

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

THE GREAT SIN: A CRITICAL STUDY
OF MORLEY CALLAGHAN'S NOVELS

by
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TO MY WIFE,
MARIETA BARROW HEATON

The great trick, I suppose, is to remain on an even keel-- and somehow or other be able to draw yourself together and realize your potentialities as a man. And the great sin really is to not realize your own possibilities. . . . That is the real sin--the real sin in a man is his abject failure to do anything with his possibilities. He to me is the sinner. Now theologically, I suppose, this is all wrong. But that to me is the failure. The guy wilfully will not realize his possibilities, and the world is full of such men. It ends up with your view of man. You have to have some kind of view of man to think that a man has possibilities to realize himself on a much fuller scale than he does. But the world seems to be full of frustrated people--people who in some mean or desperate way get blocked off from being what they should be.

Walter Callaghan

PREFACE

In his book The New American Literature: 1890-1930 Fred Lewis Pattee gives the names of the post-World War I school of American novelists. Ben Hecht, John Dos Passos, Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, Glenway Westcott, Elizabeth Madox Roberts and E. E. Cummings are among those Pattee mentions. The novel he discusses at length, as typical of the school, is Strange Fugitive (1928) by Morley Callaghan (1903-). When Callaghan was twenty-five, Story Magazine called him "the most discussed writer in America."¹ During the 1930's and early 1940's, his stories appeared for twelve successive years in Edward F. O'Brien's annual anthology of American fiction. Of his first short-story collection, A Native Argosy (1929), Frances Lamont Robbins concluded that "his characters, situations and conflicts are typically American."² Callaghan's early stories were praised by Ivor Winters, who thought they "exhibited the finest sense of irony in contemporary American litera-

¹Quoted in "Prodigal Who Stayed Home," Saturday Night, May 12, 1956, p. 22.

²Review of A Native Argosy, Outlook, April 3, 1929, p. 548. (All book reviews mentioned in this study are reviews of books by Morley Callaghan. Therefore the usual phrase "by Morley Callaghan" will be omitted in footnotes and bibliography.)

ture."¹ Looking back over his career from the vantage point of 1957, Callaghan said, "I guess I was an American writer [at age nineteen], and I am an American writer now [age fifty-four]."² Three years later, in an interview with Barbara Moon, Callaghan bluntly concluded, "In my candid opinion I was the best writer in America in the Thirties."³

In view of these statements about and by Callaghan, and in view of the fact that his books were first praised by Ring Lardner, Sinclair Lewis, Ernest Hemingway, Scott Fitzgerald, Sherwood Anderson, Ezra Pound and William Saroyan, it might strike one as odd that Callaghan is not a United States citizen, but a Canadian.

Although Callaghan is Canada's leading novelist, scholarly commentary on his work is rather slight. As Callaghan himself said in 1957, in an interview with Robert Weaver, "For some reason the professors have been a little apprehensive about saying anything definite about my work. . . . It took thirty years for a couple of guys to come along and try and say anything about the work."⁴

¹Paraphrased by Morley Callaghan in Robert Weaver, "A Talk with Morley Callaghan," Tamarack Review, No. 7 (Spring, 1958), p. 16. (Weaver, short-story editor for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation and an editor of Tamarack Review, interviewed Callaghan in December, 1957. Since references to this interview will be frequent, a shorter form, usually consisting of page number alone, will ordinarily be employed.)

²Quoted in Weaver, p. 5.

³"The Second Coming of Morley Callaghan," Maclean's Magazine, December 3, 1960, p. 63.

⁴Pp. 20-21.

Callaghan's books have been dutifully reviewed as they have appeared, in America by the professional reviewers and in Canada more often by "the professors." In fact, the bulk of commentary on the work is to be found in book reviews; rarely have "the professors" ventured to do more than compare a current Callaghan book with its predecessors, or include Callaghan in survey-type articles. A full-length analysis and assessment of Callaghan's novels is long overdue. This study seeks to make such an analysis and assessment. It will show that Callaghan deserves better treatment than he has received and that, because of the bulk and quality of his work, he is truly a major author and not just the best of a bad Canadian lot.

The study will also make a direct attack on one of the commonplaces of Callaghan criticism: that Callaghan is guilty of "moral flabbiness," "flabbiness of thought," that his novels reflect confusion and an inability to come to conclusions about the basic issues of life. Ideas expressed by two totally different writers--Nathaniel Branden, who is the leading exponent of Ayn Rand's atheistic, objectivist philosophy, and Edmund Fuller, whose orientation is thoroughly Christian--may help to indicate the means by which this study will attempt to refute the charge of "moral flabbiness." Branden says:

By its nature, every work of art projects, implicitly or explicitly, a metaphysics: that is, a fundamental view of man and of man's relation to existence. To be exact, it projects the emotional corollary

of a metaphysics: a "sense of life." It can project a tragic sense of life or a heroic sense of life or a benevolent sense of life, etc., according to the artist's basic psychological state and conscious or subconscious view of reality. But some sense of life--some estimate of existence and of man's place in it--is inescapably implicit, in an art work, by the nature of the creative process.

Edmund Fuller's statement is similar. He says:

The writer cannot be wholly coherent, as artist, unless he possesses a wholly coherent view of man to inform, illuminate, and integrate his work.

In other words, every man's novel may not have a thesis, but it must have a premise--whether declared or tacit, whether conscious or unconscious, it cannot help having a premise. That premise is susceptible to being found out even, as it were, over the author's dead body, and identification of the premise is essential to an evaluation of the work. Explicitly or implicitly, every novel reflects an opinion about the nature of man, even if the author hadn't known he had one.²

Many critics maintain that Callaghan has no coherent view of existence and man's place in it, no premise about the nature of man. The prefatory quotation of this study can be seen to embody both Callaghan's belief that he does have a coherent view of man as well as what I believe to be the thematic thread--the premise--running through all the novels: that man has possibilities on this earth which he is not achieving, that "the great sin" is not making the most of one's possibilities as a man. The reasons may be internal, in the form of character weaknesses or flaws, or external,

¹Who Is Ayn Rand? (New York: Random House, 1962), pp. 89-90.

²Man in Modern Fiction (New York: Random House, 1958), p. 7.

sociological factors which block men off from being what they should be. I shall also suggest that Callaghan the man has been a victim of the very type of thinking he writes against; he has been neglected and deemed a failure--has been unable to make the most of his own possibilities--not because of artistic or intellectual shortcomings of his own but because the reading public and the critics, by failing to read intelligently and without preconception, have at least partially blocked him off from being what he should be.

There are only two major articles on Callaghan, by "a couple of professors" at the University of Toronto--Hugo McPherson and F. W. Watt. McPherson's article, "The Two Worlds of Morley Callaghan," maintains that Callaghan early determined "that the temporal world cannot be self-redeemed; that human frailty is bearable only in the light of divine perfection."¹ McPherson's thesis is that Callaghan's work comprises an exploration of the relation between the empirical and spiritual worlds and that by examining this relation, "Callaghan has written the 'little man's' Ash Wednesday and Burnt Norton."² In his "Morley Callaghan As Thinker,"³ Watt examines nine novels and two short story collections to show that Callaghan uses the leading ideas of the 1920-1950 period

¹Queen's Quarterly, Vol. 64 (Autumn, 1957), p. 352.

²Ibid.

³The Dalhousie Review, Vol. 39 (Autumn, 1959), pp. 305-13.

to explore individual and social life in Canada. This study will take issue with the conclusions of both McPherson and Watt. True, as McPherson suggests, religion plays a prominent part in the novels, but it will be shown that though Callaghan includes religious concerns in his books, his orientation is toward this world and, as is manifest in the prefatory quotation of this study, man's possibilities in this world. F. W. Watt seems to feel that Callaghan has shown little originality as a thinker, preferring to use ideas current at the time rather than generate his own. Watt's conclusion is similarly based on the inclusion in the novels of characters representing elements in Callaghan's world. As will be seen, Callaghan specifically rejected the approach to fiction which Watt ascribes to him.

Of the three Canadian theses and one dissertation which have been written about Callaghan's work, by far the best is John Daniel Ripley's thesis, "A Critical Study of the Novels and Short Stories of Morley Callaghan," written in 1959 at the University of New Brunswick under the direction of Professor Desmond Pacey.¹ Like most critics, Ripley

¹A letter dated September 27, 1965, from Martha Shepard, Chief of the Reference Division, National Library of Canada, reads as follows: "Unfortunately, Canadian theses was not published between 1953 and 1960 but has been published annually since, and we have examined all of these issues as well as that for 1952. We have also checked our files for the newest edition just ready to go to press and Canadian graduate theses, 1921-1946." Therefore, there may be theses or dissertations written between 1953 and 1960, but there seems to be no way of locating them. Ripley's thesis, for example, was written during the period not covered by Canadian theses; it came to light only through a bit of luck.

classes Callaghan's early novels with the American naturalist school, a view with which this study is not in full agreement. The feature of Ripley's thesis is his examination of the relationship between Callaghan's novels and the philosophy of Jacques Maritain. This study will take exception to Ripley's contention that Maritain's philosophy greatly "influenced" Callaghan's novels from 1933 onward.

Reverend Louis George Dupuis' thesis, "The Spirituality of the Priest in Morley Edward Callaghan," written in 1963 at the University of Ottawa, attempts

to examine the "religious" writings of Morley Callaghan, especially as the religious quality affects the author's portrayal and characterization of the Catholic clergy living within the turmoil of the twentieth century world.¹

Dupuis examines certain of Callaghan's stories and five of the novels to elucidate his thesis. The range of Dupuis' study is intentionally narrow, and he focuses on Callaghan's Such Is My Beloved, devoting more than half of his rather long thesis to that novel. Dupuis seems to have made little effort to survey previous research; his bibliography lists only seven secondary sources.

S. J. Fajardo's thesis, "Morley Callaghan's Novels and Short Stories," written in 1962 at the University of Montreal, begins by misspelling Callaghan's name on the title page and has little to recommend it thereafter.²

¹P. 6.

²The thesis is a mass of misspellings and misquotations, devotes four or five pages to some of the stories

A thesis written at the University of North Carolina in 1964 by Albert Frederick Gillotti presents an interesting if tenuous view. Says Gillotti, "I have chosen to focus on the function of the dream, one of the dominant concerns not only of [Callaghan's] writing but also of his life."¹ Gillotti maintains that a number of Callaghan's characters live in a fantasy world and cannot distinguish between reality and dream, and that Callaghan's life was dominated by his shattered dream of Paris.

The only extant dissertation on Callaghan is François Martineau's "Morley Callaghan As a Novelist," written in 1961 at the University of Montreal. It is characterized by wholesale minor inaccuracies, confusion and misnaming of characters, stylistic inconsistency, bizarre reasoning,² and astoundingly bad writing.³

but only a page and a half to A Broken Journey, shows no awareness of earlier theses or Martineau's dissertation, contains a bibliography featuring frequent lack of page numbers and inaccurate alphabetization, omits two books from the list of Callaghan's production, and so forth.

¹"The Importance of the Dream in the Work and Life of Morley Callaghan," p. 4.

²For example, "All of Callaghan's novels have been widely read; the proof being that all but three are out of print today. . ." (p. 5).

³For example, "If Stephen Crane is better presented to the public not as a novelist but as a short story writer covering two hundred pages of such power, humanity and speculative implications as The Open Boat, The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky, and The Blue Hotel, one might consider Morley Callaghan as a superior colleague in arms with three volumes of short stories and eight novels, excluding No Man's Meat" (p. 6).

Professor Brandon Conron of the University of Western Ontario has written a book on Callaghan for Twayne's World Authors Series. The book was scheduled for release in February, 1966, but it has not appeared as yet.

* * * * *

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
PREFACE	111
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION.	1
The Writer in Canada	
Scholarship and Criticism	
II. BORN A WRITER: THE EARLY YEARS.	18
The Zola of Toronto: <u>Strange Fugitive</u>	
That Summer in Paris	
Transition: <u>It's Never Over</u> and	
<u>A Broken Journey</u>	
Naturalism and Hemingway	
III. THE BEST WRITER IN AMERICA: 1933-1937	82
<u>Such Is My Beloved</u>	
<u>They Shall Inherit the Earth</u>	
<u>More Joy in Heaven</u>	
The Middle Period and the Critics	
IV. THE DARK PERIOD: 1938-1951.	139
Theatre and Radio	
<u>The Varsity Story</u>	
<u>The Loved and the Lost</u>	
V. CONFIDENT AND SURE: 1952-	172
Morley Callaghan's Articles and	
<u>Morley Callaghan's Stories</u>	
Edmund Wilson and <u>The Many Colored Coat</u>	
<u>A Passion in Rome</u>	
<u>That Summer in Paris</u>	
VI. A LIFE OF HUMILIATION?.	228
The Artistic Aim	
The Themes	
The Method	
The Style	
The Attitude	
BIBLIOGRAPHY.	253

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The Writer in Canada

If, as Edmund Wilson has said, Morley Callaghan "is today perhaps the most unjustly neglected novelist in the English-speaking world,"¹ one reason for the neglect is no doubt Callaghan's nationality. The first novel written in Canada, Frances Brooke's The History of Emily Montague (1769), antedates by twenty years William Hill Brown's The Power of Sympathy, usually considered the first American novel. However, from Frances Brooke's time to the present, neglect of Canadian writing has been the rule rather than the exception. True, Thomas Chandler Haliburton's memorable "Sam Slick" is known beyond Canada's borders. The poetry of Bliss Carman has achieved a limited prominence outside Canada. Stephen Leacock is known beyond Canada for his more than thirty collections of humorous sketches, burlesques, parodies, essays, monologues and stories. He also wrote over one hundred scholarly articles and two dozen serious books during his distinguished academic career in political science. In 1927 Mazo de la Roche's Jalna won the \$10,000 Atlantic Monthly novel prize. Though Miss de la Roche

¹"Morley Callaghan of Toronto," The New Yorker, November 26, 1960, p. 224. Publicity blurbs customarily omit the "perhaps."

became world famous for her sixteen "Jalna" books, she also wrote a dozen other novels as well as plays, historical sketches and her autobiography, Ringing the Changes (1957). The list of Canadian writers known well, or even fairly well, outside Canada ends with Haliburton, Carman, Leacock and de la Roche. In the four corners of the globe, beyond Canada, who reads a book by Susanna Moodie, Frederick P. Grove, Ethel Wilson, Earle Birney, Hugh MacLennan, Henry Kreisel, Abraham Klein, Mordecai Richler, or Leonard Cohen? Who reads the poetry of E. J. Pratt, Douglas LePan, F. R. Scott, James Reaney, Jay Macpherson, or Irving Layton? In 1964 the Canadian critic Robertson Davies wrote, in Holiday magazine, "Insofar as Canada is known in England through fiction, it is the romanticized Canada of Mazo de la Roche."¹ Davies might well have substituted "outside Canada" for "in England."

Davies relates the neglect of Canadian writing to fashion. He says, "Canada is not a country about which it is fashionable to read, and this question of fashion is more important in the literary world than is generally admitted."² Hugh MacLennan, one of Canada's leading novelists, relates the neglect to disinterest and misinformation. "American knowledge of us," he wrote in 1942, "is confined to a strange

¹"The Northern Muse," Holiday, Vol. 35 (April, 1964), p. 16.

²Ibid.

interest in the diet of the Dionne girls, a concern for the amount of wildlife still waiting to be shot or caught in our wilderness, and a vague idea that the Mounted Police are romantic."¹ MacLennan once wrote an essay on the outside world's disinterest in Canadian literature. One need not read the essay to get the point; the title suffices: "Boy Meets Girl in Winnipeg and Who Cares?"²

Morley Callaghan's neglect, then, is a specific manifestation of an indifference to Canada in general and to Canadian literature in particular. But this is only one of the many difficulties which Callaghan and other Canadian writers continue to experience. The first Canadian Writers' Conference, held in 1955 at Queen's University, pinpointed scores of factors which debilitate the quality and quantity of Canadian literature. Delegates to the convention were Canadian publishers, critics, librarians, poets and novelists. The novelist chosen to present a paper on the Canadian novelist's position was Morley Callaghan.

John Gray, speaking at the conference on book publishing in Canada, pointed out a prime disadvantage for the Canadian trying to become established within his own country: scarcity of readers. The dismal facts were these:

¹"Culture, Canadian Style," Saturday Review of Literature, March 28, 1942, p. 3.

²In Scotchman's Return and Other Essays (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960).

The Canadian market for books by Canadians writing in the English language is perhaps eleven or twelve million--about seven per cent, about one-sixteenth--of the American market; and perhaps fifteen to twenty per cent of the British.¹

In view of the minute potential market, it is not surprising that, as the Times Literary Supplement stated in 1955: "There are fewer than fifty bookshops across Canada which do not need to supplement their income with stationery, cameras, and trinkets. Very few serious novels sell more than 300 copies. . . ." ²

The commercial Canadian magazine fares no better. Excepting business, technical and other specialized magazines, Gray's count reveals "not a dozen commercial magazines in the English language in the entire country," ³ and these are, in the aggregate, outsold by American imports. The Canadian writer of fiction will receive small hope from Gray's revelation that some of these commercial Canadian magazines can pay "up to four hundred dollars for a short story. . . ." ⁴ Being commercial publications, these magazines publish commercial, "slick," "formula" stories. The serious short-story writer's straits are even more desperate.

¹"Book Publishing," Writing in Canada, ed. George Whalley (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1956), p. 60.

²"Canadian Writers Come into Their Own," The Times (London), Literary Supplement, August 5, 1955, p. iii.

³P. 67.

⁴P. 69.

Lister Sinclair summed up the belief of his study group at the conference: "It was felt that serious short stories cannot in fact be sold to magazines, and that there is no place in Canada to sell serious short stories at all at the moment."¹

In an attempt to compensate the Canadian writer for the scarcity of profitable markets, Canadian book publishers, magazines, and the Canadian government have made frequent use of a time-honored device: the literary prize. The prize system has its disadvantages, as James Robertson MacGillivray has noted. There is danger, he says, of the writer imagining that the winning of a prize

makes him a master of the art of fiction; and neither his fellow-writers nor the patrons of our national literature will disabuse him of this idea. Under these circumstances is it any wonder that our novelists rarely give us more than the most ordinary reader expects and the patrons of literature deserve?²

In 1954 the prize system resulted in what Robertson Davies referred to as "our finest hour of confusion." In that year the Governor-General's Medal for fiction, Canada's most prestigious award, went to one Igor Gouzenko. Gouzenko's The Fall of a Titan, while written in Canada, was written in Russian and concerned a Russian Communist official. Davies wryly observed: "The gesture was doubtless meant to

¹"Summary," Writing in Canada, ed. George Whalley, p. 94.

²"Letters in Canada: Fiction," University of Toronto Quarterly, Vol. 12 (April, 1943), p. 316.

assert Canada's largeness of soul in welcoming Mr. Gouzenko, who had sought political asylum among us; it was less effective in encouraging Canadian writers, writing in English or French about Canadian themes."¹

The reasons given above for the plight of the Canadian writer would seem sufficiently discouraging; unfortunately, though, we have but scratched the surface. Desmond Pacey, professor of English at the University of New Brunswick, has discussed the problem in various publications.² His lists seem endless: the relative drabness of Canadian society compared to the Canadian landscape, the amorphous quality of Canadian society, the lack of a strong national consciousness, the wide gulf between the French-Canadian and English-Canadian cultures, the lingering frontier and colonial spirits, the lack of philosophical tradition, a prevalent puritanical attitude on the part of the Canadian public, and so forth.

A number of these factors could be categorized as subheads of a more general lack, bewailed frequently by commentators on the Canadian literary scene: the lack of a specifically Canadian point of view. Pacey has said, "The Canadian knows that he is not British, and not American; but

¹Holiday, Vol. 35, p. 16.

²Specifically, Creative Writing in Canada (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1961), and "The Novel in Canada," Queen's Quarterly, Vol. 52 (Autumn, 1945), pp. 322-31.

exactly what he is, or what he wishes to become, he is uncertain."¹ Hugh MacLennan echoes this feeling. Writers, he says, record a point of view, or at least reflect one, "and Canadians, as a people, are in the unique position of having no essential point of view germane to themselves as a geographical or political unit."² MacLennan says that Canadian writers should adopt what he calls "the Yankee point of view," which is and has been constructive dissension. But, he affirms, Canadians cannot; that attitude is foreign to them.

The adverse literary climate has had the effects on the quantity and quality of literary production which one would expect. As far as the production of longer fiction is concerned, a low point was reached in 1948, when only ten Canadian novels were published.³ Since that time production has increased, but all too often veteran novelists who should be counted on to contribute quality fiction are forced, out of necessity, either to allow years to elapse between books or to leave the fiction field altogether. Charles Clay offers Hugh MacLennan as an example: his fourth novel Each Man's Son was published in 1951, but eight years elapsed before publication of The Watch That Ends the Night. Clay concludes that

¹"The Canadian Imagination," The Literary Review, Vol. 8 (Summer, 1965), p. 441.

²Saturday Review of Literature, March 28, 1942, p. 4.

³Claude T. Bissell, "Letters in Canada: Fiction," University of Toronto Quarterly, Vol. 28 (April, 1949), p. 273.

"this paucity of production [by veteran novelists] is undoubtedly a main factor in the slow development of an aggressive and influential national literature."¹ In her book Canadian Novelists: 1920-1945 (1946), Clara Thomas offers even more striking evidence of the phenomenon. Among novelists covered, the book includes some thirty Canadian writers who were fairly successful before 1937 but who, at the time of the book's publication, had disappeared from the literary scene. Where did they go? According to Charles Clay, "Newspapers, advertising agencies, schools and colleges, civil service offices and even the stage, swallowed up most of them."²

Occasionally, in the welter of complaints that emanates from Canada, one finds a dissenting view. Robert Weaver observed in 1954 that "while there is no point in denying that writers are having a tough time in Canada, the fact is that things are tough everywhere."³ S. E. Smethurst takes those writers and critics to task who bemoan the cultural level of the Canadian writer's audience. He says,

¹"Canadian Literature," The Americana Annual, 1960 ed., p. 123.

²"Canadian Literature," 10 Eventful Years: 1937 through 1946, Vol. 1 (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., 1947), p. 524. Clay cites Callaghan as an example of those who disappeared, saying that Callaghan was a "victim of Canadian radio."

³"Economics of Our Literature," Queen's Quarterly, Vol. 60 (Winter, 1954), p. 477.

When we condemn popular taste it is easy to forget that in other countries the great writers of the past were writing for a small minority of their contemporaries and that the mass of the people were no more, and probably even less, equipped to enjoy good literature than are men and women nowadays.¹

This is perhaps small consolation to the Canadian author who can find neither publisher nor audience, or to the Canadian critic who laments the minute quantity of fiction being produced.

If the difficulties hampering Canadian creativity have resulted in a disappointing quantity of Canadian literature, the quality of that literature has been even more disappointing. Virtually all nineteenth-century Canadian novels were historical romances. For the first thirty years of the twentieth century, Canadian fictional fare was limited to the historical romance and the regional, or local color, idyll. It was only in the 1920's, in the work of Grove and Callaghan, that Canada began producing any realistic fiction at all. As William H. Magee puts it,

Since 1920 provincialism and its literary by-products have been slowly retreating from the national scene in Canada. . . . Many besides Morley Callaghan have reflected a city instead of a country perspective in novels of social protest, and for them locality is more useful for generalized than for regional implications.²

Nevertheless, though the trend away from provincialism and

¹"Towards a National Literature," Queen's Quarterly, Vol. 59 (Winter, 1952-53), p. 462.

²"Local Colour in Canadian Fiction," University of Toronto Quarterly, Vol. 28 (January, 1959), pp. 187-88.

sentimentality was heartening, Pacey concluded in 1965 that of the more than seven hundred novels published in Canada between the World Wars, only Grove, Callaghan and possibly de la Roche wrote books that will last.¹

The 1940's marked a turning point in the quality of Canadian fiction. "Only since 1940," says Professor F. W. Watt of the University of Toronto, "has Canadian literature given signs of becoming an exportable commodity, so to speak, to take a minor part alongside our wheat, lumber and sockeye salmon."² Not until 1944 was "Canadian Literature" considered by The Americana Annual worthy to be included as a separate category.

Though realistic fiction has taken an ever increasing share of the market since the second World War, historical and regional novels have still predominated by numerical count. Professor E. A. McCourt summed up the situation as he saw it in 1952:

The unpalatable truth is that to-day in Canada there exists no body of creative writing which reflects adequately . . . the nature of the Canadian people and the historic forces which have made them what they are.³

¹"Fiction," Literary History of Canada: Canadian Literature in English, ed. Carl F. Klinck (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1965), p. 658.

²"The Literature of Canada," The Commonwealth Pen: An Introduction to the Literature of the British Commonwealth, ed. A. L. McLeod (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1961), p. 14.

³Quoted in Smethurst, Queen's Quarterly, Vol. 59, p. 455.

By 1960 the general quality of Canadian novels seems to have improved but little. Of that year's twenty novels, F. W. Watt said,

Only three stand much chance of being read and re-read, and the rest, with such momentary qualities as they actually possess, must sink into entire oblivion--cargo, crew and passengers, the orchestra in some cases still bravely playing the national anthem.¹

Most of the comments above are based on the quality of Canadian fiction's subject matter. Throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, that subject matter has been characterized by a certain thinness, showing itself forth in a fiction which might generally be termed romantic. Escapes into the past or a sentimentalizing of the present are the usual manifestations of the trend. Books which take a good, hard, critical look at Canadian life are in a pitiful minority. Fictional technique, too, has lagged along with subject matter. As Pacey has said, in a discussion of deficiencies in Canadian fiction,

Technically, all our novels cling to the safe paths of the nineteenth century. For all the evidence one finds of it in Canadian fiction, the work of Henry James, James Joyce, André Gide, Marcel Proust, Franz Kafka and other such creative exponents of the novel form, might never have been accomplished.²

It should by now be clear that the quality of Canadian literature, as compared to English and American literature and most European and Oriental literatures, is not

¹"Letters in Canada: Fiction," University of Toronto Quarterly, Vol. 30 (July, 1961), pp. 401-02.

²Queen's Quarterly, Vol. 52, p. 326.

outstanding. It must also be admitted that the Canadian writer has labored under a unique set of difficulties, though the limited international success and reputation of Morley Callaghan and a few others suggest that among the factors already mentioned there are certainly excuses mixed with legitimate reasons. Nevertheless, in spite of obstacles, Canadians continue to put pen to paper. Earle Birney offers a mathematical basis for a glimmer of hope: "If we Canadian authors persist we may, for example, like the hypothetical roomfull [sic] of chimpanzees pecking at typewriters, produce a masterpiece, if only through the laws of chance and mathematics."¹ Northrop Frye, apparently in all seriousness, bases his optimism on the Canadian forests: "The argument that a country with such pulpwood resources must produce great literature sooner or later is probably quite a sound one."² But lest the Canadian literary man become overly optimistic, he might do well to remember the dire prediction implicit in the words of a young female character in Canada's earliest novel, Mrs. Brooke's The History of Emily Montague: "Genius will never mount high where the faculties of the mind are benumbed half the year."³ Perhaps Morley Callaghan's

¹"On Being a Canadian Author," Canadian Library Association Bulletin, Vol. 9 (November, 1952), pp. 78-79.

²"English Canadian Literature, 1929-1954," Canadian Library Association Bulletin, Vol. 13 (December, 1956), p. 108.

³Quoted in A. J. M. Smith, "A Survey of English-Canadian Letters," University of Toronto Quarterly, Vol. 35 (October, 1965), p. 112

partial success is due to his summer in Paris and his numerous trips to New York--they may have thawed him out.

Scholarship and Criticism

In 1956 Northrop Frye concluded that "during the past twenty-five years the most impressive literary achievements in English Canada have not been in the imaginative fields, but in scholarship."¹ Were it not for a hesitation to give offense to a great critic, one might ask Professor Frye whether that is saying very much. Impressive gains have been made in the last three decades, but much still needs to be done if Canadian critics are to overcome the cultural insularity which has weakened Canadian criticism, and if Canadian scholars are to have basic resources at their disposal which scholars in other countries have for years taken for granted. An understanding of the Canadian inadequacy in these areas does much to explain the particular inadequacy of Callaghan scholarship and criticism.

The University of Toronto Quarterly publishes an annual supplement entitled "Letters in Canada," which discusses the previous year's literary activity under several headings. Professor A. S. P. Woodhouse's contribution to the 1938 supplement covers the previous year's work in criticism. It provides an enlightening starting point. He

p. 108. ¹Canadian Library Association Bulletin, Vol. 13.

wrote, "In 1937 no work was done in the history or criticism of English-Canadian speech and letters sufficiently significant to require comment. We observe this fact with some concern [and] retain the heading for future use. . . ." ¹

For its relevance to Canadian studies, we mention that in 1942 Professor A. Bruce Sutherland of Pennsylvania State University established "English 70: The Literature of the British Dominions and Colonies." This was the first such course in the United States ²; few others have been established since then. Though Canadian literature courses had been offered in Canadian universities for some years before the Pennsylvania State course was organized, no Canadian university had established a Chair of Canadian Literature until the University of Western Ontario did so shortly after the end of World War II. ³

In a 1953 article entitled "Areas of Research in Canadian Literature," Desmond Pacey said: "It is a grim commentary on our cultural apathy that there is as yet no satisfactory and comprehensive bibliography of Canadian literature." ⁴ Later in the same article Pacey said that "there

¹"Letters in Canada: Criticism of Canadian Letters and Arts," University of Toronto Quarterly, Vol. 7 (January, 1938), p. 387.

²McLeod, p. 2. ³Ibid., p. 3.

⁴University of Toronto Quarterly, Vol. 23 (October, 1953), p. 58.

is not yet a single definitive biography of a Canadian author."¹ Reginald Eyre Watters' monumental A Check List of Canadian Literature: 1628-1950 (1959) was a godsend to Canadian scholars, though it is an unannotated list of separate publications by and about Canadians and does not include journal articles. Pacey's second quoted statement, however, remains true even now.

Only recently have Canadians focused scholarly attention on writers below the border. Though Millar MacLure's statement is fortunately no longer accurate, he maintained less than ten years ago that "no Canadian scholar or critic has yet produced a major study of any United States author."² The inadequate scholarly work on both Canadian and foreign authors is without doubt directly related to the condition of Canadian libraries. At the 1955 Writers' Conference already referred to, Hilton Smith said this: "The library situation in Canada can be summed up in one word--lamentable."³

Much of our good American criticism is to be found in the so-called "little magazines." Such is not the case in Canada. Summing up the findings of the Writers' Conference in this regard, F. R. Scott stated:

¹ Ibid. p. 59.

² "Literary Scholarship," The Culture of Contemporary Canada, ed. Julian Park (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1957), p. 223.

³ "Libraries," Writing in Canada, ed. George Whalley, p. 116.

Only two "little mags" exist in the entire country for experimental work, one university quarterly publishes and pays for short stories, but there does not exist in Canada a literary magazine of the type of Partisan Review, Hudson Review or the Sewanee Review, where a coterie of writers and critics maintain a constant watch for new talent and subject writers generally, both old and new, to an informed criticism. Indeed, it was remarked that criticism of Canadian literature scarcely exists at all; that few universities and schools give Canadian literature courses, and if they do are hard pressed to find copies of the books the students should read.¹

Ironically, as the little magazines and university quarterlies add increasing amounts of criticism, they increasingly shut out the aspiring writer of fiction, who already has too few avenues of expression. Callaghan told the conference that the pages of the quarterlies, that used to publish the work of new writers, "have been handed over to the professors of English in a kind of vast academic conspiracy,"² because of the Canadian version of "publish or perish." "The contributor of fiction," Callaghan went on, "is simply overwhelmed by the academic men grimly seeking advancement."³

Desmond Pacey's statement made in 1953 is still an

¹"The Canadian Writers' Conference," University of Toronto Quarterly, Vol. 25 (October, 1955), p. 98.

²"Novelist," Writing in Canada, ed. George Whalley, p. 25.

³Ibid., p. 26. Callaghan had quite a bit to say at the conference, some of which got on Ralph Allen's nerves. When speaking about the Canadian magazine situation, Allen said, "The writer who is not paid or read seems to be trying to prove that it is both an artistic distinction and an insufferable privation not to be paid or read. Even the writer who is paid and read--yes, even so distinguished a member of the species as Morley Callaghan--has been making odd and plaintive noises, rather like an ex-virgin stealing home at dawn" (in Whalley, pp. 71-72).

accurate assessment of the Canadian literary scene insofar as it concerns the scholar-critic: "Canadian literature remains . . . a very rich and virtually unexploited field."¹ It is to "exploit" one small area of the field that this study is being written.

¹University of Toronto Quarterly, Vol. 23, p. 58.

CHAPTER II

BORN A WRITER: THE EARLY YEARS

I happened to be born a writer.

Malcolm Callaghan

CHAPTER II

BORN A WRITER: THE EARLY YEARS

During the middle of the last century, thousands emigrated from Ireland to Canada because of the Irish famine. Among them was the grandfather of Morley Callaghan. Callaghan was born in 1903, the son of Thomas and Mary Callaghan. His father worked for the Canadian National Express in Toronto, and both his father and mother wrote poetry in their spare time.

In high school Callaghan developed an interest in sports which continues to the present. He played football and baseball and, as fate would have it, learned to box. If a writer becomes a professional when he is paid for something he writes, Callaghan turned professional while still in high school. He wrote a descriptive article on Yonge and Albert streets in Toronto, sent it to the Toronto Star Weekly, and received a check for twelve dollars. It is interesting that his first piece of writing featured Yonge Street, a street which often appears in his fiction not because it is a particularly colorful or significant street, but merely to locate the story or novel in Toronto.

Callaghan received his B. A. degree in 1925 from St.

Michael's College, University of Toronto, and decided to go to law school at Osgoode Hall, as preparation for a political career. According to S. J. Fajardo, "He was encouraged in his law studies at Osgoode Hall Law School by Harry Hindmarsh, the famous managing editor of the Toronto Star."¹ Callaghan's That Summer in Paris (1963)² tells a different story and indicates that the last thing Hindmarsh wanted was for Callaghan to continue as a student. Callaghan completed his law course in 1929--and that was the last that the law saw of him--married Loretto Dee³ and went to Paris.

Before taking up that summer in Paris, we must backtrack a few years. Claude T. Bissell has said, "No Canadian writer can avoid some American influence; but Canadian literature has never been, at any time, a branch of American."⁴ Not only did the young Callaghan not try to avoid American influence--he embraced it. In the interview with Robert Weaver, speaking of Canadian contemporary writers, Callaghan said, "I knew no-one of my own age. Mazo de la Roche and

¹p. 1.

²This book is the best source of biographical information about the years between 1922 and 1929. It is readily available in paperback, so this paragraph is merely a sketch of the period.

³Callaghan invariably refers to his wife as "Loretto," though she is variously called Loretta, Lorette Florence, and Florence Loretta in accounts of Callaghan's early years.

⁴"A Common Ancestry: Literature in Australia and Canada," University of Toronto Quarterly, Vol. 25 (January, 1956), p. 134.

[E. J.] Pratt should, in a sense, have been my father."¹ "By some streak of luck . . .," said Callaghan, "when I was at high school, I stumbled upon The Smart Set," a treasure trove of good American writing. "So I had this well of literature, of contemporary American literature, laid at my feet when I was nineteen. What was going on in the world was suddenly brought very close to me when I was nineteen, and I went for it."

Weaver: "You were an American writer even then."

Callaghan: "Yes, I guess I was an American writer, and I am an American writer now."² In his dissertation, Martineau observes, speaking of Sherwood Anderson, that "he seems to have influenced Morley Callaghan to some extent. . . ."³

Callaghan, in the Weaver interview, was more specific:

I always feel grateful to Anderson because Anderson really started me writing.

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When I was nineteen and first read Anderson--and he was the first American writer that I really got a kick out of--I felt a little elation, a little glow. He seemed wonderful.⁴

In the amusing anecdote Callaghan relates in That Summer in Paris, we learn that Callaghan considers Anderson to be his literary "father," though for a moment he had Anderson wondering whether he was Callaghan's father in actuality.

So, under the influence of Anderson and the other writers in The Smart Set, Callaghan began to write stories.

¹p. 7. ²Ibid., p. 5. ³p. 10. ⁴pp. 14-15.

He soon realized, and he was the first Canadian writer except Mazo de la Roche to do so, that if he were to reach an audience outside Canada he would have to denationalize his writing, that people outside Canada had a peculiar lack of interest in Canadian "local color" or specifically Canadian problems.¹ Therefore, from the outset of his career he wrote of universals within the Canadian setting, since that was the only setting he knew, and he wrote in such a way that the Canadian setting would often be obvious to the Canadian reader but not apparent to the reader outside Canada. But until he met Hemingway, he did not know how to get his stories before a world audience.

Callaghan has given conflicting versions of his first sight of Hemingway. While gathering material for his book The Apprenticeship of Ernest Hemingway: The Early Years, Charles A. Fenton interviewed Callaghan in 1952. The account reads as follows; the unquoted material is Fenton's:

"One morning that fall [1923]," Callaghan recalled in 1952, "I went over to check the [Star] assignment book." Callaghan, an articulate man, has a precise and ready memory. "I looked down the list and I saw Hemingway's name, and then his name again, and finally, down at the bottom, I saw it a third time." The young Canadian, who thought of Hemingway as one whose literary career had been firmly launched, was naturally curious about what kinds of assignments he was being given, and why he should receive so many of them. He

¹For an account of Callaghan's decision to write for the world market, see Morley Callaghan, "The Plight of Canadian Fiction," University of Toronto Quarterly, Vol. 7 (January, 1938), pp. 152-61.

was appalled at what he saw. "They were all piddling," Callaghan remembered, "just junk assignments." At this moment Callaghan first saw Hemingway, whom he recognized from Jimmy Cowan's description. Hemingway walked over and studied the book himself. "Jesus Christ," he muttered.¹

According to the account in That Summer in Paris, Callaghan had seen Hemingway on the previous day, Hemingway's name appeared on the assignment list "in at least five places" rather than three, and Hemingway's reaction was "a terse four-letter word."² Either Callaghan's precise and ready memory has played a trick on him, or, more probably, he is indulging in a bit of poetic license.

