is that from 1970 to 1974, Quebec's number of published titles grew altogether by 300% (from 1,310 to 3,665 titles), but that the number of copies barely doubled (from 7,955 to 19,402). Although Estivals does not specify the breakdown of the works in question (i.e., fiction, social sciences, history, etc.), he nonetheless concludes that these figures point to the greater importance of creativity (number of new titles) in relation to the expectations of actual sales (345).

5. Tzvetan Todorov specifies that "Ce n'est pas l'oeuvre littéraire elle-même qui est l'objet de la poétique: ce que celle-ci interroge, ce sont les propriétés de ce discours particulier, qu'est le discours littéraire" (19). This activity is not, however, divorced from the study of individual literary works: "Entre poétique et interprétation, le rapport est par excellence celui de complémentarité. Une réflexion théorique sur la poétique qui n'est pas nourrie d'observations sur les oeuvres existantes se révèle stérile et inopérante" (21).

6. Keith notes that the "standard of scholarship seems less rigorous, the level of criticism and commentary less disciplined and sophisticated; even the quality of the writing appears slacker, less precise" ("Function" 2). He supports his comments with a number of examples of careless criticism whose errors could in some cases have easily been prevented through a more thorough reading of the work under discussion. Instead, as Keith laments, they are read and cited by other critics, and thereby perpetuated by the so-called "critical" machine itself.

7. Margaret Atwood, Second Words. Selected Critical Prose. (Toronto: Anansi, 1982).

8. Powe does qualify his criticism: "Atwood has taken her share of critical barbs for the schematic generalizations and the sarcastic tone of her book. I do not think this is useful because, aside from being too easy to do, Survival is a provocative pioneer essay which demonstrated that there was *something* (out there) for young Canadian writers to grapple with" (77). I tend to agree with this view.

9. See W.J. Keith, "The Function of Canadian Criticism at the Present Time," Essays on Canadian Writing 30 (1984-85): 1-16.

10. Section 9.4.1, "General Studies," also lists the book-length studies of Carl Ballstadt, E.K. Brown, Northrop Frye, D.G. Jones, Archibald MacMechan, Eli Mandel, John Moss, Ronald Sutherland, and George Woodcock.

11. Besides Atwood's conception of survival, Riedel cites Frye's notion of the "garrison mentality," and the central poetic symbols explored in D.G. Jones' Butterfly on Rock, Warren Tallman's essay, "Wolf in the Snow," and the essays in Eli Mandel's Contexts of Canadian Criticism.

12. Some recent work on the reception of Atwood's writing points to varying readings that situate her as either a feminist or a Canadian nationalist writer. See Judith McCombs, ed., Critical Essays on Margaret Atwood (1988), and Mary Jean Green's review of the collection, "Margaret Atwood and the making of Critical History," Essays on Canadian Writing 41 (1990): 116-120.

13. Note de l'éditeur, Margaret Atwood, Éssai de littérature canadienne, trans. Hélène Filion (Montréal: Boréal, 1987) 9.

14. See Louis-Bernard Robitaille's comments regarding the reception and marketing of recent Canadian writing in French and English in major French newspapers and cultural magazines in "Paris découvre une littérature, " _L'actualité_ 1 Dec. 1992: 85-88. His remarks are supported in part by the attention accorded recently to English-Canadian writers in _Le Monde_'s weekly book section: the work of Jane Urquart, Alice Munro, and Mavis Gallant is discussed in the "D'autres mondes" rubric (Nicole Zand, "Canadiennes d'Ontario et d'ailleurs," 25 Oct. 1991: 32), as is Nino Ricci's _Lives of the Saints_ (Nicole Zand, "Sous le signe du serpent," 24 Jan. 1992: 34), while Robertson Davies is discussed by John Irving in an article that figures on the front page of the section "Des livres" (John Irving, "John Irving remarque Robertson Davies," 25 Sept. 1992: 25).

15. MacMechan's _Headwaters of Canadian Literature_ was reissued by McClelland & Stewart as part of the New Canadian Library series.

16. Malcolm Ross, "Our Sense of Identity," _The Impossible Sum of Our Traditions_ (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1986) 23. This essay was originally published in 1954 as the introduction to the book of the same title.

17. The historians Fohlen refers to are those who followed the lead of Lionel Groulx: Thomas Chapais, Gustave Lanctôt, Guy Frégault, and Robert Rumilly.

18. Gregory Jusdanis, _Belated Modernity and Aesthetic Culture. Inventing National Literature_. Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1991.

19. This question refers to the context created largely by Canada's French and English colonizers.

20. See Carl F. Ballstadt's thesis, "The Quest For Canadian Identity in Pre-Confederation English-Canadian Literary Criticism," (1959) for a record of the enthusiastic statements and predictions made about Canadian literature.

Chapter One

1. Brooke figures in Carl F. Klinck and Reginald Watters' _Canadian Anthology_ (1955; 1966; 1974); in A.J.M. Smith's _The Colonial Century. English-Canadian Writing Before Confederation_ (1973; 1986); in Douglas Daymond and Leslie Monkman's _Literature in Canada_ (1978; vol 1); and in _An Anthology of Canadian Literature in English_ (1982; 1983; 1990), edited by Russell Brown et al.

2. See Douglas Daymond and Leslie Monkman (_Literature_ 29); John Moss, who sees _Emily Montague_ as one of the sources of the Canadian

novel (Introduction 7-8); Mary Jane Edwards ("Frances Brooke" 87; Introduction liv); W.H. New, who refers to Emily Montague as "the first novel written in Canada" (History 57); and Russell Brown, et al., who note that Emily Montague is "often described as the first Canadian novel (and indeed as the first North American one)" (2).

3. In her book on epistolary form, Epistolarity, Janet Gurkin Altman credits Charles E. Kany's study, The Beginnings of the Epistolary Novel in France, Italy, and Spain (1937), for having rectified the widespread perception in English literary history that the epistolary novel was an English invention of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (5). Laurent Versini's Le roman épistolaire (1979) is likewise of interest on this question. It is worth noting that under the rubric of "minor fiction," The New Cambridge Bibliography of English Literature states that over 1000 works of epistolary fiction were published between 1660 and 1800 (Day 975-76). It was clearly a popular mode well before Pamela appeared, anonymously, in 1740. Richardson is often cited as having promoted public taste for the sentimental novel; however, Canadian critics usually see him as the "father" of the epistolary form.

4. C.J. Rawson remarks that "there is much contemporary testimony, not only from Fielding, that Richardson's novels, for all their vivid readability and their great emotional power, seemed to many distressingly low-bred. Horace Walpole, in a letter to Sir Horace Mann, 20 December 1764, called them 'pictures of high life as conceived by a bookseller'. Lady Mary Wortley Montague grudgingly admitted the unbecoming emotional involvement into which his novels drew her ('I heartily despise him and eagerly read him, nay, sob over his works in a most scandalous manner', letter to Lady Bute, 22 September, 1755)" (280).

5. See James J. and Ruth Talman (84); A.J.M. Smith's introduction to Brooke (3); Daymond and Monkman's introduction to Brooke (Literature 29); Linda Shohet (28,30); W.H. New (History 57); and the introduction to Brooke by Russell Brown, et al (1).

6. This does not alter the fact that most critics have noticed Brooke for having written the first novel and provided a picture of social life in the Quebec garrison. Few Canadian critics have attended to the feminist dimension of Brooke's life.

7. Lorraine McMullen and Mary Jane Edwards have both documented Brooke's initial disappointment in Emily Montague's lukewarm sales, as communicated in a letter to Dodsley, her bookseller in London. Yet both cite the book's numerous editions as a sign of its later success. Likewise, in his study of the influence of the American Revolution on fiction, America in English Fiction 1760-1800 (1968), Robert Bechthold Heilman writes that some 2000 novels were published during the forty-year period, but that 75% of these were only ever printed once; "[t]wo editions indicate considerable attention, three positive popularity" (84).

8. Indeed, in his review of New's history, Paul Stuewe suggests that, in spite of the Macmillan History of Literature series' claim to emphasize context, and even though New does include some detailed passages, the book's "pace is otherwise hectic" and that "[n]ame follows name and book follows book in dizzying succession, and much of the volume's content is treated in only classificatory terms" (review 169).

9. James J. and Ruth Talman ask if Emily Montague is "a novel only, or might it be classed also with description and travel literature?" (85); Lorraine McMullen sees in the novel a combination of the "attractions of the travel journal with those of the novel of sensibility" (Profiles 11).

10. W.H. New introduces the question of politics in "Frances Brooke's Chequered Gardens"in Canadian Literature 52 (1972): 24-38; see also Mary Jane Edwards ("Politics").

11. Neatby writes that, at the time, the division between English groups of merchants and the government could not be overlooked; it is at least as important as the groups identified as French/English by James J. and Ruth Talman (see chapter 5, "The Benefit of English Law," in Quebec. The Revolutionary Age 1760-1791).

12. See Lorraine McMullen's An Odd Attempt in a Woman, 86. McMullen's approach to Brooke is consistent in that she situates her more in terms of a female novelist and writer involved primarily with the questions of early feminism.

13. Critics who do not specialize in the field of Canadian literature do not dwell on the novel's descriptive dimension. Robert Bechtold Heilman mentions The History of Emily Montague in his study because it deals with the wider subject of "America in English Fiction" (America in English Fiction 1760-1800. The Influence of the American Revolution, 1968); Katharine M. Rogers discusses the novel from a feminist point of view in an article ("Sensibility and Feminism: The Novels of Frances Brooke") and in a study entitled Feminism in Eighteenth-Century England (1982); likewise, Katherine Sobba Green views Brooke's novels as belonging to a specific genre in The Courtship Novel 1740-1820. A Feminized Genre (1991).

