

Halton Hills Outlook

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Their Outlook

Book review

Good concept produces only "so-so" results

By ALLAN GOULD
 The concept is wonderful, but the execution is only so-so. The idea was for one of this country's major book publishers, Macmillan, to put out an annual anthology of writing in Canada. The execution, as seen in the Macmillan Anthology 1 (294 pages, \$14.95, paperback), edited by the experienced and talented writers John Metcalf and Leon Rooke, is ultimately quite unsatisfactory.

One would long for a more positive response, because the thought of an annual anthology of Canada's best fiction, poetry, profiles, memoirs and reviews fills one with hope and anticipation.

After all, with most fiction costing between \$20 and \$25 in hardcover in this country, and with so many fine poets and essayists being read by so very few in any number of excellent little magazines (such as The Fiddlehead, The Melanchol Review and others), a reasonably priced, thick annual edition of prose and poetry could do wonders for our future Atwoods, Laurences and Richlers - and provide them with a wider audience than they might ever dream of.

This sort of thing has been done before; back in the late 1970s, Doubleday published an annual collection called Aurora. It died a sad, early death. The editors of this new anthology had better show better and more consistent taste than they have exhibited in this collection, should they hope to see The Macmillan Anthology 2, 3, 4 and beyond.

of Western Ontario in London. The idea, once again, is better than the result: Nothing less than a hatchet job on "Canadian Writing 1987". It's fun to read a scathing attack on the highly praised critic, B.W. Powe: "His style is a bizarre mixture of the ponderous and the elliptical, and can best be described as 'Chateleine' edited by Margaret Atwood."

But, alas, the harsh words he has for Powe ("Is this supposed to pass for wit, for insight, for informed reflection on the state of Canadian writing?") can be applied equally to himself. All too often, when Darling tries to be witty, he ends up being only half that: "Between Men, when reprinted in paperback, will sit happily on the supermarket shelf with the National Enquirer and the monthly horoscope, and go home in the same bag with the Lite Delight weight-watcher dinners and the color co-ordinated panty liners." Enough! Give us insightful criticism, or give us depth!

RICHES
 Still the riches here must be noted. The photographs of authors throughout by the great Sam Tata are richly satisfying. The memoir by Sinclair Ross of his impossible mother is a touching and deeply felt study of The Making of an Artist. Janice Kulyk Keefer's profile of the brilliant expatriot-Canadian writer, Mavis Gallant, is both intelligent and thought-provoking and makes one long to read Gallant's upcoming study of Alfred Dreyfus.