Callaghan's account of his first conversation with Hemingway, as given in the Weaver interview, also differs from the version in That Summer in Paris. In addition to discrepancies in chronology, Callaghan gives conflicting versions of his failure to supply Hemingway with a story as he had said he would. In the Weaver interview, Callaghan says,

Next day I ran into him on the stairs and he said: "Where's that story?" and I said: "Oh, I forgot about it"--which was quite right, I had forgotten about it. And then he, using what I thought was astonishingly foul language, said he just wanted to see if I was a fake.³

In That Summer in Paris, Callaghan says,

¹(New York: Farrar, Straus & Young, 1954), p. 246.

²(New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1963), p. 25.

³p. 10.

My Friday assignment took me out of the office. The following Monday afternoon I passed Hemingway on the stairs. Wheeling suddenly four steps above me, looming over me, big and powerful, he growled, "You didn't bring that story down."

"No, I was busy."

"I see," he said, then rude and brutal, he added, "I just wanted to see if you were another god-damned phony."¹

Whichever version is correct, the Hemingway-Callaghan relationship was off to an inauspicious start. But Hemingway did read Callaghan's story. To the young Callaghan, writing in what must have amounted to spiritual and cultural isolation in Toronto, Hemingway's reaction must have been wonderfully encouraging. "You're a real writer," said Hemingway. "You write big-time stuff. All you have to do is keep on writing."²

Callaghan kept on writing and Hemingway returned to Paris. Of those days Callaghan said in 1956,

Where Hemingway was most helpful was in telling me where I could have my things published, like the literary magazines of Europe, The [This] Quarter, and Transition [transition]. He kept telling me I had it, and that some day I was going to be a great writer.³ Without his praise, I might have been awfully lonely.

About two years after Hemingway returned to Paris--two years during which Hemingway had written constant encouragement to Callaghan and Callaghan had sent a number of stories to Hemingway--stories by Callaghan were published within a few

¹p. 29. ²Ibid.

³"Prodigal Who Stayed Home," Saturday Night, May 12, 1956, p. 22.

months of each other in the second numbers of the Paris magazines This Quarter and transition. Other contributors to the issue of transition were James Joyce, Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein and Hemingway.

The extent of Callaghan's success in being published in these magazines, and the salubrious effect of such publication on Callaghan, are perhaps hard to imagine. Samuel Putnam's comment may indicate the importance in the 1920's of Callaghan's achievement. Putnam observes, in his reminiscence Paris Was Our Mistress, that though the little magazines were flourishing in the United States,

it was the ambition of every young writer to "make" the overseas organ, which was by no means easy to do. Some even journeyed all the way to Paris thinking to accomplish on the spot what could not be achieved from a transoceanic distance, and more often than not they were disappointed.¹

The nature of the work printed in the Paris magazines is also significant in light of the frequent criticism that Callaghan was, in those early days, merely a "Canadian Hemingway," a derivative writer with no originality, no experimental bent. According to a retrospective account of Mme. Eugene Jolas, wife of one of the founders of transition, the purpose of the magazine was "to create a meeting place for all those artists on both sides of the Atlantic who were working towards a complete renovation, both spiritual and

¹(New York: The Viking Press, 1947), p. 223.

technical, of the various art forms."¹ Putnam quotes transition's manifesto, which proclaimed as the magazine's aim, the "Revolution of the Word." The manifesto contained such principles as "the imagination in search of a fabulous word is autonomous and unconfined" and "the literary creator has the right to disintegrate the primal matter of words imposed on him by textbooks and dictionaries. . . . He has the right to use words of his own fashioning and to disregard existing grammatical and syntactical laws." The closing lines of the manifesto read as follows: "The writer expresses, he does not communicate. The plain reader be damned."² The manifesto was signed by Kay Boyle, Hart Crane, Whit Burnett, Martha Foley and others.

Callaghan's publication in the Paris magazines would indicate that at the time he was considered a fresh, original writer by the American expatriates who were then directing the course of American fiction. Maxwell Perkins saw and admired the stories, and within a short time Scribner's had arranged to publish Callaghan's first novel, Strange Fugitive,³ and a collection of stories, A Native Argosy. Callaghan's career was off and winging.

¹Quoted in Putnam, p. 221.

²Ibid., p. 225.

³In his thesis S. J. Fajardo says Strange Fugitive was first published by Grossett and Dunlap. This information does not agree with any other source checked and is apparently in error.

The Zola of Toronto: Strange Fugitive

It will be remembered that Fred Lewis Pattee chose Strange Fugitive (1928) as a novel representative of the post-war American school. As Pattee mistakenly thought Callaghan was an American, so he mistakes the locale of Strange Fugitive. He says,

First of all, the story is placeless. The opening exposition has in it not a hint of locality. Manifestly, however, it is American--it touches the Canadian border where "bootlegging" is a big business, and for the most part the action takes place in a city.¹

The city is in fact Toronto, as many internal clues suggest, but by not saying so, Callaghan gained the advantage of the American market.

Pattee's misreading extends beyond the details already mentioned. His misunderstanding of Callaghan's first hero, Harry Trotter, his mistaken classification of Trotter as a typical "naturalistic" hero like Frank Norris' McTeague, is characteristic of the oversimplification of the early Callaghan critics, and their propensity to place Callaghan on the most convenient hook. Pattee speaks of Callaghan's attitude or point of view, then moves to a sketch of Harry Trotter as he perceives him:

Everything objective. Never does the author assume the omniscient attitude in presenting his characters: he shows them photographically with no synthesizing general statements to make us understand them better than they understand themselves. Soon we awake to the fact that we are not studying primarily an individual. The man is

¹Pp. 461-62.

a type. In becoming acquainted with him we have been introduced to an area of masculinity. Here is the masterful, animalistic, selfish, physically dominant male so abundant in our free America--the cave-man type, the sheik type.¹

This interpretation and others similar to it emphasize those of Harry's qualities which fit in with the naturalistic stereotype while ignoring those that do not.

Pattee says of Strange Fugitive that "there is no plot, no working of all the lines of action to a culminating climax."² There is in fact one main line of action, Harry's ascent to power, which ascent is culminated in sudden and dramatic fashion. Harry begins his career as a \$50 a week foreman in Pape's lumber yard. He has the physical attributes of the lumber yard foreman, of the cave-man type, of the naturalistic hero--thick blond hair, a hairy chest, wide shoulders and strong legs. Harry gets into a fight with one of the laborers, then into an argument with his boss, and so he is fired.

Harry tries for work at various lumber yards, but he will not take a job without authority. He has an argument one night with his wife Vera and stomps angrily out of the house with Jim Nash, a friend from Pape's lumber yard. They have a few drinks at Angelina's speakeasy and then go to the Arcadia dance hall to pick up some girls. Harry gets into a fight with a young Jew who bumps him on the dance floor, and

¹Ibid., p. 462. ²Ibid.

he and Jim get out just before the police arrive.¹

As Harry and Jim wander the streets of Toronto, they see a truck unloading bootleg whiskey. They hijack the truck, sell the contents to Angelina, and thus begins Harry's new life as a bootlegger. The business thrives, Harry takes an elaborate flat, buys a grand piano and hires a Chinese servant. He is now in competition with the biggest bootleggers in town--O'Reilly, Simon Asche, Steve Weinreb and Al Cosantino. After one of his men is found shot, Harry decides that Cosantino must be eliminated, a chore which he performs himself.

Shortly thereafter Harry and a couple of his boys come out of the bookstore which they are using as a front. A car drives by and the six men in it begin shooting. The novel ends this way:

Harry dropped his gun, hit in the neck, his head dropping down slowly till his forehead rubbed against the pavement. He saw the wheels of the car going round and round, and the car got bigger. The wheels went round slowly and he was dead.²

¹According to an anonymous commentator on the novel, "[Callaghan's] story Strange Fugitive was prompted by his witnessing a young man resembling the Harry of Strange Fugitive, who rushed into a fight as Harry did in the dance hall, with utter disregard of consequences. It was thru wondering what made such a man that he worked out the character of Harry, so much a slave of his instincts, and yet having some fine characteristics mixed with ignoble ones" ("Biographical Sketch," Wilson Library Bulletin, Vol. 3 [May, 1929], p. 618).

²Morley Callaghan, Strange Fugitive (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928), p. 264. All future references to this novel will be to this edition and will be cited in parenthesis in the text after the quotation or paraphrase.

That is what happens--Harry rises to power as a bootlegger and is killed at the height of his "success." One wonders why this is not sufficient plot for Fred Lewis Pattee. Hugo McPherson also takes issue with Callaghan's plotting, maintaining that

the fabric of the novel is so full of untied threads and accidental knots that no reader could be expected to see its pattern closely, or be convinced by its statement. For all its surface "freshness", what we see in Strange Fugitive is the uncertain attempt of a young artist to say something he has felt profoundly.¹

As an example of an untied thread, McPherson cites Harry's drive to win at checkers. The following incident occurs shortly before Harry leaves Vera.

They played the game steadily until of eight checkers on the black and red squares, six were Harry's. He grinned eagerly, confidently. Gradually he had driven her into a corner. Wherever she moved he had her. His organization had been perfect. Not a single false move and now he had her. Wherever she moved she was bound to lose one checker. She studied the board. He leaned back, grinning, making a swaggering motion with his hand. He had her.

He looked at the six checkers he had manipulated perfectly, each one having a definite part in the trap he had set. Playing carefully, he had at first sacrificed five just to get rid of five of hers to bring the game quickly to an interesting point. Now he had complete control of the game's course. Things going his way. Every move thought out and making absolutely sure he couldn't be beaten. Vera moved reluctantly and he quickly jumped her, removing the checker from the board. She had only one left and the game was practically over. He considered the board and the checkers, ready for the last move, but in reality thinking of the board as his own life and the life around him, his interest reaching a high pitch until it became for him no longer a game of checkers. He had the issue, the opposition, in the hollow of his hand. He felt fine. (78-79)

¹Queen's Quarterly, Vol. 64, p. 355.

Then Harry plays his neighbor, Stan Farrel.

Harry's thoughts didn't wander from the game. He was getting all the satisfaction he might have got from fine and buoyant thoughts. He concentrated, playing the game. It was important, requiring all his energy. He was excited but confident. Stan Farrel, his neighbor, a friend of his, his antagonist, some one to hold off, some one to beat, then twist aside. Stan sitting opposite him, his white pudgy hand dallying with a checker, head drooping, three fat chins lapping over a gates-ajar collar, and grinning, easy jests on a ready tongue, his agreeable good nature marking his assumption of superiority, his distinction as a professional man. They were playing a game but he was matching himself against Stan, the strength in him against the strength in Stan. (81)

Neither Harry, Vera nor Stan understands why he wants so badly to win, but when one considers the later manifestations of this same drive--Harry's drive for power regardless of consequences--Harry's conduct at checkers seems to fit perfectly with his later behavior and in fact the checker board scene is a clever foreshadowing--a microcosm--of Harry's drive for power and his method of getting it.

Because of the jazz age atmosphere in Strange Fugitive and the early stories, because of the subject matter--speakeasies, bootleggers, hard flappers and tough guys--our author was labeled "hard-boiled." Horace Gregory observed in 1930, "In some respects Morley Callaghan is by far the most interesting member of the contemporary hard-boiled school of fiction."¹ Two years earlier Clifton P. Fadiman had similarly remarked that "Mr. Callaghan is a pat example

¹"Mr. Callaghan's Medium," The Nation, April 2, 1930, p. 399.

of a good, hard-boiled writer."¹ Fadiman continues, in his review of Strange Fugitive, to make one erroneous oversimplification after another. "It [Strange Fugitive] is Hemingway carried to the point of absurdity," says Fadiman. "Nothing but blind pigs, onion sandwiches, smuggled whiskey, assault, brutality, murder, bestial lust. All this--signifying naught. Vicious energy in action, from which nothing is to be learned, no morals are to be drawn."² Writing in 1932, Hugo Steinhauer also seems only to have seen the hard-boiled elements in Strange Fugitive and the early stories. Yet he thought Callaghan showed much promise. It was probably his mixed feeling--antipathy toward Callaghan's subject matter and admiration for his talent--that caused him to call Callaghan "The Zola of Toronto."³

T. S. Eliot once said of certain elements in the novels of Charles Williams, they "are there just because they belonged to the world he lived in, and he could not have kept them out."⁴ In 1929 Callaghan wrote, "I have written only of things around me. I don't want to write about anything I can't handle perfectly."⁵ Therefore,

¹"Cable and Fine Wire," The Nation, October 10, 1928, p. 370.

²Ibid.

³"Morley Callaghan," The Canadian Forum, Vol. 12 (February, 1932), p. 177.

⁴Quoted in Fuller, p. xvii.

⁵Quoted in Henry Goodman, Creating the Short Story (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1929), p. 108.

Callaghan sets Strange Fugitive in his home town, bases Angelina's speakeasy on a Toronto speakeasy he knew well, places Harry Trotter in a lumber yard similar to the one in which he had worked himself, creates the character of Jim Nash from certain aspects of his own personality and life (Nash was an ex-college student who worked in the lumber yard while trying to get a newspaper job), and establishes, as a "front" for the bootleg business, a bookstore similar to a bookstore he had once operated in Toronto. Most of the other elements in the story--including the onion sandwiches, smuggled whiskey, and brutality--were a part of that side of Toronto life he had covered as a newspaper reporter. If his early novels and stories were important for no other reason, they would last because, as F. W. Watt says, in them he "dealt with more of the seamy side of Canadian life, especially urban life, than had any previous writer."¹

Fadiman and most other early critics could not see beyond the seamy surface. They tried to relate Callaghan to something they knew--the hard-boiled manner, the naturalistic emphasis on heredity and environment. This view is particularly suspect in that it is diametrically opposed to everything Callaghan has said about his own work and his own view of life--and Callaghan has said a lot.

Harry Trotter is a man who, because of an inordinate

¹"Morley Callaghan as Thinker," The Dalhousie Review, Vol. 39, p. 307.

and abnormal attachment to his mother, is incapable of maintaining the love relationship with his wife Vera or of maintaining a relationship except the most basic with any woman. Harry Trotter is also power mad, for reasons that arise out of his relationship with his mother and his wife. The combination of his perverted power drive and his maternal orientation make it impossible for him to realize his possibilities as a man. And that--not onion sandwiches and brutal lust, not the Toronto version of the Roaring Twenties--is what the book is about.

The opening sentence of the book should have indicated to Fadiman and the others that Harry's wife was to be important in the story: "Harry Trotter, who had a good job as foreman in Pape's lumber-yard, was determined everybody should understand he loved his wife." (3) In the next paragraph Harry thinks he loves her "so much no other woman could ever give such satisfaction." (3)

But after he is fired, he thinks of his mother.

He tried to remember her face from years ago, when he was at public school, and for the first time, seemed aware of having lived in the same house with her for years, without actually looking at her. . . . He was sorry for himself and wanted sympathy. Slightly bewildered, he wished his mother were alive, so he could go home to her. (45)

At this point in the novel Harry knows something is the matter with his relationship with Vera, but he is too dense to have any insight beyond the fact that they were "getting on each other's nerves." "They simply weren't getting on

together. It wasn't her fault, it wasn't his fault. He wanted to be away from her though he loved her." (88) Vera touches Harry's neck with her fingers. He reacts violently:

"I tell you you don't own me. That's clear ain't it? That's what I'm getting at, see. I mean we get on each other's nerves. We irritate each other. We probably need to be alone a long while till we get going again, instead of wasting time getting in each other's way. (89)

.....
 "I don't think we should bother each other. I want to be alone and not have to think about any one. I want to drift wherever I feel like. I don't want to be tied to thoughts of any one." (90)

Shortly thereafter Harry storms out with Jim Nash. He does not know that he is leaving home, that he will not see Vera again. Harry and Jim go to Angelina's speakeasy and after a few drinks Harry says, "I never got along well with my old man. I liked my mother better. . . ." (98) Later he says, "It's funny the way you see your mother from a different angle years after, isn't it?" (100) Then,

"Something happens and for the first time you see your mother as a woman. I can see her quite plainly going around the house, and at night, getting into bed with the old man. I slept with my mother until I was nine years old." (101)

Harry continues drinking with the boys, but he thinks of Vera.

Then the bootlegging begins. Throughout the winter Harry's power and influence grow.

The business was on a solid basis and Harry was anxious to go home and explain to Vera that he was becoming successful, the business developing, his influence increasing, until he would soon have his own power and his own importance. . . . It was as if she were an

essential audience for him and there was no use trying to interest any one else in the same way. (131)

These and similar thoughts pervade Harry's thinking throughout the book. But the thoughts continue to be confused; Harry does not know why he left Vera, why he wants to return to her, or why he won't return to her.

Harry goes alone to a hockey game. His thoughts go back to his childhood, when his eye was injured. "The worst part of it all had been lying on the toboggan, the fellows pulling him home, in his mind a picture of his mother's misery when she should see the hasty bandage over the eye." (166) Harry thinks about the incident.

Suddenly [he] had the feeling he should get up, leave the arena, and go home and see his mother. Leaning back, he was only pretending to watch colored sweaters moving on ice. Really he was experiencing the uneasy restiveness that had been bothering him whenever he thought of his mother. Thinking of her he was happy but nervous, then a little sad and eager to do something that always eluded him when he thought too hard about it. (166-67)

Harry decides to put an enormous monument on his mother's grave (actually the grave of both his parents, though he does not think of his father). On his way back to Toronto after erecting the marker, "he was taking it for granted that he was going back to the city to have a long talk with [Vera]," (219) but he does not, though he often thinks of her. He gives a huge dinner, after a month and a half of preparation. Every important person in town is there. Part way through the highly successful dinner, he loses interest. "He wanted suddenly to be alone, far away

from music in an absolutely silent world, loafing in the shade and having idle thoughts, and looking at Vera sprawled on her belly." (225) But Harry puts such thoughts out of his mind and thinks instead, "I'll be the biggest guy in town." (225)

As the story draws to a close, Harry is still wondering why he left Vera. He finally calls her, says he will come to see her on the following day, walks out of the bookshop and is killed.

In the terminology of the psychologists, Harry Trotter is a classic case of maternal fixation. Because of his fixation on his mother, Harry is incapable of the relationship with Vera that he both wants and needs. He becomes, in his thirst for power, what we now recognize as a prototypical example of the man who rejects the feminine. This is how psychiatrist Karl Stern describes the type:

The man of restless energy, the hustler and go-getter, is a figure familiar to the popular imagination. . . . Now whenever we psychiatrists have an opportunity to observe this kind of person as a patient, we find at the bottom of it all a maternal conflict and a rejection of the feminine.¹

Stern goes on to say:

There is an air of restlessness about such men--not necessarily the tension of subjective anxiety, but the tension of energy--an air of endless drive and ambition for which someone once used the term, "flight into work." On getting to know these persons more intimately, one

¹The Flight from Woman (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1965), p. 1.

notices an extraordinary denial of feeling, a shying away from tenderness, and a fear of dependence or passivity.¹

In his review of the novel R. Ellsworth Larsson says, "Why Strange Fugitive is named Strange Fugitive I should like really to understand."² The book is so titled because Harry Trotter is a fugitive who, strangely enough, is fleeing (or trotting, if you will) from that which he wants and needs. The novel is much more than appears on its surface, much more than "a Canadian Rake's Progress," as George Woodcock has called it.³

Regarding Callaghan's point of view in the novel, Fadiman has this to say:

Mr. Callaghan, the fashion-plate hard-boiled novelist of 1928, has none at all. His characters undergo no interpretation, no criticism. The corollary is that his characters are neither sympathetic nor unsympathetic. You neither like nor dislike Jerry [sic].⁴

This is a serious charge, one that was also made by Pattee about this novel, and one that will be repeated by the numerous critics of It's Never Over and A Broken Journey. The characters of those novels are so complex, say the critics, that authorial analysis is essential if we are to understand them. Fadiman demands interpretation of even so

¹Ibid., p. 2.

²"Ladies, Gunmen, Gods and War," Bookman, October 28, 1928, p. 239.

³"Lost Eurydice: The Novels of Morley Callaghan," Canadian Literature, No. 21 (Summer, 1964), p. 25.

⁴The Nation, October 10, 1928, p. 370. Fadiman calls Harry "Jerry" throughout his analysis. Perhaps he is using a variant text which I have not seen.

simple a character as Harry Trotter. If Fadiman is correct, Callaghan may well belong in the naturalist school, which presents its data without comment.

Edmund Fuller's ideas on the subject of "interpretation" seem to be an apt answer to the type of criticism Fadiman represents. "To give the reader an experience is only a part, not the whole, of the writer's function," says Fuller. "It is giving us evaluated experience that distinguishes the great or the good writer."¹ This seems to be a legitimate, if unwitting, paraphrase of Fadiman's idea. But Fuller goes on to say that experience must be evaluated "whether the evaluation be spelled out specifically, or whether it is tacit in the total context of characters, actions, and conditions that [the writer] sets before us to represent his world."² Harry may not be able to analyze his own experience; Fadiman may not be able to analyze Harry's experience, if he refuses to see what is on the printed page. But the evaluation, the motivation behind Harry's actions, is "tacit in the total context of characters, actions, and conditions" that Callaghan has set before us.

The style of Strange Fugitive was generally praised. Cleveland B. Chase commented:

So fresh and vivid is Mr. Callaghan's style, so sharp and convincing his characterization, so sparkling his dialogue, that one has a momentary urge to place the laurel crown on his brow without more ado.

.....

¹p. 75.

²Ibid.

[The style] is a joy in an age which suffers from so much hack writing. He uses words freshly and with precision; his dialogue is swift, sharp and rich in colloquialisms.¹

Since, as George Woodcock has said, "Strange Fugitive is probably nearer than any other Callaghan novel to being a textbook example of his writing theory carried into practice,"² this seems an appropriate time to put forth Callaghan's writing theory, primarily in his own words.

The theory is best expressed in certain passages in That Summer in Paris. Here is Callaghan, on contemporary writing:

Why did I dislike so much contemporary writing? I would wonder. The popular writers of the day like Hergesheimer, Edith Wharton, James Branch Cabell, Galsworthy, Hugh Walpole, H. G. Wells--except for Tono Bungay--I had rejected fiercely. Show-off writers; writers intent on proving to their readers that they could be clever and had some education, I would think. Such vanities should be beneath them if they were really concerned in revealing the object as it was. Those lines, A primrose by a river's brim a yellow primrose was to him, and it was nothing more, often troubled me, aroused my anger. What the hell else did Wordsworth want it to be? An orange? A sunset? I would ask myself, Why does one thing have to remind you of something else? Going from hotel to hotel on my job I would brood over it.

I remember deciding that the root of the trouble with writing was that poets and storywriters used language to evade, to skip away from the object, because they could never bear to face the thing freshly and see it freshly for what it was in itself. A kind of double talk; one thing always seen in terms of another thing. Criticism? A dreary metaphor. The whole academic method! Of course there were lines like Life's but a walking shadow. . . .

¹ "Morley Callaghan Tells What a Bootlegger Thinks About," New York Times Book Review, September 2, 1928, p. 7.

² Canadian Literature, No. 21, p. 24.

Just the same, I'd be damned if the glory of literature was in the metaphor.¹

While speaking to a British author, whose name he does not give, Callaghan was more succinct. He said:

In no time I was telling him firmly that writing had to do with the right relationship between the words and the thing or person being described: the words should be as transparent as glass, and every time a writer used a brilliant phrase to prove himself witty or clever he merely took the mind of the reader away from the object and directed it to himself; he became simply a performer.²

A third significant passage appears in That Summer in Paris. Callaghan says he was seeking to

strip the language, and make the style, the method, all the psychological ramifications, the ambience of the relationships, all the one thing, so the reader couldn't make separations. Cézanne's apples. The appleness of apples. Yet just apples.³

The job of the writer, then, was to present his subject in as direct and uncluttered a manner as possible. Woodcock sums up Callaghan's writing philosophy:

Writing is concerned with . . . things as they are. Its purpose is statement. It should be simple--so "transparent" as to be self-effacing. The style and the content should become one, indivisible. Writing should not detach itself from the visible world. . . .⁴

The style that results from the theory is often an underplayed style, narrative in a minor key. Violent effects, for example, are written about in such a way that the violence comes from the event described, not from the mode of narration, as in the following passage from Strange Fugitive:

¹Pp. 19-20. ²Ibid., p. 21. ³Ibid., p. 148.

⁴Canadian Literature, No. 21, p. 23.

Then [Harry] told Eddie to keep away from Eva, and when Eddie grinned stupidly he hit him three times, twice on the jaw, once just above the belt. When it was over, Harry was nice to Eddie, explaining he should be sensible enough to realize he was getting more money working for him than he could get from any one else. Eddie had simply made a mistake and was sorry, insisting he would rather work for Harry than for any one else on earth. (142)

The desire for simplicity, transparency and directness did result, from time to time, in a prose that was remarkably like Hemingway's, which is understandable; since there are no inconsistencies between the two writers' ideas about style, since what Callaghan has said could have been said by Hemingway himself, the end product is at times quite similar. The following passage from Strange Fugitive might well have been written by Hemingway:

He wanted to go home. In the morning the edge would be worn off the good time. Girls at breakfast would look bad. Nobody really happy. Talk would not come easily. He decided to go home. He didn't awaken Jimmy. People in the morning could look after themselves.

He took Anna's arm and they went into the cloakroom and got their coats. The elevator went down rapidly and Anna's knees fell away, but she straightened up. In the cool air they walked a block to the parking space. They drove home. The streets were quiet in the gray morning light. The air was wonderful. He didn't speak to Anna on the way home. (229)

It should be remembered, though, that Hemingway has no monopoly on the short, simple sentence in active voice and that the foregoing passage has been chosen as an extreme example of what is only an occasional correspondence between the styles of the two men.

Strange Fugitive flopped in Canada. Says Barbara Moon, "One dealer simply returned his quota to the publisher

saying the style was not for him."¹ But the novel made \$10,000 for Callaghan in the United States, so Callaghan and his bride went to Paris.

That Summer in Paris

There is no need to examine that summer in Paris in detail; Callaghan has already done so in his most recent book. That Summer in Paris should set the record straight on a number of major and minor scores. Martineau and others, for example, maintain that Callaghan was with Hemingway, Fitzgerald and Thomas Wolfe in Paris. Wolfe is not mentioned in Callaghan's book, and Callaghan actually met Wolfe on his return trip through New York. In his thesis Ripley says, "Callaghan went often to Sylvia Beach's book-shop, a well-known writers' rendezvous, and spent long hours in conversation with the world's literary elite, absorbing the new artistic and political ideas."² This makes a good story, but Callaghan tells another in That Summer in Paris. Callaghan tried to reach Hemingway through Miss Beach, who gave him a brushoff. The only other time Callaghan entered her shop was to get a copy of The Great Gatsby.

That Summer in Paris should clear up the confusion about "the great boxing match" once and for all.³ Hemingway's

¹Maclean's Magazine, December 3, 1960, p. 63.

²p. 13.

³For details of the events leading up to the match, the match itself, and the consequences of the match, see pp. 216-27 infra.

accounts of the match--in which Callaghan knocked Hemingway down, much to the shock of Fitzgerald, the timekeeper, who let the round run too long--were never accurate. Robert McAlmon said that Hemingway's story "was that he had been drinking the night before and was boxing on three pick-me-up whiskies so that his wind gave out."¹ Just before his death, Hemingway reportedly brushed the bout aside as a "ridiculous occasion when Scott Fitzgerald had acted as timekeeper, and everybody had been full of wine."² The version of their boxing that Hemingway gave Samuel Putnam, who describes Hemingway's account in his own reminiscence about the Paris years, Paris Was Our Mistress, goes as follows:

On this particular day [Hemingway] was quite excited over a boxing match which he had just staged with Morley Callaghan who was passing through Paris. He told me about it with great enthusiasm as we walked over to his place at 69 rue Froidevaux, a few squares from Saint-Germain-des-Prés. Callaghan, it seemed, had defeated him in a set of tennis and he had had to have his revenge. They accordingly had put on the gloves in the basement of Hemingway's house, and Ernest, by his own account, had "knocked hell out of" his opponent. He appealed to Mrs. Hemingway to corroborate this, and it seemed to me that she treated him somewhat as one might a bright and lovable child. But it was plain that for him this was another of life's important exploits.³

Arthur Mizener's account of the match, in The Far Side of Paradise, is essentially correct but with one crucial

¹Quoted in Myrick Land, The Fine Art of Literary Mayhem (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963), p. 196.

²Reported by Callaghan in That Summer in Paris, p. 9.

³Pp. 130-31.

exception: he says that "Hemingway made light of Fitzgerald's blunder."¹ The vehemence with which Hemingway turned on Fitzgerald, when he heard that Fitzgerald had let the round run too long, can in no sense be considered making light of Fitzgerald's blunder, and the incident seems to have been the last straw to Hemingway, who had for some time found the friendship of Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald taxing.

The boxing match and its unfortunate aftermath² had a drastic effect on the principals and the timekeeper. Fitzgerald and Hemingway were no more than nominal friends when they returned to America. Callaghan never saw either of them again. He did not even send congratulations to Hemingway for winning the Nobel Prize.

One curious facet of the aftermath is Fitzgerald's attitude toward Callaghan. Before the two met, Fitzgerald had spoken excitedly to Maxwell Perkins about Callaghan's work. True, he had drunkenly stood on his head in order to "impress" Callaghan, but his apologies were profuse. His reason for apologizing? "You see, Morley, there are too few of us."³ Speaking to Callaghan of Callaghan's work, Fitzgerald once said, "Do you know, Morley, you have written some of the finest stories in the English language."⁴

¹(Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1951), p. 212.

²For which see That Summer in Paris, pp. 241-55. A brief account also appears on pp. 226-27 infra.

³Quoted in That Summer in Paris, p. 159.

⁴Ibid., p. 184.

After the boxing incident, Fitzgerald became abusive of Callaghan and his fiction.¹ Each of the references to Callaghan in Andrew Turnbull's The Letters of F. Scott Fitzgerald is uncomplimentary.

Letter to Maxwell Perkins, January 21, 1930:

Thank you for the documents in the Callaghan case. I'd rather not discuss it except to say that I don't like him and that I wrote him a formal letter of apology. I never thought he started the rumor and never said nor implied such a thing to Ernest.²

Letter to Perkins, circa May 1, 1930:

I've seen Tom Boyd, Michael Arlen, and too many others fall through the eternal trap-door of trying to cheat the public, no matter what their public is, with substitutes--better to let four years go by. . . . If you think Callaghan hasn't completely blown himself up with this deathhouse masterpiece [It's Never Over] just wait and see the pieces fall.³

Letter to Harold Ober, received May 13, 1930:

I could have published four lousy, half-baked books in the last five years and people would have thought I was at least a worthy young man not drinking myself to pieces in the south seas--but I'd be as dead as Michael Arlen, Bromfield, Tom Boyd, Callaghan and the others who think they can trick the world with the hurried and the second rate.⁴

¹ Though the cause-and-effect relationship is far from clear, Fitzgerald seems to have felt that Callaghan was somehow partly responsible for Hemingway's turning against him. I wrote to Matthew Bruccoli, noted Fitzgerald scholar and editor of The Fitzgerald Newsletter, asking him if he knew of any reason, except the boxing match, for Fitzgerald's changed attitude toward Callaghan. His answer, dated January 24, 1966, reads in part: "Sorry--I know of no Fitz-Callaghan feud. Possibly Fitz was jealous of Hem's interest in Callaghan." This seems unlikely since, when Hemingway's interest in Callaghan was most intense, the Fitzgerald-Callaghan relationship was friendly and pleasant.

² (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), p. 217.

³ Ibid., p. 221.

⁴ Ibid., p. 395.

Letter to Perkins, before May 2, 1932:

I'm afraid all our critical tendencies in the last decade got bullish; we discovered one Hemingway to a dozen Callaghans and [Erskine] Caldwell's (I think the latter is a wash-out) and probably created a lot of spoiled geniuses who might have been good workmen.¹

Letter to Perkins, September 25, 1933:

For God's sake can't you lighten that pall of gloom which has settled over Scribner's--Erskine Caldwell's imitations of Morley Callaghan's imitations of Ernest. . . .²

Letter to Perkins, December 24, 1938, wanting something published in the spring, and maintaining that it will sell:

It was not so long ago that Tender was among the dozen best of a bad season and had an offer from the Literary Guild--so I can't be such a long shot as, say, Callaghan.³

Callaghan has been kinder to Fitzgerald. His attitude in That Summer in Paris was one of respect for Fitzgerald's talent and fine qualities, and pity for Fitzgerald's weaknesses. Callaghan did on one occasion compare his fate to Fitzgerald's, at the latter's expense:

For a man who has been given a comparatively cold shoulder by his countrymen, Callaghan shows surprisingly little bitterness. He smiles, "I'm waiting for the law of compensation. You know, I haven't really done badly. Look at Scott Fitzgerald. What happened to him was much worse than what happened to me. He was an amazingly popular success. He became a sort of darling. Then the depression seemed to kill him off. He went to Hollywood, but by then he was out of the ball game."⁴

And Callaghan did give his current publisher, Coward-McCann,

¹Ibid., p. 227.

²Ibid., p. 230.

³Ibid., p. 280.

⁴Quoted in "Prodigal Who Stayed Home," Saturday Night, May 12, 1956, pp. 21-22.

an anecdote which made Fitzgerald look foolish, knowing that the firm was going to use the anecdote in publicity releases.¹

Less than a year ago, Callaghan gave an indication that the exaggerated tales of Hemingway's pugilistic ability can still annoy him. In his review of Jed Kiley's book, Hemingway: An Old Friend Remembers, Callaghan demonstrated his lingering, though perhaps justified, resentment. He wrote:

Kiley's story is a revelation of the "gee whiz" attitude toward Hemingway. Whether he is shown being shrewd about money or shrewd about the habits of fish in the sea, he is always the wonder boy. The book is astonishingly vivid; but for me, at least, the facts are forced to fit into a fantasy.

To take one example, in 1936 Kiley, with his friend the correspondent Floyd Gibbons, was in Cuba for fishing with Hemingway. The natives were aware that Hemingway had made a standing offer of \$10 to any challenger who could stay two rounds with him. One day, exhausted from fishing and full of food and drink, he was challenged by a local giant. Kiley's description of the bout, in which he makes the gimpy-legged Hemingway move with the grace and speed of Sugar Ray Robinson, is simply ludicrous to one who knew Hemingway's boxing style. No one can doubt

¹This anecdote, which was obtained from the Coward-McCann publicity file on Callaghan, reads as follows: "Another note on Fitzgerald: Fitzgerald was a hero worshiper. For a while, until he got somewhat disillusioned, Hemingway was a hero. James Joyce was a great hero, whom he didn't seem to know very well, if he knew him at all. One night Scott and Zelda took us to dinner, and as a kind of special event they said we would go to the Trianon near the Parc Montparnasse where Joyce often had dinner. When we got there and had sat down, Scott, his eyes shining said, 'I wanted us to sit here. This is the table where Joyce always sits'. We said nothing though we were embarrassed. Two nights ago we had been in there having dinner with Mr. and Mrs. Joyce and Bob McAlmon, and it was quite another table we had sat at, on the other side of the room." Readers of That Summer in Paris will recognize the anecdote.

the simple fact that Hemingway knocked out some boy. What is astonishing is that Kiley could see the whole thing in terms of the legend. One can only say, "Gee whiz."¹

Albert Gillotti, in his M. A. thesis, maintains that Callaghan wrote That Summer in Paris "to purge the obsession with the dream that he now recognized had haunted him from the beginning of his career."² Gillotti also contends that "the basic triangle of Hemingway, Fitzgerald, and Callaghan may be present in every novel Callaghan wrote, transformed and muted in the smithy of his imagination until barely recognizable."³ Though Gillotti's statements are of doubtful validity, That Summer in Paris reflects the significance of the Paris months to Callaghan. His review of Kiley's book indicates that the consequences of those boxing bouts with Hemingway are affecting Callaghan even today.

Transition: It's Never Over and A Broken Journey

Morley and Loretto Callaghan returned to Canada in 1930. "For a young guy who had thrown over the law for writing, it should have been awful, but . . . oddly enough, I flowered,"⁴ said Callaghan. Ripley, who has checked the biographical portions of his thesis with Callaghan's friends,

¹"Legends of the Old Man," Saturday Review, August 28, 1965, p. 43.

²p. 52. ³Ibid., p. 46.

⁴Quoted in Cheyer, Wilson Library Bulletin, Vol. 36, p. 265.

says that after Callaghan returned from Paris, "each night he wrote regularly from midnight till six o'clock in the morning, turning out his work in long hand and passing the manuscript on to Loretto, who sat up with him, for criticism and typing."¹ Within two years Callaghan published It's Never Over (1930), No Man's Meat (1931)² and A Broken Journey (1932).

Our analysis and discussion of It's Never Over and A Broken Journey, as regards Callaghan's writing aim, point of view, style and critical reception, need not be as detailed as for Strange Fugitive. The three elements first named are similar, and these two novels were as badly read as was Strange Fugitive.

The main difference between It's Never Over and Strange Fugitive is that, whereas Strange Fugitive contained many action scenes, violent and otherwise, It's Never

¹P. 14.

²This curious little book is actually nothing but a single short story bound in a volume. The only edition, consisting of 525 autographed copies, was published in Paris by Edward W. Titus, husband of cosmetician Helena Rubenstein and friend of Callaghan's. The copy examined, obtained on loan from Harvard University, is apparently the only library copy in North America. The story involves Mr. and Mrs. Beddoes and their house guest and long time friend, Jean Allen. In a crap game, Mr. Beddoes wins Jean's money, her hat, and the privilege of sleeping with her that evening. With his wife's consent, he makes love to Jean, but Jean, as it happens, is a Lesbian. She is so revolted that she becomes hysterical, so Mrs. Beddoes spends the night consoling her. Next day Mrs. Beddoes takes Jean to town, to the train station. A man from town returns with the Beddoes' car and a note: Mrs. Beddoes realizes she has loved Jean for a long time. Since Jean loves her also, they have decided to go off together.