14. Carl F. Klinck and Reginald Watters' Canadian Anthology features letters 49 and 80, in which Arabella Fermor presents the pros and cons of the Canadian climate in winter; A.J.M. Smith's anthology includes four of Rivers' early letters (letters 4, 5, 6 and 11), letters 45 and 49 about the climate, and one of William Fermor's letters to the Earl of --- (letter 115 in Smith's anthology, 117 in Mary Jane Edwards' edition of 1985); Douglas Daymond and Leslie Monkman's anthology reproduces letters 45 and 49 on climate, as well as one of William Fermor's letters to the Earl of --- (letter 150 in their anthology, 152 in Mary Jane Edwards' edition of 1985); Russell Brown, et al, choose 3 early letters

(letters 1, 10 and 11), letters 49 and 80 on climate, two of William Fermor's letters to the Earl of --- (letters 123 and 131), and excerpts of letters 127 and 169. Of the 16 different letters that appear in these four publications, a quarter are written by William Fermor and nearly half are taken from the first 37 pages of the book, which runs to 406 pages (1985 edition).

15. Mary Jane Edwards notes that Brooke's translation of Marie-Jeanne Riccoboni's Lettres de Milady Catesby, à Milady Henriette Campley, son amie (1759) was a success, but that it did not entirely wipe out her debts. Unfortunately for Brooke, no subsequent translations of Riccoboni's work came her way. In September 1765, before leaving for North America, she devised an alternate plan to generate income: "she would compose a novel that would please the ladies at the same time as it interested the men, and convinced them of the justice of [her husband's] position on Quebec and its problems" (Introduction xix, xxxiii). The larger reading audience Brooke sought was located in England.

16. The same is true of the printing press introduced at Halifax in 1751.

17. The note that W.H. New provides for the year 1764 in the chronological table at the back of his History is as follows: "First printing press in Quebec; first bilingual newspaper in Canada: La Gazette de Québec" (303). Oddly, in his discussion of the Quebec Gazette in relation to the stamp act, Douglas Fetherling quotes the French column of the newspaper, thereby giving the impression that it was primarily a French-language publication (6). It would be more accurate to note, as do Douglas Daymond and Leslie Monkman, that the Quebec Gazette "served as an unofficial voice for the policies of the British government" (Towards 6).

18. The "Prospectus" first appeared in the Quebec Gazette of 21 June 1764. This is the text to which I refer to here, although it has been reprinted in Daymond and Monkman's Towards a Canadian Literature: Essays, Editorials and Manifestos, vol. 1 1752-1940 (1984).

19. Regarding the differences in literacy rates for English- and French-speaking inhabitants of Quebec in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Allan Greer notes the following:
"most of the adult English-speaking population of Lower Canada, in the countryside at least, was born outside the province. Perhaps the most important distinction between the francophones and the anglophones in terms of its relation to literacy was neither religious nor national but was instead connected to the fact that one group was native-born and the other was composed mainly of immigrants. It has been claimed that international migration tends to be literacy selective since people aware enough of the greater world and sensitive enough to individual material interests to undertake such a great step are also more likely than others to be able to read. It is generally impossible for the original colonists of a new land to give their children as good an education

as they themselves had had and literacy may decline between the immigrants and the first generation of native-born" ("Pattern" 319).

20. Yolande Grisé and Jeanne d'Arc Lortie, Les Textes poétiques du Canada français. 9 vols. Montréal: Fides, 1988-.

21. For example, in compiling their Chronological Index of Locally Written Verse Published in the Newspapers and Magazines of Upper and Lower Canada, Maritime Canada, and Newfoundland through 1815 (1978), Ross Stuart and Thomas B. Vincent have already imposed a selection on the possible corpus of published texts by subjecting them to their own criteria: "All items included in the index were selected on the basis of some hard evidence indicating the poem was locally written. This evidence included internal references to local objects and issues, inscriptions or accompanying notes indicating the poem was written for the publication in which it appeared, and dating notations which specified Canadian locations" (Preface v). The editors admit that they may have missed some locally written verse due to the nature of the "hard evidence" they require, and recognize at the same time that "some poems reprinted from foreign sources" might also have been included. It might have been more useful to have provided references for all poems that appeared, regardless of whether they were locally written or not, and to have allowed students to come to their own conclusions as to their status. This would also have allowed researchers to approach the problem of determining what counted as "literary" from the printers' and newspaper publishers' point of view. By focusing exclusively on locally written verse, the Index's information has already been geared to answer the needs of a certain type of research.

22. Both poems are anonymous. They appear in the Quebec Gazette 5 July 1764. The "ODE" recalls the first 21 lines of Pope's "Ode for Musick, on St. Cecilia's Day:: the muses are invoked, and the "Strains decay, / And melt away / In a dying, dying Fall." Neither of these "firsts" appears in any anthology.

23. The practice of holding such races continued for some time: the Quebec Gazette of 25 June, 1767, announces that "a purse of 40 dollars will be raced for on the following Wednesday, on the "Heights of Abraham." It is requested that "all Dogs may be kept off the Course."

24. The Jesuits figured as a popular target for Protestants, especially after the order and its teaching institutions were dissolved in Catholic countries in 1762. Other articles regarding the Jesuits appear in the issues of 25 February 1768; 14 July 1768; and 23 March 1769. The Jesuits excited much suspicion--long before the appearance of the theme of the diabolical Jesuit in nineteenth-century novels.

25. See, for example, 16 August 1764 (on the lack of educational facilities in the colony); 11 October 1764 (the curé Récher

deplores the exhumation of bodies that occurred during the construction of a house); 23 February 1767 (against inebriety in the colony); 17 December 1767 (regarding liquidity problems and the possibility of developing new industries in order to solve them); 21 January 1768 (from "A Friend to the P--T-ST-NT C----H" on the need for a separate Protestant church and a separate Protestant burying ground, so that "a P--t-st--t's B--dy would have some Chance of Rest in the G--ve, as the C---d--ns would probably find Ground enough in Canada to build upon, without finding it needful of raising P--t-st--ts B-d--s in Order to lay the Foundations of their Building"); and 4 February 1768 (the population is entreated to lead a more holy life during "carnaval").

26. An English translation of this letter appears in the Quebec Gazette of 3 October 1765.

27. See the Quebec Gazette 10 October 1765 (English translation appears 17 October 1765); 18 August 1766; 26 August 1766; 1 September 1766; 8 September 1766; and 15 September 1766.

28. See "LIBERTY. An ODE" (Quebec Gazette 16 March 1767), for example. Here, Britannia's name figures alongside those of Greece and Rome, yet "*stronger fairer* than the rest." Foes of liberty are foes of Britannia.

29. Instructions for the captains of the militia appeared in the Almanach de Québec pour l'année bissextile MDCCLXXX [1780], and indicate that officers "shall have such a Room as the *Habitans* can afford, a Bed, tho' not the Landlord's, a Table, three Chairs, and Lodging for his Servant; he shall be warmed, and have the Means of dressing his Victuals." He is also to be provided with "a pair of Sheets to be changed every Month" (29).

30. First cited by Mary Jane Edwards in her introduction to The History of Emily Montague (xxvii). Murray's letter is dated 30 October.

31. See chapter 5, "The Benefit of English Law," for more on the legal situation in the colony and the dilemmas of governor Murray.

32. The Quebec Gazette of 1 November 1764 advertises "Germain Langlois's weekly circulating library" of "several Hundred Volumes"; the following number of 8 November announces a book sale to be held by the same person.

33. Some examples of this rhetoric may be found in the following poems, which all appeared in the Quebec Gazette in 1769: "LIBERTY" (2 February); "To the Conqueror of Louisbourg, Newfoundland, Canada ..." (16 February); "Augustus Britannicus to his Son" (3 August); "Ode to His Majesty's Birthday" (17 August). Like sentiments resurge with force in the poems that celebrated Carleton's victory over the Americans during the invasion of 1775-1776. Again, it is not so much the governor himself who is praised (his victory was a slim one by military standards) as "Britannia."

34. In response to her husband's announcement of 5 January 1769, in which he indicates that he will not be held responsible for his wife's debts, Gabrielle Joncaire writes the following: "Gabrielle Joncaire, femme d'Honoré Dubois de la Miltière, avertit le public, que la séparation de corps et de biens qu'elle a fait avec son mari étoit pour avoir la liberté, étant détenue prisonnière, depuis quatre mois renfermée sous clé et veroux, avec des grilles aux fenêtres, et toute sorte de cruatés: Aujourd'hui aiant été trompée par l'acte que nous avons passé ensemble, j'avertis le public que je proteste contre tout ce qu'il a pu me faire signer par sa tromperie. Ceux qui achèteront la terre de Repentigny de lui, la vente sera de nulle valeur cette terre appartenante à moi. Je n'ai pu avertir le public plutôt, parce que j'ai été obligée de partir subitement et en cachette pour la Nouvelle-Angleterre, pour éviter d'être reprise pour me traiter avec la même barbarie qu'il a fait ci-devant, m'en prevenant lui même par un billet qu'il m'a écrit devant mon départ, et que je conserve encore." Such defences are far more rare than notices submitted by husbands.

Chapter Two

1. Even-Zohar provides the following table (31) to illustrate his adaptation of Jakobson's model. Jakobson's terms appear in brackets:

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                  INSTITUTION [context]
                    REPERTOIRE [code]

PRODUCER [addresser---------------------addressee] CONSUMER

                  MARKET [contact/channel]
                    PRODUCT [message]
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2. Even-Zohar notes that "producers are not confined to a single role in the literary network, but may, and are driven to, participate in a number of activities, which in certain aspects can become partly or wholly incompatible with each other" (35).

3. "The 'market' is the aggregate of factors involved with the selling and buying of literary products and with the promotion of types of consumption. This includes not only overt merchandise-exchange institutions like bookshops, book clubs, or libraries, but also all factors participating in the semiotic ('symbolic') exchange involving these, and with other linked activities" (Even-Zohar 38).