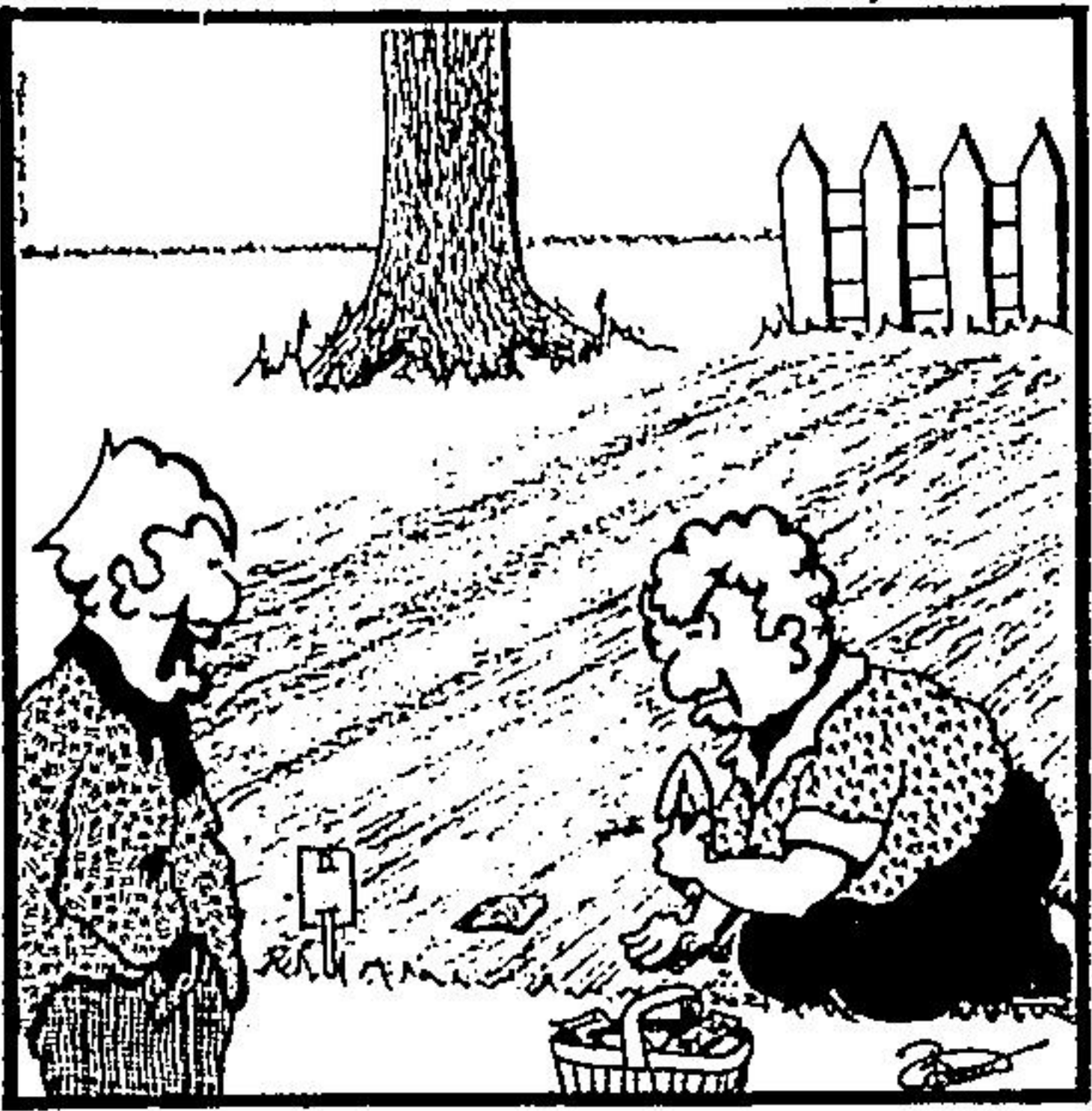
And best of all, an actual short story by the profoundly gifted Gallant herself - The Chosen Husband, with a Montreal locale and French-Canadian characters - is alternately hilarious and moving. ("Instead of praying for guidance, Marie had fallen in love with one of the Greeks who were starting to move into their part of Montreal. There had never been a foreigner in the family, let alone a pagan. Her uncle interrupted to remark that Greeks were usually Christians, though of the wrong kind for Marie.") This is a remarkable short story, with an ending that will haunt the reader long after.

One cannot conclude discussing this uneven anthology without mentioning the fine poet Lorna Crozier. Most of her poems are very good, but one of them, Male Thrust, is uproarious yet devastating, the latter in its demolition of macho writing and macho men. For this poem and Gallant's short story alone, this anthology is worth the cost. But, oh, how one longs for it to be better and more consistent. Maybe next year...?

-Allan Gould is a Toronto-based journalist and author. His latest books include the co-written Fire Stage: The Making of The Stratford Festival and The Violent Years of Mavis MacDonnell.

Two's a Crowd

By BILL BUTTLE



"Why not plant weed seeds and see if they get overrun with vegetables?"

Nickel prices skyrocket: Sudbury miners demand a share of the profits

A spectacular rise in spot nickel prices this spring is posing a challenge for Inco Ltd. and its unionized workers in Sudbury, Ont., as they sit down to negotiate a new contract. The old contract expires at the end of the month.



Your Business
 By DIANNE MALEY
 Business Analyst
 Thomson News Service

In the lean years of the early 1980s Inco made a deal with its workers that when nickel prices and profits rebounded, they would get a piece of the action.

Well, nickel prices have skyrocketed. Spot nickel prices shot up from \$3 (U.S.) a pound on the London Metal Exchange in early December to more than \$10 in the first quarter. The spot price is what desperate nickel users must pay or the commodity market for immediate delivery.

Because supply has been so tight lately, spot demand has soared. But companies such as Inco sell most of their nickel under contract, so the price they realize is more stable and much lower.

In the first quarter, for example, Inco realized an average of \$3.47 (U.S.) a pound for its nickel, including occasional sales on the spot market.