Over concentrates on reactions to one significant former action. In short, the novel is a psychological novel. To Pacey, the title "suggests that here too the naturalistic hypothesis is dominant; it suggests the uninterrupted chain of cause and effect which is 'never over.'"¹ The discussion which follows will indicate that the title suggests nothing of the sort.

It's Never Over is a book that is easily misread. It is told largely from the "point of view" of John Hughes, a bass soloist who sings in church and on the radio, and who works in a department store while waiting for his "big break." The other main characters are Lillian, who is John's sweetheart, and Isabelle, who is the sister of John's good friend, Fred Thompson.

We learn that before the book opens, Fred has killed a policeman in a speakeasy scuffle and has been sentenced to die. Shortly after the beginning of the novel, Fred is executed for murder. One reading of the book is illustrated by these statements by Basil Davenport and S. J. Fajardo. Davenport says, "Isabelle feels herself hopelessly disgraced [by her brother's crime and punishment], and finds her only consolation in dragging her friends and his into disgrace as well."² Fajardo says, "[Isabelle] insists on the fact that

¹"Fiction," Literary History of Canada . . . , p. 690.

²"Crime and Catastrophe," Saturday Review of Literature, June 21, 1930, p. 1140.

John and Lillian are the only two friends she has left, as if trying to appropriate them and to include them permanently in her sorrow."¹

John Hughes holds the same opinion. For him, Fred's execution is over, it should be forgotten, life should go on as best it can--a mature attitude on the surface. But Isabelle, he thinks, in her obsession with Fred's death, is trying to drag him and Lillian down with her. Because of Isabelle, John loses his job at the church, loses his apartment, and is about to lose his girl when he decides to kill Isabelle, to rid the world of a monstrous person. He enters her house unnoticed, proceeds to the bedroom, and finds that Isabelle is dying, that there is no need to kill her. After Isabelle dies, John and Lillian find that they no longer care for each other as they once did, and they go their separate ways. This very sensible reading makes John the righteously indignant hero and Isabelle an obsessed villainess who, in her abnormality, tries to disgrace John and Lillian.

That is the usual reading critics gave the book. It is sensible, yet inaccurate. John Hughes is in truth guilty of the great sin. His insistence to Isabelle that "it's over" is symptomatic of his inability to concern himself with anything not compatible with his own narrow view of life. Isabelle had also been such a person. Only after

¹P. 40.

Fred's death did she realize her responsibility to him, to try to help him with the difficulties that were destroying him. She tries to make that up to Fred by attempting to involve John, by attempting to shake him out of his detachment and insensitivity. In a lesser way she tries to do the same for Lillian and for the family priest, Father Mason. Her grief causes her attempt to take some rather bizarre forms.

As the novel opens, John joins the crowd around the jail. Fred's face appears at the window. "When everybody understood a face was at the window they began to cheer a little uncertainly, because they had followed his trial and felt sure that if he hadn't killed a policeman he would have been given only life imprisonment."¹ John meets Father Mason, who is both the prison priest and the Thompson family priest. The father has been drinking. "I oughtn't to take it," he says, "but I've got to keep on going. I take too much of it, that's the trouble. . . . It bothers me taking it to help over a crisis."² The priest is amazed that he and John can talk about Fred's funeral before Fred is dead, but John says, "That's the way it is. But I'm used to it." (12)

¹Worley Callaghan, It's Never Over (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1930), p. 4. All future references to this novel will be to this edition and will be cited in parenthesis in the text after the quotation or paraphrase, with the exception of the next footnote.

²p. 11. Readers of That Summer in Paris will recognize Father Tom as the model for Father Mason.

John gets up at five o'clock the next morning, looks out his window at the roofs, and observes them in detail:

He sat in the back sunroom, looking out over the roofs of the houses sloping down to the lake, and over the park land to the office towers tipped by the dawn light. The east side of the slate roofs were [sic] a pastel shade and other sides were shadowed, and when the light was stronger the slate roofs and the painted shingles were tilted surfaces of green and crimson and pearl-gray and brown, the surfaces slanting to the sun at sharp angles. (15)

The detail of that paragraph contrasts sharply with the lack of detail in the next; the only detail in the following passage is the ironic twist of juxtaposing the point of the sentence with the insignificant bit about daylight-saving time: "Fred Thompson was hanged at five o'clock in the morning when there was hardly any light in houses on the streets, because it was daylight-saving time." (15)

Later John goes to the Thompson home. The coffin is in the corner. John speaks to Isabelle, who says of him and Lillian,

"The two of you are in my thoughts all the time. I don't know what I would do sometimes if I didn't have you to think about."

"Well, it's over now and you'll be happier."

"No, it's not over." (27-28)

After the funeral John is bothered; it worries him that Lillian seems eager to share Isabelle's feelings. Once again John urges Isabelle to forget about it, to stop talking about it: "It's over now, I tell you. . . ." "It's never over," she says. But he insists it is, becoming more resentful, getting more angry with Isabelle.

For some days it seems that every time John and Lillian are happy, Isabelle or thoughts of Isabelle come between them. Lillian takes an apartment so that she and John can have a place to be alone. Eventually John discovers that Isabelle has urged Lillian to take the apartment. John thinks that Isabelle has done so knowing that the inevitable increased intimacy would disturb Lillian's conscience. "'So that's it, is it?' he muttered once. 'That's it. That's it. She's got hold of you.' Lillian held on to his arm but he would not talk at all." (81)

Eventually John is seduced by Isabelle, and as a result of being seen with her loses his apartment and his job. John begins to see that Isabelle has snared him and Lillian; she also snares Father Mason by telling him in the confessional box of her degradation. In a moment of drunkenness, Father Mason violates the confidence of the confessional and discusses Isabelle's confession with John, who tells Lillian. Lillian insists that Isabelle merely wanted to go to confession, but John denies that.

"She wanted to draw him into it. He had been a part of it, do you see, and she didn't want him to get away from it as long as she had it to think of."

"No, I tell you, John."

"Yes, we're all a part of it," he said, squeezing her hand, till she winced, pulling it away. "We're all part of it, and we can't get away from it. . . . She's got hold of us. She's got hold of you and me and all of us, and we have to share it with her. I tell you she owns us. She's got possession of us. That's what she wanted. Slowly, in her own way, she's taken possession of us."

"I'm away from it."

"No. It's a kind of movement all around us. She's drawn us into it. She's holding us. She won't let us go." (160-61)

One evening, as John is loitering near Lillian's apartment, he sees Lillian and Isabelle leave arm in arm. He follows them to the cemetery, to Fred's grave. He learns Isabelle has convinced Lillian that she was once in love with Fred. John says that Lillian didn't really want to come to the cemetery, that Isabelle persuaded her. Isabelle answers, "I think it only natural that a girl should occasionally go to the grave of a man she had loved and think of him. Lillian loved Fred and I loved him." Lillian says to John, "You know I loved Fred." John answers,

"But you don't have to be stupid enough to go on thinking about him, though you never did. You didn't use to think of him."

"But I can't help thinking of him now," she said and started to cry.

"Do you see?" Isabelle said, looking directly at him.

"I see all right. I loathe you. I hope you're damned. You're beyond redemption. I despise you. . . . You're to blame for this, you morbid, silly creature. I hate to say anything to make you feel bad, but the trouble with you is you're so egotistical you can't think of anything but yourself. You've got to stop bothering us or I'll wring your neck, do you hear? I'll wring your crow's neck. After tonight go and pick the bones of some one else." (173-75)

Shortly thereafter Lillian is told by Isabelle that she and John have made love. Lillian tells John she knows. In the following passage, John decides that he must kill Isabelle. It might be mentioned that, while the passage is typical of Callaghan's prose style, there is not the remotest resemblance to the style of Hemingway.

Lying in bed in the morning, all his body became suddenly alert, his arms trembling a little and a fire in his head. His forehead had a weight pressing against it, and rubbing his hand across it, he felt beads of moisture and contemplated the shining tips of his fingers. On the bed he sat up, holding his head, rubbing the temples slowly to drive away the hotness and the fever so he could think of the idea coolly. Still he was trembling a little from the first excitement of the notion and refused to go on thinking. The eagerness and excitement was there because he clearly saw himself committing a violent act, but he refused to go on thinking of the act alone for it was necessary for him to get beyond the first feeling and see himself critically as an instrument, and was now sure, walking the length of the room, glancing out the window, he had become detached from the normal emotions of resentment and anger. There were hardly any noises on this street, and a new peacefulness and quiet satisfaction came to him after finding the solution to a problem bothering him a long time. (185)

John goes to commit murder, but Isabelle convinces him she will soon be dead anyway. Even though John is not going to kill her, she sees that the fact that he intended to, and would have, joins him with Fred.

"You know you wanted to kill me. Fred didn't want to kill anybody, but you'd both be there. Only you're alive now and he's dead, but you're one together now."

"You're delirious. I'll call your mother."

"No, you'd both be there. So there's the bond between you, the living and the dead. You can't get away from it now."

Helpless, he shuddered, watching her lips trying to move into a smile, and feeling she had hold of him more tightly than ever before, till he was one with her and her brother and all of them, only now he was no longer anxious to get away from it; almost calmly, and with a new, unexpected humility, accepting it. (217)

John tells her that she was cruel about involving him. She says,

"You were away from me and had become beyond me and wanted to remain beyond me."

"No, I didn't."

"Yes, you were running away from the whole thing."

Everybody runs away from it."

"I didn't want to go on thinking about it."

"You were selfish."

"I know. I wanted to get away from it." (218)

Isabelle dies, but she has succeeded in involving John, in conquering his insensitivity to life.

Basil Davenport, Louis Kronenberger, Hugo Steinhauer and others objected to Callaghan's failure to analyze directly the minds of his characters. The critics thought that such subtle situations as appear in It's Never Over did not adequately delineate character. As Steinhauer said, "Mr. Callaghan, in his attempt to escape the Scylla of over-analysis, was dashed on the Charybdis of the other extreme: his characters apparently have no minds at all."¹ As was true of Strange Fugitive, the answers are there on the printed page in It's Never Over, if one will but read perceptively. Though Fred dies in Chapter One, he comes alive in flashback. His reluctance to perform a violent act is made clear in the relation of an incident which happened during the war. It was necessary that someone kill a crazed German soldier, and Fred, being the highest ranking officer present, had to do it, though he did not want to. Fred returned from the war disillusioned and disturbed. He is clearly pictured as a fine but confused person, but Isabelle did not help him, and John, his best friend, did nothing to help him. His death drove John farther from him, but drew his sister closer.

¹The Canadian Forum, Vol. 12, p. 178.

John's attitude of withdrawal is apparent in all his words and actions. He typifies the man who "doesn't want to get involved," who remains detached and unemotional. Until Isabelle makes him aware of his sin, he is less than a man. Isabelle's character, as a minority of readers perceived, among them Thayer Hobson, "is superbly done. She is no ruthless harpy, but a normally affectionate, intelligent woman in an abnormal state of morbid tension. . . ." ¹ Perhaps Davenport, Kronenberger and Steinhauer would have understood what the novel is all about if Callaghan had begun it "Isabelle Thompson, no ruthless harpy but a normally affectionate, intelligent woman in an abnormal state of morbid tension. . . ." All in all the novel is a competent execution of a unique conception, and in its probing of extremely subtle facets of the normal and abnormal mind is a remarkable performance for a writer only twenty-seven years old.

George Dangerfield makes this statement in his review of Callaghan's third novel: "Morley Callaghan is a gifted writer who has never quite succeeded in becoming a novelist: and A Broken Journey is a failure, all the more complete because it is constantly trembling on the rim of success." ² The idea that Callaghan almost succeeds, almost fulfills his potential as a writer, may be found frequently in commentary

¹"Murder and Its Consequences," New York Herald Tribune Books, March 9, 1930, p. 7.

²Bookman, Vol. 65 (October, 1932), p. 640.

on his separate books and on his total production. It would be more accurate to say that the critics almost understand what Callaghan is trying to say and do.

The calculated confusion of place continues in A Broken Journey. Jonathan Daniels, in his review of the book, says the novel is a "story of a girl in a Middle Western town."¹ As usual, the novel actually begins in Toronto. The main characters of A Broken Journey form a triangle: young Peter Gould loves young Marion Gibbons and Marion loves Peter, which is usual enough, but Marion's mother Teresa also loves Peter.

At the time of the action, Teresa Gibbons is "middle-aged but vibrantly dominant." She is a complex, deeply religious woman, who in her youth had been hot-tempered, eager and vital. "For two years she had been a good, faithful wife to Gibbons, and after that, for twenty years or more, though they lived in the same house, they could not tolerate each other."²

The most important event of Mrs. Gibbons' life had occurred during the first World War. She had met a young soldier and had thought he would be happier if she were separated from her husband before they lived together, so

¹"The Night of the Soul," Saturday Review of Literature, September 17, 1932, p. 104.

²Morley Callaghan, A Broken Journey (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), p. 2. All future references to this novel will be to this edition and will be cited in parenthesis in the text after the quotation or paraphrase.

she would not let him make love to her. But the soldier was killed in France. "If she had only given herself to him she felt she might have been able to stand losing him. She thought herself the harshest, silliest woman in the world." (3) Mrs. Gibbons had an excess of money and passion, so she embarked on a series of intrigues. As the novel opens, however, she is in love with Peter.

Mrs. Gibbons is quite an interesting person in her own right, distractingly so in fact, since the hero, Peter Gould, is not interesting at all and since Mrs. Gibbons' complexity and color overshadow her daughter's less dramatic characteristics. Teresa Gibbons must come alive in order to exert the influence which she does exert on her daughter, but in creating her Callaghan has perhaps performed his task too well. Though Mrs. Gibbons exits when she is disabused of the notion that Peter cares for her, she remains in Marion's mind and in the reader's mind. Peter had seen "that she was more than just a sensual, sentimental middle-aged woman angling for a lover, and that her sincere feeling for him had been nourished by the strength and failure of her whole life," (63) and the reader agrees and remembers. One also remembers her honesty, her total readiness to admit she had made a fool of herself, when she tells Marion she has been wrong about Peter's feeling for her. She says,

"I got the notion he was fond of me. I seemed to have a whole lot of things mixed up in my head. Then I saw I was a silly old woman."

"Wasn't Peter nice to you?"

"Of course he was. He only smiled. There was no excuse for me. I acted like a silly, sentimental old woman." (110)

Peter had been "marvelously like the young lover's image that had been in her head for years," (61) and she had made a foolish mistake which she honestly admitted. Eventually she moves to France, to live near the spot where her officer was killed and buried. "It would express the only notion of loyalty that was left to her." (235)

But A Broken Journey is the story not of Mrs. Gibbons but of Marion and Peter--actually of Marion, since Peter is merely a device, a cipher. Marion is seen throughout as a girl who will not live her own life, will not make her own decisions, has few motives of her own. She does much of what she does as a reaction against her mother, and when she behaves in a way which does not please her in retrospect, she partially blames her mother. Though she does not excuse her behavior, she accounts for it by remembering that she is "her mother's daughter." If one believes Marion, the book may be read as a naturalistic novel, as it often was; Marion is a product of her heredity. Margaret Cheney Dawson, for example, thought this was so. The theme of the book, she wrote, is "the inability of a fine girl . . . to escape the emotional disorganization inherited from her mother."¹ It is unlikely, however, that Callaghan intended for us to believe that Marion

¹"Prison of the Emotions," New York Herald Tribune Books, September 11, 1932, p. 6.

was not responsible for her actions. More likely is an interpretation which would find Marion guilty of Callaghan's "great sin": a failure to make the most of her possibilities as a woman because of her tendency to relate all of her actions to her mother in some way.

At the book's outset, Marion has just returned from a trip, to be met by her mother and Peter. In non-chronological order Callaghan soon gives us some background information about Marion, interspersing it between bits of action in the present. "After the university, when she was twenty-two, she had begun to think of her mother's life as something twisting and decaying at the very root within her till she had become a demoralized woman." (22) Later Callaghan tells us that "at the time she had become aware of her mother's infidelities and of the men who came openly to see her, and her own virginity became very precious to her." (40) Marion, it seems, does not want to maintain her virgin state because of principles of her own but so as to be different from her mother. Marion thinks she might find strength and courage in a religious order.

Though she wanted to keep a deep respect for her mother, she wanted at the same time to be utterly apart and different from her, clean, simple and untouched by any of the passions she felt had destroyed her mother. So she had become Sister Mary Rose. . . . (22)

Marion's motivation in entering the convent was completely negative--she was trying to escape something, not achieve something.

While she was in the convent she often tried to see and feel the image of Christ before going to sleep. "Sometimes she was able to see the slender form of a young man, and she shivered with exultation. . . ." (40-41) One night the image was clear; "she recognized the tall boy, Christopher, who used to hold her in his arms. She cried all night, for she knew she ought to leave the convent. 'It's my mother's nature in me,' she thought at the time." (41)

When Marion finds that her mother also loves Peter, she thinks back to her days in the convent.

She had tried to live in a world far beyond her mother's sensualism, and had even gone to a convent to devote herself to the eternal Virgin that it might be a symbol for her life. But now, by the looseness of her passion, her mother had drawn her into her life till they both wanted the same man. "Everything I've wanted is now destroyed utterly," she thought. (37)

Marion and Peter had been planning a journey to the Algoma Hills, but Marion decides to break with Peter. Before she sees him, she takes a walk in the rain and comes upon a young, smiling drunk, who sits down in a puddle. The drunk talks her into coming to his apartment "to take her wet shoes off." The drunk tries to help her undo her garters and peel off her stockings. Then he moves against her. "She was too tired even to be ashamed, and closing her eyes, she wilted. His breath was on her neck as she waited." (44) The drunk, fortunately, has fallen asleep. When Marion gets back to her room, she has her customary introspective session.

She had been disappointed, then disgusted and revolted, had found it necessary to let herself be picked up by a little drunk and had waited for him to make love to her, which indicated clearly that unless she hung on to herself, she was apt to become a sensual little bawd. "Mother and I are just like each other. We're a pair and it would have been just like her to think of running off to a primitive country with a fellow like Peter when she was my age." (48)

When she sees Peter again, she tells him she is not going on the journey. The next night Peter picks up Patricia Lee in a movie. Two days later he moves in with her.

Some time later Mrs. Gibbons tells Marion about her young soldier and their last night together. Marion observes, "When a thing's so close and you want it and you can reach out and touch it, you ought to be swift before you have a chance to cheat yourself." Her mother answers, "That's it, Marion. I was close enough. But I was a timid coward." (109) After Mrs. Gibbons admits she has been a fool about Peter, Marion goes to her room. "It seemed to her that she, herself, in refusing to go away with Peter, was doing what her mother had done when she was a young woman." (111) As Marion would not go on the journey because "it would have been just like her [mother] to think of running off to a primitive country with a fellow like Peter," so she now decides to go to take advantage of something her mother missed. But by the time she locates Peter, an enraged Patricia has shoved him down the stairs and badly injured his back.

The two are foolishly determined to go on their journey, however, and as a crowning idiocy they take Peter's

brother Hubert with them. Peter is in constant pain throughout the trip and, reminiscent of the injury to Jake Barnes in The Sun Also Rises, Peter's back injury renders him incapable of making love. After they arrive at Bousneau's boarding house in the Algoma Hills, Marion gets into her solitary bed and says, "I feel so disappointed." She had leaped at an opportunity her mother had forsaken, and her lover lay a cripple in an adjoining bedroom, with his brother.

The days pass in humdrum fashion. Peter is confined to his bed, and Marion amuses him in various ways, telling him what she has seen outside, bringing little objects to amuse him.

During this long lull in the proceedings, we might mention a device which Callaghan employs in A Broken Journey for the first time--extended passages describing the Algoma Hills country. These descriptions, as George Woodcock has noted, are "intended partly to evoke the impersonal power of the natural world and partly to deepen the shadows of mood in the depiction of a series of doomed relationships,"¹ though one not adhering to the naturalistic interpretation would delete "doomed." The following passage is illustrative:

Far down the shoreline the sky was crimson. There were no clouds at all. Night came on. A loon cried mournfully. The vast smooth water became slate gray, then the sky became slate gray, till the horizon faded and and there was no line between the sky and the water. All the rest of the world seemed to have slipped down

¹Canadian Literature, No. 21, p. 28.

behind the vanishing skyline. They were high up in the deep silence. She was a bit afraid. It was like watching the night come on for the first time in a new world. Then came one western star, then a handful of stars, and the towering rocks on the shoreline loomed up dark and close till they, too, were lost in the starlight. Only the great lapping lake waters soothed the rugged shore. It was soon full night. As the northern lights began to sweep vastly across the sky, she felt a strange harmony and peace all around her, and she felt herself groping toward it and trying to become a part of it. She felt, as her heart began to beat heavily, that her love for Peter was the way toward a more complete and final peace than any she had ever known, and that they might both know the mystery that rounded out the night. (207-08)

Marion is seduced by the beauty of the night into a false optimism about herself and Peter; within a score of pages she is seduced by Steve, the fishing guide. Peter's brother Hubert may have put the justification in her head when he said, "A woman really wouldn't be having an affair with Steve at all. She would be having an affair with this country, see?" (225)

After Marion's affair with Steve, there is a recurrence of an image already met with when the trio arrived in the Algoma Hills--the image of weeds, traditional symbol of evil. The description of the weeds as they arrive is brief: "Weeds were so thick on the surface by the plank dock, the water could hardly be seen. . . . The river water never moved. The thick weeds were like a great net holding down the life in the river." (160-61) The image recurs as Marion contemplates suicide, and decides against it:

As she listened, she began to think of the rotting wharf and the thick weeds. On the river in the evenings she had always been afraid of those thick heavy weeds on the surface. The first time she had seen them she had been afraid because the water was so dark underneath, dark and deep because you couldn't see it. Suddenly she got up and went over to the window and looked down the embankment at the river and the moonlight was on the yellowish weeds. Far down the dark water looked so smooth but there was the light on the yellowish weeds. . . . "I'm not afraid to do it. I'm not afraid. It's what I ought to do. It's what I'm ready to do. Oh, why don't I do it? I won't. It will be better to know what I'm losing. I'll know, too, what I'm worth." And trembling she went back and sat down again waiting for the picture of the wharf and the weedy water to go out of her head; the picture seemed so much a part of her, so deep within her, she could hardly put it away from her. . . . (261)

The color yellow is often used, in traditional Christian symbolism, to indicate degradation or treason. Judas, for example, is often pictured wearing a dingy yellow garment.

Marion talks with Hubert and tells him, "Well, it's over. I let him make love to me. No. I wanted him to make love to me and he did. I've been wanting him to for some time. And he did." (262) Hubert tries to tell her he understands. Marion goes on:

"It's my lack of faith that's important," she said faintly. "I see it. My lack of fidelity, my lack of honor, and I haven't got those qualities. . . . I don't seem to have any faith in anything. . . . My mother is all right because she has faith, so she had consolation. Everything can be forgiven for her, and she can be really sorry. And she isn't without honor, either. That's fine of her, going off to France like that. I'd like to go with her." (263-64)

Hubert tries to tell her she is a fine girl. She says,

"But of course there's a nasty streak in mother and there's a rotten streak in me. I've always known how much alike we

were." (264) While admitting her mother's fine qualities, she refuses to take full responsibility for her irresponsible behavior, attributing it to her inherited "rotten streak." After telling Peter that Steve has been making love to her, Marion leaves and the novel ends.

In a letter to Callaghan dated November 16, 1931, Maxwell Perkins demonstrated the perception that made him a great editor. Perkins said:

In almost all your writing your characters were the common run of people--people who have not had the chance to develop much, intellectually or emotionally. This has led many readers, even some reviewers, to regard you as a "hard-boiled" writer. But there were reviewers, and some readers, not so utterly dumb: they saw that a very unusual delicacy of perception was one of your most marked and most distinguished qualities, and that it was expressed with corresponding subtlety in your writing. They should have seen this even in your first book, about a bootlegger.¹

But, went on Perkins, Callaghan put sordid details in A Broken Journey, and Perkins thought they "didn't belong." We cannot be sure, but it is possible that Callaghan did some revision on the book after receiving Perkins' letter, since there are few sordid details in A Broken Journey, or in It's Never Over for that matter. In Strange Fugitive the hero had almost no insight into what made him the way he was, though the facts were there for the perceptive reader to grasp. In the two transition novels just covered, insight into why they have not fulfilled themselves comes

¹In John Hall Wheelock (ed.), Editor to Author: The Letters of Maxwell E. Perkins (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1950), pp. 74-75.

to the principals either when it is too late to do anything about it, or at the end of the novel. In Callaghan's fourth novel, to be discussed presently, the hero, Father Dowling, perceives early what he must do to fulfill his possibilities as a churchman and as a man. But before moving to those novels written when Callaghan was "the best writer in America," we must dispense with two clichés of the commentary on Callaghan's first three novels once and for all.

Naturalism and Hemingway

It is usual to classify Strange Fugitive, It's Never Over, and A Broken Journey as naturalistic novels. In his thesis S. J. Fajardo says, "This first phase of his production belongs to the American naturalist school."¹ J. D. Ripley, in his thesis, uses the term "passive naturalism" to describe the early work.² In one of the two major articles on Callaghan, F. W. Watt maintains that the first books are naturalistic in content and philosophy, that the characters are "scarcely responsible for their lot because they are at the mercy of forces that are greater than themselves--biological, psychological, social--and that are beyond their comprehension or control."³ Whether these glib generalizations are true or not, Callaghan would not agree with them, and his words should carry some weight.

¹P. 2. ²P. 4.

³The Dalhousie Review, Vol. 39, p. 306.

Characteristic of the naturalistic technique, in its desire to bring humanity into the laboratory and under the microscope, is a willingness to accept the unpleasant aspects of man's physical being. As the scientist reports his results without deleting those details which are unpleasant, so does the naturalist report all that he has observed, down to the last distasteful detail. Zola codified the naturalistic principles in Le roman expérimental; could the following statement possibly have been in that book?

[The French author Mauriac] has this older woman and he has this younger fellow in her arms. And as she looks at him in her arms, she is aware of the blackheads on his nose, and all the sort of uncomfortable aspects of the flesh. She is aware of this. Now it's possible he's right; it's possible to see the thing in that way. But I get a little bored with Mauriac's women in their thrills of ecstasy always seeing this thing in its dreariest aspect. It's just not so. It doesn't work out that way or the thing would come to an end.¹

Those are Callaghan's words, of course (spoken rather than written words, which accounts for the chatty nature of the passage). "It's possible to see the thing in that way," but Callaghan does not see it that way. In the scene above, Callaghan would be interested in the emotional relationship, not the epidermis. His heroes may have blackheads, boils and blood blisters, but he does not say so because those details do not matter to him. He would agree with one of Ayn Rand's principles: "In life, one ignores the unimportant; in art, one omits it."²

¹Weaver, p. 26.

²Quoted in Branden, p. 103.

Here is Callaghan on the art of fiction. What naturalist has a similar view?

I choose to think that the art of fiction is the greatest of all the arts, because the writer has for his material the ways of men and women in their relationship to each other. It is an art that has a providential quality--the writer in his pages is giving form to the stuff of life. He deals with love and death and hope and faith and pride and anguish and courage and loyalty, not just as they touch himself but by living demonstration of the impact of these great human qualities on others. So all great writers are really moralists. As soon as you begin to give a shape and form to human experience you become a moralist.

The great fiction-writer, then, must not only have a view of man as he is, but of man as he ought to be. This kind of wisdom he can get only by going inward in his own heart. . . . Let the writer then remember his special function. His job is to be concerned with the spirit and heart of man in these times when the general consensus of opinion seems to be that man has very little spirit at all.¹

The last term the naturalistic writer would apply to himself is "moralist." The last concept to enter the naturalistic writer's mind is "man as he ought to be." The last concerns of the naturalistic writer are the spirit and heart of man. But those are Callaghan's interests.

In technique and attitude towards the writer's craft and function, Callaghan and the naturalists are worlds apart. The difference between them is even more pronounced in their attitude toward the characters they portray. The keynote of the naturalistic writer is objectivity--to present documentary detail with an amoral detachment. The characters are not to be pitied or censured. That Callaghan's attitude

¹"Novelist," Writing in Canada, ed. George Whalley, pp. 31-32.

toward his characters is different is difficult to demonstrate, but most critics note dissimilarity even while they are calling Callaghan a naturalist. With the possible exception of Hemingway, the word most frequently to appear in Callaghan criticism is compassion. What naturalistic writer would not fight the man who accused him of compassion?

Callaghan's attitude will be more fully discussed in Chapter VI; for the present, suffice it to say that this quality is "felt" by virtually all the critics, though it does not readily yield itself to demonstration.

In his revision of Thrall and Hibbard's A Handbook to Literature, C. Hugh Holman says that it is characteristic of the naturalist "to be pessimistic in his view of human capabilities--life, he seems to feel, is a vicious trap, a cruel game."¹ Callaghan is not similarly pessimistic. "You have to have some kind of view of man to think that a man has possibilities to realize himself on a much fuller scale than he does," Callaghan has said. Callaghan's characters may be caught up in the "cruel game" of life, the "vicious trap" of life, but Callaghan sees man as capable of beating the game, of escaping the trap, if he will but use his possibilities as a man. Even if he loses, man should "fight the good fight." Callaghan made the remarks in the prefatory quotation of this study in 1957, but he had maintained the essence of the remarks as early as that summer in

¹(New York: The Odyssey Press, 1960), pp. 303-04.

Paris. "Our job, I would say to Loretto, was to be concerned with living and it seemed to me it would be most agreeable to God if we tried to realize all our possibilities here on earth. . . ." ¹ The naturalist thinks man has few if any possibilities to realize.

It hardly seems adequate to limit so many-sided a novelist as Morley Callaghan, and such many-sided novels as Strange Fugitive, It's Never Over, and A Broken Journey by calling the man and the works "naturalistic." True, naturalism was "in the air"; mechanistic theories of the universe were once again fashionable. Perhaps humanity was a product of its heredity and environment. But to compare Callaghan to the naturalists is, as we have seen, to run up against several stumbling blocks. It seems that those who claim Callaghan for the naturalist camp are basing the opinion on certain aspects of his writing while ignoring many others. Certainly Callaghan is interested in the motives for the actions of Harry Trotter, John Hughes, Isabelle Thompson, and Marion Gibbons, but mere interest does not make the early books naturalistic. In sum, to say that the overriding theme of the books, or the view of life expressed, is that man is controlled by heredity and environment is to say, in the terminology of Swift's Houyhnhnms, "the thing which is not."

Time once saw fit to compare Callaghan's writing

¹That Summer in Paris, p. 111.

with Hemingway's fighting. The passage reads, "Hemingway once told Callaghan 'Dostoevski writes like Harry Greb fights.' Unfortunately, Callaghan writes the way Hemingway fights--eager but heavy on his feet and a real sucker for a Left Bank."¹ But many critics see Callaghan as "the Canadian Hemingway," that is, Hemingway as writer, not boxer. In the Weaver interview Callaghan observed, "The difficulty is that as soon as a new writer appears, you feel uncomfortable unless you can label him or link him with something. And I--unfortunately or fortunately as the case may be--was linked with Hemingway."² Later, Callaghan was not so reticent to express an opinion about the link. In That Summer in Paris he wrote that he thought, at the time, he was being "disastrously damaged" by the connection, and that Hemingway knew it, though they never spoke about it. Callaghan tells how the link began.

When I went again to New York at the time Strange Fugitive came out, the business manager at Scribner's, Whitney Darrow, who took me out to dinner, told me with enthusiasm that in their promotion of my novel they had tied me up with Hemingway. A success with The Sun Also Rises? All right, tie me in with that success, you understand? Oh, they certainly did! And the mill run reviewers picked up the cue.

Later, when I left Scribner's for good, Max Perkins told me earnestly there was one thing he wanted me to know: it had never been his idea to associate me and my work with Hemingway. From the beginning he had seen that I had entirely different perceptions.³

¹"Importance of Beating Ernest," Time, March 15, 1963, p. 106.

²P. 14. ³That Summer in Paris, pp. 63-64.

After the Scribner's promotion campaign was underway, comments like the following began appearing in reviewers' columns: "Morley Callaghan . . . writes so much like Ernest Hemingway that the work of one might appear over the other's signature without surprising any but the most careful reader."¹ Others have not gone so far as to say the two are interchangeable. Kunitz and Haycraft label Callaghan "a disciple of Hemingway's, with the same detailed realism and the same bare clipped speech."² Their account goes on to say that "his books belong to the same genre as Hemingway's, Caldwell's, William Faulkner's, and even James Cain's--stripped, spare, and intense in their style, coldly observational in their matter."³

Some reviewers, picking up the Scribner's cue, decided that Callaghan's method out-Hemingwayed Hemingway. For example R. N. Linscott wrote, "This dogmatic realism, this determination to deal only with the most unpromising material and never to exceed by a fraction of an inch its

¹Robbins, Outlook, April 3, 1929, p. 548.

²Stanley J. Kunitz and Howard Haycraft (eds.), Twentieth Century Authors (New York: H. W. Wilson Company, 1942), p. 238.

³Ibid. On page 4 of his dissertation, Martineau expresses a strangely similar view, without clogging up his manuscript with such scholarly paraphernalia as quotation marks, footnotes, or other evidence of obligation: "His books belong to the same genre as Hemingway's, Caldwell's, William Faulkner's and even James Cain's. They are stripped bare, intense in their style, and coldly observational in their matter."

natural limitations makes the stories even of so objective [a] writer as Hemingway seem wildly romantic by contrast."¹ Others saw the style as similar to that of Hemingway, but thought Callaghan was better at it. Hugo Steinhauer, for example, wrote that Callaghan's style "is the style of Sherwood Anderson and Ernest Hemingway . . . but it is handled with a skill that neither Anderson nor Hemingway possess[es]."² Reviewing They Shall Inherit the Earth, Alvah C. Bessie indicated Callaghan's stylistic superiority this way:

Mr. Callaghan has shown that he can go further [than Hemingway]. For one thing, his medium--the selection of words and their arrangement in sentences--demonstrates a plasticity and a set of nuances that Hemingway never has achieved. He has an ear for the rhythms of the language; he has an ear for the everyday speech of living people.³

Oddly enough, Basil Davenport made approximately the same point, but awarded the honors to Hemingway: "[Callaghan] has apparently imitated the superficial characteristics of Mr. Hemingway's style . . . but he has missed the delicate internal modulations . . . with which Mr. Hemingway varies his style."⁴ After one reads that Callaghan's writing dem-

¹"Monotone," New York Herald Tribune Books, April 7, 1929, p. 7.

²The Canadian Forum, Vol. 12, p. 178.

³"The Importance of Not Being Ernest," Saturday Review of Literature, September 28, 1935, p. 6.

⁴Saturday Review of Literature, June 21, 1930, p. 1140.

onstrates a set of nuances never achieved by Hemingway, and that Hemingway varies his style with delicate internal modulations, one wonders whether the entire reviewing game is not, to use one of Callaghan's terms, "the bunk."

A few besides Maxwell Perkins perceived the differences early. In a review of Now That April's Here--a collection of stories not differing in essentials from the first collection, A Native Argosy--"S. Y." wrote as follows:

It is only necessary to contrast such stories as Hemingway's "The Killers" and Caldwell's "The Negro in the Well" with any in the present collection to realize that the bare, dry simplicity of these two Americans is startlingly unlike the lyrical inferences and sympathy of Callaghan.¹

For the most part, however, critics and readers read Callaghan, then compared him to Hemingway. They misread the novels, praised him for the worst aspects of his work (as Hemingway said they would), and later dropped him without ever learning what he was trying to say. Callaghan was "disastrously damaged" by the linking with Hemingway; the Scribner's get-rich-quick scheme did much to keep Callaghan from realizing his possibilities as a writer.

In the last ten or fifteen years, Callaghan's work has been reevaluated by an astute few, like Wyndham Lewis, Charles A. Fenton, and Edmund Wilson, but the commentators continue to speak in terms of Hemingway--over-reacting,

¹"Morley Callaghan's Stories and Other Recent Works of Fiction," New York Times Book Review, September 13, 1936, p. 6.

perhaps, to the early, disastrous damage. The English critic Wyndham Lewis has been one of Callaghan's staunch supporters. On the dust jacket of Morley Callaghan's Stories (1959), he is quoted as follows; few if any of Lewis' conclusions about the stories would be appropriate to Hemingway's work:

These are tales very full of human sympathy--a blending of all the events of life into a pattern of tolerance and of mercy; there is no sultry misanthropic phobia lurking anywhere in it. . . . Apart from the literary merit of the stories, this book is beautifully replete with a message of human tolerance and love. Every one, or almost all, of these discrete miniature dramas ends softly and gently. At the end of some anguish there is peace; at the end of some bitter dispute there is reconciliation. All of these creatures are dimly aware that the parts they play--for all the sound and fury into which they may be led by the malice of nature, by the demands of the instinct for animal survival, or by our terrible heritage of original sin--the roles they are called upon to take are played according to some great law, within the bounds of a rational order. The plot, however tragic, is not some diabolic and meaningless phantasy, in other words--which is the fatal conclusion that we are required to draw from the perusal of a story, say of Mr. Hemingway's. There is good and evil not merely good luck and bad luck.

Lest it be thought that Wyndham Lewis is referring to stories written after Callaghan's "naturalism-Hemingway" period, it should be pointed out that, though the stories were not collected until 1959, at least forty-four of the fifty-seven stories were written before 1936.