4. "The 'institution' consists of the aggregate of factors involved with the maintenance of literature as a socio-cultural activity. It is the institution which governs the norms prevailing in this activity, sanctioning some and rejecting others. Empowered by, and being part of, other dominating social institutions, it also

remunerates and reprimands producers and agents. As part of official culture, it also determines who, and which products, will be remembered by a community for a longer period of time" (Even-Zohar 37).

5. "'Repertoire' designates the aggregate of rules and materials which govern both the making and use of any given product. These rules and materials are thus indispensable for any procedure of production and consumption. The larger the community which makes and uses given products, the larger must be the agreement about such a repertoire. Although the degree of familiarity with a specific repertoire need not be fully identical for interlocutors (either 'addresser' or "addressee") in a specific exchange (communication) situation, without a minimum of shared knowledge there will be virtually no exchange" (Even-Zohar 39).

6. Bentley cites George Parker (Beginnings 38). Marie Tremaine also lists details regarding the poem's printing history (271-72). It should be noted that roughly 200 copies of the poem were printed.

7. The same is true of commentators of writing in Canada. James J. and Ruth Talman make a similar assumption in their article, "Settlement III, The Canadas 1763-1812" in Carl F. Klinck's History. They write that "[m]ore popular than fiction, apparently was poetry, for the period provides at least four long descriptive poems" (99), one of which is Abram's Plains.

8. In Quebec City alone, these papers included the Courier de Québec ou Héraut François, which never really got off the ground, and the Quebec Herald, Miscellany and Advertiser (Nov.1788-Dec.1792), both owned by William Moore and edited by James Transwell; the Times / Le Cours du temps (Aug.1794-July 1795), owned by William Vondenvelden; the British American Register (Jan.1802-Aug.1803), a bilingual paper owned by John Neilson; and the Courier de Québec (1806-1808) edited by Jacques Labrie (Beaulieu and Hamelin, Presse 8-14).

9. Cary makes the best of a bad situation by using it to emphasize his own virtues: "we stand forth, alone, in the open field, in *propria personae*, the undisguised and unshielded, though undaunted, mark of [our assailants'] arrows; which, it is true, recoil, without making any kind of impression. The reason is, that they are not only totally wanting in every thing that bears any resemblance to the Attic polish or point, but they have, on the contrary, every appearance, from their dullness and bluntness, of being framed of Boetian lead.

We have to apologize to our readers for making Self the little hero of our tale; but where laudable industry was the mark and distortion the mode of attack, not to repel the shafts would be a failure not only of the reprehension due to such assailants, but of common justice to ourselves" (Quebec Mercury 19 September 1808, 303).

10. Bentley's description of the poem is an example of this, as is an observation made in a recent article by Marcel Trudel, who states that Quebec has undergone a total of four "revolutions" in its history; he situates the first of these in 1763, "quand nous sommes passés sous l'allégeance britannique" ("Le vent souffle" 25).

11. Cary acknowledges that he is the author of the prologue to a theatrical performance, included in the first number of the paper (5 January 1805). He may also have written some of the short two- or four-line poetical salvos directed at the Canadien, and other short unsigned poems that appeared on important occasions, such as the King's birthday, the bestowing of colours on a certain regiment, or a British naval victory.

12. Thus, Cary prints a number of Moore's poems ("Dead Man's Island" ["On Passing Deadman's Island] 20 October 1806, 336; "A Ballad. The Lake of the Dismal Swamp" 27 October 1806, 336); "Love and Reason" 8 December 1807, 392; "A Canadian Boat Song" 11 May 1807, 152), but does not venture to comment on them or on Moore's qualities as a poet. Instead, he relies on the judgment of the "Critical Reviewers" regarding Moore's "poetical spirit and powers of versification" (31 August 1807, 275).

13. A few titles illustrate the more dominant features of the poetry column: "The Ploughman's Ditty," "The Way to Get Married," "Colin and the Doctor" (1805); "The Pride of the World," "The Great Nation," "Gallia's despot deeply riled" (1806); "The Fop," "Jack and the Deacon," "Ear Boring," "The Tooth Ache" (1807); "Charon and Bonaparte," "The Pious Painter. A Catholic Story," "To My Barber" (1808).

14. According to John Hare and Jean-Pierre Wallot, Neilson's accounts mention sales, memberships and exchanges regarding the following periodicals: le Moniteur; la Belle Assemblée; The Lady's Museum; Tradesman or Commercial Advertiser; Gentleman's Magazine; The Philosopher; Fine Arts; l'Ambigu; American Review; The Lady's Preceptor; Cobbett's Weekly Political Register; Port Folio; Philosophical Transactions of London & Edinburg[h]; Porcupine; Monthly Preceptor; Magasin des enfants et des adolescents; Gentlemen Merchants & Trades; London Philosophical Transactions (95). In a note, they list some of the many newspapers from Britain and the United States that were available in Quebec: The New York Herald; The New York Spectator; The New York Gazette; The Public Advertiser (New York); The Price Current; The Bookseller; le Petit Censeur (New York); The National Intelligence (Washington); The US Gazette (Philadelphia); The Philadelphia Daily; The Baltimore Evening Post; The Repertory (Boston); The Boston Gazette; The Columbian Sentinel (Boston); The Palladium; The Daily Journal; The Richmond Engineer; The Freeman's Journal; The Citizen; The Register; The Crisis; The Chronicle; The Reporter; Spooner's Vermont Journal; The New Hampshire Gazette; The Western Star; The National Eagis; The Salem Gazette (111). Hare and Wallot do not list all of the newspapers from Neilson's accounts.

15. In note 1 on page 50, Anderson defines "creole" as a "person of (at least theoretically) pure European descent but born in the Americas (and, by later extension, anywhere outside Europe)." Thus, most of Lower Canada's French-speaking population and some of its English-language inhabitants would have been creoles.

16. Cary occasionally relents on this point. An example of this is a letter published in French on 2 February 1807, and which objects to the Canadien's conception of the freedom of the press, claiming that the paper is reserved for the "productions d'un petit nombre de personnes à têtes chaudes: pour le plaisir desquelles, les autres souscripteurs ont le privilège de payer, et rien de plus" (33). "B. & S." may have been refused publication by the Canadien's editors. Whatever the case, they urge Cary, whose paper they prefer, to be impartial and to accept all letters regardless of the language they are written in.

17. Jean-Antoine Bouthillier, Jacques and Denis-Benjamin Viger, Michel O'Sullivan, Valentin Jautard, Joseph and Antoine Quesnel, Louis Charland, E.-G. Plante, P.-D. Debartzch and Joseph-Louis Borgia (Reid 13).

18. Likewise, in the Mercury's last number of the following year, Cary remarks on the "competition lately raised, by an extraordinary accumulation of presses and papers, in the province" (28 December 1807, 409). In 1808 he writes with pride of having "reached the end of the fourth year, with a continued augmentation of support, notwithstanding the competition which has, of late years, opposed our progress" (26 December 1808, 409). Earlier editorial decisions suggest his awareness of the competition that the Quebec Gazette represented: Neilson's paper appeared on Thursday, while the Mercury came out on Saturday for the first nine months or so of publication. As of 14 October 1805, however, Cary shifts the Mercury to Monday, which suggests that he wished to allow for a full three days between the papers. Although he later "dare[s] to compare numbers even with the Gazette" (22 December 1806, 407), there are indications that Cary experienced some difficult periods due to competition.

Chapter Three

1. Fernand Ouellet dates the onset of Lower Canada's agricultural crisis from 1816. At this point, the cumulative effects of faulty agricultural techniques proved disastrous in the one province but resulted in a growing market for the farmers of Upper Canada. The consequent shift in grain production to the western region of the Great Lakes necessitated more efficient means of transportation and lent urgency to the call for a banking institution in Upper Canada. This increased economic activity allowed the upper province to gain

increased independence from Lower Canada, thereby freeing it from its "colonial" status (250).

2. Mary Lu MacDonald's definition of what she takes to be literary works includes "works in both prose and poetry which were essentially political, critical, or didactic." She admits to having narrowed her focus in relation to the nineteenth-century sense of literature as "everything in print and most of what was spoken or sung" (Literature 2). This is understandable in view of the necessity of limiting one's corpus, yet it is regrettable that she excludes published sermons from her study, for if there is one point in the nineteenth century where "literature" and "sermon literature" intersect, it is surely on the point of their shared didacticism. And if the numerous published sermons of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century may not seem especially critical to the twentieth-century reader, they are almost always political. On the question of whether to include such writing or not, George Parker expresses a common opinion: "After the 1820s it was possible to find hundreds of verses and sketches in newspapers and little magazines, and to find hundreds more pamphlets and books dealing with interpretations of the scriptures, local histories, politics, temperance, travel, emigration, and natural resources; but most of this activity by no stretch of the imagination could be called literature" (Beginnings 54). I disagree with this judgment, since it is through these reading practices--by "practising" different types of reading--that a colonial audience develops the reading strategies and habits that are necessary to the consumption of the purer form of literature that Parker appears to have in mind. I see the emergence of "pure" literary products as inevitably entwined with the growth of colonial print culture and the emergence of what Bourdieu calls the "field of restricted production."

3. Leslie Monkman lists three recent editions: one by Mount Allison University, edited by Douglas Lochhead (1978); another by the Cherry Tree Press of Toronto, edited by Roy Abramson (1981); and the last, a critical edition edited by Douglas Lochhead for the Centre for Editing Early Canadian Texts, at Carleton University (1991).