UNEQUAL SHARES
 Workers shared in the windfall, but not equally, leaving some workers feeling decidedly disgruntled.

Some Sudbury mine managers and foremen reaped a bonus of more than \$1,000 each, thanks to the surge in nickel prices. In Thompson, Man., miners walked away with a bonus of about \$875. But in Sudbury, miners

who had struck a different deal with the company ended up with \$150. Their bonus formula had been capped at a realized nickel price of \$2.90 a pound.

"When we took the deal three years ago, our crystal ball didn't reveal \$11 nickel," Garry Patterson, a union vice-president, said. Membership is livid, Mr. Patterson said.

"We're going to get some of that profit, and I don't mean tied to the price," he told reporters. Instead, the miners want a increase in basic wages.

OTHERS HAPPY
 The company, of course, is reluctant to raise wages in case the nickel price rise does not stick. Indeed, realized prices will continue much lower than the volatile spot price.

In a recent report, Thomas Byrne, mining analyst at McLeod Young Weir, the big investment dealer, forecast that prices to producers would average \$3.85 (U.S.) a pound this year, compared with \$2 in 1987; this could rise to about \$4 a pound in 1989.

But Inco and its workers face a further test. The Sudbury mine workers with the price cap are unhappy with the bonus scheme, but everyone else seems to like the idea. Will different groups of workers split on such a fundamental issue as profit-sharing?

Steelworkers have accepted flexible wage rates in other companies, but union officials still seem uncomfortable with the idea.

"I'd rather see an increase on the basic wages that will hold up over the long term," one union executive said. "But frankly, the membership seems happy."

The Sudbury miners feel cheated, understandably. The solution may be to ask for higher base wages or to strike a better deal on bonuses. It will be interesting to see which way the union goes.

Crying foul over fish



Staff Comment
 By BRIAN MACLEOD

Frustrations boiled over at the Ac-ton quarry dump hearings May 26 when several members of the committee accused the proponents of trying to rush through the meetings.

Councillor Pam Sheldon, sitting in on her first meeting since they began discussing the technical aspects of the dump, told Eco Logic's Douglas Hallett there's "too much at one meeting and not enough in advance."

Evidence of the heavy agendas was backed up by the fact that only odors were discussed May 26. The agenda called for dust and noise to be discussed as well.

Committee members also gave Dr. Hallett a tongue-lashing for the complexity of the documents.

If, as the Ministry of the Environment says, these meetings are supposed to be an "information exchange" forum, then things must change. How can the committee members possibly disseminate information to the public when they can't understand the documents themselves.

Jim McColl, drawing on his own engineering experience, is becoming a significant thorn in Eco Logic's side.

He says he works with the consultants Eco Logic's using and they're perfectly capable of putting the information in laymen's terms.

In our system of free enterprise RSI has every right to attempt to use their land for a dump.

But they've got to convince everyone involved that it's safe.

They put their intentions under suspicion right from the start in the eyes of the public when they first announced that the "public information meetings" were not going to be open to the press or the public.

Eco Logic seems to want the meetings to wrap up in October. Some people are anticipating an application for the dump shortly thereafter.

But after the May 26 meeting one message seems clear, residents are going to need many more meetings than the nine remaining on the schedule, before they're satisfied.

Regional councillors are crying foul now that they have to look at the effects of urban growth on fish in Halton's streams and rivers. The Ministry of Natural Resources has developed a new fisheries management plan, which includes sport fishing and new salmon in the Credit River. The ministry has "major concerns" about Georgetown's growth and its effects on the Credit.

It's not fair to start "throwing fish into the equation now," say Regional councillors.

Why not? Call it bureaucracy but that's why the task of conservation falls into the hands of government. Most private firms wouldn't give a tinker's damn about fish in the Credit.

It's to the MNR's credit that they're at least thinking about the effects of growth on the environment.

Councillors should stop pouting and get on with proving their case for urban growth.

Date line

The International Date Line, a zig-zag line that approximately coincides with the 180th meridian, is where each calendar day begins.

Best director

Mike Nichols won an Academy Award as Best Director in 1967 for "The Graduate."

Lat submarine

On June 9, 1959, the George Washington, the first U.S. ballistic-missile submarine, was launched at Groton, Conn.

U.S Immigration

Immigration to the United States is limited to 270,000 people per year.