Charles A. Fenton, who perhaps knew Hemingway's work as thoroughly as anyone, denies any similarity other than subject matter between Hemingway and Callaghan. In The Apprenticeship of Ernest Hemingway he took time out from his account of Hemingway's early years to make these

observations about Callaghan's writing:

Callaghan was never a disciple of Hemingway in the patronizing sense with which most literary criticism has belittled the Canadian. His talent was wholly different, celtic and imaginative, and his style has grown steadily in individuality. The critical dismissal of him as no more than a Hemingway imitator derived largely from the fact that his early material was often drawn from a reporter's world; like Hemingway, he frequently wrote about whores and cops and athletes.¹

For some years Edmund Wilson of The New Yorker has been waging a one-man campaign to boost Callaghan's stock. In the valuable passage which follows, he contrasts Callaghan with the other two members of that Paris triumvirate, Hemingway and Fitzgerald:

Each of them [Hemingway and Fitzgerald] was rather a poet who put himself at the center of his poem than, as Morley Callaghan was, a sober inquirer into what went on in other people's minds; but in Callaghan's less brilliantly imagined world, as we know from his excellent novels, the man himself is not at the center as a self-assertive, self-conscious ego which must force the world to come to terms with it and, whether in success or failure, to recognize its incomparable importance. Who is the writer Morley Callaghan, the reader of his books might well ask, as he could not possibly ask of Hemingway or of Fitzgerald. Callaghan is so much interested in moral character as exhibited in other people's behavior that, unlike his two exhibitionistic friends, he never shows himself at all. The people in his stories do not burst upon us as they do in Scott Fitzgerald or incise themselves as they do in Hemingway; gently but very surely they lay hold on the reader's attention and gradually become more interesting, become something often startlingly different from what we had at first supposed, and the situations seem to unfold almost without the author's manipulation. Callaghan has nothing of the lyricism that intoxicated the readers of his two older colleagues, and the rhythms of his prose, though they carry one, do not generate

¹p. 286.

the same kind of emotion, but his unobtrusive art is more subtle and his intelligence more mature than those of either of the others.¹

Wilson's summary is an appropriate one. Callaghan's is a gentle, gradual, subtle, unobtrusive art, which makes it difficult both to paraphrase his work and to convey its essence in short quoted passages. Even though this is so, it is hoped that the discussion of the work, and the passages which have been quoted, plus the comments of Lewis, Fenton and Wilson, have conveyed a sense of the essential differences between Callaghan and Hemingway.

Callaghan is still touchy about the subject. In the interview with Robert Weaver he said,

You have to have some kind of a view of life. My view of life was not Fitzgerald's view of life or Erskine Caldwell's view of life, and certainly anybody capable of passing an entrance exam ought to have seen years ago that it's not Hemingway's view of life.²

Maxwell Perkins understood, but the Scribner's promotion department did not. Callaghan left Scribner's after the publication of Such Is My Beloved in 1934, but the "disastrous damage" had been done.

¹"That Summer in Paris," The New Yorker, February 23, 1963, p. 139.

²p. 25.

CHAPTER III

THE BEST WRITER IN AMERICA: 1933-1937

In my candid opinion I was the best writer in
America in the Thirties.

Malcolm Callaghan

CHAPTER III

THE BEST WRITER IN AMERICA: 1933-1937

Though most critics agree that a fairly definite break takes place between A Broken Journey (1932) and Such Is My Beloved (1934), each critic has his own view of the differences between the first three novels, with their somewhat cryptic titles, and the next three, all with titles based on biblical passages. During this second phase of his career, Callaghan is described as a novelist of moral predicament, a religious writer, an anti-church writer, a critic of socio-economic conditions, and a critic of commercialism. He is defined as a moralist, and he is characterized as morally flabby. His books, some said, are a confusing mixture of themes and ideologies. Yet one constantly sees, in the writings of the critics, the sentence beginning "Morley Callaghan's constant theme is . . . ," the ellipsis being filled by the critic's particular reading. And finally, the Canadian Hemingway has, it seems, become the Canadian Maritain. Before examining these various critical interpretations, however, we must have a look at the novels.

Such Is My Beloved

On the dust jacket of Such Is My Beloved (1934), the French philosopher Jacques Maritain praises Callaghan's fourth novel. Maritain says,

Mr. Callaghan's story of the young priest and the defiant, shameless, yet pitiful girls is told with an honesty, straightforwardness, and poetic beauty that makes it the most effective and affecting work yet to come from an author noted for his deep probing of human motives and desires. I have been profoundly touched by the absolute sincerity and simplicity of this very moving book.¹

There is something suspicious about the smoothness of Maritain's prose style, since he "had no English" at the time of the quotation. Nevertheless, there was a close connection between Callaghan and Maritain, whom Callaghan met in Toronto in 1933. Callaghan viewed his association with Maritain highly, as is evidenced by the dedication in Such Is My Beloved, which reads:

TO
THOSE TIMES WITH M. IN THE
WINTER OF 1933

The "M." referred to is unquestionably Maritain, though Barbara Moon has told of the Montreal Star's book critic, Samuel Morgan-Powell, who "devoted part of his review [of Such Is My Beloved] to suggesting that M's identity was obvious, since one of the prostitutes [in the novel] was named Midge."² One can only speculate about the reaction of young

¹Quoted in Martineau, p. 217.

²Maclean's Magazine, December 3, 1960, p. 63.

Loretto Callaghan to such a monstrously absurd suggestion.

As University of Toronto professor Malcolm Ross and others have noted, Such Is My Beloved, like much of Callaghan's work, is written in the ironic spirit. The hero, Father Dowling, is condemned by the very persons who should praise his good works--his ecclesiastical superiors and the members of the congregation. Ross relates Callaghan's ironic manner to the fact that he is a Canadian. He says,

The ironic habit of mind . . . has been nourished by the contrary pull-and-tug of London and Washington, by the long unsettled state of vacillation between province and nation, as well as by the inherent French-English tension and the lively interplay of the many new immigrant traditions. All of Morley Callaghan's work is cast in this ironic mode. Typical is Such Is My Beloved (1934), the story of a Catholic priest who seeks to redeem two prostitutes, to the horror of his ecclesiastical superiors. Callaghan comes to an epiphany of the coexistence within time of good and evil, of the wheat and the tares together--a coexistence not static but dramatic, revealed in the ironic flash of illumination. . . .¹

In the following analysis of the book by Henry Seidel Canby, perception of the ironic mode is implicit:

[Such Is My Beloved] is "The Song of Solomon" worked out in terms of a sordid, industrial town [Toronto is again unrecognized], where a simple but not naive soul encounters once again the complexity of love which cannot be divine without being human and cannot be human without involving the inconsistencies and inconveniences of experience.²

Callaghan's summary of the novel is more succinct: "[Father

¹"Canada: Literature," Encyclopaedia Americana, 1963 ed., Vol. 5, p. 435.

²"Sacred or Profane?" Saturday Review of Literature, March 10, 1934, p. 535.

Dowling] tries to do something and he gets licked."¹

In the first edition of Such Is My Beloved, Callaghan prefaces the novel with this verse from the Song of Solomon:

Many waters can not quench love,
neither can the floods drown it. If a
man give all the substance of his house for
love, still would he utterly be condemned.

However, the verse which precedes the New Canadian Library edition is from the King James Version and is not quite the same. It reads:

Many waters cannot quench love, neither
can the floods drown it: if a man would
give all the substance of his house for love,
it would utterly be contemned.

Beyond the fact that the condemnation is shifted from "a man" in the first version to the act of giving in the second, the significance of the change remains obscure.

The opening paragraph of Such Is My Beloved foreshadows all of Father Dowling's difficulties to come:

The most eager young priest at the Cathedral was Father Stephen Dowling. From the time of his ordination he had approached every bit of parish work with enthusiasm and preached with such passion that old Father Anglin, the pastor at the Cathedral, used to shake his head and wonder if the bishop could be advised to send him to some quiet country town where he would not have to worry about so many controversial problems. It was rather disturbing for the older priest and some of the old and prosperous parishioners, too, to have a young man around who was apt to attack any difficult social problem with all the intensity of his very ardent nature.²

¹Weaver, p. 23.

²Morley Callaghan, Such Is My Beloved, edited with an introduction by Malcolm Ross ("New Canadian Library," No. 2; Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Limited, 1957), p. 3. (First published in 1934; New York, Charles Scribner's

The irony to come is that Father Dowling will be destroyed because of his possessing the very qualities a young priest should possess--eagerness, ardor, the desire to become involved in controversial problems because of the good he may do, his refusal to avoid social problems merely because it would be more comfortable to do so. Father Dowling will be destroyed because the elder churchmen and parishioners are almost totally devoid of these same qualities; to them the church is a business which should be made to prosper as any business does, through compromise, negotiation, and general good sense.

One snowy, rainy evening, as Father Dowling proceeds home from a call on a sick parishioner, he is accosted by two prostitutes. Father Dowling ducks his head in embarrassment and hurries along, but suddenly he realizes that these are girls living in his parish and that perhaps he can help them. He returns to confront the girls. They cannot see the clerical collar; they call him "Rosy Cheeks." Their leering advances embarrass and discourage him, so he leaves them once again.

Back at the rectory, Father Dowling has a renewed sense of his obligation to these unfortunates who live within his parish. He goes out again, to the hotel where the girls

Sons.) All future references to this novel will be to the New Canadian Library edition and will be cited in parenthesis in the text after the quotation or paraphrase.

have said they live, and visits them in their shabby room. When they finally see the Roman collar, the girls are frightened and try alternately to get rid of him and to seduce him. He tries to explain himself:

"It works out like this," he said. "You both looked mighty wretched standing there on the corner. It just struck me in such a way that I couldn't put the sight of you out of my mind, I guess. I never felt so much sympathy for anybody in my life. I wanted to do something to help you so you wouldn't want to stand on the streets like that." (11)

Midge and Ronnie are doubtful and sarcastic, but under the influence of Father Dowling's kindly, open manner, they begin to thaw. Finally the three decide that they are all "good friends." The remainder of the novel consists of the good Father's attempts to persuade the girls that their ways are wicked and to make it possible for them to make a living doing something else. Father Dowling rarely preaches to the girls. Instead, he tries to become their friend, to keep them so satisfied with his presence that they will not want to take to the streets.

Father Dowling becomes enlightened. At first it seems to him merely a matter of persuading Midge and Ronnie that prostitution is evil. Shortly the girls make him aware of the economics of their situation. Midge says, "You have a good time talking about praying for us, don't you, but prayers won't pay for our room, prayers won't help me get my hair curled. You can't eat prayers. How do you think we're going to live? Did you ever stop to figure that

out?" (22) Father Dowling had not stopped to figure that out. The girls point out the filth of their surroundings, their shabby clothes, the fact that there are many more girls than decent jobs, until "Father Dowling began to feel doubtful, as if there might be many things he did not understand." (22) He decides that rather than continue to explain the evil of their way of life, he must try to help them live decently.

Father Dowling begins more definitely to relate his relationship with the girls to his mission on earth. As a nameless reviewer states it, the girls "come to symbolize for him that great, passionate, impersonal love which he feels to be the core of his faith."¹ Callaghan puts it this way:

He began to think of Ronnie and Midge, feeling that his love for them was growing, so that he might try and love them in his way as God must love everybody in the world. It seemed to him also that the more he could understand, love and help these girls, the closer he would be to understanding and loving God. So he made up his mind to be very patient, never to be angry if he was not immediately successful with them, and to see, if possible, that they were never in want. These thoughts filled him with hope. (37-38)

Father Dowling's resources are meager. He decides to ask Mr. Robison, a wealthy parishioner, to find jobs for the girls. Mr. Robison, treating Father Dowling embarrassingly as though he were a child, points out the many economic difficulties the country faces as a result of the

¹"Growth in Morley Callaghan's New Novel," New York Times Book Review, March 11, 1934, p. 9.

depression. Still not realizing that the girls on whose behalf Father Dowling speaks are prostitutes, Mr. Robison congratulates Father Dowling for his attitude: "It's mighty good of you to be taking such an interest in these people. Keep on with the good work. I admire your enthusiasm and energy." (41) Father Dowling visits some other wealthy prospects. He is always heartily welcomed, given wine or tea, and spoken to "as though he were a lovely boy." (42) Finally Father Dowling concludes "that moral independence and economic security seemed very closely related." (42)

As the story progresses, Callaghan is seen to be portraying four attitudes toward the girls. Father Dowling's attitude is that of the shepherd toward strays from the flock. The girls come to mean as much to him as all the rest of his work. He must love them at least as much as he loves the proper and prosperous members of the congregation. Charlie Stewart, a young, atheistical, Communist friend of Father Dowling's, embodies another attitude. To him the girls are products of a decadent society, not to be considered as individuals. They are a social problem. Charlie tells Father Dowling:

In the perfectly organized state there would be no streetwalkers. If the state has a proper control of the means of production and the means of livelihood, it's never necessary for a woman to go on the streets. No healthy woman of her own accord would ever do such work. It's too damned degrading. But if in the ideal state there were still women who were streetwalkers out of laziness or a refusal to work steadily then they would be kicked out or interned somewhere for laziness,

or as non-producers. Then they'd have to work or starve. Your mistake is seeing this as a religious problem. It's really an economic problem. Do you see, Father?" (126-27)

The third point of view is that of Mr. Robison, and later of his wife. Father Dowling sits one Saturday evening pondering the next day's sermon. He opens his Bible to the Song of Solomon,

and it began to seem to him as he leaned forward breathlessly that he understood some of the secret rich feeling of this love song, sung so marvellously that it transcended human love and became divine. Then he forgot how he had been worrying about borrowing money. He began to write rapidly. He smiled with exaltation. He prepared his sermon on human and divine love. The bold sensual phrases of the love song startled him, stirred him and were full of such meaning that he read them over and over again.

And in the morning he preached on the Song of Songs, only he made it a song of a love that all people ought to have for one another. (78)

Mr. Robison's reaction to the sermon, when the two meet at the church door, would seem to be all that Father Dowling could have wished. Robison says,

"Good morning, Father. It was a great pleasure to listen to you this morning. Seldom have I heard such eloquence. Seldom have I been so moved. . . . All I can say is that love and charity always will seem to me to be the divine themes, the most powerful themes for affecting the human heart." (80)

Father Dowling rejoices and takes the opportunity to make an appointment with Mr. Robison later in the evening.

Mr. Robison envisioned a plea for money. He pictured himself writing a check for fifty or one hundred dollars, to the delight of the priest. Then they would drink a bit of old wine together and all would be well. But Father Dowling

wants Mr. Robison to come see the girls, which is not what Mr. Robison had in mind at all. Again Mr. Robison has a vision--of a humble home, a destitute couple. As they walk to the Standard Hotel, he is disabused of that notion. Father Dowling, in his enthusiasm to explain the plight of the girls, does not notice that Mr. Robison is beside himself with shock on hearing that the priest has actually gone to the girls' room. The girls are not at home. Mr. Robison's irritation and uneasiness become relief.

But the girls arrive. Father Dowling wants them to see Mr. Robison's lovely home and family, thinking that will encourage Midge and Ronnie to be better. Mr. Robison thinks Father Dowling has lost his wits, but he complies, to avoid going into the hotel.

As they sit in the Robison drawing room, Mrs. Robison enters. She is unable to conceal her astonishment and contempt. She calls a taxi for the girls. Ronnie remains silently furious but Midge says,

"Ah, yes. We really must leave now. It's been a great pleasure to be here for the evening, Mrs. Robison. You must come and see me some time. Do you mind me telling you how I love that beautiful white streak in your hair? I've heard people say that anybody with a white streak in the hair has somebody crazy in the family, but I never believed that."

Then to Mr. Robison: "I know you'll be coming to see me some time. It was a treat to meet the wife after the way you've mentioned her so often to me. . . ." (93)

After the girls leave, Father Dowling's rage

compounds the disaster. Mrs. Robison says,

"I must say, Father, I don't thank you for bringing streetwalkers into my house."

"And I can hardly compliment you, Madam, on the charitable way you received them."

"Then we disagree."

"Just about as emphatically as I can make it."

"I might as well tell you I think the whole business too scandalous to be believed."

"And I've been more scandalized in this house to-night than I've ever been in my life." (93)

Mr. Robison tries to smooth things over with Father Dowling, secretly proud that his wife had treated the priest in a way he would not dare.

Mrs. Robison, shaken by the manner in which Father Dowling has criticized her and her attitudes, persuades her husband that it is his duty to tell the bishop of Father Dowling's misbehavior. Bishop Foley represents a fourth attitude toward church problems generally and toward the girls in particular: his policy is to do what is expedient.

Mr. Robison tells the story to Bishop Foley and then mentions Father Dowling's name.

The Bishop nodded his big head and sighed deeply, as if the sound of the priest's name had made him very sad, but what he actually was thinking of as he looked out the window so gloomily, was not of the priest but of a charity campaign he was about to launch throughout the city, and he was imagining the result of a scandal that would follow if a priest were implicated with two prostitutes. Sitting there, he could almost hear the story spreading and growing throughout the city, appearing first of all half hidden in the newspapers, and then whispered about till it became a matter for obscene joking. (100)

The two agree that something must be done. Bishop Foley says,

"By the way, Mr. Robison, you have possibly some connection through the courts with the police?"

"You're suggesting, Your Grace . . ."

"Dear me, it's hard to say what to do. It's a pity the police wouldn't arrest the girls and get them out of the way. Maybe we ought to pray for that."

"We will, Your Grace." (101)

Apparently, prayers are answered. Midge and Ronnie are arrested. Someone has spoken to the magistrate, suggesting the proper disposition of the case. The girls are put on the train out of town.

Father Dowling receives an expected summons to Bishop Foley's presence. He is sure that the Bishop will understand his explanation. The Bishop is not without compassion and understanding:

One part of his mind was telling him that the young priest was utterly without blame; the other part of his mind was urging him to be rational, to be firm, to administer his office according to his highest conception of duty. . . . Besides there was also the charity drive throughout the city that would be spoiled by circulation of scandalous stories about priests. (131)

Isabel Paterson, in her review of the book, says of the ensuing conversation that Bishop Foley "quite reasonably and kindly rebuked [Father Dowling] for imprudence and spiritual arrogance."¹ Her reading could not be worse. Bishop Foley says to Father Dowling, "I should imagine the notion of prostitution alone would make you sick with disgust." Father Dowling replies,

¹"The Business of the Artist," New York Herald Tribune Books, February 18, 1934, p. 4. This is the same Isabel Paterson whose column carried a totally erroneous version of the Callaghan-Hemingway boxing match.

"If I start hating prostitutes where am I going to stop? These girls have prostituted their bodies. All around us there are all kinds of people prostituting their souls and their principles for money. I know people in this city who prostitute our faith for the sake of expediency. I watch it going on all around and wonder how corrupt our faith can become before it dies. So if I can't have charity for those girls, certainly I can have no love for many others in higher places." (132)

The Bishop sees that there is no reasoning with Father Dowling and makes plans to send him away. Father Dowling is naturally troubled, but he soon concludes that his love for the girls is good, let them do with him what they may. He decides to write a commentary on the Song of Songs, to show how human love may transcend all earthly things. Nonetheless he becomes "depressed, slow-moving and ever unanswering." (141) Instead of sending him to another parish, his superiors put him in a mental hospital. Father Dowling's mind has in truth become disordered.

Father Dowling has occasional periods of clarity. During one such period he realizes that his madness has resulted from his worry about Midge and Ronnie, but he feels that even his madness must be for a purpose. He prays:

"O my God, accept my sickness and insanity as a sacrifice and I will willingly endure it, and my God, for this sacrifice I ask only that You spare the souls of those two poor girls. Preserve their souls and the souls of all the living who need Your pity and justice. Deliver them from all evil." (143)

After a moment, growing calm, Father Dowling says, "I'm content now. I may have many periods of clarity. . . . I can go on with my commentary on the Song of Songs." (144)

Ripley and McPherson are two critics who think that Father Dowling's opponents are not convincing. Ripley says,

In the light of Father Dowling's almost superhuman personality Mr. Robison, his wife and the Bishop seem to lack power as an opposing force. The scenes in which they appear are indeed effective and convincing but they do not seem to occur often enough and early enough in the narrative.¹

It may well be that Callaghan is making a point that Ripley does not perceive. Father Dowling's opponents do lack his power, as individuals, but they represent those large segments of the population which have rejected the girls. A man who obstinately resists the establishment may be more powerful than any individual opponent, but collectively the establishment can break that man because of what and whom it represents.

Callaghan could have created more powerful opposing forces, but to do so he would have had to dehumanize them. He does not completely tip the scales against Father Dowling by having Iagos as his adversaries. Though Mr. Robison, at his wife's prompting, sees it his duty to report Father Dowling to the Bishop, he has twinges of regret and conscience. He has perceived something in Father Dowling's loving attitude that he wants to understand and share. But he realizes that a scandal within his church would make him a laughing stock at his club, so he puts such thoughts out of his mind. Bishop Foley was once an ardent, idealistic priest. He realizes that in a way he loves Father Dowling and wants to

¹Pp. 122-23.

help him. But he concludes that for Father Dowling to have been toward the girls what he was trying to be, "he would have to have been a saint." (135) He puts such thoughts aside and insists to himself that Father Dowling's acts were "a piece of folly that can't be tolerated, that's all there is to it." (136)

Similarly, in order to balance the scales more evenly, Callaghan makes it clear that Father Dowling is a man, with a man's temptations:

Father Dowling had a man's passion, and as he sat there looking furtively at the dark girl [who had exposed her breast to him], and at Midge and Ronnie, he suddenly saw them just as young women, making him full of longing as they used to do when he was a boy. He wanted to take their soft bodies and hold them while his arms trembled. He wanted to put his head down on white warm softness. . . . But then his forehead began to perspire, his whole body relaxed and he trembled and felt ashamed. "I ought not to be ashamed of being tempted," he thought. "I am not a eunuch. The Church will not accept a eunuch for a priest. I'm a normal man and I wouldn't be normal if I wasn't tempted. But I'll never be tempted like this again." (49)

Nevertheless, as Ripley points out, there does seem to be something superhuman about Father Dowling, and one is drawn to the obvious parallel between Father Dowling and Christ. Ironically, it is those very Christlike qualities--love, charity, forgiveness--that cause the churchmen to become uncomfortable. Father Dowling is a constant reminder to them of the way they should be. But the church Father Dowling represents has become more concerned with its functions as an organization than as a body which should minister to sick souls as well as bodies. Father Dowling's church is a

church which is based on conventionality, compromise and good business sense; therefore, Father Dowling's attitude is a cause for embarrassment and concern.

So Father Dowling tries to do something and he gets licked. That is what happens, but what does it mean? Some would have it that Father Dowling should have been allowed a victory, that the novel should have the proverbial happy ending. As it happens, very few of Morley Callaghan's novels have endings which are happy in the usual sense of the term. True, the happy ending would enable Callaghan to avoid a constant criticism--that he knows how to present problems but not to solve them. But do we continue to read Upton Sinclair's The Jungle because of the sociological treatise appended to it, in which Sinclair outlines the steps necessary to avoid the evils of the Chicago stockyards? Or do we continue to read Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin because we believe that a new Negro nation in Africa would have been a proper solution to the slavery problem? That was Mrs. Stowe's solution. By the same token, would we admire the author of Such Is My Beloved more, or less, if Father Dowling were to "clean up the town," as would happen in the Hollywood version, or if Callaghan were to tack on a sociological-theological treatise on hypocrisy?

We read The Jungle and Uncle Tom's Cabin because of the power of the narrative, and despite the appendages. Callaghan has wisely eschewed the pat solution to a difficult

problem. What we are left with is the story of a man who tries to do something and gets licked, but the power of the novel as a work of art causes us to feel that Father Dowling was right to act as he did. Even though madness was the price he paid, and willingly, Father Dowling did what Morley Callaghan would have us do--try to fulfill our possibilities as men. As Edgar Lee Masters has said in his poem "George Gray," "to put meaning in one's life may end in madness." Nowhere does Callaghan indicate that Father Dowling should have done otherwise.

They Shall Inherit the Earth

After the publication of Such Is My Beloved, Callaghan finally broke with Scribner's, but still the comparisons with Hemingway lingered on. Alvah C. Bessie, for example, speaking of Callaghan's next novel, awkwardly concluded: "Callaghan has continued from the point that Hemingway left off."¹ Random House welcomed Callaghan by conferring a signal honor upon him; They Shall Inherit the Earth became the first novel to be published originally, rather than reprinted, in Random House's Modern Library series.² In Canada, on the other hand, Callaghan's novel was not only neglected as usual; it was banned by the Toronto Public Libraries.³

¹Saturday Review of Literature, September 28, 1935, p. 6.

²Bernard Preston, "Toronto's Callaghan," Saturday Night, January 18, 1936, p. 12.

³Moon, Maclean's Magazine, December 3, 1960, p. 63.

They Shall Inherit the Earth is a novel of greater subtlety than its rather simple plot would indicate. Michael Aikenhead, a young graduate civil engineer trying to find work in depression-torn Toronto, takes a weekend trip to the summer place of his father and stepmother. Michael has been estranged from his father for some years because of his hatred of his stepmother and her son. While at the summer retreat, Michael learns that his stepbrother Dave Choate has been trying to persuade Michael's sister Sheila not to marry Ross Hillquist, son of Mr. Aikenhead's partner, Jay Hillquist. Dave has told Sheila that her mother was mad and that Ross would not marry her if he knew. Michael becomes infuriated with Dave and, one evening when they are together in a row-boat on the lake, is perhaps responsible for Dave's death by drowning--"perhaps," because in a sense the novel revolves around the question of responsibility. Though no one makes an outright accusation, most people think Michael's father Andrew has killed Dave. As a result of the unspoken accusations, Andrew Aikenhead loses his partnership and his friends.

Once Dave's death has occurred, the novel concerns itself with Michael's desire for justice, his need to determine the degree of his own guilt and his father's implicit responsibility. This desire of Michael's is part of his greater desire to discover whether life is just, whether life has meaning. Eventually, through the help of his

mistress (later his wife) Anna Prychoda, Michael arrives at some tentative conclusions, admits to his now broken father that he knew of the circumstances of Dave's death, and is reunited with his father. As is usual with a Callaghan novel, this one cannot fairly be paraphrased, since subtlety and gradual unfolding and involvement are the very essence of Callaghan's art.

Though there is a larger supporting cast than in any novel thus far, the story is Michael's--and later that of Michael and Anna. Michael wants no charity from well-to-do Andrew. He wants to begin his career as an engineer, but these are depression times; he wonders "if there ever would come a time when people would say to him that there was work to do and they wanted him to work for them."¹ Dave Choate is Michael's diametric opposite. He is a leech on Mr. Aikenhead and a mamma's boy as well. Shortly after Dave arrives at the country place, he loses money to some friends and becomes violent when Mr. Aikenhead will not pay his debts for him, and in fact suggests that he get a job. Mr. Aikenhead speaks harshly to him, saying "You're good to no one in the

¹Morley Callaghan, They Shall Inherit the Earth, edited by Malcolm Ross with an introduction by F. W. Watt ("New Canadian Library," No. 33; Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Limited, 1962), p. 32. (First published in 1935: New York, Random House, Inc.) All future references to this novel will be to the New Canadian Library edition and will be cited in parenthesis in the text after the quotation or paraphrase.

world. You'd be better dead than alive." (39)

Dave has one sincere emotion--his love for his step-sister Sheila, who is soon to marry Ross Hillquist. Desperate to keep her from marrying Ross, he says, "Ross won't want to marry you if he knows your mother was out of her mind before she died. Not many men would want to marry you." (51) Sheila calls him a liar but runs to Michael's room to find out the truth.

As Michael explains their mother's sickness to Sheila, explains that she became melancholy after losing a child, his own thoughts go back to those days. He had seen Dave Choate's mother Marthe struggling ferociously with Mrs. Aikenhead, throwing her back into her room and locking the door. He had heard his father calming Mrs. Choate and

caressing her with his voice . . . as if he was terribly afraid of losing her, as if she was the only one in the house that was very close to him and had his love and knew his secret thoughts.

Michael looked a long time at his father's head and his familiar face, and he was full of wonder, and then gradually the sound of his father's voice became utterly meaningless. He had such a contempt for his father and so much disgust that he felt almost sick at his stomach. (58)

Michael remembers all this and thinks that Dave and his mother are now hurting Sheila the way they hurt his and Sheila's mother. He goes to find Dave.

Dave had been wretched and confused by his longing for Sheila. He could not sleep, so he went down to the dock and sat in a rowboat alongside the dock. Michael finds him there. Michael rows out into the lake while they talk.

When they are far out on the lake, Michael tells Dave they are going to stay there until Dave agrees to tell Sheila he was not serious when he told her that her mother was mad.

He tells Dave,

"I always hated your guts. I hated everything you ever stood for. I hated your soft useless life. I hated you because you were a bum and got away with it and I had to work. I hated you because you didn't have a spark of pride in you. I hated your guts because you never believed in anything but your balls and your belly. I know all about you. Guys like you are all around, just vomited up by a sick class in society. You just make a stench for the rest of us. (62)

Dave laughs and jumps out of the boat. Michael grabs at Dave, to pull him into the boat, but Dave evades him.

Michael keeps cutting Dave off with the boat, until Dave is finally swimming in a circle. Michael tries to hook Dave with an oar. Dave pushes the oar away, so Michael jabs at Dave with it. Suddenly Dave turns and heads for the other shore of the lake. A beaten Michael lets him go.

He did not know how long he sat there motionless like that; he began to imagine he heard someone calling. Then he actually did hear, coming over the water, that one pleading cry that he had wanted to hear before, "Help, Help." It rose out of the lake. Standing up in the boat Michael shouted, "Swim, you bastard. You wanted to swim, now why don't you swim?" He stared in the darkness, unable to hear or see anything because he was so numbed and blinded by the surge within him of all the hatred of Dave he had ever had and all the hate of Dave's mother too. . . . Then he began to breathe more evenly, and bit by bit he grew afraid. (63)

He rows out and looks for Dave, but he cannot find him.

After Dave's body is discovered, Marthe Aikenhead blames Andrew. Michael knows he has let Dave drown, but he thinks, "She knows he's to blame and in a way she's

right. It started years ago and he was to blame. He arranged the whole thing." (73) Mrs. Aikenhead does not want the police to go. She tells an officer,

"There's a good deal that you ought to know about this matter and I don't know why you hurried away. Didn't you wonder how it might have been for my boy around here? That's what I want to tell you. Nobody liked him. Maybe I shouldn't say that because the girl, Sheila, there, she always got along all right with him and they grew up together, and Michael, over there, he and Dave hardly knew each other or had much to say to each other in the last ten years. It's my husband that knew Dave. My husband didn't want the boy around at all. You should have heard them quarrelling the other night, the first night they got here. You should have heard the way he talked to Dave and you should have heard the contempt and hatred in his voice. You certainly ought to know about that. Why didn't you ask about it instead of running off the way you did?" (73-74)

Andrew Aikenhead smooths things over with the police, but after they leave, his wife asks him what he had in mind when they came to the country place. She accuses him:

"There was something different about it this year because you planned it for weeks ahead and I often saw you smiling to yourself. I wondered what was in your mind and now I know. Andrew, you wanted that boy to go; you wanted to get rid of him; you wanted him to die. You said he'd have more dignity dead than alive. I can remember how you promised me over and over again that you'd make him like your own son and yet the more you tried the more you hated him till it got so you couldn't stand the sight of him around the house. He had to die just because he was my son. That was the only reason; he was my son, and you didn't want me to have a son. I can remember when he was a child he wasn't spoiled at all, and if he changed it was your money and your ways that spoiled him and then you couldn't stand him. What did you do to him, Andrew?"

"Marthe, be quiet!"

"I can tell by the way you look at me that you know what happened," she said. "Dave's dead and he wouldn't be dead if I had never brought him near you. He wouldn't be stretched out and found drowned, if it weren't for

you. For months there's been guilt in your heart," she said, her voice rising sharply. And it seemed to Michael, who listened and watched her and got more excited himself, that she was getting at the truth with uncanny penetration, that every word she said was absolutely true, that it was a much higher truth than could be got at in the simple fact that he, himself, had let Dave drown; it went behind that fact and included it and went beyond it. (74-75)

These lengthy passages have been quoted in an attempt to transmit the subtlety of the problem. We are not sure, in the first place, of the degree to which Michael is directly responsible for Dave's death. Even if that point were clear, however, the degrees of indirect responsibility would be difficult of assessment. Even Marthe does not make the point-blank statement that Andrew killed Dave. She merely says "he wouldn't be dead if I had never brought him near you." She confirms Michael in his belief that the ultimate responsibility for Dave's death lies with Andrew. Michael feels that, in Marthe's accusation, justice is being done.

The half-hidden rumor that Andrew might have been involved in Dave's death begins to trickle throughout the city. Marthe leaves him. Michael has rejected him again. The rest of the book, as far as Andrew Aikenhead is a part of it, is a picture of a strong, successful advertising man who loses his grip on himself and sinks into lonely poverty.

After Michael returns to town, his educational process begins. He will find himself in various situations with various people, always growing in insight, until he realizes

his rejection of his father has been wrong--that his idea of life is too harsh, that life has meaning, and that his judgment of his father must be tempered with mercy.

Michael returns to his rooming house and meets Huck Farr, who is, as George Woodcock calls him, "every man's comrade and every woman's enemy."¹ Huck has been Michael's friend for some years and Michael is happy to see him; he knows

that no matter what he might have done on earth he could be sure Huck Farr would not hold it against him. Huck was beyond any moral law or loathing. He believed only that men ought to be comrades, that they ought to drink together and fornicate often and understand and admit that they were all liars and petty thieves. (83)

Huck has his eye on Anna Prychoda, who also lives in the rooming house. Anna is nearly out of money, and Huck realizes that he will have her if he plays the waiting game. He carries out the seduction attempt with the guile and heartlessness of the professional hunter who works his quarry into a cul-de-sac. The roomers who have nothing better to do place bets on Huck's persistence and Anna's resistance, but most of the money is on Huck because Anna is two months behind in her rent and growing desperate.

Finally Anna asks Michael for his opinion of Huck. Michael is loyal to Huck: "Huck's a pretty good guy, Anna," and "He's ace high with me." (97) But after Huck and Anna leave the rooming house on their first date, Michael

¹Canadian Literature, No. 21, p. 30.

remembers Anna's pleading look and cannot let his friend victimize her. He follows Anna and Huck about, pestering them, making them both angry, until at last Huck shouts, "If you want this bitch here, why don't you say so? She's been sitting staring at you all night with her tongue out anyway. Go ahead, you push her over." (106) Later Michael explains to Anna what Huck is like and, after a suitable number of obstacles and arguments, the two become lovers. Michael has rejected his long time friend, and his friend's amorality, in favor of a sympathetic response to the victimized girl.

Michael's second friend, Nathan Benjamin, is a Jew who has been converted to Catholicism. His discussions with Michael are not as integrated into the fabric of the novel as is Michael's relationship with Huck. In fact, Nathan is little more than a foil, inserted to give Michael an opportunity to expound his beliefs. Nathan, in his new found Catholicism, "believes in free will and the responsibility of the individual soul, and the soul's destiny, and all that crap," (89) as Michael puts it. Michael's view is that things happen whether people want them to happen or not; he is specifically thinking that the real cause of Dave's death is far back in his father's life when he tells Nathan:

"Here's what I mean. I know every one of us went up there with the best intentions in the world and look at the way it turned out; all by itself it turned into a mess. You mean to say there was anything the matter with us wanting to go up there? Nobody wanted it to

happen. Was it the will of God? If it wasn't anybody's choosing why do we have to take it? Nobody wanted that from your God. We'd like to hand it back. It's not good. You know why bastards like you talk about God's plan and free will. . . . This just occurred to me and you can have it for nothing. Nothing ever happened to you. That's why you want to pity everybody. You've got to get in somehow but not close enough to get hurt." (90)

The "theology" here is not clear because Michael is not yet sure what he believes and what he disbelieves, but he does resent those who make judgments based on religious principles. He makes judgments himself, about Dave's death, but based on the circumstances preceding and surrounding it, as he knew them.

During an interlude in his pestering of Huck and Anna, he retires to a friend's table so he can keep his eye on the couple. The friend is Bill Johnson, communist. As Michael sits with Bill, he envies him.

It seemed to Michael that the history of all men, through the faith of men like William Johnson, was given at last a splendid meaning, that there in their own time such men were directing it toward a goal. Bewildered people like himself, Michael thought, found only silliness and confusion in their own lives, yet there was William Johnson proclaiming that a human being could find dignity carrying on the struggle of all the humble people who ever lived on earth. There was such a faith in Johnson, such a feeling for the flow of time, Michael thought, that he, himself, began to feel humble, and he longed to free himself from his distress by losing himself in his friend's disinterested hope for the poor of the world. (103)

Bill and his wife had recently indicated to Michael their concern for the poor and the humble, their desire to gain justice for the exploited, so Michael eagerly explains Anna's situation to Bill. Bill's response?

"It's a perfect example of what goes on in society. It's a perfect example of necessity on her part. That's what's going on all over. It could all be settled by an economic adjustment. Don't you see, Mike, it's just an illustration of everything I've tried to tell you?"

"But what about the girl? Doesn't she worry you?"

"She's just an individual. What's happening to her may be tragic. I don't deny it, although even our conception of tragedy may have to change. She's an illustration of a larger issue and you can't stop to worry about her." (104)

Michael, amazed at Bill's lack of feeling, goes back to the table of Huck and Anna and sits quietly.

All evening, while Michael had mocked himself doing the things he did not want to do, there had been growing in him a deep concern for Anna which he could not feel strongly because he had so much pity for himself, but now the desolation he saw so clearly in her face, and the words of William Johnson, shocked him. There she was beside him, twenty-three years on the earth, maybe with good luck forty years more to go, and already they all were crushing the humanity in her; and while he had these thoughts, and watched her trying to give herself fully to Huck Farr, his concern at last became a surge of love. (105)

The rest of the novel can be scanned quickly.

Michael and Anna become lovers, then live together. It is the person of Anna, her simple, sincere ways, and his love for her, that bring about an awakening of faith in Michael. Yet he still thinks in terms of justice:

It did not seem unjust to Michael that he should be free and his father should be bearing the blame for Dave Choate's death. There grew in him day after day a great hunger to find that there could be justice among human beings on earth. (149)

Michael's longing for justice is part of his longing for an organized, sensible, meaningful world that does not operate solely by means of the laws of chance. Two-thirds of the way through the novel, however, he is still baffled. He

tells Anna,

"There's no use trying to hold on to anything. It all gets broken in the same stupid, meaningless way. Anybody could run this god-damned universe better than it's run. No matter how you long for a thing, it doesn't matter. You get kicked around just the same. There's no order in anything human. Everything you love, everything simple like the noises on the street out there, and the bit of wind coming through the window and the sunlight on the good warm days, it's all accidental." (155)

Michael meets Bill Johnson and tells him that they agree things are extremely bad, but Michael realizes that Bill's solution would leave much yet to be done. "There's more to it than that," he says. "The personal problems will begin all over again then. You seem to think that you just have to have an economic house cleaning and we'll all get justice. None of us will get justice, personal justice, and we'll start hungering for it all over again." (174) Suddenly Michael sees his father in the street. For the first time he feels pity and shame.