4. It is worth questioning T.D. MacLulich's remarks on the 'aristocratic' view of Canadian literature, as developed in Between Europe and America. The Canadian Tradition in Fiction (1988), especially in light of James' complaints regarding the States' protracted cultural dependence, which seems to have continued in spite of the American Revolution. MacLulich notes that "early [Canadian] writers did not show the urge towards national self-definition that is so evident in their American counterparts. They were conspicuously reluctant to follow American writers in creating works of literature that were aggressively North American in subject, outlook, and language" (20). These comments suggest that American literature in the nineteenth century constituted a fully independent system, long before Canadian literature enjoyed such a status. Yet while the United States' political independence may

have helped to promote the book trade and other functions of the system, it did not automatically produce new models for texts to supplant entirely those that bore an 'aristocratic' stamp. Indeed, the literary careers of later figures, such as Eliot and Pound, certainly argue for a healthy strain of aristocratic literary values that continued well into the twentieth century. English literature enjoyed a high degree of cultural power in both countries. At the same time, it must not be forgotten that many writers living in Canada, especially towards the end of the century, actually wrote for U.S.-based periodicals. This widespread practice tends to undermine the idea projected by nationalist literary histories that the literatures of the two countries are wholly distinct. An eloquent contemporary example of this tendency is the career of Mavis Gallant, whose short stories invariably appear in the _New Yorker_ before being marketed in collections by Canadian publishers.

5. The moral world,
Which though to us it seems perplex'd, moves on
In higher order, fitted amd impell'd,
By wisdom's finest hand, and issuing
In universal good. THOMSON
(title page, _St. Ursula's Convent_)

6. In presenting "British Indians" Hart implies that there is such a thing as an "American" Indian, although none figures in her narrative. The image of natives conveyed in _Tonnewonte_ conforms to the general character of such representations in American literature during the first half of the nineteenth century. Mary Lu MacDonald has found that these images habitually lend natives negative characteristics; at best, they are ambivalent: "The aboriginal was a demonic and ferocious enemy in periods when whites were in process of conquering a new territory, and a noble and natural friend in periods when there was no warfare" ("Red & White" 93-94).

7. Errington writes that this myth "continues to be perpetuated in many of the most widely accepted scholarly studies of this formative period of Upper Canadian development" ("Friends" 58).

8. Errington's study of the _Kingston Gazette_ shortly before, during, and after the War of 1812 reveals that birth, death, and marriage announcements from New York, Vermont and Connecticut were regularly included, and are an indication of how the communities were linked ("Friends" 63). Her analysis of the paper's news content shows the extent to which Stephen Miles, the paper's editor, reprinted the greater part of his news regarding America from federalist newspapers. She suggests that the members of the Kingston elite largely shared the opinions of their federalist American neighbours regarding the war.

9. A similar awareness was on the rise in Lower Canada, where, during the same decade, the word "Châteauguay" "had almost become a slogan in itself, implying that Canadiens had defended their

country against great odds, had triumphed, and had remained loyal to Britain" (MacDonald Literature 175).

10. These have been attributed to Alexander James Christie (Canadian Magazine and Literary Repository, May 1824), Samuel Hull Wilcocke (Scribbler, 8 July 1824), and David Chisholme (Canadian Review And Literary & Historical Journal, July 1824) (Lochhead xxvii-xxx).

11. Reviewers who recognized and named the 'Canadian' dimension of Hart's work were themselves immigrants to the Canadas from Great Britain. We may speculate that their readiness to name the work as distinctly Canadian is similar to the headstart that English writers had on Americans before the Revolution in identifying the land and people of what would become the United States as "American" (Merritt 58). In his well-known study, Symbols of American Community 1735-1775 (1966), Richard L. Merritt remarks that the English use of the designation "American" allowed writers to differentiate themselves from the colonists, thereby drawing attention to the cultural difference which, to their minds, separated the two groups (58).

12. In 1824 the Kingston Chronicle cost 17s 6d per year; St. Ursula's Convent was priced at 8s 8d (MacDonald Literature 284, 287).

13. Strachan was not beyond reading certain works. He records having written on 16 October 1815 to James, his brother who lived in Scotland, and from whom he occasionally requested certain books. This time his list included Don Quixote, Gil Blas, "Swift's works," Robinson Crusoe, and "Smolletts works when cheap ones can be found" (Spragge, Letter Book 99).

14. Strachan devotes a number of columns to the dangers of novel reading: "Reckoner N° 17" (30 April 1811); "Reckoner N° 34" (27 August 1811); "Reckoner N° 50" (18 February 1812).

15. On this point Strachan would have agreed with John Lambert, who relates in his Travels an interesting anecdote in which novel-reading, deplored elsewhere in his work, is portrayed to be literally misleading, as the following excerpt shows: "It is a dangerous experiment to wander carelessly in the woods of Canada, without a guide, or a sufficient acquaintance with the paths; and instances have occurred, of people perishing even within a small distance of their own habitations. A few years ago, two young ladies who were on a visit at the house of Mr. Nicholas Montour, formerly of the North-west Company, and who then resided at Point du Lac, near Three Rivers, strolled into the woods at the back of the house, one morning after breakfast, for the purpose of regaling themselves with the strawberries and other fruit which grew abundantly there, and were then in great perfection. One of them had an amusing novel in her hand, which she read to the other; and so interested were they with the story, and the scenery around them, that they never thought of returning to dinner. In this

manner they strolled delightfully along, sometimes wrapt up in the charms of the novel, and at other times stopping to gather the fruit which lay luxuriously scattered beneath their feet, or hung in clusters over their heads; when the declining sun at length warned them that it was late in the afternoon. They now began to think of returning, but unfortunately they had wandered from the path, and knew not which way to go. The sun, which an hour before might have afforded them some assistance, was now obscured by the lofty trees of the forest; and as the evening closed in, they found themselves yet more bewildered (423-24).

16. In 1803, Strachan realized that it would be an uphill battle to build his own congregation in Kingston. On 27 October, he wrote to his friend in Scotland, Dr. Brown, that "the people have little or no religion, and their minds are so prone to low cunning, that it will be difficult to make anything of them. ... A great part of my parish belongs to the Lutheran persuasion, a greater has no religion at all. A number of the people are Catholics, and plenty of Presbyterians with a few Methodists" (Henderson, Documents 25). Strachan's own "theological slanting" of numbers was disputed in the colony, but this habit of his can be explained: "By Strachan's time dissenters from the established church were not outlawed or punished in an attempt to end their existence. His solution was to treat them as schismatics who had broken with the one true church. They could be regarded as in reality members of the Church of England who because of particular circumstances did not themselves acknowledge the fact. Thus ... he could argue that 'the tendency of the population' of Upper Canada was 'towards the Church of England, and nothing but the want of moderate support [prevented] her from spreading over the whole province'" (Osmond 50). In certain cases, though, it became necessary to use more persuasive measures in promoting the established church. During the late 1820s, in Strachan's dealings with Peter Jones, the first Amerindian to be ordained as a Methodist preacher in Canada, it was suggested that government would withhold its support to Jones and the members of the Credit River community if they refused to espouse the teachings of the established church; Strachan apparently lent Jones some books for the translations he was engaged in, and urged him to seek out the passages that spoke against the practice of camp meetings (Kewley 22, 27). Jones proved unmovable. He even refused the position of Superintendent of Indian Affairs under Colborne because it would have entailed renouncing Methodism (Kewley 28). His religious preference speaks for a majority of Upper Canadians since, in the long run, evangelism won out easily over Anglicanism. During the forty-year period from 1842 until 1881, Ontario's population increased fourfold; at the same time, Methodism far outstripped population growth by increasing sevenfold, while Anglicanism lagged behind even demographic growth and increased only 3.4 times (Allen 37).

17. While the curriculum of English universities had come to focus on classical learning during the eighteenth century, Scottish universities remained more generalist in orientation and promoted the study of the vernacular over the classical (Hubert 18-22). At

the same time the Scottish system was less exclusive; by catering to the interests and needs of the middle class, it necessarily adopted a more practical approach. Consequently, the Scottish educational system was "universal and democratic, at least in theory" (Hubert 21).

18. American school teachers had been in the province for quite a while, and their presence was seen by some to constitute a real danger, as the following excerpt from a letter written in 1802 by a settler on Yonge Street to David Smith, the Surveyor General, indicates: "'I am sorry to find in the disposition of several of the inhabitants of Young Street, and in particular those from the Northern States, that they show a very great contempt to the Officers of our Government, both civil & military ... As for Fiske and little Hide, the Schoolmasters, they use all their efforts to poison the minds of the Youth, by teaching them in republican books, in particular the 3d part of Webster's History ... Youths educated in said books, by & by, will have the privilege of voting members for our Assembly'" (Bowler 78).

19. David Mills's study, _The Idea of Loyalty in Upper Canada, 1784-1850_ (1988), cites David Bell's distinction between patriotism, which implies attachment to soil, and loyalism, which involves attachment to "the parent" (3).

20. Strachan's flexible approach to education is one example of his awareness of local differences that has already been mentioned. In his _Report on the State of Religion_ written for the Chief Justice in 1815, Strachan favours the training of local clergymen over the emigration of clergymen from England, whose "learning may be more profound and extensive, but [whose] manner & habits will not easily accommodate themselves to those of his Parishioners." Such emigrants would "feel uncomfortable" and "consequently [be] less useful" (Spragge, _Letter Book_ 74)--utility being a constant concern for Strachan. A final example is evident in his recommendations to Thomas Cartwright, son of merchant Richard Cartwright, for whom Strachan had worked when he first came to the colony. When Cartwright passed away in 1815, three of his sons fell under Strachan's guardianship. He advised the sixteen-year-old Thomas that, "You will always bear in mind that you are to spend your Life in Canada where it is expected that you will support the reputation of Your Family" (Spragge, _Letter Book_ 100).

21. Clément Moisan and Denis Saint-Jacques note that the separation of literature from the larger field of discourse depends on a shift from the oral to the written text, which coincides with a change of focus that moves from political involvement to aesthetic concerns. At the same time, this specialization of the literary field means that literature no longer figures as an element of common culture, but belongs instead to a field of "restricted" or specialized culture (12). Strachan, whose uses of reading and writing are generally directed to the advancement of his social vision, would not readily accept the purely aesthetic existence of texts. As has been suggested, Strachan's idea of a

social vision necessarily implied the inextricable union of religious and political factors. For this reason he was particularly wary of the "atheist intellectual," who clearly would not use writing in an appropriate manner, as Strachan makes clear in the following excerpt from a sermon preached on 2 October 1825: "We have only to recal [sic] to our attention the literary characters of the present age to find several of the most eminent of the enemies of the Gospel. Nor is it difficult to account for this: the Gospel reminds them of a Superior--it tells them of their weakness, their infirmities, their need of a Saviour and their mortality--truths which many are unwilling to know. It calls upon them to be humble and meek while the world is filled with admiration at their genius" (MacRae 61).