Things begin to make sense for Michael on a wolf hunting trip he takes with Ross Hillquist and the Indian guide, Jo Jamison. Mike claims that the wolf kills without sense, for the sheer lust of killing. He tells the others,

"If you want it to be clear that a man is ruthless and an enemy of society you call him a wolf, don't you? Any enemy of the race you call a wolf because he knows no moral law, and that's why you can't organize society, because it's full of wolves, and they don't know justice and don't want it."

While Mike talked like this, he was really crying out against the meaningless confusion of whatever he had known of living, and his search for peace, and he wanted most of all, even without quite knowing how

much he wanted it, to justify his preservation of his own bit of happiness and his own life. (189-90)

As Mike lies awake in the night, he hears the howl of the wolves and thinks of his mother's madness, his sister's sorrow, his father's failure, and "they all became one in their common suffering." (193) He thinks of Anna.

If only the love between them could flow out from them and touch the world; but their love could touch no one but themselves; it could only grow more intense and become an agony, and yet how lucky, how marvellously lucky to have found it and resist with it, and deny joyously that it could perish on the earth. Then it came again, farther and farther away, the threatening wolf's moan, out of the night and the snow, deeper even than that, out of the core of the hostile world. (193)

In the morning the three find the carcasses of many deer, killed by the wolves. The deer had become stuck in the snow, and the wolves had slashed their throats or noses and had torn away only the tenderloin, leaving the rest. Michael sees the scene as the perfect example of what he has been saying. He shouts,

"What a god-damned useless slaughter. Useless, purposeless, wanton slaughter. You had the nerve to talk to me last night about meaning and order in life and justice and God knows what else, Ross. Look at it. Put your nose down and try and smell it. The natural history of natural justice." (195)

But the Indian guide explains the purpose of the wolves--in effect they have put the deer in a deep-freeze, looking ahead to the thaw when they will be unable to catch the deer. By preserving the carcasses, the wolves will have meat for their litters. Mike concludes that "there might be unity in life on earth, and it might be only vanity to try to understand the meaning of the single parts." (197) He thinks,

"Maybe justice is simply the working out of a pattern. The deer and the wolf have their place in the pattern, and they know justice when they conform to the pattern. . . . And there would be a justice for all things in terms of the things themselves. There would be a justice in art, the justice of form, and there would be social justice, the logical necessity of preserving the pattern of society. If society was what it was today, and there was class striking at class, it was like a jungle, and there was no pattern and no unity and no justice. That's the best I can do." (197)

This is not a firm conclusion, for Michael or for Callaghan, but Michael seems to feel, and Callaghan to imply, that there can be justice and pattern and unity, though at the time of the novel's action there is not.

Michael is still disturbed by a problem closer to home. He realizes now that he has been guilty of pride in judging his father's life. He thinks, "I know everything will have some meaning if I stop passing judgment on other people, and forget about myself, and let myself look at the world with whatever goodness there is in me." (197)

Anna becomes pregnant, so Mike and Anna are married. Michael knows he should tell Anna about Dave's death, as part of his resolution to follow the urge of whatever goodness there is in him, but his love for her overwhelms his knowledge.

He felt that whatever he did he would do only out of love for her. When he was acting out of a fund of love, it would give him a vision of the world that would be fresh and his own, but all around him would be people who were restlessly seeking and never really finding, willing to change one vision for another, wishfully seeking the right one, and they would make it desperately hard to hold onto his own way of seeing it, yet

he would have to hold onto it, no matter who rejected it, for when it was gone he would no longer be a lover and would be just as confused as anybody else. (208)

Mike has arrived at a faith which is a compound of the resolution to act on whatever goodness is within him backed by the genuine love that he and Anna share. He will let the ignorant armies clash by night while he and Anna are true to one another.

After Anna is taken to the hospital, Mike gets the impression from the doctors and nurses that something is wrong. He thinks Anna is going to die; "he began to believe that he was about to be given some final justice that would take Anna from him." (233) He wants to live and he wants Anna to live with him, but then he must acknowledge that Dave, too, was young and did not want to die. He thinks of the child soon to be born.

"I can't stand it. I bring life into the world. I send life out of the world. I give and I take away, and I give and I take away. . . . Is there any justice in that? I didn't mean to use the word justice because I realize that I do not understand at all what it means. Just the same I'm like God. Somewhere down there my father walks along the streets, and he wants only justice, but I've been all over that, and I don't know what it means, I only know that Anna will have to die, and it won't be unjust." (235)

When Michael sees that Anna's death will not be unjust, when justice is brought that close to him, he comes to realize that justice is not what he wants at all. "Who on this earth ever really wanted justice?" he asks. Then he whispers, "My God, have pity on me. I don't want justice. I want mercy. Have pity on me." (235) Anna has a boy. They call him

Little Mike.

As the novel draws to a close, Mike still has not told Anna about Dave. Mike lies next to Anna, thinking. He thinks of Nathaniel Benjamin, the Christian convert who "stank with pride," of Huck Farr who "had found the brotherhood of man in the desire for women," of Bill Johnson's wife who "jumped from one cause to another." (242) Only Bill Johnson the revolutionary seemed at all in control of himself.

Michael sums them up:

They were all like himself, only some of them became Catholics and some became communists, and then it was too bad for Catholicism and too bad for communism, for such people as these in this generation only heaped the chaos in their own souls on whatever they touched. Such people were all like him in this, that they couldn't know peace or dignity or unity with anything till they were single and whole within themselves. (242)

Michael turns and looks at Anna, thinking, "She's everything I'm not."

She went from day to day, living and loving and exposing the fulness and wholeness of herself to the life around her. If to be poor in spirit meant to be without false pride, to be humble enough to forget oneself, then she was poor in spirit, for she gave herself to everything that touched her, she let herself be, she lost herself in the fulness of the world, and in losing herself she found the world, and she possessed her own soul. People like her could have everything. They could inherit the earth. (242)

Michael finally tells Anna about Dave's drowning. She persuades him not to go to the police but rather to go to his father. Andrew forgives Michael, the two are reunited, and presumably Andrew, Michael and Anna live moderately happily ever after.

Whether one agrees with Callaghan's conclusions or not, they seem to be clear cut. Michael learns through suffering that his search for "Justice" has been both futile and misguided. By deciding to make the most of the goodness within him, and combining that with his love for Anna, he may become like Anna, one of the meek who shall inherit the earth. Through her love of life and of Michael, she can last, and last happily, until the clashing of factions is over, until society is no longer a jungle. She has made the most of her possibilities as a woman, and one feels that with her help and with his new insights, Michael will make the most of his possibilities as a man. He seems, as the novel closes, to be pointing in the right direction.

The critics somehow managed to find Callaghan's book confusing. Desmond Pacey perceives "ambiguity, and an ambiguity which we feel to be not deliberate but the result of indecision in the author's mind. The explicit theme of the novel, suggested by the title, is that the meek, the poor in spirit, shall inherit the earth."¹ After quoting the passage in which Michael realizes that people like Anna "could have everything," Pacey continues, "But William Johnson, the communist, has explicitly condemned this notion in an equally persuasive passage. There is, then, no clear certainty yet in Callaghan's mind: he, like his characters,

¹Creative Writing in Canada, p. 213.

is groping for a faith."¹ Pacey concludes that "generally, the book marks an advance because the issues, though not resolved, are presented more clearly and forcibly, and the author's bewilderment is more honestly portrayed."² Pacey is attributing a bewilderment to Callaghan that the novel does not substantiate. True, the passage in which William Johnson refutes the notion that the meek shall inherit the earth might be considered "persuasive," but even if we grant the doubtful conclusion that it is "equally [as] persuasive" as the passage Pacey sets up beside it, it is hardly as persuasive as the rest of the novel, which embodies the opposite point of view. Callaghan does not have the answer, but he puts forth in the person of Anna, and later in Michael, his idea of certain eternal s on the basis of which man may order and arrange his life.

Not every reader and critic will "believe in" Callaghan's eternal s; the degree of belief may depend on the attitude the reader brings to the book. And it is certainly true that there is an amorphousness to such terms as "meekness," "love," and "goodness within" which may disturb the literal minded. Reviewer "J. M." observes, for example, that "sometimes when there does exist some peace and quiet among [the characters], you are given to understand that it is only because a Love so potent as to annihilate everything but the

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

people concerned has magically manifested itself."¹ "J. M." goes on to complain that "the author has a habit of introducing Love whenever his characters are in a tight situation."² The criticism is not without foundation; Love does come in handy. Nevertheless, since Callaghan is a "fictionist" rather than a philosopher or a theologian, his book is a novel and should be considered as such, rather than as a tract on love or natural goodness. Only if the novel has been successful as a novel--if the reader has come to see and feel as Michael and Anna do, to empathize with them as characters--only then will their manner of making the most of their possibilities be "believable." Those who have not willingly or unwillingly suspended disbelief will continue to disbelieve after the novel has been shelved.

More Joy in Heaven

In 1929 Henry Goodman included Callaghan's first published story, "A Girl with Ambition," in his textbook Creating the Short Story. Goodman had apparently asked Callaghan about the "genesis" of the story. Callaghan's foreword to the story reads in part as follows:

I daresay that you know as well as I do that most explanations of the genesis of a story are the bunk, at least I've always thought so. One can give a kind of historical sketch of the notions accompanying events that became material for a short story, but I don't

¹The New Republic, November 13, 1935, p. 27.

²Ibid.

believe that much is really explained, do you?¹

Callaghan's statement may be applicable to the incident which was the "genesis" of his next novel, again with a title of biblical derivation, More Joy in Heaven (1937). Nevertheless, discussion of the novel would be incomplete without a sketch of the incident.

Norman F. "Red" Ryan, bank robber sentenced to life imprisonment, served over eleven years of his sentence before being released as a result of the combined efforts of certain highly placed Canadians. He was welcomed by society as the completely reformed criminal, living proof that with help a man can turn over a new leaf. Ryan became official greeter at a hotel and hobnobbed with Canada's elite. Less than a year after his release, he was shot down and killed by police while he was in the process of robbing a liquor store.

In 1957, Robert Weaver asked Callaghan how closely he intended More Joy in Heaven to parallel the Red Ryan episode. As might be expected, Callaghan answered,

Not very close. That is a misunderstanding. . . . What made me tired during that period was that everybody went around saying society is betrayed--you know, that Red Ryan betrayed society. This always bores me. I don't think society is ever betrayed.²

Callaghan may have felt more than boredom at the notion that society is betrayed. His novel may well have been written

¹P. 108.

²P. 24.

to counteract that sentiment, because in More Joy in Heaven Kip Caley is betrayed, and society is the betrayer.

Kip is a man for whom prison "took." He had embarked on a career of bank robbing in order to be somebody, to make a name for himself, but his stay in prison, he realizes, is a rather large price to pay for having his name in headlines. While Kip is in prison, he helps his fellow prisoners and acts as a mediator between prisoners and prison administrators. News of his good work spreads beyond the prison walls; committees investigating prison conditions want to see him and marvel at his conversion. Finally Senator Maclean arranges for his release on parole.

So Kip Caley is the sinner who repenteth, and there is great joy on earth. His only desire is to live a quiet, useful life, but as he arrives home he sees crowds of people waiting. Among them are the reporters. Kip tries to explain his new attitude to the press. He speaks of crime and prison and says, "I don't want to play ball in that league. I'm for being just like you and your brother and the guy next door, see."¹ The sinner has repented; the prodigal has returned; all he wants is a chance. But society gives him much more--it makes him a celebrity.

¹Morley Callaghan, More Joy in Heaven, edited by Malcolm Ross with an introduction by Hugo McPherson ("New Canadian Library," No. 17; Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Limited, 1960), p. 25. (First published in 1937: New York, Random House, Inc.) All future references to this novel will be to the New Canadian Library edition and will be cited in parenthesis in the text after the quotation or paraphrase.

Senator Maclean sends Kip to Mr. Jenkins, a hotel owner. Jenkins wants Kip to be "official greeter" at the hotel. Kip demurs. He wants to stay out of the public eye. But Senator Maclean convinces him that taking the job is the thing to do. With Senator Maclean while he convinces Kip is Bishop Murray. He too sees no harm in Kip's prominence and in the celebration he has caused. "After all," the Bishop observes, "they did a little feasting and celebrating for the prodigal son, didn't they?" (36) Eventually Kip sees that he can accomplish much in the hotel position, that he can be an inspiration to society and to those behind bars by acting as a middleman between the two.

It is at an ice carnival that Kip begins to have an inkling that there is something phony about the way people regard and praise him. As he sits in formal attire with Senator Maclean and his daughter Ellen, surrounded by society's elite,

the tightness in him was becoming unbearable and spoiling this world for him. All their faces seemed to belong to the glistening ice, the violet lights, the stiffly jumping horses. These faces were bright masks. The Senator's mask was pink and white. Ellen had on a sharp, pretty little frozen-faced mask. Kip felt he was incredible. They gaped up at him as if he were a great crag of basalt. Snatches of conversation in polite voices came to him, "What a big, handsome brute he is! What are the Macleans up to?" "He's splendid, but think of being up an alley with him if he hated you!" "There you are--right under your eyes, moral grandeur, my dear." "Look at the pallor of his face!" "That's the prison pallor." (49)

Kip makes a frantic excuse and escapes to a little luncheonette for a sandwich and relaxation. He tries to read the

paper and sees himself all over the front page. A Protestant minister is going to preach on "Kip Caley--A Change of Heart." A rabbi "spoke eloquently about human fellowship and society's open door for the disinherited." (50) Kip becomes ashamed of himself for running away from the ice carnival. "Those people who gazed at him had probably only been thinking the same things these ministers were saying." (50) Kip feels that everybody is with him and that his long time dream of becoming a member of the parole board may become a reality.

The attitude of society toward Kip is put forth in the words of the Mayor. "I'm mighty proud of the way it worked out for you, Caley," the Mayor said. "What's happened to you is the thing our system stands for," (60) and later, explaining why he likes to see Kip at city hall, "I'm a great champion of the corrective as opposed to the punitive system. It's men like Kip here who keep a little hope in the hearts of anti-social characters. I like them to know he's around. Have a cigar, Kip?" (90) However, there are two people who do not share the general belief in Kip's conversion and, oddly enough, they are at opposite ends of the reputability scale. One is Judge Ford, who sentenced Kip to life and twenty lashes, who opposed Kip's parole, and who is himself a member of the parole board.

Judge Ford "believed Kip to be essentially lawless and violent. And when he heard that Senator Maclean, women's

clubs, and the Mayor had suggested that Kip be given a position on the parole board it seemed to him to be a mockery of the law and order he loved above everything." (72-73) When Kip hears from Senator Maclean that Judge Ford threatens to resign if Kip is made a member, Kip goes to see the Judge, confident that he can convince him. The Judge states his position to Kip:

"The Mayor feels so very happy," he said. "He thinks the things he stands for have worked on you," and he smiled. "No man is ever evil in his hierarchy. That's how you get in, Caley. There's no such thing as free will to men like him. Men to him are simply pushed around by forces working on them. They get a man like you in a penitentiary and train him and he expresses the beautiful godhead in him. Everybody is delighted. There's more joy on earth than there is in heaven. Well, I'm having no part of it. You mean well, but I believe that you're potentially dangerous. I have a duty to society--I hope you keep out of trouble--But I'm absolutely opposed to putting you in any position that will glorify you and cheapen my conception of law and order and the people who ought to defend it." (90-91)

Kip tries to persuade the Judge that he is wrong, but the Judge insists that Kip belongs in prison. Kip becomes angry, rips off his shirt, and shows the Judge the lash scars on his back. To the Judge, Kip's violent action is confirmation of what he believes Kip to be.

The other unbeliever is Joe Foley, a petty crook Kip had known in prison. He is cynical about Kip's conversion, and insists that Kip merely "has a good thing going for him." An unbeliever of sorts is Father Butler, the prison chaplain, who believes in Kip to an extent but sees that he is in grave danger of being taken in by society's temporary sentiment.

He had asked Kip to come back to the prison and be his gardener. Kip had answered:

"Listen, what would you have thought of the prodigal son if he had come home, and found his old man and his family had got a big feast ready and invited all the neighbors in and they were all getting ready for a swell time, and the son takes one look at them and refuses to sit down on account of them wanting to make a fuss over him? What would you have thought of him? They have to call it all off because he's feeling sour. A killjoy--too dumb and self-centred to see it didn't mean anything, unless he met them half way. Is it going to be that way with me?"

"How odd!"

"Why?"

"That you should have figured it out." The priest rubbed the side of his slipper on the rug and pondered. "That's quite an idea. Maybe the prodigal son had a job going from feast to feast till the end of his days. Maybe anybody who wanted an excuse for a feast invited him out; maybe he had a job at it for the rest of his life. I wonder what happened to him after the feasting was over." (71)

The remainder of the book consists of Kip's discovery that the feast is over and his reaction to the knowledge. His first big disillusionment occurs when Jenkins, the hotel owner, wants to convert him into a professional wrestler. Jenkins wants to keep Kip's identity a secret, put him in a dozen fixed bouts, and then reveal him as Kip Caley. To Kip's amazement, Senator Maclean advises him to do as Jenkins suggests. Kip says to the Senator:

"You don't get the significance of the thing. My God, you and me--we built up something big and beautiful for people. And you forget what it was like--you forget!" He was muttering to himself. "It came right here into his own house--all those big people--and New Year's Eve--how moved they were, the way they sang." His face shone. He seemed to be hearing people crying out to him and feeling their wonder as they thronged around him. "Okay, Senator, I'm on my way. . . . I guess you dropped out somewhere along the way." (114)

Kip goes back to the hotel and tries to interest a small group in what he has to say, but they continue to talk about other things until he begins to speak of a particularly successful armoured car robbery, the only subject left with which he can hold their attention. Kip's hopes receive a stunning blow when Jenkins tells him that people are tired of him.

"That's a terrible lie," Kip said. But he was leaning on the desk limply, struggling with his own surprise. He looked stricken. It made him think of the Senator telling him to go away, wanting to get rid of him, of Ellen, with no time to talk. . . . There seemed to be a little tug at his heart, a sudden distortion of his vision. Everything he had thought good became ugly and ridiculous. (119-120)

Kip is soon sitting with his girl, Julie Evans, "thinking of the nights when he had gone over and over his life, putting a new price on everything. Then his hurt eyes were full of despair. The thing he had thought so big, this faith, the peace he had found, the innocence he had sought, had made him a clown." (124-25) The next day Foley discovers Kip in his confused, dreamy state. He metaphorically sums up Kip's position as he sees it:

"Every one of those mugs that was stuck on you a while ago works it for his own game. They've all got their hand in where it's soft, every one of them. And you-- a chopping block, you see? A post, and if anybody's got a little extra virtue giving him a pain, he runs up and squirts it all over the post, you see?" (129)

Foley is being as persuasive as he can because he and Kerrman, another cheap crook, want Kip to pull a bank job with them. Kip has a sort of reverie about the prodigal son:

"I just figured out what happened to him," he said, his voice a bit excited. "He sat around for months and months and it all wore off and he got fed up and bored and disgusted and maybe he stopped a few people on the street and said, 'Remember me, I'm the prodigal son.' Maybe they said, 'Oh, yeah, well I'm the king of Egypt. Out of my way big boy, I'm in a hurry,' and they pushed him off the sidewalk. So he got pretty sore and saw that the big feeling he had was just a shot in the arm for the folks of the town, then he cleared out, hating everybody. . . ." (131)

As it happens, this is just a setback for Kip. The next day, after doing a lot of thinking, Kip tells Julie, "I've made some mistakes. But I found out that the thing I got hold of belongs to me--it doesn't depend on anyone else." (145) By now, though, Julie has told Father Butler about the bank robbery plans she overheard. The priest has decided the best way to avoid trouble is to tell the police, so they can pick up Foley and Kerrman. Julie lets it slip to Kip that she has talked with the priest, then Kip makes her tell the rest. He is full of disbelief that the two people left to him had not had sufficient love and faith to believe in him. Kip knows the police will let Foley and Kerrman walk into a trap. He is full of fury that he is to be the means of trapping the two, and that the police are letting them attempt a crime that will mean life imprisonment.

Kip reaches the scene just as Foley and Kerrman are entering the trap. "His pulse began to pound. He went forward, feeling power and confidence, feeling on that sunlit street he was at last truly the mediator between the law and those who break the law." (149-50) But Kip is caught in the

crossfire. He grabs the dead Foley's gun and tries to make the police stop shooting, but he is hit in the shoulder. In a blind fit of frustration, he shoots a policeman who advances on him.

The wounded Kip makes his escape and eventually crawls back to Julie's apartment. He reaches her door as the police begin firing. Julie shields him with her body and is killed.

Eager hands try to keep Kip alive.

It had become a desperate necessity not only for those people down there [outside the hospital], but for everyone whose good-will he had violated, that he be hanged. It was necessary that he be hanged in order that their pride and self-respect might be redeemed, that they might be cleansed of their humiliation, and that the pattern of law and order be finally imposed on him. They talked about the heart-broken Senator. The betrayal of his generous instinct was the betrayal of each one of them. Everything Judge Ford stood for seemed to have been vindicated. (158)

The police chief speaks to the doctor:

"If he's permitted to die--it's an outrage. Doctor, this is important to everybody, it's important to the fundamentally decent human instincts in everybody that this man should be legally hanged. If we miss out on him, we're fooled again." (159)

To everyone's disappointment Kip dies that night and "the Bishop he had had lunch with ordered that he be buried in unconsecrated ground." (159)

Callaghan would probably concur with F. W. Watt's comment that Kip's "personal salvation is achieved regardless of his society's complete misunderstanding and condemnation,"¹ as would most readers. Kip has made his peace;

¹The Dalhousie Review, Vol. 39, p. 312.

for him the title of the novel will hold true. Kip had great possibilities as a man. As Katharine Simonds says, in her review of the novel, "he had the makings of a great warrior saint."¹ A lesser man would have given up after the feast was over, but Kip continued on. The thing he got hold of belonged to him and didn't depend on anyone else. Yet Kip is destroyed. Why?

The easy part of the answer is "because of society." Though Kip Caley is an unusual case, having been a bank robber, he suffers the fate of the aging movie star, of the ball player who was a hero a few short years ago, of salesmen like Willy Loman, of heroes on the battlefield--people who are in the public eye or are outstanding and well known within a limited range but who are forgotten as fashions change or as another super star, hero, or flash in the pan comes on the scene. Morley Callaghan may well have had this social phenomenon in mind. Ironically, it was soon to happen to him.

Callaghan's emphasis, though, seems to be on the hypocritical nature of society's acceptance of Kip. As Father Butler puts it, society wants and needs someone to feast over, someone who proves that its way of doing things is the right way. Or in the metaphor of Joe Foley, Kip is a post for society, convenient for those whose excess of virtue is giving

¹"Regenerate Robber," Saturday Review of Literature, December 4, 1937, p. 6.

them a pain. Society is not interested in Kip's possibilities as a man but rather in the selfish use it can make of him.

Yet, Kip is far from blameless. The extremes of his character do much to bring about his tragedy. His open, trusting nature, his sincerity, his refusal to be hypocritical, do as much to bring on his downfall as the violent streak in his nature. Neither extreme fits in the society of which he wants to be a part, in which he wants to play the role of mediator. In many ways Kip is like Father Dowling of Such Is My Beloved and Peggy Sanderson of The Loved and the Lost. The three are in a sense too good for this world and are hence destroyed by the world. As McPherson sagely observes in his article "The Two Worlds of Morley Callaghan," "the world rarely recognizes its saints."¹

The Middle Period and the Critics

Since Morley Callaghan did not publish a major novel between Such Is My Beloved in 1937 and The Loved and the Lost in 1951, this would seem to be an appropriate point at which to give the critics a chance to express their views. Though the comments take different directions, virtually all perceive the three "middle period" novels to be of a different character from the first three.

For George Woodcock the novels of the middle 1930's

¹Queen's Quarterly, Vol. 64, p. 360.

are novels of moral predicament:

Each asks a question. What are the bounds of Christian love? How far can a man be free when all his acts affect the lives of others? Can the prodigal ever return to the world against which he has risen in rebellion? Can the individual assert and maintain his human dignity in an acquisitive society? Each novel asks its questions; none provides the glib and easy answer.

It is these moral questions that dominate and shape the novels of Callaghan's middle period to the virtual exclusion of other considerations.¹

This is a convenient way of looking at the novels, and had Woodcock stopped there he could hardly be quarrelled with, but he concludes that the novels are therefore parable-novels and not realistic novels at all, and that the books are only plausible if regarded as parables. He says, "While the apparent plausibility of background and of minor action may at first deceive the reader, neither the characters nor the structures of action in these novels are in any sense realistic."²

This notion is a difficult one to accept. In the first place, it presupposes a fictional method which Callaghan has emphatically denied is his--taking a theme and building a novel to illustrate it. Secondly, a parable is a story designed to convey a point or moral lesson, and the moral lesson of a parable is usually a "glib and easy answer" such as even Woodcock does not find in the novels. Finally, Woodcock's statement that neither action nor characters are in any sense realistic simply does not make sense.

¹Canadian Literature, No. 21, p. 29.

²Ibid.

The background and minor action are not apparently plausible--they are plausible. The minor characters are deftly done, and it is hoped that the earlier commentary on the three novels has indicated that both characters and action are realistic in any number of senses. Yet Woodcock feels that Father Dowling and Kip Caley are engaged in unrealistic actions. Though Woodcock's interpretation cannot be refuted, an example of his own can be offered as a case in point, for either the prosecution or the defense. To Woodcock, "Father Dowling's haunting of the prostitutes he decides to befriend is plausible only as a manifestation of neurotic obsession."¹ That statement reflects a limited view of man's possibilities, a view which Callaghan would probably not share.

In his major study of Callaghan's work, Hugo McPherson maintains that Callaghan reacted to the despair and disillusionment of the 1920's and 1930's by becoming

a religious writer . . . an artist who looked searchingly at his experience . . . and concluded that the temporal world cannot be self-redeemed; that human frailty is bearable only in the light of divine perfection.²

Religion plays an important part in Callaghan's work. The priest is never far away. The most frequently recurring image in his fiction is that of a church or cathedral spire sticking up in silhouette against the sky. In his dissertation Martineau has compiled a partial list of religious

¹Ibid. ²Queen's Quarterly, Vol. 64, p. 352.

ceremonies and symbols in the fiction, including the Sunday service, the devotions of the First Friday, the Christmas services, the Easter Sunday Mass, the High and Low Masses, regular communion, the novena to the Little Flower, the red light in the sanctuary, the confessional box, the last rites, meditation, contemplation, the sermons, contrition, the feast of Pentecost, St. Teresa of Avila, Mary Magdalene, Mary of Egypt, etc.¹ The heroine of one novel is named Marion, a variant of Mary. Two heroines and several minor characters in the novels, and a dozen or so characters in the stories, are named Anna, a name derived from Anne (St. Anne was the mother of the Virgin Mary).² Callaghan himself said, in the interview with Robert Weaver, "Frankly, I don't mind being called a religious novelist," though he unfortunately minimizes the significance of the statement by adding immediately, "As a matter of fact, I don't care what you call me."³

The mass of Catholic references in the novels need not concern us greatly. Callaghan is a Catholic, these things

¹Pp. 182-83.

²It is a remote possibility that Callaghan's inordinate fondness for the name Anna is connected with his use of Loretto instead of Loretta when he refers to his wife. Legend has it that the house in which St. Anne gave birth to the Virgin Mary was transported by the angels to the town of Loretto in Italy. More probably, Callaghan likes the sound of Loretto better than Loretta, but the coincidence is interesting.

³p. 25.

are things that he knows about and can handle perfectly, and perhaps he cannot keep them out. More important is McPherson's claim that Callaghan has concluded, in the middle period novels, that the temporal world cannot be self-redeemed, that human frailty is bearable only in the light of divine perfection. It is the contention of the present study that Callaghan was and has been temporally rather than eternally oriented, that his view of man envisions greater possibilities on this earth than man has yet achieved, and that Callaghan has had this constant view since he told Loretto in Paris that

our job . . . [is] to be concerned with living and it [seems] to me it would be most agreeable to God if we tried to realize all our possibilities here on earth, and hope we would always be so interested, so willing to lose ourselves in the fullness of living, and so hopeful¹ that we would never ask why we were on this earth.

Another aspect of the middle period novels which many critics have noted is that, while religion plays an important part in the books, Callaghan is not satisfied with the church as an institution. This can be most obviously seen in Such Is My Beloved, but it is also an element in More Joy in Heaven. Father Butler, another priest based on the jolly cleric whom Morley and Loretto Callaghan met on the boat to Europe, drinks too much and is frowned upon by his superiors, but Callaghan likes Father Butler, not Bishop Murray. Pacey voices this anti-institutional church attitude

¹That Summer in Paris, p. 111.

of Callaghan's:

The outlook is strongly Christian, and priests and the Church play a large part in his work. His Christianity, however, is not of the institutional variety: the organized Church almost always figures, in his books, as a reactionary force; the priests he admires are the young enthusiasts who do not conform to the will of the hierarchy.¹

Pacey may have written the "Callaghan" entry in Canadian Writers: A Biographical Dictionary; the conclusion is similar: "[Callaghan] has more faith in a liberalized and humanized Christianity than in the church itself, which, although it preserves Christian values, is often portrayed as reactionary."²

George Woodcock sees the novels of the 1930's as "novels of their time, in which the writer shows a deep consciousness of existing social ills."³ Callaghan was embraced by the left wing New Frontier magazine, which said in 1936:

So long as Callaghan voices this cry his writing will fill an immediate need. . . . When poverty is seen poisoning the springs of human love, the compassionate artist has no need of a political platform to move the indifferent. He has simply to tell his story, which has in itself the power to rouse those who construct alternatives to action.⁴

However, those who perceived the novels as having been

¹Creative Writing in Canada, p. 211.

²Ed. Guy Sylvestre, Brandon Conron, and Carl F. Klinck (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1964), p. 16.

³Canadian Literature, No. 21, p. 28.

⁴Quoted in Watt, The Dalhousie Review, Vol. 39, p. 310.

written primarily to point up the evils of depression times are in error. These elements were present in the society around him, so Callaghan wrote about them, but he is not a muckraker or a propagandist. Midge and Ronnie become prostitutes because there are more girls than jobs, but Callaghan's novel is not about the evils of a depression that force girls into such a position. Similarly, More Joy in Heaven could have been a diatribe against the Canadian penal system, but Callaghan did not choose to have it so.

Desmond Pacey says that "in Callaghan's work . . . it is not so much the universe itself which is blamed for man's misfortunes as an ignorant and falsely motivated society."¹ Pacey goes on to specifics: "The enemy for Callaghan, as for Leacock and de la Rocha, is a society in which commercial values take precedence over human values."² The point is well taken. One is not surprised that political leaders like Senator Maclean and businessmen like Mr. Jenkins, Jay Hillquist and Mr. Robison place a higher value on material things, but even the upper echelons of the church hierarchy, where one might hope to find a last ditch stand being made to defend human values, are more concerned with the church as administrative organization than as institution. Callaghan speaks out sharply, in the Weaver interview, against the cult of commercial success. He says, "In my own way I'm

¹ Creative Writing in Canada, p. 210.

² Ibid.

against the success man . . . the great American Myth . . . the Myth of Success." He goes on to say, "I'm interested in why the mental hospitals are full. And somehow or other it has to do with this business of being alive as a man in the world--which is quite a different business than making a lot of dough."¹ In the middle period novels, this interest can be demonstrated. And it usually turns out that the more money a man in these novels makes, the greater is his failure as a man.

However, though Callaghan is a critic of commercialism, his books have not been written as vehicles to convey that criticism. As Ripley correctly observes in his thesis,

While Callaghan was by no means unconscious of the defects of the economic system . . . he was far more interested in justice for the individual man, based on a recognition of his rights as a human being, not as a part of the whole social pattern, but because of what he is in himself.²

A specific statement of one harsh indictment of Callaghan's work, which was referred to at the end of Chapter I, should be included here. The criticism, briefly put, is that the work is "morally flabby." Desmond Pacey best states the case for this critical opinion. He says,

[Callaghan] succeeds admirably in revealing the shoddiness of most of the prevailing standards, but when it is a matter of suggesting alternatives he can offer only vague words like simplicity, tenderness and compassion. The result is that all of Callaghan's work has a certain moral flabbiness. This is much less obvious in the short

¹p. 24.

²p. 18.

stories than in the novels, because the short story can be made out of a moment of insight, a compassionate glimpse of suffering humanity. Of the novel, however, we demand a firm philosophy, a clearly articulated sense of values, and instead of that Callaghan invites us merely to a feast of pity.

.....
 Callaghan is potentially a very great novelist who has never quite fulfilled his early promise because he has never fully and firmly made up his mind about the basic issues of life.

Though it is hoped that the reply to this criticism is implicit and explicit throughout this study, the answer as the charge relates to the middle period novels seems to lie in the persons of Father Dowling, Anna Prychoda, the later Mike Aikenhead, and Kip Caley. Why will they not do as the "alternatives" Pacey requires? Are they not a living articulation of a sense of values? To call Callaghan's novels morally flabby is to call these characters morally flabby, which is to speak from an untenable position. The alternative to the shoddiness of most prevailing standards is the implied exhortation of the novels to be like Father Dowling, to be like Anna Prychoda, to be like Kip Caley, even if one tries to do something and gets licked. It may be that Professor Pacey has fallen prey to the North American passion for the happy ending. Pink bow-knot denouements give a feeling of resolution, of firm philosophy. To Callaghan, however, the attempt to realize one's possibilities must be made even if it ends in madness or death.

¹Creative Writing in Canada, pp. 211-12.

The final critical attitude to be discussed here is that the Canadian Hemingway of the first three novels has become the Canadian Maritain in the next three. The lengthiest exposition of the parallels between Maritain's philosophy and Callaghan's second trio of novels is to be found in John D. Ripley's thesis. Ripley's major professor was Desmond Pacey, and the two have made a strong case for the parallels.

In his review of A Passion in Rome, Pacey says that Callaghan "found his theme in the winter of 1935 [1933]," when he spent considerable time with Maritain.¹ Pacey goes on, "As a graduate student of mine, Mr. John D. Ripley, has pointed out, the themes of all of Callaghan's later novels can be found in such passages as these, from Maritain's The Rights of Man and Natural Law. . . ."² There follow the passages in question.

Callaghan was undoubtedly very much impressed by Maritain. In one of his articles, entitled "It Was News in Paris--Not in Toronto," Callaghan tells of his excitement that Maritain's first trip away from Europe was to be to the Toronto Institute of Medieval Studies. Callaghan describes his behavior after Maritain arrived:

I went around saying, "Jacques Maritain is in town," with a beaming smile. There he was in our zero Toronto weather, speaking no English, always shivering with the

¹Queen's Quarterly, Vol. 69 (Summer, 1962), p. 309.

²Ibid.

cold and strangely like a shy duck looking for water. But this extraordinary philosopher could convey a warmth of understanding that was enchanting. He had no English and I spoke pigeon French, but it was hardly necessary to finish a sentence; the idea was grasped intuitively, the feeling, the insight was always there in him.¹

There is something suspicious here. If Callaghan had to convey his ideas to Maritain in "pigeon French" so bad that Maritain had to intuit his meaning, how was Maritain, who spoke no English, capable of conveying philosophy sufficient for Callaghan to use as the basis of subsequent books?

Furthermore, very little of Maritain's work had been translated into English by 1933. Of the three books of Maritain's that Ripley cites in his thesis as parallels of Callaghan's thinking, two (Christianity and Democracy and The Rights of Man and Natural Law) were not translated into English until 1945 and one (Man and the State) not until 1951. Even Professor Pacey seems to be unconvinced. In the review of A Passion in Rome previously referred to, Pacey concludes that "whether the themes come from Maritain or from Callaghan's own meditations does not matter. . . ." ²

* * * * *

Though the critics present diverse views, each has something to add, an observation to make. Of none can we say he sees something that is not in the fiction, though most of the critics see only a part and either ignore or fail to see the rest.

¹Saturday Night, June 5, 1951, p. 17.

²Queen's Quarterly, Vol. 69, p. 309.

CHAPTER IV

THE DARK PERIOD: 1938-1951

WEAVER: There were really almost ten years when you
didn't write?

CALLAGHAN: Yes--the dark period of my life.

CHAPTER IV

THE DARK PERIOD: 1938-1951

In 1939 Edward F. O'Brien published his anthology, 50 Best American Short Stories: 1915-1939. His selection as best story of 1930 was Morley Callaghan's "The Faithful Wife." In the book he said of Callaghan, "He is now the most distinguished living Canadian writer by reason of his novels as well as his short stories."¹ For a writer who was at the time Canada's most distinguished, Callaghan was having a hard go of it. After he began his flirtation with the theatre in the late 1930's, Callaghan wrote eight stories in a row that he could not sell. Then, according to Barbara Moon, he stopped writing altogether for three years.² At about the time he stopped writing, Callaghan received an assignment from the National Film Board which took him to sea on a Royal Canadian Navy corvette. His attempt to resume writing resulted, it seems, in a book which was partially

¹(New York: The Literary Guild of America, Inc., 1939), p. 860.

²Maclean's Magazine, December 3, 1960, p. 64. Miss Moon is probably referring to the 1940-1943 period. Canadian and American bibliographic sources which may or may not be accurate reveal that Callaghan published "Big Jules" in the Yale Review in September, 1940, and nothing else until March, 1943, when his descriptive article "Union Station" appeared in Maclean's Magazine.

based on his shipboard experience.

This next book has had a mysterious history. Barbara Moon has said that the book utilized the naval background with which he had become familiar while on the corvette. However, Callaghan's agent could not find a publisher for the book, so Callaghan began to work on it again. In 1944 Eric Koch wrote:

He has not written a novel since 1937, and much will depend on the book he is writing now which, although it takes place in war-time, is not a war-story. One half of it concerns the land, and the other half the sea.¹

In Canadian Writers: A Biographical Dictionary this note appears: "In 1963 he began working on a novel Thumbs Down on Julien Jones with a wartime setting first in New York and then at sea."² The last clue to the mysterious novel, provided by Gillotti in his 1964 thesis, reads, "[Callaghan] is working on a novel called Thumbs on Julian Jones, which will be published later this year."³ Gillotti does not indicate the source of his information--or misinformation as it has turned out, since the book has not yet been published. A letter to Callaghan's current publisher, Coward-McCann, requesting any available information about the mysterious novel remains unanswered.

A. H. Cheyer reports Callaghan's summary of his

¹"Callaghan: Lend-Lease from the Bohemians," Saturday Night, October 21, 1944, p. 17.

²P. 17.

³P. 2.

career up to the early 1940's. Said Callaghan, with customary candor,

I started off in a blaze of glory and seemed to be known . . . and warmly praised by everyone from Ring Lardner to Sinclair Lewis to Ezra Pound to Jacques Maritain. My stories appeared in all the leading magazines, and I wrote regularly in the New Yorker. And then I seemed to fade away.

The difficulty was, I think, that reviewers were never seeing me for what I was. They were trying to judge me in terms of something they knew. . . .¹

Six years before Cheyer's article appeared, Callaghan spoke to the Canadian Writers' Conference. Though he talked of writers generally, the temptation to read between the lines, and to suspect that Callaghan was speaking about himself, is irresistible. Callaghan observed that, because everyone is always on the lookout for the new fair-haired boy,

the book world becomes very much like the millinery business. The writer who has written three or four books and made for himself some reputation must be prepared for the sudden shift of fashion. By being prepared I don't mean he should do the shifting. He must go on in his own way being loyal only to his own talent and accepting philosophically the fact that the very reviewers who lifted him up in the beginning will be the ones to yawn over him and forget him.²

It seems, then, that Callaghan thought his failure to find a publisher resulted from a change in fashion. Whether that is so or not--and we cannot pass judgment since the stories that were turned down are not available for examination, nor is the early version of the mysterious novel--

¹Wilson Library Bulletin, Vol. 36, p. 265.

²In Writing in Canada, p. 27.

his failure to publish is one reason for Callaghan's use of the term "dark period" to describe the late 1930's and the 1940's. Another reason was World War II. In an article of anonymous authorship, "Prodigal Who Stayed Home," Callaghan is quoted as saying, "The war upset things for me. Nothing seemed right. I took the war very hard."¹ In the Weaver interview, Callaghan echoed that feeling. He said, "[The dark period] was during the war. The war had a most depressing effect on me. I don't know whether to look back with bitterness or hope on this period. . . ."²

Theatre and Radio

Though Callaghan was depressed during the dark period, and though he was writing little fiction, he discovered within himself a latent interest which was to sustain him both spiritually and financially--an interest in his native country. He went on in the Weaver interview to say,

In those ten years, God forgive me, I began to take a great interest in Canada. I mean, I say this with tears in my eyes and on my knees, but I began to think this was my country--to look at it for whatever it is--and God help me it's my country--and I began to take a great interest in it.³

This renewed interest in Canada may have been a cause, or an effect, of the radio work which occupied so

¹Saturday Night, May 12, 1956, p. 22.

²p. 20. ³Ibid.

much of Callaghan's time during the dark period and subsequently. He may have gone into radio in order to participate more fully in the cultural, intellectual and political life of Canada, or it may be that he took on the radio work in order to survive, with a consequent and unexpected surge of patriotic feeling resulting from active participation in his country's affairs. Callaghan is, by all accounts, a sentimental man, and he has genuinely enjoyed his participation and prominence as a radio personality, after having for so long been away from home even while living within Canada's borders. Before we discuss Callaghan and the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, however, Callaghan's curious preoccupation with a new genre deserves a brief account.

Speaking of the late 1930's and early 1940's, Ripley says that Callaghan "became obsessed with the notion that he could become a successful dramatist. He spent most of his spare time haunting theatres and writing plays."¹ Callaghan apparently received the impetus to try his hand at another genre from a New York producer who suggested that he adapt one of his novels for the stage. Callaghan wrote that play, then two others, and two of the three, according to Barbara Moon, "actually came very close to Broadway production before collapsing under casting and financial

¹p. 21.

difficulties."¹

The two plays that were eventually produced in Toronto were Turn Again Home, which was a dramatized version of They Shall Inherit the Earth and was purchased but not produced by the New York Theatre Guild, and Just Ask for George. The Toronto New Play Society produced Just Ask for George in 1949, under the title To Tell the Truth, and Turn Again Home in 1950, under the title Going Home. Scripts of these plays have not been published, but the reviews suggest that the themes of the plays were cut from the same cloth as the thematic concerns of the novels.

In a review of Going Home, Mary Lowrey Ross called the play "probably the most controversial play that the New Play Society has ever put on,"² which was one of the kinder critical comments. The plays were not well received and according to the account in "Prodigal Who Stayed Home" were termed "long on talk and short on action."³ As usual, Callaghan disagreed with the critics, describing his two plays as "brilliant."⁴ As recently as ten years ago Callaghan had apparently retained his dreams of theatrical glory. He quoted himself at the Canadian Writers' Conference as having

¹Maclean's Magazine, December 3, 1960, p. 64.

²Saturday Night, April 11, 1950, p. 39.

³Saturday Night, May 12, 1956, p. 22.

⁴Quoted in Moon, Maclean's Magazine, December 3, 1960, p. 63.

recently told a friend, "Oh well, I suppose I'm a dreadful failure; but I suppose you've heard I'm going to make a million dollars on Broadway."¹ Not only has Callaghan not made a million dollars on Broadway; he has not made a dime.

To us it might seem strange that a successful prose artist would turn to radio, as Callaghan did in the early 1940's, but the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has been the Canadian cultural and artistic focal point for several decades. In 1956 Northrop Frye described the influence which the CBC has had on Canadian cultural life when he said:

Every aspect of Canadian culture has been affected by the enormously beneficent influence of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. However one may criticize the CBC in detail, there is no reasonable doubt that without the steady employment it has given to writers, actors, musicians, and composers, and without its consistent efforts to guide as well as reflect popular taste, Canadian culture would be in a desperate state.²

The CBC is government-owned and is therefore not commercially oriented as American radio and television companies are. By appearing on CBC, Callaghan was not joining the disc jockey-weather forecaster class but was aligning himself with the most powerful cultural force in Canada.

Callaghan's first venture into radio came in 1943, when he took the chairmanship of the program "Of Things to Come." By 1944 he was referred to by Eric Koch as "one of

¹In Writing in Canada, p. 28.

²Canadian Library Association Bulletin, Vol. 13, p. 110.

Canada's most popular radio personalities."¹ Within a few years Callaghan had served as chairman, panelist or commentator on CBC programs "Citizens' Forum," "Fighting Words" and "Audio."

In the talk with Robert Weaver, Callaghan explained his reasons for entering the radio and TV fields.

"I may conduct myself on several fronts. A man ought to. I never pretended to be a literary figure. I don't like being a literary figure. I like eating well and living comfortably.

.....
 "I went along for a good many years, Bob, living on writing good stories. Why did I do other things? Well, mainly because people asked me to, and the flesh is weak, and besides, you know, there is a doubtful validity to the notion that you should just be determined to write stories. You write stories when you have to write. So people ask me to do other things and I do them."²

The implication is strong, throughout the Weaver interview, that Callaghan may have tried theatre and radio because he had temporarily "written himself out." He speaks rather nostalgically in the interview of the days when the writing came easily, when he wrote what he felt he had to write without worrying about whether the work was good or not. As he published more and more, however, Callaghan says he became more interested in the way other writers wrote and began to see, as problems, aspects of writing which had not been problems before. Callaghan's extensive reading and considerable bulk of writing before 1940 may have done something to

¹ Saturday Night, October 21, 1944, p. 16.

² Pp. 19-20.

inhibit his creative spirit. He may have reached a point where, as he says, one cannot write simply because one is determined to write.

Callaghan's remark to Weaver that "people ask me to do other things and I do them" might mislead a reader into thinking Callaghan is easily swayed by the desires of others. Callaghan, in fact, has a history of not doing things that other people ask him to do. He refused to try for a Rhodes scholarship when his name was proposed, refused an offer in 1934 to become a member of the New Yorker staff, turned down the editorship of the magazine Saturday Night, and refused to accept an honorary LL.D.¹ Barbara Moon offers the following example of Callaghan's refusal to accept any job he considered "corrupting":

When Going My Way--a lovable film about a lovable Irish priest played by Bing Crosby--was about to be released, someone in Hollywood was inspired to suggest that a matching novel would be good promotion. Since Callaghan was Irish and a Roman Catholic he was obviously, it was decided, the man for the job. He laughed savagely in their faces.²

Callaghan, then, probably took on his radio work voluntarily. He liked radio from the outset because, as Eric Koch explains, "it gives him scope, as an artist, to express himself."³ However, there is something of the ham in Morley Callaghan. Koch goes on to observe that "it also

¹ Moon, Maclean's Magazine, December 3, 1960, p. 62.

² Ibid.

³ Saturday Night, October 21, 1944, p. 17.

amuses him to perform verbal acrobatics before a nationwide audience."¹

As was mentioned earlier, it is not clear whether Callaghan's venture into radio was a cause or an effect of his renewed sense of love for his native country. Whichever is true is probably immaterial, but a further result of his reacquaintance with Canada was a group of miscellaneous articles, most of them appearing in the 1950's, in which Callaghan commented on various aspects of the Canadian scene, usually taking issue with the establishment.

Callaghan began publishing stories again in 1945, when "The Importance of Henry Bowman" appeared in the January issue of Good Housekeeping. From 1945 to 1948 he continued in radio and published seven stories.² Callaghan was probably not altogether satisfied with these stories; only one of the seven, "One Spring Night," is included in the 1959 collection, Morley Callaghan's Stories.

The year 1948 was a productive one for Callaghan, quantitatively if not qualitatively. He published three stories, two articles and two books. One book was entitled Luke Baldwin's Vow, an expansion of two stories he had previously published in the Saturday Evening Post. The volume

¹ Ibid.

² Again the inadequacy of Canadian bibliographies must be mentioned. There may have been other stories, but only seven are noted in the standard bibliographic sources.

is a piece of juvenile fiction, about a boy and his dog. The story contrasts Luke's boyish idealism and natural sensitivity with his Uncle Henry's infinite, adult practicality. Luke learns that he must acquire the means to handle people like his Uncle Henry "who were kind and strong and because of their strength of character and shrewdness, dominated and flattened out the lives of others."¹ He vows to do what he can as soon as he can to insure that "he would be able to protect all that was truly valuable from the practical people in the world."² Reviewers generally found the book a shade heavy for juvenile readers but without sufficient substance for older readers. Luke does seem to develop, quite early, a sense of tempered practicality that would have stood Father Dowling and Kip Caley in good stead.

The Varsity Story

In the late 1940's the University of Toronto, which had embarked on a fund-raising drive, asked Morley Callaghan if he would write a little piece on the university which could be used in the campaign. Instead of the article the university requested, Callaghan produced a curious mixture of fact and fiction entitled The Varsity Story, the second book he published in 1948, and turned the proceeds of the book's sale over to the university.

¹Morley Callaghan, Luke Baldwin's Vow (Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Company, 1948), p. 187.

²Ibid.

The factual material in the book is of two kinds. First, the book contains hints calculated to encourage alumni and friends to give generously; reference is made to the need for a new men's residence, a new library, and more classrooms. Second, though the main characters are fictitious, actual faculty members--sometimes referred to by name, sometimes only described--are included.

Callaghan sets the story in 1924 and imports a young New Zealander, Arthur Tyndall, as his hero. Tyndall is the Warden of the university's Hart House, an athletic and cultural center on the campus. As the story opens, we learn that young Tyndall has a mastery of the facts of the university which outdoes that of the natives. But Tyndall is dissatisfied.

He had dreamed of brooding northern landscapes. That first summer-time he had gone on a fishing trip to the north shore of Lake Superior and there in the blue Algoma hills had looked upon this sombre operatic country and felt its remote loneliness, and had seen the great hills rising like cathedrals against the slashes of light made by the setting sun. In the loneliness he had found grandeur. The whole countryside, the northland, the prairies, the deep rivers, accentuated in his mind his belief that in such a land and among its people there would be a poetry, a wildness or a harsh strength. He had seemed to hear the music of Sibelius. Even the extremes of climate, the unbearably hot summers and the fiercely cold winters, suggested an extreme of character in the people, a vigour, a passion. But in this city and at this university he had felt only a dismal lack of passion. Even among the students who should be so alive and so open to intellectual stimulation, and among the Faculty men, too, he had found a peculiar mildness and a lack of true affability and charm.¹

¹Morley Callaghan, The Varsity Story (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1948), p. 11. All

Tyndall's early idea of Canada is a calendar picture notion. Once he becomes disenchanted, he thinks about why he has been disappointed and decides that the reason is the lack of common character, of common pattern, in the students and the university.

It wasn't his idea of a university at all. It was a big factory. A facts factory. It had no tone. It made no mark of its own on anybody. It was time to be honest with himself and he knew his life would be wasted there. The place had no atmosphere, no colour, no flair. (17)

In addition, the university is so fragmented, so disunified, that "it made no cultural sense at all." (18) Satisfied with his conclusions, Tyndall writes to his fiancée in New Zealand that he will be home as soon as he decently can and that she need not plan to come to Toronto.

Tyndall does not know it at the time, but he is going to stay at the university for another twenty years, searching in nooks and crannies, buttonholing people on the street and at social functions, entering discussions at faculty clubs and bohemian restaurants--always looking for the pattern of unity within the diversity which is the University of Toronto.

Very little happens in the book. There are only

future references to this novel will be to this edition and will be cited in parenthesis in the text after the quotation or paraphrase. The particular volume used for this study was obtained by mail order from a Toronto book store. It is in hard cover, is tastefully illustrated, and is autographed by both illustrator and author. The price: seventy-five cents.

two minor characters who are presented at any length, both young students who merely embody the characteristics of two academic types--the Honors student who is concerned about grades, and the Pass student who follows his inclinations at the expense of scholastic reputation. The book is largely a series of conversations between Tyndall and different faculty members and students, with Tyndall's own reflections interspersed between sections of dialogue.

Tyndall finally concludes, just before he goes to World War II, that the greatness of the university lies in the greatness of its men, both those presently on the faculty and those whose influence continues to be felt though they have gone. At his farewell dinner, Tyndall admits that the pattern for which he has searched so long has continued to elude him, but he leaves the university convinced that the pattern--the unity--is there even though he sees only its individual facets, a conclusion about the university similar to that drawn about life itself by Mike Aikenhead in They Shall Inherit the Earth.

The character in The Varsity Story toward whom Callaghan seems most favorably inclined is Tom Lane, the Pass student. Lane expresses ideas that Callaghan has expressed, and almost in Callaghan's very words. "A man should sometimes look around, see things freshly," says Lane. "I mean with his own eyes. I don't want to get trained to see the world through somebody else's eyes." (93) Lane wants to

be a writer. Tyndall thinks Lane would be a proper candidate for a Rhodes scholarship. Tom explains why he is not interested.

"All a writer has, if he is any good, Mr. Tyndall, is his own eyes and his own ears. Maybe I'm afraid of being seduced by the grandeurs and beauties of Oxford. Even around here I can recognize the Oxford men, and they're not like me. I see things the way I do because I grew up around here. It's all I have, but it's mine. If I keep it I'll at least be trying to look at the world in my own way. That's the way it is, Mr. Tyndall." (114-15)

Morley Callaghan may well have turned down the opportunity to try for a Rhodes scholarship for the same reasons. The ideas expressed by Tom Lane are in keeping with Callaghan's belief that a man can make the most of himself only if he follows his own lights.

The Varsity Story adds nothing to Callaghan's stature as an artist. The book was designed for a sub-literary purpose and is most interesting because of what it lets us know about Callaghan the man. The very fact that he wrote a book of this nature indicates the extent of his renewed interest in things Canadian.

During the long hiatus between serious novels, Callaghan can be seen to have re-examined his country, his university and, of course, himself. He had become a popular, comfortably situated personality through his radio work. What was he to write next? What sort of effort would mark his return to the full-length, serious novel? Listen to Joe Dever in his review of Callaghan's next book:

Don't know whether or not Morley Callaghan likes the smell of revival incense but it looks like he's eligible for it again. In The Loved and the Lost, his first novel in twelve years, he's still a big leaguer, he's Joltin' Joe DiMaggio, coming back in mid-September to belt the ball out of the park with three men on.¹

Some agreed. Others thought Callaghan should have stayed in the bush leagues.

The Loved and the Lost

After having lunch with Edmund Wilson in 1957, Callaghan gave the New Yorker critic a copy of The Loved and the Lost. Wilson read the book and wrote Callaghan that he found it extraordinary, "one of the high points of contemporary literature." He wanted to know when the book was scheduled for release, because "it'll cause a big stir."² Callaghan had to inform him sadly that the book had been published six years before and had failed. Callaghan was apparently fortunate that the book was published at all; his agent, Don Congdon, was turned down by eight publishers before Macmillan took the book.³

¹The Commonweal, April 20, 1951, p. 42. I have seen this jaunty, metaphoric tribute rivaled in poor taste only once in what passes as Callaghan "criticism." Martineau's dissertation actually includes this passage: "In the cosmic world of Mr. Callaghan's imagination the inhabitants go their way activated by his creative power. To some, he will give the solid fuel of love which will drive them out of the pull of the gravitational force of the material world and have them rise into the spiritual orbit of divine charity; to others he will give but the fickle liquid fuels of materialism and sexuality which will scarcely make them rise into the atmosphere where they burn out and disappear" (pp. 108-09).

²Moon, Maclean's Magazine, December 3, 1960, p. 19.

³Ibid., p. 64.

With his usual modesty, Callaghan said of the novel that "it was a great book."¹ The book has had an interesting history, which Barbara Moon outlines in her article. During the first year a mere 1,650 copies were sold, after which period the publishers somehow persuaded the New American Library to take the book for their Signet series. In the next eight years the book sold over half a million copies in Signet paperback. The garish front cover, announcing the book as "The Story of a Reckless Infatuation," plus the "teaser" on the back cover,

Innocence or Evil
 Was Peggy Sanderson good or bad?
 Was she an incredibly innocent woman
 in a cynical world--
 or was she the designing trouble-maker
 that many claimed?
 Jim McAlpine, who loved her,
 tried to find out.

may well have sold a large portion of the books on newsstands.

For a change, Callaghan identifies the city in which his novel is set. It is Montreal, and Callaghan's use of the city as a background for the story was generally praised, though, according to Robertson Davies, there were those who thought this particular story more appropriate to an American, rather than a Canadian, city.² Arthur L. Phelps is quite impressed by the use which Callaghan has made of

¹ Ibid.

² Holiday, Vol. 35, p. 16.

Montreal in The Loved and the Lost. He says,

Reading it, I suppose you may call it a book about Montreal, our most interesting Canadian city. The book is full of Montreal. It has caught the hue, texture and essence of much that is Montreal: climate, weather, street scenes, amusement places, eating places, the sense of the mountain, of the river, of the city's economic and social and racial stratifications. All these are interwoven with the stuff of the book, though never paraded in the book. The Montreal material is both incidental and inevitable. Callaghan's people happen to live in Montreal, that's all; it is inevitable that Montreal be a part of them. For the first time, it seems to me, we have a Canadian city alive in a piece of fiction.¹

Jim McAlpine, young ex-associate professor of history at the University of Toronto, has written an article in the Atlantic Monthly which has appealed to Joseph Carver, self-styled enlightened liberal editor of the Montreal Sun. Carver invites McAlpine to Montreal, and eventually McAlpine becomes an editorial page columnist for the paper. As is usual in a Callaghan novel, there is a love triangle. McAlpine squires Catherine Carver, young divorced daughter of his editor, to the various activities of her social set. McAlpine also becomes involved with Peggy Sanderson and eventually comes to love her.

Catherine is a typical Montreal socialite. Peggy is a girl who is addicted to the society of Montreal Negroes. She spends her evenings in a Negro night club, the Café St. Antoine, and is friendly with the customers, the help and the jazz band. She is a girl who is completely independent

¹Canadian Writers (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Limited, 1953), p. 11.

in mind and spirit, lives in a monastic little room, and moves from one job to another, as her successive employers find out about her friendship with the Negroes.

McAlpine becomes fascinated by Peggy. He wants to understand her, to find out, as the back cover of the Signet edition puts it, whether she is "an incredibly innocent woman in a cynical world" or "the designing trouble-maker that many claimed." Eventually a racial brawl erupts at the St. Antoine, indirectly precipitated by Peggy, and she is loudly rejected by Negroes and whites alike. McAlpine finds her back at her room and asks whether he may remain with her that night. Although she says he may, he decides not to, telling himself that she may be accepting his love for the wrong reasons. When he returns to her in the morning, he finds that she has been murdered. Catherine Carver gives the police a clue which connects McAlpine with the crime, but he is shortly cleared. Nevertheless, he feels responsible for the murder, since he did not stay with Peggy.

Callaghan does much with this rather unlikely material, and the artistry of the work was generally praised. Ripley, for example, finds that the book "shows a maturity of artistry beyond anything he has achieved in his previous work."¹ One reason for the favorable critical commentary about the book's artistry was Callaghan's effective use of symbols. Though Callaghan had made some small use of sym-

¹P. 138.

bolism in the earlier novels, it will be remembered that an extensive employment of complex, esoteric symbols was from the first foreign to his artistic credo.¹ Understandably, therefore, the symbolism in The Loved and the Lost is, in the terms of his artistic aim, "transparent as glass." It is used not to evade, but to assist the reader in "seeing the thing as it actually is."

The novel's first sentence mentions the first symbol--the mountain: "Joseph Carver, the publisher of the Montreal Sun, lived on the mountain."² The opening sentences go on:

Nearly all the rich families in Montreal lived on the mountain. It was always there to make them feel secure. . . . Those who wanted things to remain as they were liked the mountain. Those who wanted a change preferred the broad flowing river. But no one could forget either of them. (1)

For McAlpine (possibly a label name) the mountain symbolizes what he has always wanted--wealth and prominence. Callaghan provides McAlpine with a childhood suitable to his adult desires. He describes the mountain as "looming up like a great jagged brown hedge" and later Jim tells of a childhood incident in which he was separated from some wealthy young friends by a "tall dark hedge" surrounding their palatial home. Jim tells of running away from the house,

¹Supra, pp. 40-41.

²Morley Callaghan, The Loved and the Lost (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1951), p. 1. All future references to this novel will be to this edition and will be cited in parenthesis in the text after the quotation or paraphrase.

and then, "He stopped, breathing hard, his fists clenched, and stared back at the gleaming hedge, darker than the night, and whispered fiercely, 'Just wait. Just wait.'" (9) The reader accustomed to wrestling with the symbolism of D. H. Lawrence or William Butler Yeats will find the symbolic use of the mountain a bit too pat, but the use is in keeping with the essential simplicity of Callaghan's art.

Callaghan makes traditional use of whiteness in the novel. As Fajardo has noted, "The snow [is] used consistently as a symbol of Peggy, of her purity, of the delicate insistence of her love. Wherever and whenever she appears, or McAlpine thinks of her, the scene is projected on a background of snow."¹ After McAlpine shifts his goals and sees that he wants Peggy even if it is at the expense of prominent position, Callaghan joins the mountain and color symbols:

[McAlpine] stood there, for the enchanting, peaceful, pure whiteness of the snowbound city strengthened his faith in Peggy. And he didn't even look up at the black barrier of the mountain. In the snowstorm he could hardly see it. He didn't want to see it. (60)

Callaghan introduces the saloon owner Wolgast's "white horse" as a symbolic example of how an impulse that is basically good can be perverted. At one point Wolgast explains his childhood dream to McAlpine, a dream of owning a beautiful white horse. His father's last words to him, spoken on the day of the first snowfall, were, "Try and own

¹P. 83.

a white horse of your own someday, son. Try hard." (155)
 After Wolgast left a life of poverty in Poland and became a moderate business success in Montreal, he thought he had achieved his "white horse" and was determined not to let Peggy destroy it for him by bringing Negro friends to his place of business.

Two other symbols appear quite early and recur throughout the book. Jim meets Peggy as she is on her way to see a leopard carved of wood. To Peggy and Jim the crouched leopard suggests what crouched leopards usually suggest--ferocity, power, and lurking violence. When McAlpine learns that some of Peggy's friends are "violent guys," he senses in her a perverse attraction to violence and relates his feeling to her reaction to the carved leopard:

She had been held in the spell of all the fierce jungle wildness the cat suggested. She had waited, rapt and still, for the beast to spring at her and devour her. He must have suspected then that her gentle innocence was attracted perversely to violence, like a temperament seeking its opposite. In fact there was some proof now that this was so. (101)

After the two have seen the leopard, Peggy takes Jim to see a little, out-of-the-way church. Callaghan blends the images of the church and the snow:

The church hung there in the snow; it could sail away lightly like a ship in the snow. Then he turned and looked at Peggy's lifted face, on which the snowflakes glistened and melted, making her blink her eyes. He looked again at the church and then at her face. Her shoulders were white, his own arms were white, and the slanting snow whirled around them. Feeling wonderfully lighthearted he started to laugh. (33)

Later, by himself, McAlpine tries to find the church, but he cannot. "He had missed the church and it bothered him. He had missed also the solitary satisfaction he had sought. And maybe it meant he would miss Peggy too." (77)

In the last four pages of the novel, Callaghan draws the symbols together. McAlpine has just been released from jail, no longer suspected of the crime.

All night the snow had been melting. Parts of the city were still shadowed by the heavy mountain darkness against the sky.

He wanted to walk for hours until he could understand that what had happened was not a stupid irrational mockery of his love. He had to know truly, and no matter how it lacerated his heart, what had prompted him to draw back in that fatal moment in her room instead of abandoning himself impulsively and going headlong with her and never leaving her no matter what she was. Oh, what had compelled him to put her beyond him? Always the high dark hedge, the black barrier. The lights and the laughter and the singing on the other side of the hedge. He had to figure it out. (231-32)

McAlpine knows he failed Peggy. He relates that failure to Wolgast's white horse. He thinks that he, too, "had come to Montreal to ride a white horse. Maybe that was why I was always trying to change her. That was the sin. I couldn't accept her as she was." (232) McAlpine then has a fantasy; a group of men come charging down the mountain on white horses. McAlpine stands beside Peggy in the snow. He draws back out of the way, and the riders trample Peggy in the snow. McAlpine realizes that "in a moment of jealous doubt his faith in her had weakened, he had lost his view of her, and so she had vanished. She had vanished off the earth. And now he was alone." (233)

McAlpine imagines that if he can find the little church Peggy showed him, he can somehow keep her with him. He hears the bells, but always, as he approaches them, they begin ringing somewhere else.

But he went on with his tireless search. He wandered around in the neighborhood between Phillips Square and St. Patrick's. He wandered in the strong morning sunlight. It was warm and brilliant. It melted the snow. But he couldn't find the little church. (234)

The symbols are integrated throughout the book, are coherent, and are brought together in the conclusion. They do not jut up as obstacles above the terrain of the novel. They are a part of the novel's landscape and are not imposed upon it.

If the symbolism of The Loved and the Lost is fairly straightforward, other aspects of the book are not. The novel is mystifying on several counts. Arthur L. Phelps says, "To me it is an exasperating and baffling book. As I read, I am always wondering how much is really in it."¹ At the simplest level, the level of what happens, the critics exhibited confusion about whether Peggy's murderer is known or not. The detective investigating the crime suggests, "What if we all did it? The human condition. That has truth, don't you think?" (230) Callaghan may well have left the murder unsolved because that was his view. Ripley, Martineau and Claude T. Bissell state without any expression of doubt that the murder was committed by persons unknown. Edmund Wilson asserts firmly that Peggy was raped and killed "by a white

¹p. 11.

man who has been laying siege to her, who has set off the brawl in the Negro night club by his brutal public advances, and who has been badly beaten up by the Negroes."¹ Though certain facts point to the man to whom Wilson is referring, a prominent newspaper man named Walter Malone, he and all the other suspects are protected with alibis. The "human condition" is left as the most likely suspect.

The leading characters present an interesting contrast. McAlpine is an understandable man. His motivations are clear.

The job on the Sun was the kind of job he had always dreamed of. He had come to it after many years of waiting since the night on the Havelock beach when he had run along the road and then had stopped and looked back at the hedge, muttering, "Just wait!" That night, the end of his boyhood, he had lain awake for hours dreaming of making a name for himself someday so no one would ever have to ask again who he was. He had waited and had suffered many humiliations but had known the day would come when his talents would be recognized. Now the main chance had come. He could get his own column on the Sun; he would be read; he would go on from there to a bigger world. It was time, then, to realize what was expedient and what was inexpedient. It certainly would be unwise to see Peggy again. (102)

Once he falls in love with Peggy, he retains his earlier ambitions, though not so strongly, and wants her to share them with him. He feels the resentment toward Peggy of both Negroes and whites and tries patiently to draw her away from her present way of life. But at the critical moment, he deserts her. He doubts the fullness of her love for him and suspects her of feeling only gratitude. He fears that

¹The New Yorker, November 26, 1960, p. 230.

if one of her Negro friends had been first at her side after the night club brawl, that Negro would have consoled her and she would have felt similar gratitude. Less than an hour after he leaves, she is killed.

So McAlpine is an understandable man. Peggy Sander-son, on the other hand, is an enigmatic woman. If one believes her saint, sinner, martyr or typical Canadian girl, the substantiating evidence may be found in the book. The question of her character is one that must be answered, since one's interpretation of the meaning of the book hinges on the answer.

Edmund Wilson says Peggy "evidently--though we are never told explicitly--does not sleep with either her white or her colored admirers."¹ Roy Daniells, however, refers to Peggy's promiscuity, "not proved but constantly suggested."² Desmond Pacey observes that Peggy "seems willing to submit to the amorous advances of almost anyone."³ The novel supplies circumstantial and hearsay evidence to support both views of Peggy; nevertheless, it seems only fair to give Peggy's virtue the benefit of the doubt, since Callaghan could obviously have proven her promiscuity conclusively in a few words, but he did not choose to do so.

¹The New Yorker, November 26, 1960, pp. 226, 228.

²"Literature: Poetry and the Novel," The Culture of Contemporary Canada, ed. Julian Park (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1957), p. 35.

³Creative Writing in Canada, p. 214.

Albert Gillotti sees Peggy as a martyr. In his thesis he says,

Peggy Sanderson got exactly what she desired so fervently, but which she was unaware she desired--death. For it is a death wish, an unconscious, dark, hideous death wish that has informed all her actions, a dream of death that dominated her soul.¹

McAlpine has either seen or imagined this aspect of Peggy's personality. He saw her drawn to the violence of the leopard as well as to the serenity of the church. When he explains the history of his relationship with Peggy to Catherine and Mr. Carver, he speaks of "the fact that she courted destruction." (227)

F. W. Watt refers to Peggy as "the saint."² Edmund Wilson agrees. He says, "She is actually a kind of saint, and yet nothing is more admirable in the novel than the way in which Mr. Callaghan never lapses into mysticism or sentimentality but always makes her a believable girl."³ Harvey Swados, on the other hand, finds Peggy thoroughly unbelievable. "Peggy is merely an abstraction," he says, "and her demise means only another page to be turned."⁴

Within the story, as Wilson has pointed out, the other characters cannot "rise to the level of believing that such a person as she exists."⁵ All the whites think Peggy

¹Pp. 31-32.

²The Dalhousie Review, Vol. 39, p. 313.

³The New Yorker, November 26, 1960, p. 228.

⁴"Two Novels," The Nation, April 14, 1951, p. 352.

⁵The New Yorker, November 26, 1960, pp. 228, 230.

has an abnormal desire for Negro men. The Negro women feel the same way. As the Negro bandleader Elton Wagstaffe says, "They think they know. Being women, I mean, they know what's going on, they think--and they hate her guts." (95) Wagstaffe also describes the attitude of the Negro men.

"The boys sit around watching each other and suspicious and sore; watching each other. Maybe each guy by himself would leave her alone, or believe it was beautiful having her with us just the way she is; but he don't trust the next guy. They figure they know each other." (95)

The only exception to the general opinion of Peggy is McAlpine's, and even he had doubts just when it was necessary that he be most sure.

Apparently Peggy is not "convincing" to the other characters in the book, and many readers are similarly unconvinced, perhaps for the same reason: they can not rise to the level of believing that such a person as she exists. Some accused Callaghan of vagueness, of inadequate characterization, because Peggy is a mysterious quantity. More probable is the fact that Callaghan believed in Peggy, as a quotation from the Weaver interview will presently indicate, and wrote a book calculated to reinforce the beliefs of believers while leaving the cynics unconvinced.

Different interpretations of the book's theme have been proffered by the critics. Roy Daniells has said,

Above all, there transpires through the lines of the story the difficulty of maintaining one's individuality in a cosmopolitan city, the home of brutalized minds at every level, the breeding ground of suspicion,

hatred, and murder.¹

What Daniells says is true; "it's in the book." The city is the leveler, the equalizer. Peggy was hated by both races and by people from all social strata, by some because she might be as bad as she appeared to be, by others because she might be as good as she appeared to be. However, this is not Callaghan's theme. There are deeper issues.

Claude T. Bissell observes that in The Loved and the Lost, "Callaghan is still fascinated by the baffling dialectics of good and evil, by the contrast between the easy moral dichotomies of society and the revaluation enforced by sympathetic spiritual insight."² This is true, and it is a very important comment. The readiness of society either to praise or condemn purely on the basis of moral precept or legality, because society lacks the sympathetic spiritual insight which would temper unqualified conclusions, has been a source of concern to Callaghan in virtually all the novels--especially It's Never Over, Such Is My Beloved, More Joy in Heaven and The Loved and the Lost. However, the comment is not sufficiently specific to explain The Loved and the Lost. It is only one element in the book.

The racial issue has obvious importance in the novel; on one level the book is "about" Negro-white relations.

¹In The Culture of Contemporary Canada, p. 36.

²"Letters in Canada: Fiction," University of Toronto Quarterly, Vol. 21 (April, 1952), p. 260.

Arthur L. Phelps, who considers the novel one of Callaghan's finest, has said,

Without parading his intention, without moralizing or didacticism, just as something inwoven with his story, I think Callaghan has written a novel on what we call the racial problem that approaches greatness in its insight and inevitability. In this book I am inclined to think Callaghan, as preparation and schooling, has justified all he has done before.¹

Earlier in his discussion Phelps makes an even more probing observation when he says,

To put it briefly and far too simply, the theme of The Loved and the Lost involves racial differences and prejudices and barriers and the attempt through Peggy, the book's heroine, to go below and beyond all such to something deeper, to a common human solvent in human innocence and sympathy.²

Strange Fugitive gave every appearance of being a jazz age chronicle of a bootlegger. On its surface, More Joy in Heaven was concerned with prison reform. Phelps seems to realize that, as was true of those novels, Callaghan has used the incidents which make up the novel's surface to explore deeper issues.

Callaghan said in the Weaver interview about The Loved and the Lost:

My point that emerged out of the book and which was very disturbing to everybody and quite unsatisfactory, was that the Negroes of course, being men, had the nature of men, and white men had their nature, and it was the same human nature. You see, what people didn't understand was that I was really writing a book completely destructive of class valuations.³

That last sentence makes it plain that The Loved and the Lost

¹Pp. 17-18. ²Ibid., p. 12. ³P. 25.

is Peggy's book, not McAlpine's. She is the only character who lives as though class valuations were meaningless. In terms of Callaghan's "great sin," racial prejudice becomes one mean and desperate factor which blocks Peggy off from being what she should be. It also blocks both Negroes and whites from fulfilling their possibilities as men. The Negroes are confined to economic and social ghettos. Similarly, the prejudice of the whites against the Negroes keeps them from fulfilling the better part of their nature. Callaghan has said, "A man's nature is a very tangled web, shot through with gleams of heavenly light, no doubt, and the darkness of what we call evil forces."¹ In The Loved and the Lost Callaghan seems to be saying that prejudice against the Negroes is one aspect of the whites which darkens their own "gleams of heavenly light."

In addition, Callaghan has said that one point of his book is the common nature of men, whether black or white. Both races are equally suspicious of Peggy. Because of her, violence breaks out between whites and Negroes in the night club. Violence shortly thereafter destroys her. The animal nature of man, as symbolized by the leopard, overcomes the heavenly light, symbolized by the little church. McAlpine's failure to find the church without Peggy to guide him may signify that the world is not yet ready for people like Peggy, as the world is not yet ready for a man like Father

¹Weaver, p. 23.

Dowling. One may read Such Is My Beloved and The Loved and the Lost as statements by Callaghan that the Peggys and Father Dowlings can never survive in our world, but Callaghan probably feels that such people cannot survive in our world as it presently exists. As each man has possibilities which he has not fulfilled, so does humanity itself. McAlpine cannot find the church, but, as Roy Daniells concludes,

The existence of a centre of peace, of holiness, and of light is implied. If never found, it is ever sought, and there is no implication that it does not exist or that its existence is purely a subjective one--only that a cloud surrounds it.¹

¹In The Culture of Contemporary Canada, p. 36.

CHAPTER V

CONFIDENT AND SURE: 1952

I was now feeling confident and sure of myself. In the last ten years I had written The Loved and the Lost, The Many Colored Coat and A Passion in Rome. What Hemingway might have thought of any of these books, or whether he had even read one of them, had ceased to matter to me.

Walter Callaghan

CHAPTER V

CONFIDENT AND SURE: 1952-

Morley Callaghan's Articles and Morley Callaghan's Stories

From 1952 through 1958 Callaghan wrote a few stories, but he devoted most of his time to radio and television work and to publishing a group of articles which reflect his re-awakened interest in Canada. The first of these articles was "It Was News in Paris--Not in Toronto,"¹ in which Callaghan discusses the activities of the Toronto Institute of Mediaeval Studies. This is the article in which Callaghan describes his association with Jacques Maritain in 1933. In 1953 Callaghan wrote an article entitled "University of Toronto" for Holiday.² This is the only article or story of the 1952-1958 period which appears in a magazine other than Canada's popular Maclean's Magazine and Saturday Night, yet another indication of Callaghan's intensified interest in his homeland.