22. For Strachan, inhabitants of the Canadas are British subjects. Some of these inhabitants are "French," by which Strachan means French-speaking. He calls them "Canadians" (40).

23. In defence of Great Britain's involvement in the slave trade, Strachan writes that reason has won out over force: "The blood of the innocent Africans no longer cries to Heaven against us. Commerce has been taught to respect the laws of humanity, and the unhappy negroes are acknowledged to be men. Our sovereign rejoiced in passing this salutary law; he rejoiced in the annihilation of a trade at which future ages will be astonished" (Discourse 30).

24. The irony of Strachan's situation is that, as an ardent defender of Great Britain's imperial interests in North America, he was himself something of a victim of the empire. By seeking ordination for a colonial parish in 1802, his future prospects and mobility were changed irrevocably: "By taking orders in the colonial church Strachan had cut himself off from both Scotland and England. The Scotch had no place for men in English orders. England denied the right of presentation to livings to men ordained outside. He was now a clergyman for the colonies only, or for the United States or Ireland" (Henderson, Strachan 11). But Strachan would not have seen things this way at all. Like Bishops Inglis and Mountain, Strachan shared the view that Britain was God's elect nation, especially following the persuasive fact of Nelson's victory at Trafalgar: "The heart of Mountain's message was not just that Providence was rewarding British virtues by success in arms ... but that these marks of favour meant that Britain was elected by God not only to defeat the French, but also to fulfill a mission to all mankind, like Israel, her ancient counterpart" (Wise, "Peculiar" 51). S.F. Wise adds that the bishops of British North America tended to the view that the British victories that confirmed God's favour were also due to Britain's merit as a nation, and that Strachan, perhaps more than any Anglican clergyman, was convinced of the calling to spread "the divine mission of Britain" to the rest of the world (52). These views on Britain's status help clarify Strachan's profound aversion to the United States.

25. Strachan takes this point very seriously. In one of his notes, which account for thirty of the seventy-six pages of his Discourse, he situates the model for superior public morality in the actions of the king, especially when compared with the behaviour of the last French monarch: "The writers on the French revolution unanimously declare that the general corruption of manners was one of the most powerful causes of that unhappy event. And this corruption was supported by the example of the king. Louis XV lived in open adultery. He seduced a city matron, carried her publicly from her husband to exercise sovereign authority, and thus opened a channel for licentiousness. This weak prince placed his sceptre at the feet of one of his mistresses who had been chosen from among the dregs of Paris, and this meanness covered him with contempt, the certain forerunner of state disasters. Governed by women of characters so abandoned, decency fled the court. All who made professions of honour and who respected propriety of conduct, were overwhelmed by the denunciations, the licentiousness, the intrigues and corruption of those abandoned women, who surrounded the king, with a crowd of people without morals, and enemies to virtue" (49).

26. There were two presses at Niagara, one at York, and one at Kingston. Those of Niagara and York ceased operations during the first year of the war, so that Stephen Miles's Kingston Gazette was the only newspaper that appeared in Upper Canada from 1813 to 1815 (Wallace 6). It should be noted that most of Strachan's early individual publications were printed on presses in Lower Canada.

27. In her "Sketches of the Past," written in 1897 and 1898, when she was in her nineties, Susan Burnham Greeley tells of the place of printed materials in her early life: "We had a very few good [books] of our own that we had saved from the wreck of our fortunes in the war, and these we studied over and over till I often think of what the author of WAVERLEY says. The reason why the Scottish peasantry are so generally intelligent, is, that though they have few books, those are very good and they have to read them till they are thoroughly acquainted with the valuable information they contain, and can never forget it". She also mentions that some friends "took the papers" and sent them on to her family two or three times a year (Talman 78-79).

28. In his introduction to The John Strachan Letter Book, George W. Spragge observes that Strachan originally wrote to Brown on 9 October 1808 regarding the idea of an honourary degree (vi). The Kingston Gazette of 2 July 1811 notes that the "University and King's College of Aberdeen, have conferred the degree of Doctor of Divinity upon the Rev. John Strachan, Rector of Cornwall, in Upper Canada."

29. "Reckoner" columns n° 25-26-27 tell the story of "Akbar" (25 June, 2 July, 9 July 1811); n° 43-44 are about the "hermit Obed" of Palestine (31 December 1811 and 7 January 1812). Some columns on marriage include n° 2 (8 January 1811), n° 23 (11 June 1811), n° 66 (16 June 1812). Temperance is discussed in n° 42, in which the

sobriety of Isaac, an "untutored" Mohawk Indian from Fort Hunter, is lauded as a "triumph of reason" that places him far above "the celebrated Macedonian Hero," Alexander the Great, known "in one drunken fit," to have "burned the magnificent metropolis of the Persian Empire, and in another [to have] murdered his friend" (24 December 1811).

30. These topics are discussed in "Reckoner" columns n° 30 (30 July 1811) and n° 45 (14 January 1812, on burials); n° 53 (10 March 1812) and n° 65 (9 June 1812, on servants); and n° 52 (3 March 1812, on physicians).

31. Strachan later provides an account of his efforts in promoting the defense of Upper Canada in a letter to Lieutenant-Colonel Miller Clifford dated at York on 25 April 1816: "I encouraged and brought to Maturity the Loyal and Patriotic Society subscribing one tenth of my Income which has done so much good & had so great an influence in raising the patriotism of the People ... I had indeed laboured most anxiously to raise the Loyalty of the people I drew up an address for the Parliament at the Commencement of the war which was unanimously adopted by them & published in their name for the use of their constituents. I printed two Sermons and occasional addresses and I had many opportunities when preaching & my general knowledge of the People to preserve and increase the Spirit of Loyalty which principally saved the Province during the first two years of the war. To have been the instrument of much good during the war is pleasant for it carries its own reward but I can safely add that I have done more to promote the religion and the sound education of the people than any other man in Upper Canada" (Spragge, Letter Book 108).

32. Hence Strachan's entreaties for the adoption of these emergency measures made in A Sermon, preached at York before the Legislative Council and House of Assembly, August 2nd, 1812: "Environed almost with our enemies, and mixed with doubtful characters and secret Traitors, it is necessary and proper to arm Government with more extensive powers than usual to meet this exigency, and to bury for a time, part of our freedom, as some do their gold, on the approach of an enemy, that it may rise again with redoubled splendour ... Wicked and seditious persons may fear, and such and only such will oppose them; but the friend of his country, the honest and well intentioned loyalist has nothing to fear, such powers are not directed against him. ... No man therefore who is conscientiously determined to defend his King and Country can be opposed to such measures. Think therefore, my friends, when you hear and see lamentations and tears for the supposed prostration of our liberties and the hardships which traitors and persons justly suspected may experience, that you hear and see not merely the charming of serpents and the tears of crocodiles, but the death knell of yourselves, your friends and companions murdered by the very traitors whom such whining imposters endeavour to protect" (17-18).

33. A prime example of this subordination is the delayed founding of a university, a project that had been dear to Strachan since his earliest days in the colony. Though he had always seen the establishment of a university as the logical progression of his earlier groundwork in the field of education and as the culmination of his plan to design an integrated system of education for the colony, Strachan's efforts were repeatedly thwarted due to his own unflagging insistence that higher education fall under the authority of the Church of England in Upper Canada.

34. Indeed, David V.J. Bell cites anti-American sentiment as characteristic of contemporary Canadian nationalism: "An additional attribute of Canadian culture is its doctrinaire ... anti-Americanism. The English-Canadian turned to anti-Americanism as if by instinct, unconsciously and intuitively, despite the profound lack of real difference between the two societies in terms of basic values. One could almost argue that the only element uniting Canadians is a strong sense of dislike for the United States--certainly this is one important aspect of so-called Canadian 'nationalism'" (30).

35. David V.J. Bell adds that identification with the imperial community "accentuated a kind of social and cultural provincialism, manifested in the continuous aspiration, especially among the elite, to be recognized and accepted in England" (30). Along similar lines, Paul Romney's detailed consideration of the alien question in Upper Canada during the early 1820s reveals how "a legal doctrine that reflected provincial history" was quashed and "ultimately, an English judicial decision was erected as an authoritative negation of that history" (100).

36. Bidwell provides this information in the title of his pamphlet.

37. Like other writers, Bidwell's use of the term "Canadian" is ambiguous. In his criticism of national customs, he seems to refer to Upper and Lower Canadians alike.

38. Bidwell's proposal to establish an "Academy" at Ernestown in 1811 (Kingston Gazette 26 March 1811) provides an example of the apprehension inspired by schoolmasters from the United States and the influence they were likely to have on their pupils, as discussed in note 18; his advertisements were vehemently contested: "[Bidwell] was in his own country a distinguished partizan of democracy, in the most unqualified sense of the word; and it would be hardly possible for those who should be placed under his tuition, to escape the infection of his political tenets, which are hostile to the fundamental principles of our government" (Kingston Gazette 16 April 1811).

39. It is interesting to compare Bidwell's recommendations for provincial development with those advocated specifically for Quebec by Louis-Joseph Papineau during the early 1830s, by which time he had lost all confidence in imperial ties and had begun to articulate a new, republican orientation for the province.

40. Paul Romney, "Re-inventing Upper Canada: American Immigrants, Upper Canadian History, English Law, and the Alien Question," in Patterns of the Past. Interpreting Ontario's History (1988).