The year 1954 saw the publication of "Writers and Critics: A Minor League."³ In the article Callaghan takes

¹Saturday Night, June 5, 1951, pp. 8, 17-18.

²Vol. 13 (March, 1953), pp. 75-76ff.

³Saturday Night, November 6, 1954, pp. 7-8.

issue with the restraint and timidity of Canadian critics. Callaghan complains that the relationship between the Canadian writer and the Canadian critic is "mild, chummy and folksy and minor league."¹ Callaghan says that his own relationship with the critics has been "amiable" and seems to wish that the relationship were not quite so bland. He says that if the reviewers would

let themselves go and lay about them openly with the bludgeons of their wild prejudices and fierce frustrations and foolish vanities, then they might make an author feel that he was alive; he would shake himself and stir and let his cry of pain be heard across the land.²

Little did Callaghan know he was soon to have an opportunity to let his own cry of pain be heard. After A Passion in Rome was published, the Canadian critics who resented Edmund Wilson's praise of Callaghan's work turned suddenly vicious. In the words of George Woodcock,

the hunt was on, the reviewers a pack in full cry, and the incident reached its deplorable climax when the author, run to earth in a Fighting Words [television] programme, turned on his critics with all the petulance of a bitterly disappointed man.³

¹ Ibid., p. 8.

² Ibid., pp. 7-8.

³ "The Callaghan Case," Canadian Literature, No. 12 (Spring, 1962), p. 61. A letter to George Woodcock, requesting the text or substance of Callaghan's remarks on the "Fighting Words" program, remains unanswered. A letter from Evelyn M. Teasdale of the CBC reads in part: "This program ended in 1962, and there is no way we can trace the particular program you are inquiring about. The discussions were unscripted and consequently there was never any printed material available."

Though the text of the television program is not available, reports indicate that Callaghan behaved badly when faced with the sort of criticism in which he had urged Canadian critics to engage. According to Paul West,

Callaghan responded out of all proportion; authors of fixed repute should not, it seems, be subjected to hostile criticism. But who else can withstand it? Does the Canadian novelist feel so precarious and vulnerable that, when a reviewer does a hatchet job on him, he must bleat about an effort to "destroy"?¹

Callaghan seems to condone the laying about with bludgeons but not with hatchets.

In November, 1955, Callaghan published "The Ontario Story: Paradox of Progress,"² a descriptive, historical, anecdotal and occasionally nostalgic account of his own province. A disconcerting experience with the customs office probably spurred Callaghan to write his next article, "Censorship: The Amateurs and the Law."³ Callaghan had been sent a book by a New York publisher, but a customs clerk had refused to give it to him, maintaining that it was "indecent." Callaghan's point in the article is that those indecency-conscious citizens who speak of the "flood of filth" should haul suspected violators into court, instead of slandering authors whose books are legally sold throughout Canada.

¹"Canadian Fiction and Its Critics," The Canadian Forum, Vol. 41 (March, 1962), p. 265.

²Saturday Night, November 12, 1955, pp. 7-8.

³Saturday Night, February 4, 1956, pp. 9-10.

"Why Shouldn't We Be Like the Americans?"¹ and "Let's Go Easy on the U.S.A."² are both pieces in which Callaghan argues against the typically Canadian tendency to blame the country's difficulties on the people "across the line"--the Americans. In "Canada's Creeping 'Me Too' Sickness"³ Callaghan decries the tendency to conform which he sees throughout Canadian society. "We're on the Wrong Track in Our Culture Quest"⁴ is yet another article in which Callaghan disagrees with the establishment. The formation of the Canada Council spurred Callaghan to write the article, in which he expresses his ideas as to how the money at the Council's disposal should be used. The last article of the 1952-1958 period is "Holiday Weekend in Montreal,"⁵ which merely chronicles the events of a weekend which Morley and Loretto Callaghan spent in the French-Canadian city.

The preceding brief outline of Callaghan's journalistic production in the 1950's should be sufficient to indicate the direction of his activity in the popular Canadian magazines. He became a sort of gadfly, poking fun at the complacent and jarring the conservative elements in

¹ Maclean's Magazine, June 23, 1956, pp. 6, 81-82.

² Maclean's Magazine, June 7, 1958, pp. 13ff.

³ Saturday Night, April 13, 1957, pp. 18-19, 38.

⁴ Maclean's Magazine, May 25, 1957, pp. 8, 86-87.

⁵ Maclean's Magazine, August 30, 1958, pp. 12-15.

Canadian society. However, Callaghan had not abandoned fiction. Even as he engaged in television work and churned out articles, activities which enabled him to achieve his two professed pleasures--"eating well and living comfortably"--he was hard at work on two books which were not to come out until several years later. The Many Colored Coat was published in a magazine version as early as 1955; A Passion in Rome was partially based on a trip Callaghan took to Rome in 1958, though the novel did not appear until 1961. Before either of these novels was published, however, roughly half of the short stories were finally brought out as a collection.

Morley Callaghan's Stories appeared in 1959.¹ Here is part of Callaghan's prefatory address to the reader: "Many other stories I have written might have been included in this book, but these are the ones that touch the times and moods and people I like to remember now." The times Callaghan liked to remember in 1959 seem to be "the good old days"; of the fifty-seven stories in the collection,² twelve

¹Morley Callaghan, Morley Callaghan's Stories (Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited, 1959). Macmillan also brought out Stories in London in 1959. Also in London, MacGibbon and Kee published Volume One of a story collection in 1961 and Volume Two in 1964. I have been unable to obtain the MacGibbon and Kee books, so I do not know whether the stories are the same as those appearing in the Macmillan edition or not. In 1963 in New York, St. Martin's Press brought out a collection of the stories. Since St. Martin's is an affiliate of Macmillan's, their edition is perhaps the same as the 1959 Canadian edition.

²Some of the Callaghan critics cannot add. Margaret Avison's count totals fifty-six, Martineau's fifty-eight.

are from A Native Argosy (1929) and thirty-two are from Now That April's Here (1936).

Of his stories Callaghan has said,

Those stories are very good. . . . I haven't the slightest worry about those stories. Those stories will be read--the trouble is that fashions come and go, and those stories don't belong to any fashion. People will come upon them sooner or later.¹

It has taken some decades, but the critics have "come upon" Callaghan's stories and have come to realize their quality. In 1929 John Chamberlain had said of A Native Argosy, "The stories in the present collection are mostly devoted to the inhabitants of Moronia."² In the same year, and speaking of the same collection, R. N. Linscott had similarly remarked, "All the stories are studies of failure or frustration, and most of the characters are morons."³ The critics saw the naturalistic elements--Fred Lewis Pattee's onion sandwiches--and failed to see what Maxwell Perkins and the Paris group had seen, that these stories, as Callaghan himself has claimed, were not "like anybody else's stories."⁴ The critics who reviewed Morley Callaghan's Stories were not so apt to link Callaghan with the naturalists or with Ernest Hemingway as were those of thirty years before. The following comments by

¹Weaver, p. 16.

²"Morley Callaghan's Inarticulate People," New York Times Book Review, March 24, 1929, p. 9.

³New York Herald Tribune Books, April 7, 1929, p. 7.

⁴Weaver, p. 17.

Desmond Pacey are typical of the praise bestowed, twenty-five or thirty years late, on Callaghan's short stories: "[Callaghan's] stories are good by any standards, but by comparison with most of the romantic tales being spun in Canada in the twenties they stand out like pyramids in the desert."¹ Pacey later concludes that Callaghan's stories "are easily the best short stories to be written by a Canadian in the first half of this century."² There are few who have disagreed with Pacey's conclusion.

Edmund Wilson and The Many Colored Coat

In 1955 Callaghan won a Maclean's Magazine prize of \$5,000 for his novel The Man with the Coat.³ Though Macleans published what Hugo McPherson has called a "mercilessly edited" version of the novel, Callaghan continued to work on the book. Two years after its first publication, Callaghan told Robert Weaver he had just finished the rewrite. "Right now I hope it's pretty good. If I see that it isn't I'll just have to look at it again."⁴ Callaghan either took another look or could not find a publisher; the book did not appear until 1960.

¹In Klinck, p. 675.

²Ibid., p. 689.

³Variously misnamed Man in the Raincoat and Man in the White Coat by some critics.

⁴p. 29.

"The publishing event of the year [in Canada] was the appearance of The Many Colored Coat by Morley Callaghan,"¹ said Earle Birney in 1961. According to Birney, critics in both Canada and the United States found The Many Colored Coat to be "his best book and one that should place him in the first rank of living novelists."² It sounds as though Birney was unfamiliar with the highly frustrating aftermath of the book's publication.

In 1960 Callaghan found a champion in John Geoghegan, president of the Coward-McCann publishing firm. Geoghegan hoped that by publishing Callaghan's novel he might "start something of a rediscovery for him."³ The week the novel came out, Celebrity Service Incorporated, a New York firm which supplies guest celebrities for television shows and feeds gossip to the columnists, named Callaghan "Celebrity of the Day." According to Barbara Moon, "the only other Canadians the outfit has ever found worthy were [comedians] Wayne and Shuster."⁴

Callaghan's celebrity lasted little more than a day. The Many Colored Coat came out in August, 1960. In that month

¹"Canadian Literature," The Americana Annual, 1961 vol., p. 118.

²Ibid.

³"Trade Winds," Saturday Review, January 21, 1961, p. 14.

⁴Maclean's Magazine, December 3, 1960, p. 19.

Coward-McCann gave a cocktail party in Callaghan's honor, celebrating the novel's appearance. Says John Geoghegan,

I won't say nobody came, but thank God for the loyal office staff. Except for Harrison Smith and Whit Burnett, none of his old New York literary friends appeared. It seemed that Morley was a ghost to most people, and I had a suspicion that they would prefer not to have him popping up like this. After all, he had once been mentioned in the same breath with Hemingway and Fitzgerald in the late Twenties and early Thirties. . . . After that the war and descent into obscurity.¹

After the cocktail party fiasco, Coward-McCann sent the customary copies of The Many Colored Coat to other writers who might reasonably have been expected to reply with the customary quotes that could be used in publicity blurbs. The only two who responded were Alfred Kazin and Callaghan's old friend Erskine Caldwell. The publishing firm, Geoghegan continues, then

sent out a long biography on Morley to all the literary columnists around the country detailing his life from his Paris days . . . and explaining the long silence between 1940 and 1950. No one picked up a single item except Bill Hogan of the San Francisco Chronicle, who ran his column over a headline that said, "Whatever happened to Morley Callaghan?"²

¹Saturday Review, January 21, 1961, p. 14.

²Ibid., pp. 14, 16. In response to a letter asking for a copy of the "long biography" Geoghegan mentions, Judy Van Gieson of the Coward-McCann editorial department answered in part: "I've searched our files for the 'long biography' you requested without success. At the end of 1960 we released some anecdotes of his for publicity purposes, which may be what the Saturday Review article referred to. I'm enclosing a copy of the anecdotes herewith." A subsequent letter to Coward-McCann, requesting any further information available in the "Callaghan file" remains unanswered, as does a similar letter to Random House. According to a letter dated March 6, 1966, from Catherine Bent of the editorial

It will be remembered that Earle Birney spoke of the rave reviews the book received. Geoghegan must not have read the same reviews, for he says, "The reviews were scattered, small, and damned with faint praise. Nobody mentioned Morley's career, his work to date, or anything like that. They didn't seem to know him either."¹

Enter Edmund Wilson. He read the book and phoned Callaghan to tell him he found The Many Colored Coat, as he had found The Loved and the Lost, "extraordinary" and that he intended to do "a major appreciation" of Callaghan's work in The New Yorker. Callaghan was perhaps thinking wishfully when he said, "The Wilson piece might do the trick."² The book had done nothing, and Coward-McCann realized the need for a miracle; they hoped Wilson might produce one. Geoghegan continues with his story:

Even the reprinters who had taken The Loved and the Lost in 1951 didn't want this one, and Morley appeared to be forever lost, lost, lost. By November, when the novel was already past the three-month life span given to most fiction in which to do or die, Wilson pronounced his historic words.

I guess I flipped my lid. I sent wires, air mail letters, postcards, and whispered prayers to the magazines, columnists, reviewers, the book trade, everybody, telling them the news.³

department, Scribner's is reorganizing its files and is not presently honoring requests for information about its authors.

¹Ibid., p. 16.

²Quoted in Moon, Maclean's Magazine, December 3, 1960, p. 19.

³Saturday Review, January 21, 1961, p. 16.

In his thesis Albert Gillotti says that "the immediate result of Wilson's article was an increase in Callaghan's sales."¹

Geoghegan, who was in a better position to know, said,

The silence has continued to be deafening. To date we've had reorders for about fifty copies.

For Morley we all tried very hard. Frustration and cynicism have not set in. I am still an eager-beaver publisher.²

Wilson's "major appreciation," entitled "Morley Callaghan of Toronto," appeared in the November 26, 1960, issue of The New Yorker. In the article Wilson speaks generally about Callaghan and Canada, and specifically about The Loved and the Lost (nine years late) and The Many Colored Coat. We should be wary of Wilson's generalizations because, as he admits in the article, he had at that time read only one of Callaghan's earlier books, apparently Such Is My Beloved. Wilson's oft-quoted opening sentence provides a keynote for the direction the article is going to take: "The Canadian Morley Callaghan, at one time well known in the United States, is today perhaps the most unjustly neglected novelist in the English-speaking world."³ Wilson sketches in Callaghan's early life and accounts for his fading away in terms of his nationality: "It is one of the most striking signs of the partial isolation of [Canada] from the rest of the cultural world that . . . he

¹P. 50.

²Saturday Review, January 21, 1961, p. 16.

³The New Yorker, November 26, 1960, p. 224.

should quickly have been forgotten in the United States and should be almost unknown in England."¹

Wilson goes on to speculate further about the current indifference to Callaghan's work, then moves to a direct consideration of The Loved and the Lost and The Many Colored Coat. Wilson rounds off his article with the following sentence:

The reviewer, at the end of this article, after trying to give an account of these books, is now wondering whether the primary reason for the current under-estimation of Morley Callaghan may not be simply a general incapacity--apparently shared by his compatriots--for believing that a writer whose work may be mentioned without absurdity in association with Chekhov's and Turgenev's can possibly exist in our day in Toronto.²

The Canadian critics were scandalized at the suggestion that while they were out prospecting elsewhere, acres of diamonds lay neglected in their own back yard. In a 1962 article entitled "The Callaghan Case," George Woodcock first outlines Callaghan's modest success in the eyes of the critics, then goes on in the typically Canadian ironic manner to take issue with Wilson:

But nobody, to my knowledge, suggested that one of the world's great writers, fit to be compared with the finest talents of the past, dwelt among us in the modest obscurity of Toronto.

It was left to an American critic, the eloquent and eclectic Edmund Wilson, to make this astonishing discovery. Callaghan, Wilson claimed, was an author fit to be classed with Turgenev and Chekhov.³

Woodcock continues by maintaining that Callaghan has little in common with the Russian writers Wilson mentions, jabs at

¹Ibid. ²Ibid., p. 237.

³Canadian Literature, No. 12, p. 60.

Wilson by stating that "the occasional irresponsibilities of critical mandarins are liable to have disconcerting effects in a literary world excessively concerned with the semblances of prestige,"¹ refers to "the false fame created by Edmund Wilson's indiscretion,"² and then proceeds almost gloatingly to chop Callaghan's next novel (A Passion in Rome) to bits, maintaining that "it is clumsy, prolix and dull. The structure is ramshackle, the characters do not convince, the prose is Callaghan's worst."³

Wilson wondered why the Canadians were so indignant about his "appreciation," why it was described with such terms as "Yankee imperialism." In a subsequent article he explained what he discovered:

I was told that the accepted opinion in Canada was that Callaghan could write short stories but was incapable of writing novels, and that they resented my praising these latter. I was thus, from their point of view, trying to dispose of Canadian property in the same way that other Americans had done when they bought up Canadian industries or had attempted to dictate to the Canadian government the policies that our government would prefer to see it follow. When I asked one of the younger novelists to account for the annoyance I had caused, he replied that I must understand that to be an artist in Canada was regarded as "a kind of sin, and to be a good artist makes it worse."⁴

The colossal size of the Canadian critics' inferiority complex is quite evident. In an attempt to avoid the charge of chauvinism which might result from excessive praise of

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., p. 61.

³Ibid., p. 63.

⁴"A Reporter at Large: An American's Notes on Canadian Culture," Part II, The New Yorker, November 21, 1964, p. 64.

one of their own writers, they have overcompensated by denying the value of Callaghan's contribution to contemporary literature.

The title The Many Colored Coat comes from the chapters of Genesis, beginning with the thirty-seventh, which relate the story of Joseph. The "Joseph" of the novel is Harry Lane, a public relations director for the Sweetman Distillery of Montreal. Harry is young, successful and popular; he is everybody's friend, forever surrounded by free-loaders and people wanting favors. Dame Fortune seems at first to smile on him as she did on the biblical Joseph.

Harry finds a person he needs in Scotty Bowman. Scotty is a respectable, fiftyish bank manager, who is attracted to Lane's glamorous way of life. The two become friends--Scotty because he enjoys the change from his humdrum existence, Harry because he finds satisfaction in the relationship with the older, substantial, sincere Scotty, who is so different from the rest of his associates.

Harry gets an inside tip on an oil stock from a friend whose life he had saved. Scotty suggests that Harry take fifteen thousand shares from his friend "on loan," give the stock to Scotty's bank as security for a loan, and pay his friend for the stock with the borrowed money. The current market value of the stock is one dollar per share, and the anticipated rise once the oil well comes in will be to five dollars per share. Scotty tells Harry he has arranged

the loan, though Harry knows the stock is highly doubtful as security. After the transaction has been effected, Scotty asks Harry whether he may have five of the fifteen thousand shares as payment for the favor. At first Harry is shocked at the suggestion, but he realizes he would probably not have obtained the loan if Scotty had not vouched for his character, so he agrees to the proposition.

Some time previously, Scotty Bowman had helped an ex-fighter named Mike Kon to start a tailor shop. Mike felt extreme loyalty and gratitude to Scotty for making the shop possible. Mike thinks Harry is a phony and does not like the way Scotty trails along with him. Eventually Harry comes to Mike's shop and orders a summer suit, which later, at the literal level, will become "the many colored coat" of the novel's title.

The oil well proves to be worthless, and the stock plummets to a dime per share. When the bank examiner comes to see him, Harry is astounded to find that the loan had not been approved by the bank, that Scotty had told the bank he had received thirty thousand shares as security instead of fifteen thousand, and that the bank examiner suspects him of having persuaded Scotty to arrange the illegal transaction. To the examiner it is unthinkable that Scotty would have placed his career in jeopardy without Harry's urging. Harry, however, is sure that Scotty has the integrity to admit that Harry knew nothing of the transaction's illegality.

Before Scotty is arrested for fraud and misrepresentation, he makes Harry promise not to mention the five thousand share arrangement between them; if that fact comes out, says Scotty, the entire transaction would look like a "cooked-up deal."

At Scotty's trial for embezzlement, his lawyer questions Harry Lane in such a way that onlookers in the courtroom get the impression Harry has persuaded Scotty to make the loan. Mike Kon, the tailor, testifies about a conversation between him and Harry in the tailor shop. Though Harry was kidding Mike, Mike's literal recollection of Harry's actual words becomes extremely damaging to Harry's reputation. Everyone now believes that Harry has taken advantage of Scotty's friendship and good nature, though Harry has faith that all will be made clear when Scotty takes the stand; he knows the honest Scotty will tell the truth.

But Scotty's lawyer will not let him take the stand. Harry leaps to his feet, to demand that he be allowed to take the stand again. He wants to tell the court that Scotty had pleaded that he be given five thousand shares, but he sees that it is too late, that he will be suspected of conspiracy. He also realizes that Scotty, by obtaining his promise not to tell of the five thousand shares and then by remaining silent in the court room, knew he could avoid the sentence he deserved, since a large part of the blame would fall on Harry. Scotty is sentenced to only four months in

jail. He has everyone's sympathy; the town of Montreal thinks he was merely putty in Harry's hands.

Harry sees his reputation rapidly fading. He knows he must get to Scotty and persuade him to tell the truth. Scotty cheats Harry of his opportunity by committing suicide in his jail cell. The town blames Harry for Scotty's death, and he loses his public relations job at Sweetman's.

Harry goes to get his summer suit from the cleaners and finds that the lining has been ruined. The cleaning men convince him that the lining was defective and that Mike Kon should replace it. At first Mike refuses, claiming the cleaning fluid was at fault and thinking Harry is trying to get back at him for being Scotty's witness in court. Then he realizes it will not help his business to have Harry saying he uses faulty materials so he relents and says he will replace the lining. Harry ignores the begrudging offer and stalks out scornfully. Later in the day, Kon goes into Dorfman's, a fashionable Montreal bar. He tells the crowd of Harry's trying to shame him into replacing the lining. After Harry comes in, wearing the suit, there is a tense scene between the two in which Kon comes out badly. Harry makes it known that at first Kon had tried to avoid repairing the coat. Mr. Dorfman, the owner of the bar and a friend of Harry's, feels that Kon has taken cowardly advantage of Harry and advises him to stay away. Kon is extremely upset; he knows his silent partner, Singerman, will say "he couldn't

afford to be associated with an old fighter who was an out-cast from a place where the best people went."¹ Kon and Harry both hope the incident concerning the suit will be forgotten, but a gossip columnist informs the town of all the facts. Wherever Harry goes, trying to clear his name, people pay little attention; all they are interested in is the amusing incident involving the coat.

Though it is by now late September and the weather is getting very cool, Harry begins to wear the suit every day. People notice, the gossip columns pick up the news, and Harry soon becomes a joke. As A. H. Cheyer says,

Wearing his badge of righteousness, his many colored coat, Harry seeks vindication of his innocence in the eyes of the world, but the coat, a shabby summer suit made for him by Kon, ends by making him an object of ridicule.²

When people snicker at him about the suit, Harry laughs with them. It does not take Mike Kon long to figure out that Harry is trying to infuriate him. Kon changes from one drinking spot to another, but always he finds that Harry is present, is expected soon, or has just left. Mike takes to spending his evenings at home.

Walter O'Hearn, in his review of the book, expresses confusion about the significance of the title. He says,

¹Morley Callaghan, The Many Colored Coat (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1960), p. 156. All future references to this novel will be to this edition and will be cited in parenthesis in the text after the quotation or paraphrase.

²Wilson Library Bulletin, Vol. 36, p. 265.

"Theme and title both suggest an analogy with the story of Joseph in the Old Testament, but, if there is one here, it is difficult to find."¹ Most commentators, however, have seen a connection between Harry's shabby suit and Joseph's coat of many colors. Edmund Wilson says "[Harry] suffers the fate of Joseph, who has been envied by his brethren for his many-colored coat--that is, his popularity, his charm, his easy superiority."² In his review of the book, F. W. Watt says,

The biblical Joseph's coat of many colours was the sign of his father's love, but the favour provoked his brothers' hatred. Lane, too, was much-favoured, and his summer coat is also poor armour: not only does it draw down upon him, and fail to protect him from, his enemies-- it is itself corrupt, rotten on the inside. It is when Lane comes to question his own garment of innocence and way of life deeply that he ceases (like the hero of They Shall Inherit the Earth) to search for justice and turns instead to mercy. He has joined those whose full self-awareness is in "knowing the terror of their innocence."³

The significance of the last portion of Watt's statement will be clear presently.

Harry finally admits to his girlfriend Mollie that his eventual goal is another "day in court." He knows that he is ruining what is left of his reputation by appearing day after day in the shabby suit, but he also realizes he is ruining Kon's business and that eventually Kon must either

¹"Suit of Innocence," New York Times Book Review, August 28, 1960, p. 5.

²The New Yorker, November 26, 1960, pp. 230-31.

³University of Toronto Quarterly, Vol. 30, pp. 403-04.

sue him or attack him physically, either of which would be sufficient to bring the case to court. Kon asks Mollie to speak to Harry, to make him stop wearing the suit. He even goes to Harry and offers to make him another suit, but Harry knows this will not be sufficient to clear his name.

The climax occurs in Dorfman's. Kon has been banned from the bar but enters anyway and tries to speak to Harry. Harry refuses to listen and begins to walk away. An enraged Mike Kon grabs Harry by the coat collar.

Harry hardly struggled and Mike thought he was going to listen to him. Then Harry pivoted suddenly; he jerked himself free; the light caught his pale face and his wonderfully bright blue eyes. Balancing flat on his feet, he punched Mike hard on the jaw. It was an astonishing punch, beautifully timed, for he was set right [and] Mike went down on his haunches. (275-76)

Harry calmly walks out. Mike catches up with Harry and punches him, knocking him down the stairs and nearly breaking his neck. In The Man with the Coat, the earlier magazine version, Harry is killed by the punch, without ever having an opportunity to clear his name.¹ In The Many Colored Coat, however, Harry lives and looks forward to his day in court.

The newspapers treat the "assault with intent to maim" charge against Kon as a continuation of the Scotty Bowman case. All the people who had attended the first trial are present at Kon's preliminary hearing. Kon has even engaged Scotty's clever lawyer to handle his case.

¹Ripley, pp. 145-46.

Various witnesses are called and, though Kon is on trial, the Scotty Bowman case keeps popping up. Annie Laurie, a lady of leisure and friend of Harry's, manages to present part of Harry's side of the situation, over the defense attorney's objections. After all witnesses for the prosecution have been heard, Harry Lane is called to the stand. But he does not appear.

Mike realizes that the people in the courtroom think he "had got to Lane, mollified him, fixed him, given in to him." (304) The case is dismissed, but Kon asks to address the crowd. His lawyer tries to quiet him, but he insists.

"No, there's one thing I've got to say," Mike said doggedly as he turned to the magistrate. "I've got to say it here and now." Taking a deep breath he hesitated, half bewildered and half driven, and looking at Quimet [his lawyer] for help, then at the door as though weighing whether he could hurry out. Lifting his head, he said with dignity, "Scotty Bowman was my good friend as everybody knows. That's why I'm in this court today. I did accuse Harry Lane of ruining Scotty Bowman. I did it openly and made no bones about it. But this is what I'd like to say here in this court. I had no right to make that accusation and try to stick by it. I lost my head; you see, everybody was against Harry Lane and so was I, but I was carried away by my sympathy for my friend Scotty Bowman. Maybe I had no way of judging the real facts. Maybe I had no right to judge Harry Lane. After all, how do I know what went on between him and Scotty Bowman? Maybe I was blinded by my friendship for Scotty. That's all. Thank you." (308)

When last we see Harry, he has finally changed his suit. He sits in a little restaurant, reading and rereading Kon's statement in the newspaper. It seems Harry has realized that he was using his innocence to destroy Bowman's friend Mike Kon. He had wondered

if innocence was like a two-edged sword without a handle, and if you gripped it and used it, it cut you so painfully you had to lash out blindly, seeking vengeance on someone for the bleeding. (313)

As he had walked about on the night before the trial, he realized that in his proud innocence he could have fallen into corruption. He thought at the time, "My God, it need not be corruption--why not into some awareness that could give width and depth to a man's whole life?" (314) Harry saw, on the night before the trial, why he had needed Mike Kon.

Standing in the dark, motionless and rapt, he had been filled with a sudden grim exultation as if he saw that this was the hour of his real and ultimate need of Mike Kon: Mike was there so it could be shown whether he could leave Mike and Scotty alone: so he could show whether he was ready to walk away from them. (314)

And that is why Harry did not appear at the hearing. He was ready to walk away from them.

According to Taliaferro Boatwright, in his review of the book, "This is a beautifully constructed novel, soundly plotted and smoothly executed."¹ George Woodcock, on the other hand, maintains that "the looseness of construction is paralleled in the characterization, which hovers uneasily between the sharpness of caricature and the flabbiness of sentimental pseudo-realism."² As so often happens in Callaghan criticism, the comments are so varied that one wonders whether the critics have read the same book. Concerning the

¹"Morality Tale from Canada," New York Herald Tribune Books, August 28, 1960, p. 11.

²Canadian Literature, No. 21, p. 33.

book's theme, however, there is considerable agreement; virtually all of the critics realize that the crucial line in the novel is Harry's concern about whether "innocence was like a two-edged sword." In Phèdre Racine has said, "Innocence has nothing to dread." The theme of The Many Colored Coat might well be phrased, "Innocence may have much to dread," or as Walter O'Hearn has said, "Morley Callaghan's theme is that terror of innocence which is more dread than the consequences of guilt."¹

In one way or another, innocence has been of concern to Callaghan in all of the earlier novels except Strange Fugitive and A Broken Journey. In the 1957 interview Weaver spoke to Callaghan of the "innocents" in his novels. Callaghan's comment at that time is helpful. He said,

I don't mean really that innocence is always crucified, but innocence is rather fascinating. Innocence has always fascinated me. There's a very thin borderline between innocence and crime. I'm not talking now about respectability, which is quite a different thing; respectability is simply in its final analysis a kind of an agreement to keep out of jail. But you see the saint and the sinner, or the saint, let us say, and the man guilty of the sin of monstrous pride--there's a very thin line there because the saint in his own way has a kind of monstrous egotism. The saint puts himself against the world, opposes himself in what he stands for to the whole world--which he calls, of course, usually the work of Satan. But the great criminal also puts himself against the world and the laws of society. . . . It's a very interesting theme.²

It is truly an interesting theme. There have been a number

¹New York Times Book Review, August 28, 1960, p. 5.

²P. 22.

of writers--Hawthorne and Dostoevsky most obviously--who have written of the consequences of guilt. No writer but Callaghan comes to mind who has been so concerned with the consequences of innocence.

Callaghan uses the "innocence" theme in this novel to make yet another comment on "the great sin." Harry Lane is young, handsome, and of good family. People from all levels gravitate toward him. He has a job which he likes and performs well, he earns fifteen thousand dollars a year, he eats and drinks well, and he has plenty of women. He is honest, faithful, and a good friend to many. He is "the success man." It will be remembered, though, that Callaghan has said, "In my own way I'm against the success man."¹ Callaghan has expressed concern for "this business of being alive as a man in the world--which is quite a different business than the making of a lot of dough."² What Callaghan seems to mean is that he is against the man who is a "success" (in society's terms) but nothing more. In The Many Colored Coat he portrays a "success man" who is also an "innocent." Apparently, from the fate that befalls Harry Lane, even innocence is not sufficient for Callaghan. Harry is obsessed with his own innocence. Until he rids himself of the obsession, he cannot gain "width and depth" for his whole life. The obsession with even so praiseworthy a

¹Ibid., p. 23.

²Ibid., p. 24.

quality as innocence can result in the "monstrous pride" to which Callaghan refers in the Weaver interview. It keeps Harry from fulfilling his possibilities as a man; his very innocence becomes a "great sin," in the terms of our prefatory quotation.

Since Callaghan seems to think Harry should not have behaved as he did, this question remains: how should Harry have acted? Harry's alternatives were few. He could have tried rationally to explain what had actually happened between himself and Scotty Bowman. But he did try to explain in court, and he was not believed. As in The Loved and the Lost, the characters could not rise to the level of believing that such a man could exist, a man who was genuinely fond of Scotty, and not out to make the most of the relationship. After the trial, when Harry tried to explain rationally, people would not listen. Their only interest was in the lining of his coat. Another alternative open to Harry was leaving Montreal to begin anew somewhere else. But why should he? His family, friends and job were in Montreal, and he had done nothing wrong, nothing to be ashamed of. Surely Callaghan would think that course the coward's way out.

The only alternative left to Harry seems to be to have done nothing. Perhaps Harry could have continued to wear fashionable suits instead of his many colored coat; perhaps the incident would have blown over and he could have

recaptured his precious reputation. However, as happened to the hero of Conrad's Lord Jim, reminders of the incident would have continued to crop up. Nonetheless, Callaghan may well believe Harry should have done nothing, even though to do nothing would have been a less courageous course for Harry than voluntarily subjecting himself to mockery and ridicule, as he did.

The answer is not clear. Harry's problem is well presented, but the suitable alternative to Harry's conduct is not. In point of fact, we have no right to demand to know what Callaghan would have had Harry do, as many critics have demanded. Callaghan has written a novel, not a code of behavior. Harry is superficially successful, plummets to disgrace, and through suffering comes to realize the sham of his former life. Granville Hicks has said, "Harry, as he realizes at the end, is destroyed by his innocence, which is not a firm reliance but a great peril."¹ Harry could have been destroyed by his obsession with his own innocence, but he was not. The peril was not Harry's innocence itself but Harry's obsession with innocence. The result of his experience is that Harry will now go on to add depth and width to an existence which was previously shallow and narrow.

A Passion in Rome

At the time of the death of Pope Pius XII, Callaghan

¹"The Unsuccessful Gamblers," Saturday Review, August 27, 1960, p. 12.

received a journalistic assignment which took him to Rome. Barbara Moon has reported his reaction:

He was supposed to stay four days, but he stayed three weeks and got enthusiastic about the decorative Roman women and the intellectual ferment in the cafés along the Via Veneto. "It's like the Montparnasse of the Twenties," he told a friend excitedly when he got home.¹

Out of that trip came A Passion in Rome (1961), Callaghan's most recent and most abused novel. To enjoy and appreciate much of Callaghan's work requires a certain abandoning of preconception, because both the novels and the stories "are not like anybody else's." The reader must give the fiction time to take effect, must maintain a neutral if not sympathetic attitude while the novel or story creates its illusion. Much of the bad Callaghan criticism has come from those who must review a number of books per month and consequently are both hurried in their reading and are, by profession, "comparative" readers--readers looking for the hook on which Callaghan is to be hung. A Passion in Rome may best be read by those who, because of a familiarity and sympathy with the previous books, can give the spell an opportunity to take effect.

Unfortunately, because of the Edmund Wilson article, A Passion in Rome was not given the reading it deserved. The angry Canadian critics seemed to swarm gleefully on the novel, and it was generally concluded that A Passion in Rome

¹Maclean's Magazine, December 3, 1960, p. 64.

was, as George Woodcock has said, "Callaghan's most recent, most ambitious and least successful novel."¹ As a rule the American reception was also less than enthusiastic. One aspect of the criticism revolved around the Coward-McCann claim on the book jacket that A Passion in Rome is "a major novel." Robert Gorham Davis, reviewing the book in The New York Times, says the book would be a major novel if major subjects and themes were enough to make major books.² The Time reviewer headed his article "Minor Major" and nastily remarked that A Passion in Rome was an example of "a new literary phenomenon: the insignificant major novel."³ Time summed up its opinion of the novel by calling it an "earnest, dull book."⁴ For Taliaferro Boatwright, however, the novel

is a mature work of art, the product of long practice in observation and communication, and acute insight into the behaviour of men and women, a moral and psychological drama of rare intensity, and a filling, satisfying experience for the mind, as well as the emotions.⁵

For Robert Gorham Davis, "The characters . . . are anything but finely aware. Totally inadequate to the demands made upon them, they are insensitive, vulgar and, above all, unconvincing."⁶ Let us take a look at the two insensitive,

¹Canadian Literature, No. 21, p. 33.

²"Carla, Sam and a Dying Pope," New York Times Book Review, October 15, 1961, p. 4.

³October 20, 1961, p. 99. ⁴Ibid.

⁵"Moral Drama of Rare Intensity," New York Herald Tribune Books, October 8, 1961, p. 11.

⁶New York Times Book Review, October 15, 1961, p. 4.

vulgar, unconvincing characters around whom Callaghan builds his moral and psychological drama of rare intensity and through whom he conveys a filling, satisfying experience for the mind as well as the emotions.

One character is Sam Raymond, the photographer. Thirty-nine and solidly built, Sam has come to Rome from Canada to do a picture story on the Pope, who is expected to die shortly. Sam has achieved some renown as "the best newspaper photographer there is," but he has spent the past fourteen years quietly painting. Finally he has admitted to himself that his painting is no good and has locked his studio forever. As he rides on the bus from the airport to Rome, "Sam wondered if there couldn't still be some one place in the world where a man's life might take on meaning."¹

There has apparently been a mix-up about hotel reservations, and at one o'clock in the morning Sam finds himself alone in the deserted streets of Rome. He sees a girl, who is to be Callaghan's other main character, standing in a doorway. When Sam asks her where he might find a room, she speaks in broken English with a thick Italian accent. She says her name is Carla Caneli. Carla appeared, ten years earlier, under another name and in a minor role, in The Loved and the Lost. In that novel Jim McAlpine witnessed the

¹Morley Callaghan, A Passion in Rome (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1961), p. 10. All future references to this novel will be to this edition and will be cited in parenthesis in the text after the quotation or paraphrase.

comeback attempt of a beautiful young singer who had become a wretched alcoholic. As Sam Raymond is soon to learn, Carla Caneli is not an Italian at all; she is the American night club and television singer Anna Connel (again Callaghan shows his fondness for the name Anna), whose career has been destroyed by her drinking.