41. On this point we may note that this unflattering use of the term persists, even in the writing of those who clearly recognize the mythical dimension of the Loyalist identity. Dennis Duffy allows that the "simplistic pattern of Loyalist fidelity vs Late Loyalist shiftiness, which the facts hardly bear out, comes to be the received version of the facts" (Gardens 6), yet goes on to provide a seemingly contradictory note regarding the distinction between the two groups: "Late Loyalist was the name given the land-hungry Americans who moved to Upper Canada in the years before 1812 and took an oath of allegiance to the crown" (135). It is not immediately clear whether Duffy shares this perception or not. At any rate, as S.J.R. Noel observes, Loyalists seemed to be no less "land-hungry" than any other group of settlers, and reminds us of the importance that was attached to land in the beginnings of political culture in Ontario. The more one had of it, the more "righteous" one came to appear, regardless of the fact that political beliefs were not taken into account where the question of one's loyalty was concerned. Indeed, Noel sees the exchange of land for loyalty as the practice that instituted that of "clientelism" in Upper Canada. Clientelism is not to be confused with patriotism; instead, it constitutes a "network of relationships based upon 'vertical dyadic alliances,'--that is, upon patron-client bonds." Clientelism's "core interaction is thus a type of reciprocity, an exchange of mutually valued goods or services between individuals who are of unequal status and in control of unequal resources" (13).

Chapter Four

1. A product of the literary system is "any performed (or performable) set of signs, i.e., including a given 'behavior.' Thus, any outcome of any activity whatsoever can be considered a 'product,' whatever its ontological manifestation may be" (Even-Zohar 43).

2. T.D. MacLulich, "The Colonial Major: Richardson and Wacousta," Essays on Canadian Writing 29 (1984): 66-84.

3. Regarding newspapers, George Parker notes that although "individual newspapers had a struggle to survive, as a group they flourished and enjoyed a prestige that is hard for newspaper readers in our day ... to grasp" (Beginnings 57). It is perhaps unfair to expect Richardson to have had a more comprehensive view of the situation in his own time, although his contemporary, Susanna Moodie, has often been cited for her remarks concerning the newspaper's popularity. Critics frequently refer to her introduction to Mark Hurdlestone, the Gold Worshipper, reprinted in Moodie's Life in the Clearings (1959).

4. Some critics have described Richardson's predicament in terms of the colonial who strove unsuccessfully to be recognized by the parent culture, only to return to the land of his birth where he in turn proved dissatisfied with the crude nature of his countrymen. This subsequently led to his final "exile" in the United States. Thus, Desmond Pacey refers to Richardson as "a colonial whose insecurity and sense of inferiority led him to distrust and despise his fellow-colonials" ("Colonial II" 56), and Carl Ballstadt to his "disillusionment with Europe" (Major 7). T.D. MacLulich tends to agree with Pacey, and sees Richardson as "above all a colonial" occupying a "marginal position on the fringes of European society." He also sees Richardson as the first to exemplify the exiled Canadian: "Richardson's career was governed to a significant extent by his difficulty in deciding just where his cultural homeland lay. Indeed, he presented himself to the reading public as, by turns, a British, a Canadian, and an American writer. He exemplifies the Canadian as self-created permanent exile, doomed to feel ill at ease even in his own country" ("Colonial" 66, 82). In Margaret E. Turner's opinion, "Richardson is at a double disadvantage because, although he is not firmly attached to the new culture in the new place, neither does he have a past in a former place. He fails to join the parent culture and become part of British military and social life, just as he fails to make a successful life for himself in Canada" (189). In a recent book-length study of Richardson, Michael Hurley defines him as "the borderline case" who "lives between, both inside the dominant culture and outside it, both reinforcing and interrogating the ideologies of his society" (10). Manina Jones cites MacLulich's echoing of Pacey regarding Richardson's status as a colonial, and goes on to identify aspects of Wacousta which point to "Richardson's ambivalent colonial discourse" (47-8).

5. When T.D. MacLulich refers to the "widespread disease" of being a colonial, he clearly uses the word "colonial" to designate more than just an inhabitant of a colony. The meaning he attaches to being "a colonial" is pejorative in that it entails the assumption that metropolitan behaviours and values are necessarily superior to the homegrown variety, an assumption that MacLulich does not agree with, and one which he identifies in Richardson's attitude: "Throughout his career, [Richardson] sought to compensate for an abiding--though unacknowledged--feeling of inferiority, which stemmed directly from his colonial origins" ("Colonial" 66). When MacLulich judges that "Richardson is not an attractive figure" (82), we are not sure if this is because of his "colonial" attitude, or if it is a global judgment of his personality. On the latter subject, the second half of Desmond Pacey's article, "A Colonial Romantic. Major John Richardson, Soldier and Novelist" (Canadian Literature 3 [1960]: 47-56) seems more balanced in its presentation of Richardson's nature, and prompts us to ask whether Richardson would have been suited to *any* society.

6. John Richardson, Personal Memoirs of Major John Richardson (Montreal: Armour & Ramsay; Quebec: W. Neilson; Toronto: R. Stanton; Kingston: J. MacFarlane, 1838).

7. In his study of regional leadership in Upper Canada during the Upper Canadian period (1791-1841), J.K. Johnson notes that of a total of 283 members of the House of Assembly, 230 had done military duty. Of these, 90% had done so before being elected (75).

8. David R. Beasley lists a number of reasons for the demise of the New Era (June 1841-August 1842), Richardson's first newspaper. One was that advertisers who wished to do business with the military avoided the pages of a periodical whose editor had been "black-listed." This lack of advertising resulted in Richardson's difficulty in keeping up in the competition with daily newspapers. Revenues were also low because Richardson had too few subscribers, and of those he did have, many neglected to pay (Don Quixote 128-29). Desmond Pacey notes that the New Era "had been relatively non-partisan in its political reporting" ("Colonial I" 51); perhaps the fact that he did not "go the whole hog" also worked against him.

9. Richardson made this comment in his introduction to the 1851 edition of Wacousta, published in the United States. Douglas Daymond and Leslie Monkman reprinted it in Canadian Novelists and the Novel (1981).

10. There is much to suggest that basic literacy was more of a concern, and not always as an end in itself. R.D. Gidney notes that a variety of schooling alternatives were available in Upper Canada before the educational reform began to take shape during the 1840s. Some of these received government funding, but most did not; all "were the products of local initiative and ... reflected local needs." Often, these needs included the ability to read the Holy scriptures and to look after one's accounts. Gidney observes that this heterogeneous variety of schooling "was the typical way in which the educational needs of most people were met at the time, not only in Upper Canada but in America and Britain" (183-84). Allan Greer underlines the importance of the Sunday school movement in promoting the level of basic literacy in Upper Canada: "Obviously, its contribution cannot be isolated and measured but it is suggested that its presence in so many areas helps to account for the extremely high literacy rate of rural Ontario in 1861 when the Sunday scholars of the 1830's would have reached adult maturity." Yet he specifies that, in these schools, "[t]he teaching or reading was directed at ... Christian goals. Literacy may have its secular uses and we may be most impressed with the Sunday schools' achievements in this respect, but never once in all the appeals for donations and public support do we find a Sunday school society saying, "We teach basic literacy and that is why you should help us." In short, "[t]he ultimate aims behind the Sunday school movement were the salvation of souls and the advancement of piety" ("Sunday" 172, 179, 184). Nan Johnson's studies of the

teaching of English at all educational levels suggest that "composition" only appears as "an English subject with its own curricular domain" in 1850: "Nineteenth century instruction in English subjects at the elementary grades dealt with spelling, grammar and reading. Students of junior secondary age studied grammar, composition, reading, and elocution, and the most advanced students in high schools studied composition, rhetoric, English literature, history of the English language, and elocution" ("Study" 205). Elsewhere, in a discussion of English studies in Canadian colleges and universities, she observes that, "[b]efore 1860, the study of literature tended to be subsumed under the two more dominant English subjects, "Rhetoric" and "History of the English Language." ... Even after the subject heading "literature" begins to appear as a subcategory of "English" after mid-century, the historical focus of the Canadian approach to English studies retained a close connection between literary and philological studies" ("English" 298). In Upper Canadian education, reading and writing may have had practical or religious applications, and, in the context of higher education, literature may have been considered a subject of historical study, yet there is no suggestion that pupils and students were being oriented to become consumers or producers of literary texts.

11. William F. Morley names "Jack Brag in Spain," "Recollections of the West Indies," "Operations of the Right Division," and "Tecumseh" as having appeared in the New Era (53-54).

12. Carole Gerson says the petition was undated, but that it was received on 20 July 1841. NAC, Governor General's Office, Civil Secretary's Correspondence, RG7G20.

13. Duffy is perfectly conscious of the critic's constitutive role. Thus, after warning that no one should make the mistake of discussing Richardson's work in terms of his being a genius, Duffy goes on to allude to the critic's typical behaviour, and to cast some discredit on it: "At this point, literary critics begin a series of name droppings as a guide to the neophyte and as a way of bestowing immortality on works few sensible people would ever willingly read" ("Richardson" 110).

14. Among those equally fascinated by the "borders" that are said to testify to "a fundamental dualism in our art and society and give rise to the familiar Canadian double vision and voice" are writers Robert Kroetsch, Robertson Davies, bp Nichol, Michael Ondaatje, Sheila Watson, P.K. Page, Rudy Wiebe, James Reaney, Margaret Atwood, Sinclair Ross, Scott Symons, F.P. Grove, Marian Engel, George Bowering, Mordecai Richler, Alice Munro, and Timothy Findley, and critics Northrop Frye, Margaret Atwood, D.G. Jones, John Moss, Dennis Lee, Linda Hutcheon, and Marshall McLuhan (Hurley 5, 13, 20, 27, 4).

15. After having named "American poet and dynamic explorer of the male psyche" Robert Bly, and "Jungian analyst" Marion Woodman as writers whose "influence will be readily apparent" in his work,

Hurley recognizes that some readers might object to his claims: "Taking delight in a plurality of critical approaches, I am grateful for the endeavours of literary critics of all stripes and feel neither qualified nor inclined to judge or police the work of others, especially those of a different critical orientation or persuasion. This is my reading of Richardson and other writers; I do not pretend to Olympian clarity or scholarly 'objectivity' or to a unitary view of the Canadian nation or to speak authoritatively for any collectivity, even when I use 'we' and other problematic or contentious terms" (xi). He admits that terms such as the "Canadian imagination" and the "Canadian sensibility" fall into the category of problematic terms, yet employs them generously throughout his study.

16. Carole Gerson says that Richardson "may be viewed as the first major exemplar of the dilemma of the nineteenth-century Canadian novelist: attempting to mediate betweeen the early American engagement with romance and the waxing British practice of realism, he compromised with an uneasy hybrid" (82). For his part, in Between Europe and America. The Canadian Tradition in Fiction, T.D. MacLulich describes Richardson's fiction in terms of class, claiming that it was unsuited to Canadian society because of the aristocratic values it upheld.

17. The advertisement of 26 January 1842 is reprinted in Douglas Cronk's introduction to the 1987 edition of Wacousta (xxxix-xl).

18. Donald Stephens includes excerpts of comments made in anticipation of the publication of The Canadian Brothers in his introduction to the 1992 edition. I refer here more specifically to remarks made by the editors of the Montreal Herald (29 August 1839); the Montreal Gazette (5 September 1839); and the Toronto Patriot (23 October 1839) (xlii-xliii).

19. William F. Morley notes that Richardson serialized Écarté: Or, The Salons of Paris in volume I of the Canadian Loyalist, and that the novel probably appeared in numbers one through thirty-two.

20. In his elaboration on Ramsay Cook's expression, J.M.S. Careless contrasts the "particular societies of people" to be found in Canada with the more general idea of the "all-embracing sovereign people" current in the United States. He describes Canada's particular societies as "exclusive rather than inclusive in viewpoint" and notes that they "stressed the nearer corporate loyalties of religious and ethnic distinctions--Scot, English, and Irish, as well as French--instead of broad adherence to a democratic state" ("'Limited'" 5).

21. Pierre Bourdieu notes that "Symbolic goods are a two-faced reality" whose "specifically cultural values and ... commercial value remain relatively independent although the economic sanction may come to reinforce their cultural consecration" (16).

22. Besides the fact that his expectations were unrealistic and arose as a result of his ignorance of the society concerned, there is also a degree to which Richardson's experience was in no way unique. Anthony J. La Vopa notes that a similar disjunction characterized the relationship that held between European writers of the eighteenth century and their readerships: "The new print market offered eighteenth-century authors an objectified public identity and opened unprecedented prospects for direct communication with a mass audience. On both counts the market promised liberation from the aristocratic, self-enclosed world of courtly letters. Often enough, though, authors' reverence for the ideal *Publikum* marked their alienation from the actual reading public. The egalitarian momentum of the market had its dark side; it threatened to reduce the writer to a hireling of fickle consumers and greedy publishers and to trivialize his work as one more ephemeral commodity. In the face of this specter many eighteenth-century literary men became all the more self-conscious about maintaining the pose of a gentleman amateur, in some cases even as they were being reduced to Grub Street hacks" (108).

Chapter Five

1. Charles Daoust presented his lecture on 17 December 1853, upon the occasion of the ninth anniversary of the *Institut Canadien*. It was published in Le Pays (27 and 29 December 1853). Yvon Lamonde notes that the *Institut Canadien* was apolitical until 1848, the year when Lévesque gave his lecture. This year also marked the return of Louis-Joseph Papineau to Lower Canadian political life, as well as Louis-Antoine Dessaulles' call for the repeal of the Union in the *Institut*'s paper, l'Avenir (1847-1852). By 1850, the *Institut* opened its membership to English-language Protestants of Montreal (Lamonde, Gens 23).

2. The poems in McGee's Canadian Ballads frequently mention snow, ice, and cold weather. These quotations are from "Jacques Cartier" (13), "The Death of Hudson" (21), "Our Ladye of the Snow!" (33) and "Freedom's Journey" (49).

3. In the New Era, McGee makes early, and frequent, reference to the linked projects of union and expansion in his editorial columns. On 27 May 1857 he notes that it is "a political consideration of the first consequence, to keep extending our western front parallel with that of the Republic" ("Missing the Main Point"). In discussing the question of foreign policy, he suggests that one of the "questions of to-morrow as well as of to-day" is that of "the extension of the political sphere of these Provinces, either by confederation or by Imperial representation ... and an immediate enlargement of our own political horizon" ("A Foreign Policy for Canada," 10 June 1857). In challenging the claims of the Hudson's Bay Company to a territory that exceeded the limits of Rupert's Land, McGee proposes to extend Canada's boundary: "The ... point at issue between the Co. and the Province

is, what constituted Canada at the treaty of Paris (1763). The French forts surrendered at the time ... serve of course to define the ancient boundary. They were subject to Montcalm and his predecessors; they passed over, necessarily, to the new colonial authorities. Now, Fort St. Pierre, Fort Charles, Fort Maurepas, Fort Berens, and Fort Bourbon, make the Lake of the Woods, Rainy Lake, and Lake Winnipeg, as much a part of Canada, as the valley of the St. Maurice or the Ottawa." In the style that earned him his reputation as a visionary, he goes on to argue that the issue of expansion is a worthwhile cause: "Our readers are not to infer that Canada is contending for a worthless or uninhabitable region. The Red River flows through forests of maple, ash, oak, and elm; the broad prairie is spotted with fields of full-eared wheat; wherever the plough has been driven, the barn has been well filled. The *Anemones* bloom wildly; the March marigold, the Golden thread, and the Nemorosa, beautify the face of nature. The medicine men of the Indians gather Liverwort and the healing Ranunculus; the rivers and lakes swarm with fish, and the woods and glens are still the resort of the elk and the moose. Some men in Canada declaim against locking up real property in mortmain, but here is half a continent in the clutch of the deadman's hand--monopoly. The complaint of the Red River settlers is the very voice of Nature crying to Canada. They are not permitted to hold land in fee, to import or export goods, to call their souls or bodies or businesses their own, under the Company, the Company's police, and the Company's servants" ("The 'Hudson's Bay Company' and its Boundaries," 23 June 1857). There is no time to lose: "While the Americans of the northwest are fitting out an expedition of from 12 to 15 hundred carts at St. Paul, for a peaceful invasion of the Red River Valley, the public voice of Canada is silent, and the public will inactive. Why is this? Is the prize of a country twice as large as France unworth contending for? Is it not, at least and laziest, our duty to posterity to inquire whether the legacy left by the old Canadian sovereignty over those regions is worth claiming or not?" ("The Company and the Country," 7 July 1857), he asks. The project of expansion is seen in terms of an ideological race against the United States, and is held up as a commercially attractive, imperial venture: "[T]hat we must ultimately come to a Federal Union, seems to us as inevitable as that our rivers should flow into the sea, and mingle their waters with its mightier destinies.

... What is intelligence worth to a new country, if not to anticipate and prepare for its future? Anticipate! who can look at a forest without anticipating its fall beneath the axe, or at a wasted water power without anticipating its power for production.

(...)

... Again, away towards the sunset, lies the new Canadian West, the field for another great Province. Central Canada, drained by the Ottawa, may easily be made the shortest route for the commerce of Huron, Michigan, and Superior. These are facts, not dreams. Consult the map. There they stare you in the face, demanding the helping hand of wise and intrepid statesmen. If those mines of *may-be* are not marked out to the very depths, 'then 'tis not in our stars, but in ourselves,' the fault and drawback will be found. The verdict of posterity will be, that we were

unworthy of our time and its golden opportunities, for that we might have founded a new Empire, whereas we only begot three or four foolish and ephemeral factions" ("Confederation of the Colonies," 8 August 1857).

4. Charles Murphy notes that over the course of the ten years he lived in Canada, McGee made over one thousand speeches, addresses and lectures (xi). The collection of speeches and addresses that Murphy edited, presents a mere handful of these; many deal with political questions, but some comment on literary topics. Even these, however, may often be put to political use. An example is McGee's lecture on "The Political Morality of Shakespeare's Plays," presented at St. Lawrence Hall, Toronto, on 17 September 1858. Here McGee tells us that although "Shakespeare ... portrays to us, in many respects, the horrors of despotism, we must not run to the other conclusion--that he is the least of a democrat. It is evident from a hundred passages that he had no faith in the wisdom of the multitude" (47). He adds that Shakespeare's most consistent characteristic is "his reverence for age, authority, the magistracy and the priesthood" (49); accordingly, McGee states that he was "a firm believer in the hereditary monarchy" (50; "Macbeth and the King, in Hamlet" are cited as proof of this). Finally, McGee takes Shakespeare to be directly relevant to Canada's political situation: "I sought [my subject] casually for my own instruction, and I was greatly influenced in making up my own conclusions in politics, to find that the highest genius who ever used our language was a zealot neither for democracy nor autocracy--that he was the exponent and eulogist of that Constitutional form of government of which we possess an unfinished copy in this Province. This great master of human nature desired liberty regulated by fixed laws, a Government heedful to opinion, but not servile to clamour. ... He is the Bard of freedom, and while no one more exalts the Kingly office, no one more boldly denounces those who abuse that office, under the instigation of evil counsellors and their own base passions. He was a monarchist but he was a man" (52).

5. Poems by "Donnacona" include "Nationality" (23 February 1858); "The Voyageur's Song" (27 March 1858; it is accompanied by a note: "For a description of the romantic life led by the trappers and hunters on the Western prairies, see the captivating pages of Mayne Reid. *Voyageur* is the term by which the hunters of the West are known by French Canadians"); and "I've Wandered in the Sunny South," a "National Song" (15 April 1858), whose well-travelled speaker never fails to return to his "Northern home," "More lovely in her snowy dress, / Or in her vesture green, / Than all the pride of Europe's lands, / Or Asia's glittering sheen." The latter two poems are included in Dewart's Selections from Canadian Poets, under the "Descriptive and National" category, and are attributed to J.F. McDonnell. McGee's friend, Mary Ann Sadlier, contributed "A Reminiscence of Ville-Marie" to the New Era (25 June 1857), and Rosanna Leprohon, "The Song of the Far West Emigrant" (30 July 1857); an unidentified poet offered "The Maple Leaf," "a national melody" (25 August 1857).

6. It is worth comparing McGee's treatment of the conquest with that of Rosanna Leprohon in Antoinette De Mirecourt (1864), which appeared shortly after McGee's Ballads. This "essentially Canadian" (Leprohon 1) historical romance is deliberately set at the time of the conquest, and sets out to depict the social consequences of that event. In his introductory essay to the 1989 edition of the novel, John C. Stockdale provides a detailed account of the work's reception in French Canada from the time of its initial publication up until 1901 (xxxvii-xlviii). After noting that "the first reprinting of the English version in book form since 1864 did not occur until 1973" (xlviii), he turns to some of Carole Gerson's observations on the novel in order to account for its rather tepid reception in English Canada: "One of the most interesting questions [Carole Gerson] raises has to do with the apparent lack of popularity of Mrs. Leprohon's three novels on French-Canadian subjects ... in 'English Canada,' especially in comparison with their obvious popularity among French-Canadian readers." Stockdale suggests that English-language readers of the time "undoubtedly felt" quite a "shock" in reading Leprohon's depiction of a milieu that was "romantic and exciting, but also ... physically destructive;" a "morally dangerous wilderness that bore a striking resemblance to the Montreal these readers were experiencing in the mid-nineteenth century" (l-li).

By the end of the twentieth century, we might say that the tables have turned in the reception of Antoinette De Mirecourt. While The Centre for Editing Early Canadian Texts chose the novel as the sixth in its Series, and Stockdale pronounced it an "important nineteenth-century Canadian novel" (li), the editors of La vie littéraire au Québec ultimately dismiss the work. They do remark that Leprohon was "la seule écrivaine anglophone dont les oeuvres, traduites, connaissent une large diffusion auprès des lecteurs francophones" (Lemire 3:116) during the second half of the nineteenth century, but their final assessment is that she "met en scène des personnages du beau monde dans un décor aristocratique qui entretient souvent peu de rapport avec la vie des Canadiens francophones" (3:421).

7. Dewart's Selections from Canadian Poets (1864) include "The Arctic Indian's Faith," "Jacques Cartier," and "Home-sick Stanzas" by McGee. William D. Lighthall prefers "Jacques Cartier" (Songs of the Great Dominion, 1889); Theodore Rand selects "Our Ladye of the Snow" (A Treasury of Canadian Verse, 1900); Bliss Carman, Lorne Pierce, and V.B. Rhodenizer follow Lighthall and choose "Jacques Cartier" (Canadian Poetry in English, 1922; 1954). Edward S. Caswell includes an unknown manuscript poem, "To Mrs. Connolly" (Canadian Singers and Their Songs, 1925), while A.J.M. Smith, in the original edition of The Book of Canadian Poetry (1943), selects "The Arctic Indian's Faith" and "Thomas Moore at St. Anne's." Subsequent editions (1948; 1957) omit McGee. More recent anthologies include "The Arctic Indian's Faith" (Canadian Literature. The Beginnings to the 20th Century, ed. Catherine M. Lay, 1974; 100 Poems of Nineteenth Century Canada, eds. Douglas Lochhead and Raymond Souster, 1974). Carl F. Klinck and Reginald

Watters select "The Arctic Indian's Faith" and "Jacques Cartier" (Canadian Anthology, 3rd ed. 1974). The New Oxford Book of Canadian Verse in English (1982), chosen by Margaret Atwood, includes nothing by McGee.

8. The first part of this article was reprinted in the New Era of 17 October 1857, of which there is no surviving copy.

9. In discussing the portion of McGee's article that deals with questions of education, Carl Ballstadt concludes that "McGee's concern for Canadian education is certainly integral with his concern for a Canadian literature and a federation of the provinces" ("Thomas D'Arcy" 89). Although it is accurate to note that McGee objects to the common school system on the grounds that it is based on the "Boston and New York system," and therefore threatens "the Americanization of the future inhabitants of Canada West," he does not argue for an alternative "Canadian education," as Ballstadt might appear to suggest. McGee's objection has more to do with religious rights than with nationalist preoccupations in the field of education. Part of his disenchantment with life in the United States was due to the poor treatment reserved to Catholics, and to Irish Catholics in particular. Not surprisingly, once he arrived in Canada, McGee set out to rectify the under-representation of this particular group in the colony's political life; much of his political career was devoted to defending the right to a Catholic education, and to having that right enshrined in the new constitution. Thus, the real threat is represented not so much by 'American' schooling as by Protestant domination: "It is the part of the State to assist and encourage teachers, but not to constitute itself the supreme Teacher. If you permit the State to form the minds of the young, apart from parental or religious control, why not allow the same State to establish a uniformity of belief and worship for the old. The same pretension which justifies the State School will justify a State Church. We have no State Church in Canada, and, with the blessing of God, never will have" ("The Future of Canada," 22 October 1857). The real question concerns the future of *Catholic* education in the face of what McGee takes to be rampant, aggressive Orangeism. His many editorials on this subject signal the root of his preoccupation.

10. Some New Era editorials against Orangeism include "An Orange Convention Called at Quebec" (12 June 1857); "The Anti-Canadian Character of Orangeism" (16 July 1857); "Our True Position" (21 July 1857); "Let Us Argue the Case" (28 July 1857); "Cliqueism" (29 August 1857); "The Coming Election" (15 September 1857); "The New Attempt at Orange Ascendancy" (19 September 1857)--the subject appears as one of the paper's frequent themes.

11. Again, it is important to emphasize that McGee took this threat to be real. A later editorial that same month, written in response to a move to repeal the provisions for separate schools, urges Catholics to rouse and perform their duty, which is "that of agitating for the right of educating their children in their own religion, and according to the principles of morality; neither of

which can be taught them in the polluted atmosphere of a public school, where the child learns to despise his parents at the same time as he casts off the duties of the religion which they profess; where daily intercourse with those who acknowledge no moral or religious restraint on their conduct, produces its deplorable effects" ("Separate Schools--Mr. Ferguson's Bill," New Era 17 April 1858).

12. Holton wrote to George Brown, leader of Upper Canada's reformers, on 14 October 1859. NAC, George Brown Papers vol. 3 (quoted in Bernard, 172).

13. Ballstadt identifies five editorials ("A National Literature for Canada" (17 June 1857), "A Canadian Literature" (30 June 1857), "Who Reads a Canadian Book?" (25 July 1857), "Canadian Nationality--Literature" (26 January 1858), "Protection for Canadian Literature" (24 April 1858)) on literature. Along with McGee's Canadian Ballads and Occasional Verses and "The Mental Outfit of the New Dominion," he sees them as "a very significant contribution to the quest for a Canadian literature in Pre-Confederation days" ("Thomas D'Arcy" 86).

14. In Murphy's edition of McGee's collected speeches and addresses, "A Policy of Conciliation" follows a speech delivered in the House of Assembly on "The Separate School Question" (23 June 1858). In this speech, McGee makes the following remarks regarding the "American system" of schooling: "The truth is, the Common School system is mainly upheld ... for the speedy amalgamation of the children of 'foreigners'--as they are called--with the native population. A new nationality is always more intolerant than an old one; and the American will not permit, if it can help it, one trace of the social or national character of the immigrant to survive in his children" (157).

15. Martin refers to the Confederation Debates (1865) on this point: "Critics were equally unimpressed by ringing talk of a "new nationality" in British North America. 'I cannot see that the Federation of these provinces has anything of a national phase in it', commented Thomas Scatcherd. 'When you speak of national existence, you speak of independence; and so long as we are colonists of Great Britain we can have no national existence'" ("Case" 39). Well before the Confederation debates took place, a reader of the New Era responded to one of McGee's editorial calls for a Canadian nationality: "a common nationality is a well defined self-governing and self-sustaining edifice,--without being self-sustaining and self-governing it is not common nationality. ... Now, in colonies properly called, there can be no common nationality, simply because, as the name signifies, it is a colony and not a nation; it is the heterogenous assemblage of all races and origins, who will not blend politically as a nation until they have a common local head or government appointed by themselves, and in which they are all separately interested" (16 January 1858).

16. The CIHM collection attributes these letters to McGee. A note on the text indicates that the first two letters first appeared in the Montreal Gazette, and that the third was being published for the first time.

17. McGee's comments, "Prospects of the Union," were made on 14 August 1864 (Speeches 96-99). Ged Martin notes that the argument made against the scheme of union in the Maritimes "suggests that the different provinces felt themselves to possess distinct social and political cultures." He observes that the "separate identity of French Canadian society on an Anglo-Saxon continent was obvious enough" but that "in the Maritimes--and especially in Nova Scotia--there was as great a sense of being different from the province of Canada as modern Canadians would today feel separate themselves from their neighbours in the United States" ("Case" 44).

18. McGee offers some cautionary remarks as to the dubious value of novels: "For my own part, though no enemy to a good novel, I feel that I would fail of my duty if I did not raise a warning voice against the promiscuous and exclusive reading of sensational and sensual books, many of them written by women, who are the disgrace of their sex, and read with avidity by those who want only the opportunity equally to disgrace it" ("Mental" 4). These views were certainly widespread, especially where women's impressionable nature was concerned. McGee more or less shares the opinions of John Lambert, Thomas Cary, and Bishop Strachan on this point. One suspects that St. Ursula's Convent and Wacousta would hardly have met with his approval. As a "corrective for an excess of imaginative reading" he suggests "actual lives and books of travel," as well as the "Book of books itself--the Bible," always helpful to "diseased imaginations" (4).

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