Callaghan proceeds to fill in the backgrounds of Sam and Carla. Sam had considered himself basically a painter. He had spent every spare moment from his photography duties working on his canvases. It is only in the Sistine Chapel that he realizes his obsession for art had cut him off from his father and close friends. He was left a man without a job that interested him and without a woman who needed him. In the chapel he thinks,

What had he to show for all this striving? Nothing but his loneliness and the knowledge that he could never paint again. He had a frantic longing to rush out of the chapel as he would have rushed out of a place where he had been imprisoned and tormented for years. . . . (39)

Carla had been a successful entertainer. After she heard that her television show was being taken off the air, she had collapsed in a tantrum. Eventually she had turned up in Rome with the movie maker Alberto Ruberto, who dreams of making a comeback with an important picture. In his review of the book, Walt McCaslin sums up Carla's textbook background. He says, "[Her] expatriate closet is thoroughly cluttered with childhood skeletons, career disappointments,

gin bottles, and the patent leather shoes of gigolos."¹

Sam meets Anna again, in the company of Alberto. Anna speaks in a normal "American" voice and shows no sign of having recognized Sam. As Sam sits talking with his interpreter Francesca, Alberto and Anna, he begins to have the impulse which is to dominate his actions throughout the novel:

All afternoon Michelangelo had been in Sam's mind. And just as before he had imagined the painter dealing with the faces in the Florentine restaurant, he had him now dealing with this girl's face. Right into a corner of "The Last Judgment" she would go, Sam thought, the fingers of demons clutching at her naked body. It made him feel angry. Supposing Michelangelo had been the one wandering in the streets of Rome last night and had met her in the shadow at the corner of a building as he, himself, had done? What would the talent-driven master have made of her? No time for her? Would the great man have taken one glance at her, shaken his head and hurried on? They say he wasn't much interested in women. But the time would come when the giant would search around in his mind for a haunted face and a voluptuous body to put on a damnation fresco; then he would remember the face of the girl on the street. With his tremendous talent he would make her live as long as painting lived. But live as what? Goddamn it, live as what? Naturally he would do what he wanted with her. The great talents always did what they wanted with their material. Use it. Something for form and color. A very, very great talent. Who would give a damn about what a girl named Carla Caneli was really like? Supposing she cried out, "That's not me. I don't feel like that"? Who cares? She would die. The work would live on. The work was different, anyway. Again Sam seemed to be caught up in that wild rhythm he had felt in the chapel. He struggled with some strange longing in him he didn't understand himself. Under her mask of discontent and her dreamy vagueness he thought he saw in Carla loneliness and longing. It was the spark of her spirit, he told himself fervently. No painter could ever get it in a glance unless he had some deep feeling for her. Not

¹"A Ballad Singer Regenerated," Saturday Review, November 11, 1961, p. 28.

even Michelangelo. How could the painter bring it out in her if he wasn't able to be there watching it grow in her life? Only a man in love could achieve this masterpiece. (54-55)

Sam begins to see that though he cannot be the painter that Michelangelo was, and cannot do with Carla what Michelangelo would do, he can bring out the Carla who is behind the haunted face and the voluptuous body. He can pierce beneath the mask of discontent and dreary vagueness, rid her of her loneliness and longing, and help her to become what she is capable of becoming.

When Sam returns to his hotel, he tries to remember whether he has seen Carla on television. He seems to recall "a girl carelessly and happily herself, so fresh, spontaneous, and natural, she was unaware of her distinction," (60) but he is unsure whether he remembers or is trying to imagine Carla as she should be. Sam sketches her face.

The face on the sheet gradually took on an expression of secret, mysterious, almost arrogantly untroubled self-possession; a girl proudly at peace with her own nature. Though he couldn't get all this on paper, yet what he had there made the image he had in his mind come wonderfully alive. (61)

Sam feels his compassion and his sensual attraction becoming "one deeper feeling, as if once he touched her he could be anything with her and she, anything for him." (61) Sam goes out to find Carla, but she seems to have disappeared.

The Pope is better; apparently he is not going to die after all. Sam's paper cables him to come home at once. But Sam is troubled about Carla. He feels homeless, lonely

and at loose ends. As he wanders about Rome, he comes to a decision.

"Okay, Angelo. I came into that chapel of yours expecting a big lift. That finger of God of yours came right down and you stuck it in my eye. Maybe my canvases should all be thrown out. Or some landlady will use them to cover holes in the wall in some cheap rooming house. But maybe it's as big, even a bigger thing to do something with a life--if it moves you--as it is to do something with a hunk of clay or some tubes of paint. . . . I think I know what Carla should be like."
(65)

Sam cables the paper that he will remain in Rome until the death of the Pope. He then gets permission from Alberto to see Carla. Alberto feels Carla has destroyed him by drinking, by having affairs, and by forcing him to sell his one good motion picture. When Sam finds Carla, she is in the custody of a strong Italian woman who has her scrubbing floors. Sam takes an apartment and the two move into it.

Things go well for Sam and Carla for a few hours. Then Carla has her first tantrum, because Sam will not take her out for a drink. She screams and throws things at Sam, who finally lets her leave by herself. Suddenly she returns, very frightened. Sam realizes that

she knew she couldn't bear to be alone any more. Underneath the need of someone sympathetic to her was her mixed-up fear of everything in her life; love, death, hostility, the time she lived in, everything in the world that could frighten her; and out of it now came that pitiable plea in her eyes for protection. (107-08)

Sam gives Carla the protection and comfort she needs. They spend their days tramping the streets of Rome. Sam soon finds that Carla is fostering the illusion that she is

"a Roman woman" (she was born in Brooklyn). She treats Rome as her home town and is familiar with all of the historical aspects of the city, gossiping about the great families, past and present, as if they were personal friends. Sam tries gradually to encourage her independence, so she will not have to lean on him. This portion of the novel, and it makes up the bulk of the book, is very similar in conception to F. Scott Fitzgerald's Tender Is the Night, in which Dick Diver tries to perform the same service for his wife Nicole. At times Sam feels himself weakening; he feels the nearly irresistible urge to take the dependent Carla away with him, to forget about his hope that she will sing again. He realizes, however, that "in her dependence she wasn't free to say yes or no. As yet she had no freedom in her heart. It was when she was free that he would know how she felt about him." (156)

Sam makes fine progress in his re-creation of the old Anna. He contrives to get her to sing. He buys a guitar one evening and pretends to fumble with the chords. She takes the instrument from him and presently is playing and singing. Sam thinks of the painter Streeter who had told him that his reaction to the Sistine Chapel would indicate whether he could paint or not:

Old Streeter! he thought. What would the arrogant old painter say to this? Had the old man ever gotten the satisfaction out of a finished painting that he himself got now seeing Carla, as he had dreamed of her in this quiet happy amused enjoyment of herself? Alone and not caring. Was this the way a man of great talent felt

when he looked at a work and knew it to be splendid? Michelangelo! Yes, the old boy would have passed her by in the street, another one of his demon-haunted women, missing the fact that she should be sitting here like this. (162)

Carla and Sam both pretend to pass the incident off lightly, but Sam is exultant, and later Carla confesses that Sam has made her "feel beautiful." Not long after, Carla disappears.

When Carla returns, she is with a cheap American hoodlum, Joe Mosca. He has convinced her that he can be her manager and has obtained a singing engagement for her at a noisy Rome night spot. Out of loyalty to Sam, Carla had wanted to tell him of her plans. Sam is furious. He tries to tell her that she is not ready, but she will not listen. At her debut she panics, curses the crowd and runs off the stage. She returns to Sam and, after a scene in which Sam rages at her, the reconciliation is effected. Some time later, Sam arranges for her to sing in a club more suited to her talent. Almost before she realizes what has happened, someone has handed her a guitar and she has sung, and very well. She continues to sing at the little club, with Sam always unobtrusively at a shadowy corner table.

Eventually Carla is strong enough to make her own way, but she sees that Sam refuses to admit it. She sees that Sam is going down rapidly, that he is in as great a danger of being dependent on his feeling for her as she had once been solely dependent on him. She takes the plane to New York. Sam thinks that he has been a failure as a painter,

and now he feels that he has not had enough love to hold Carla. "A no-love, no-talent guy," he calls himself. But then Sam begins to feel good. His imagined creation, after all, has become a reality. He seems strangely to have a renewed interest in photography. He speaks to an associate:

"I'm the best photographer you ever met," he said. Then he pondered, his eyes turned inward as if his sudden confident acceptance of his distinction puzzled him. "I won't say I've made the most of it. I'm going to get around though. And the thing is. . . . and I don't know why it is--I know I can go home--go anywhere on earth, and wherever I go now, I'll feel pretty good." (351)

Callaghan's novel ends this way:

He would go to the Sistine Chapel again tomorrow. Those distorted figures in "The Last Judgment." No, it was only Michelangelo's best judgment of the matter. Never the last one. He would stand in the Chapel. He would think of Carla as she had looked, standing beside him, with the Pope being lowered into his grave; beside him, yet beyond him in all the serenity of her summer ripeness. He felt all at once fiercely exultant. (352)

The character of Carla/Anna has been much criticized. According to George Woodcock, "Anna comes into the novel fighting, interesting in her sulky perversity, and one expects much of her; but Sam's devotion irons out her individuality to a self-abnegating silliness. . . ." ¹ In his review of the novel, probably the review which caused Callaghan to become so angry on the "Fighting Words" television program, Tony Emery refers to "Carla's staccato Sitting Bull phrases." ² Neither of these is a fair criticism. Would

¹ Canadian Literature, No. 21, p. 34.

² "A Great Passion for Dullness," Saturday Night, December 9, 1961, p. 43.

Woodcock have Anna continue to fight and sulk perversely? Of course the degraded, uncontrolled alcoholic is more "interesting" than the person with hope, poise and self-confidence. It is true, as Woodcock says, that the triumphant recovery of both Sam and Anna "is a projection of every psycho-analyst's dream,"¹ but Callaghan makes the recovery believable. Carla has numerous setbacks, and her ultimate recovery is not assured until the closing pages of the novel. Though Sam Raymond is a somewhat colorless character, his motivation is so clearly set forth that one cannot doubt he possesses the qualities necessary to help Carla recover. Tony Emery's comment is appropriate only to Carla's speech in the opening scene between her and Sam, when she tries to pass herself off as "a Roman woman" who "has little English." After this scene, her phrases are as legato as one could wish.

Milton Wilson has seen a bit of Callaghan himself in the character of Sam Raymond. He says,

If Sam seems pretty unconvincing as an ugly duckling among Canadian painters, all we have to do is a bit of translation--say, of failures to exhibit into failures to publish--and the details start to make sense. Not that they matter. The issues, as usual with Callaghan, are more ultimate than local, more intimate than social, despite the surface texture.²

Wilson is right. Though Callaghan had difficulty in being accepted at home just as Sam Raymond did, there are more

¹Canadian Literature, No. 12, p. 64.

²"Callaghan's Caviare," Tamarack Review, No. 22 (Winter, 1962), p. 92.

ultimate issues involved here. If Callaghan had been content to present the story of Sam and Anna, using Rome merely as a backdrop, the novel would have been passably interesting, though its conception would have been suspiciously similar to that of Tender Is the Night, which Callaghan is known to have read.¹ What sets Callaghan's novel off from those novels of only passing interest is his juxtaposition of the passion of Carla and Sam with the death of the old Pope and the election of the new. As Sam's friend Francesca tells him, "Well, it's the time of the Passion in Rome, Sam. You know--the Church, the death in the house, and the widow waiting. . . . I suppose some of the Passion has to rub off on you." (296-97) The cyclical nature of the papacy, housed in the Eternal City--the death of one Pope and the rebirth of the church through the next--are paralleled in the death of the old way for both Sam and Anna, and the rebirth of each. Desmond Pacey seems to perceive the significance of the juxtaposition; he observes that Callaghan sets the story of Sam and Carla

¹ I have not seen this similarity mentioned elsewhere, but it is striking. In Tender Is the Night, Nicole Diver's later difficulties are brought about largely because her father had raped her when she was very young. Carla Caneli had been raped by her uncle when she was but a child. Psychiatrist Dick Diver treats Nicole at his sanitarium, comes to love her, and then marries her. He continues to try to break her dependence upon him and when he finally succeeds, and Nicole leaves with another man, he finds that his own life has been ruined. Sam's relationship to Carla is quite similar, except that Sam is not a trained psychiatrist. Therefore, he is too much the victim of his own feelings and does what he thinks is right for Carla by using his common sense, rather than psychiatry.

"against the drama of the death of one Pope and the election of another presumably to argue that in their way they are equally important, equally embodiments of the divine spirit in human form."¹

Though the theme of A Passion in Rome is, as Pacey has said, the persistency of the human spirit--in Anna, Sam and the papacy--at a more immediate level Callaghan is making an additional comment on the necessity for a man to make the most of his possibilities. Sam Raymond's father had been a famous "society photographer." He had been called "the great Raymond" because of his photographic portraits of governmental and business figures. He had thought Sam would follow in his footsteps, but Sam had felt contemptuous of his father's way of life. He had chosen to go his own way, performing his news photography chores during the day and painting in his studio at night. He expends so much time on his painting for fourteen years that he reaches the age of thirty-nine with a reputation as a topnotch news photographer but nothing else. He has no private life but his painting. He has drinking pals, but no close friends. He has girls, but no wife or family. Then he realizes that his painting is no good.

It is an interesting question. When a man has given all his energies to fulfilling his possibilities in one direction, and then finds that he has fulfilled those possibilities only to remain a failure, because he had so few

¹Queen's Quarterly, Vol. 69, p. 310.

possibilities to fulfill, what course is left to him? If Sam Raymond's solution is a proper one, and Callaghan seems to indicate that it is, one must find a new way to make life take on meaning. If Sam cannot put Carla into his own "Last Judgment," because he does not have Michelangelo's tremendous ability, he must do what he can with the abilities he does possess. By making it possible for "the Roman woman" Carla Caneli to become Anna Connell once again, to fulfill the possibilities of her rare, intimate talent, he fulfills his own limited possibilities. Though George Woodcock finds the novel's last sentence "excruciating,"¹ Sam seems to have reason to feel "fiercely exultant."

That Summer in Paris

The idea of writing about the Paris of the 1920's may have been in Callaghan's mind for some time. In 1957 Callaghan told Robert Weaver, "I must some day write about Montparnasse because not much has been written that is truthful."² In 1961 A. H. Cheyer quotes Callaghan as saying, "Some day when I grow old, I'll write about those days in the Quarter and some intensely emotional adventures with Fitzgerald and Hemingway."³ In 1963 Callaghan published the promised book--That Summer in Paris.

¹Canadian Literature, No. 21, p. 34.

²p. 11.

³Wilson Library Bulletin, Vol. 36, p. 265.

The critical reception of the book was unanimously favorable. Even George Woodcock, who had spoken so harshly of some of Callaghan's other work, seemed unable to praise the book highly enough. "Morley Callaghan's best book for a quarter of a century. . . . A rare feat of reminiscence," he has called it. Woodcock continues, "The flabbiness of prose and thought that have characterized his most recent novels is absent; everything is crisp, clear, unpretentious."¹ It must seem ironic to Callaghan that he had to write a book that was not a novel in order to receive the unstinting admiration of the critics.

The book is significant for several reasons. First, it will endure not because of who Morley Callaghan is or what he has accomplished as a writer of fiction, but because he has written significantly of two writers whose significance outshines his own--Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald. Though Callaghan was young and somewhat impressionable at the time of his association with the two Americans, he saw them even then, as John K. Hutchens has said, "so clearly, recognized and analyzed their virtues and imperfections so acutely, that from now on no study of either of them can conceivably overlook this reminiscence."² The primary value of the book, then, is to the Hemingway and Fitzgerald scholars

¹Canadian Literature, No. 21, p. 21

²"Time: 1929... Place: The Left Bank," New York Herald Tribune Books, April 21, 1963, pp. 6, 11.

who with the literary historians must feel fortunate that Morley Callaghan had the opportunity and the ability to chronicle and analyze the events of that complicated summer in Paris.

This study, however, deals not with Hemingway and Fitzgerald but with Morley Callaghan, more specifically with Morley Callaghan's novels, and That Summer in Paris, though a non-fiction work, adds considerably to an understanding of the novels. For one thing, the book contains much of Callaghan's artistic theory, which has been discussed in Chapter II of this study. Secondly, it is interesting to note the mass of material in That Summer in Paris which Callaghan has used in the novels in one way or another. It has already been mentioned that Callaghan used his experience as a lumber yard worker and as a book shop owner in Strange Fugitive; these early experiences are covered briefly in That Summer in Paris. While writing, in That Summer in Paris, of his early life in Toronto, Callaghan speaks momentarily of his brother, who had taken a job while studying to be an opera singer, as had John Hughes, the hero of It's Never Over, though the similarities between the two may have ended there. In That Summer in Paris Callaghan covers his few years as a reporter on the Toronto Star. He tells of the Star man who handled all the big stories, the man invariably referred to by the editor as "our Mr. Reade." In A Passion in Rome, the Toronto newspaper man sent to cover the death of the Pope, while Sam

does the photography, is referred to as "our Koster." Koster's character was probably based in part on the character of "our Mr. Reade."

Callaghan's experience with his Star editor, Harry Hindmarsh, is the basis for at least one incident in The Loved and the Lost. Hindmarsh had become annoyed at Callaghan for being the only reporter who refused to offer him a cheery good-morning. Joseph Carver, publisher of the Montreal Sun in The Loved and the Lost, becomes similarly annoyed at a young reporter. From Callaghan's account of Harry Hindmarsh, as presented in That Summer in Paris, it seems apparent that other characteristics of Callaghan's editor have been bestowed upon Jim McAlpine's publisher, Joseph Carver. Ford Madox Ford's pretense (or so Hemingway thought) of being gassed in the war, which Hemingway said was an infirmity he adopted so that people would have to listen intently to his whispered words, also finds its way into The Loved and the Lost.

Callaghan seems to have enjoyed the company of "Father Tom," the penitentiary chaplain whom he and Loretto met on the boat to France and with whom they spent some time in Paris. The most direct use in the novels that Callaghan has made of the friendship is in the characters of Father Mason in It's Never Over and Father Butler in More Joy in Heaven, both of whom are also drinking priests who have walked to the execution chamber with many men and who have boasted

that none of the condemned men they accompanied died in terror. Father Butler sweats a lot, as did Father Tom. The real Father Tom changed his clothes two or three times a day, Father Butler his underwear. These are all the most minute of details, of course, but it is the observation of such details and their use in fiction that makes characters, and novels, come alive.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of That Summer in Paris, insofar as that book is related to his fiction, is the way in which Callaghan gives form and structure to his material. The book is more than a series of reminiscences, more than a chronological account of a period of his life. Rather, the book has a focal point to which Callaghan builds and from which he tapers off. Callaghan draws together the relationships of himself, Fitzgerald and Hemingway at that focal point--for one dramatic moment--and quickly disperses them. The focal point, the "climax" of this non-fiction book, is of course "the great boxing match."

Callaghan opens his book with Hemingway's light-hearted memory of those days in Paris in 1929. Hemingway reminisces to photographer Ronnie Jacquss, who passes along Hemingway's "warmest regards" to Callaghan via newspaper man Ken Jonstone. Callaghan paraphrases Hemingway's story as he has received it at third hand:

In the old days in Paris he used to box with me, he [Hemingway] said. It had all been rather wonderful and amusing, Hemingway assured Ronnie, and there had

been one ridiculous occasion when Scott Fitzgerald had acted as timekeeper, and everybody had been full of wine. Anyway, Hemingway sent his warmest regards. But what really happened? Ken Jonstone wanted to know.¹

Callaghan denies that they had all been full of wine; "yet come to think of it," he writes, "maybe Ernest, even years ago, had determinedly chosen to regard it in that light." (10) Just what the "it" of that last sentence is will not be disclosed until the book is nearly over, but the "it" is what the book will point toward.

References to boxing, as that sport concerns Callaghan or Hemingway or both, are carefully interwoven into the narrative. After Hemingway has left Toronto and just before the Callaghans leave for Paris, Callaghan hears a puzzling report about a letter Hemingway had written to a mutual friend. Callaghan had published a story about a prize fighter, probably "Soldier Harmon," in Scribner's Magazine:

[Hemingway] told this friend that when Morley wrote stories about the things he knew, there was no one any better, but he should stick to the things he knew something about. What was bothering Ernest? I wondered. Did he think that in writing about a fighter I had made an unworthy excursion into his own imaginary world? Was it because I had forgotten to tell him I had done a lot of boxing and went to all the fights? Well, what did it matter? The main thing was I would soon see him. . . . (64)

Callaghan raises these tantalizing questions early. He passes them off with "Well, what did it matter?" but they

¹Morley Callaghan, That Summer in Paris (New York: Coward-McCann, Inc., 1963), p. 9. All future references to this book will be to this edition and will be cited in parenthesis in the text after the quotation or paraphrase.

will be seen to matter very much. Callaghan had noticed when Hemingway was in Toronto that he "had that fatal capacity for making men want to tell fantastic stories about him." (68) As Callaghan was having a farewell lunch with Max Perkins, he heard one of these stories from the great editor himself, a tale in which Hemingway supposedly had knocked out the French middleweight champion in one round. Though Callaghan had noted this "fatal capacity" in Hemingway, he did not know whether to believe the story or not, though Perkins obviously did.

When Hemingway enters the Callaghans' hotel room in Paris, the first Paris meeting of the two, his first words after the usual social amenities are a reference to Callaghan's dressing gown: "I haven't seen such a dressing gown on a man since the last time I saw Georges Carpentier climb into the ring." (92) Later, as the Callaghans and Hemingway walk up the rue Vaugirard, Hemingway scoffs at a boxer who had seemed to Callaghan to have talent. "Already," says Callaghan, "Ernest was making me feel I had never seen a really good fighter." (93) The three drink beer at a café. Though Callaghan's glass usually has beer in it, each time Hemingway orders he asks Callaghan if he will have another. Hemingway outdrinks Callaghan seven glasses to three. After Hemingway leaves, Callaghan tells Loretto that Hemingway has changed in only one way: "Didn't you notice about the beer and how he made it plain I couldn't keep up with him? Now

he just has to be the champ." (96) Callaghan establishes Hemingway's need to be "the champ" at even so insignificant an activity as beer drinking so the reader may more fully understand Hemingway's reaction to the outcome of "the great boxing match."

Not long after, the Callaghans visit Hemingway and his newest wife, Pauline. The wives strike up a conversation, and then, Callaghan writes, "[Hemingway] turned to me as he sat down, and apparently at random, just to make conversation, asked if I had ever done any boxing. Yes, I had done quite a bit of boxing, I said truthfully." (99) Hemingway leaves the room, and when he returns he has a set of boxing gloves. He wants to spar with Callaghan then and there. Callaghan recalls the earlier references to boxing and sees that they may be connected in some way:

Then suddenly I remembered the comment he had made to the mutual friend about my fight story in Scribner's; nobody was any better than Morley when he stuck to the things he knew something about. I seemed to know then intuitively that quite aside from his interest in my career, or any changes that might have taken place in my personality since he had seen me, he had this one little curiosity about me. It is these little questions about each other that are at the root of most men's relationships. Suppose I had been faking an interest in fighters? Would it mean the loss of his respect for me? But this little thing, this little question, must have been in the back of his mind when he came to our hotel room. The crack about the Georges Carpentier dressing gown! And wasn't it why he had started talking about that Negro fighter, Larry Gains, getting my opinion of him as we walked up the street? (99-100)

Callaghan continues to use the device of the unanswered question, to maintain suspense and interest.

The two men square off and trade a few punches. Hemingway is soon satisfied that Callaghan knows how to box. In telling of the incident, Callaghan could have left an unfavorable impression of Hemingway, by emphasizing that Hemingway had not taken his word that he had boxed quite a lot or by making Hemingway out to be an absurd, demanding person for insisting on a boxing bout in a living room full of period furniture. These opinions were in Callaghan's mind, but his impartiality causes him to emphasize Hemingway's genuine pleasure in Callaghan's boxing ability. Hemingway seems overjoyed to have found someone with whom he can have regular boxing sessions. This joy in boxing, and appreciation of Callaghan's skill, is to continue to be characteristic of Hemingway up to the climax of the book, even on those numerous occasions when Hemingway leaves the gym with a swollen face and a cut mouth.

Callaghan shortly enters the arena with Hemingway for the first time, feeling understandably nervous. Hemingway has the professional heavyweight's pose and build, and a reputation as a boxer. Callaghan, by his own account, is "five foot eight and fat." When Callaghan continues to crouch and cover himself up, Hemingway kindly gives him some instruction. Callaghan reports,

As I listened I was dreadfully humiliated.

I'm not trying to box with him, I thought with disgust at myself. I'm trying to defend myself against all the wild legends I've heard. . . . Yet all winter long I had been boxing with my friend Joe Mahon, who, just as

big as Ernest, had been the international intercollegiate heavyweight champion. Concealing the disgust I felt for myself, I assured Ernest he wouldn't find me doubled up, almost on my knees, in the corner again. (104-05)

Callaghan soon discovers that he is much quicker than Hemingway and that he can easily hit him. Callaghan says,

As the round progressed I became at ease and sure of myself. I could see that, while he may have thought about boxing, dreamed about it, consorted with old fighters and hung around gyms, I had done more actual boxing with men who could box a little and weren't just taking exercise or fooling around. Since I could see this for myself, it didn't matter to me that he would never believe it. (105)

Callaghan has nothing but praise for the way Hemingway took his punches to the mouth and nose. Rather than growing savage, as the legend would have it, "he took a punch on the nose like any good college boxer; he took it with grace and an appreciation of the aptitude of the man who had landed it." (105)

On one later occasion, however, Hemingway's grace and appreciation seem to desert him. Callaghan lands a particularly effective punch on Hemingway's mouth, which begins to bleed and continues bleeding. Suddenly Hemingway spits blood all over Callaghan's face and gym shirt. He announces to Callaghan, "That's what the bullfighters do when they're wounded. It's a way of showing contempt." (126) Callaghan is insulted, outraged and bewildered, but Hemingway suddenly does a most unexpected thing. He smiles. Callaghan says,

I didn't even complain, for I saw that he had more complete goodwill for me than ever. But I was wondering out of what strange nocturnal depths of his mind had come the barbarous gesture. What other wild gesture might he make in some dark moment in his life to satisfy himself, or put himself in a certain light, following, or trying to follow, some view he had of himself? But here he was, so sweet and likable again, so much at ease with me. I tried to tell myself he had put it just right; he had yielded to his boyish weakness for amusing and theatrical gestures. The whole thing could have been pure theatre. (126)

Though Callaghan seems to make light of the incident, perhaps to protect his own wounded pride, he establishes the fact that Hemingway is unable to maintain his calm, sportsmanlike exterior while having his mouth and nose punched with regularity every week and that Hemingway's need to box well is part of his drive to perform well in any manly activity. Yet after the spitting incident, Hemingway seems to be happier than ever. Later, he rolls back his lip to show the cut to Jimmy, the bartender and an ex-fighter. "As long as Morley can keep cutting my mouth," says Hemingway, "he'll always remain my good friend." (127)

Out of their many matches, Callaghan has apparently introduced only those boxing sessions which have bearing on "the great boxing match." One such occurs on the afternoon when the Spanish painter Joan Miró accompanies the two to act as timekeeper. The incident is important because shortly Fitzgerald is also to act as timekeeper, so Callaghan presents Miró as the very picture of the efficient, businesslike clock watcher. Callaghan recalls,

Due, no doubt, to Miró's presence, it was one of our best boxing afternoons. At other times in our boxing, Ernest and I would laugh and kid each other. Miró added a touch of solemn Spanish dignity to the affair. Taking off his neat coat, he carefully folded it. Moving with brusque efficiency, he studied his watch so he could call out accurately the beginning of the three-minute round and the minute rest. All his movements became precise, stern, polite and yet dominating. Never had I had a timekeeper so immersed in a match, and so commanding with his splendid dignified earnestness. To have laughed or not been workmanlike in our boxing would have been an insult to his dignity; he would have been disappointed in us. So it was a good afternoon. We were all happy and satisfied, and I thought that Miró, especially, had enjoyed himself. (168)

As Miró and Hemingway walk away, Callaghan feels sure that some day soon, Fitzgerald will arrange to come along to one of the boxing sessions.

In the account of That Summer in Paris given thus far, it will be noticed that Fitzgerald has yet to put in an appearance. Callaghan was, in fact, seeing both Fitzgerald and Hemingway regularly but, though the Callaghans had been in Paris for some time, the writing trio had never been together, as Callaghan had dreamed they would before he left Toronto. Shortly before they finally get together, Callaghan and Fitzgerald converse about Hemingway's ability as a boxer. Fitzgerald repeats the story about Hemingway's one-round knockout of the French champion, obviously awed by the tale. An exasperated Callaghan asks if he really believes Hemingway is that good. Callaghan writes,

It didn't seem to occur to him that I might know better than he did. With a judicial air he pondered. "Ernest is probably not good enough to be the heavyweight champion," he said gravely. "But I would say

that he is about as good as Young Stribling."

Young Stribling was a famous first-class light heavyweight fighter who was so good he was forced to fight heavyweights. (209)

Callaghan tries to explain that both he and Hemingway are amateurs, just having some fun, but Fitzgerald remains convinced of Hemingway's fistic prowess. He finally puts the question to Callaghan that he has long wanted to ask. He wants to know if he may come to watch his two friends box. Callaghan says that he is perfectly agreeable. A week later, Fitzgerald and Hemingway appear at Callaghan's door. The moment which the young author has anticipated for so long finally becomes a reality.

The three go to the American Club gym. Fitzgerald is instructed by Hemingway in his duties as timekeeper. Callaghan says, "As he took these instructions, listening carefully, Scott had none of Miró's air of high professionalism. He was too enchanted at being there with us." (212) In the first round, Callaghan and Hemingway each box in their customary styles, with Callaghan moving about and Hemingway cautiously following after him. At the end of the round, Callaghan notices that Fitzgerald is "rather quiet, meditative, and I could tell by the expression on his face that he was mystified. He must have come with some kind of a picture of Ernest, the fighter, in his head." (212)

Then comes the second round, the point to which Callaghan has been building throughout the book. Hemingway gets

careless so Callaghan bloodies his mouth. Callaghan supposes that the shock in Fitzgerald's face is what causes Hemingway to come lunging in, rather than taking the blow with his customary "grace and appreciation." Callaghan writes of the result of Hemingway's recklessness:

I could see Scott on the bench. I was wondering why I was tiring, for I hadn't been hit solidly. Then Ernest, wiping the blood from his mouth with his glove, and probably made careless with exasperation and embarrassment from having Scott there, came leaping in at me. Stepping in, I beat him to the punch. The timing must have been just right. I caught him on the jaw; spinning around he went down, sprawled out on his back. (213)

Then Fitzgerald makes his panicky announcement: he has let the round go one minute overtime. Hemingway shows neither grace nor appreciation.

"Christ!" Ernest yelled. He got up. He was silent for a few seconds. Scott, staring at his watch, was mute and wondering. I wished I were miles away. "All right, Scott," Ernest said savagely. "If you want to see me getting the shit kicked out of me, just say so. Only don't say you made a mistake," and he stomped off to the shower room to wipe the blood from his mouth. (214)

When Hemingway returns, the three seem to try to forget that anything out of the ordinary has happened. Callaghan and Hemingway continue to box, and then Callaghan trips over a wrestling mat, falling to one knee. To make amends, the good-hearted, luckless Fitzgerald cries, "One knockdown to Ernest, one to Morley." (216) One shudders to think of the effect the well-meant remark had on Hemingway. Hemingway's humiliations are not over, however. A slender young chap who has been playing billiards nearby offers to

teach Hemingway a bit about the defensive aspects of boxing. Hemingway has regained his aplomb, though, and proceeds to make the boy look foolish.

Each of the trio behaves splendidly. They laugh and joke and drink, though they have just experienced a terrific emotional strain. But the occasion is the first and last time that Callaghan, Hemingway and Fitzgerald are to be together.

The unfortunate afternoon marked the end of something for Fitzgerald and Hemingway, though when he returned to Canada, Callaghan still considered himself the friend of both. Unfortunately, a highly erroneous account of the boxing match appeared in Isabel Paterson's column in the New York Herald Tribune. Callaghan wrote a humorous letter of explanation and received an apologetic letter from Miss Paterson, but before his correction could be printed, Callaghan received a collect cable from Fitzgerald: "Have seen story in Herald Tribune. Ernest and I await your correction." Callaghan was enraged, and the publication of his own correction the following Sunday only made him more angry; he seems to have supposed Fitzgerald and Hemingway would think they coerced him to write the correction.

Callaghan wrote Fitzgerald a stinging letter and received letters from Hemingway and Fitzgerald. Finally, Maxwell Perkins seems to have smoothed down the ruffled feathers of his three authors, though at the time of the

writing of That Summer in Paris, Callaghan admits he made a mistake in letting Perkins handle the adjustment, rather than seeing Fitzgerald and Hemingway himself. As a result, his friendship with the two ended in late 1929; he never saw either of them again.

Callaghan's "reminiscence" is a remarkable performance. Throughout the book, in his treatment of such difficult people as Fitzgerald, Hemingway, Robert McAlmon, Ford Madox Ford and others, he maintains the attitude which characterizes his writing in the novels--an attitude which might be called "compassionate objectivity." He sees impartially and reports objectively, but one feels that he understands and sympathizes. Though he had been insulted and humiliated by both Fitzgerald and Hemingway, he did not lose his sense of justice, remembering that they had been kind and helpful to him. Callaghan refers to them, at the conclusion of That Summer in Paris, as the nicest men he ever knew.

CHAPTER VI

A LIFE OF HUMILIATION?

I have lived a life of humiliation.

Wesley Callahan

CHAPTER VI

A LIFE OF HUMILIATION?

It seems astonishing that a man who was the friend of Ernest Hemingway, Scott Fitzgerald, James Joyce, Sinclair Lewis, Sherwood Anderson, and Thomas Wolfe is not only still alive but is still writing in Toronto. For his persistent devotion and application to the art of fiction, Morley Callaghan should receive the writer's equivalent of service stripes, if nothing else.

Morley Callaghan's real importance, of course, has little to do with longevity. Part of his significance is due to the impressive bulk and range of his achievement. He has produced nine serious novels which have been translated into a dozen languages, three short-story collections and dozens of uncollected stories, plays, criticism (both written and via radio and television), social commentary, and reminiscence. Though his work portrays a cross section of contemporary Canadian life, he has most significantly pioneered in his articulation of urban Canada. By writing of universals within the Canadian setting, Callaghan broke with the romantic, regional, parochial Canadian fiction of the past and paved the way for the increasing amount of realistic fiction being written in Canada at present. As Mordecai

Richler states flatly, "Before Callaghan, the only Canadian literary voices were colonial."¹

For these reasons Morley Callaghan (to use one of his favorite terms, and one that he would never apply to himself) is Canada's leading "literary guy"--Canada's foremost man of letters. A question may remain, however, as to just how much that means. Though Callaghan is Canada's foremost literary figure, is he truly a major writer or no more than the best of a bad Canadian lot?

The Artistic Aim

Callaghan has the lofty artistic aims of the major writer. As was mentioned in Chapter II, under the subhead "Naturalism and Hemingway," Callaghan views the art of fiction as the greatest of the arts. The writer of fiction is concerned with the spirit and heart of man, and must view man as he is while retaining a mental vision of man as he ought to be. At the Canadian Writers' Conference, Callaghan spoke of the writer's value to society. Callaghan, it will be seen, does not align himself with those who preach art for art's sake. Said Callaghan,

I believe most emphatically that the writer has some role to play, and some social obligation. I believe that he has always had his greatest value to society--and I don't care what kind of a society it is--when he is accepted in his natural function, plying his free imagination on human experience, as a wild goose going his own way,

¹"Canadiana: One Man's View," Holiday, Vol. 25 (April, 1964), p. 47.

trying to express an experience that hasn't been expressed before.¹

At the conference Callaghan went on to speak of the responsibility of the writer. He said,

It seems to me that the writer, since his material is human beings, and since his special equipment is for having his own vision, has an enormous responsibility. He is concerned with the heart of man--with the heart of man as it touched Sophocles and Dante and Villon and Chaucer and Shakespeare and Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy and Joyce. The writer, the artist, has his own kind of knowledge of these matters, which he expresses when he gives form to his material; and he is a fool if he is seduced by the latest fashions in knowledge, the psychological jargon, the sociological jargon, and chatter about the meaning of meaning. The writer, the artist with words, must always be looking outward, but at the same time he saves himself and makes himself universal by going deeper and deeper inward.²

Callaghan's concern for the spirit and heart of man, his insistence that the writer maintain his own vision of man as he ought to be, are reminiscent of a statement of the artist's function and importance which has come to be considered one of the great statements of our time--William Faulkner's speech upon accepting the Nobel Prize.

In the preceding passage it will also be seen that Callaghan specifically rejects an approach to writing which F. W. Watt and others have attributed to him. Watt has said that Callaghan used the leading ideas "in the air" about him as a means of exploring various aspects of Canadian life. Watt says that Callaghan offers no original

¹"Novelist," Writing in Canada, ed. George Whalley, pp. 30-31.

²Ibid., p. 31.

"philosophical thinking" and that we have no right to demand it. For Callaghan, the value of the artist lies in the originality of his vision and the originality of its expression. Though Watt does not say Callaghan was "seduced by the latest fashions in knowledge, the psychological jargon, [and] the sociological jargon" and though ideas current at the time of writing may appear in the novels, perhaps because they were part of his world and he could not keep them out, it is doubtful that Callaghan makes the conscious use of leading ideas which Watt attributes to him.

The Themes

In Man in Modern Fiction, Edmund Fuller makes the following comment:

So far as writing is concerned, there are a good many men and women around who can write a novel in the sense of producing something sufficiently articulate, and with enough story fabric, to induce a publisher to put it on the market. But there are relatively few who are able to think a novel. It is in the area of concept that contemporary fiction is anemic. Only a minority of our novelists have something clear to say, and of these a dismaying number have emphatic things to say of a virulently destructive and anti-social character.¹

Morley Callaghan's concepts, his themes and ideas, are the themes of major fiction. Callaghan has the ability Fuller finds so rarely--the ability to think a novel. In an article entitled "Toronto's Callaghan," Bernard Preston has written of Callaghan's writing method, the process through which he creates fiction. Preston tells us,

¹P. xiv.

[Callaghan] says that his method of creation is to think and keep thinking about his basic idea, until it takes form and becomes visible to him; whereupon he begins to feel, and continues to do so, more and more intensely, until the whole subject is so nearly complete that practically all it needs is transmission to paper.¹

In describing their own creative habits, many writers have said they think and compose best at the typewriter or the writing table, that they set their characters in motion to see what they will do, without knowing in advance what the outcome of the writing will be. Callaghan is apparently not of that sort. Preston continues with the following paraphrase of Callaghan's words:

To feel so intensely that the thing writes itself would seem to indicate that writing in this way is not a manifestation of the intellect. But when one remembers that all this feeling is the fruit of thought, the thought that has gradually been assembling the various factors in the story, then it will be recognized after all as an intellectual piece of work.²

Callaghan would seem to be among the minority of writers who make an attempt to think a novel.

Yet Callaghan has denied that he takes a theme as his starting point. In the Weaver interview, Callaghan said, "I don't think of myself as having a theme. No, absolutely, I don't think a writer should have a theme. Because you then start writing thesis books. . . . I have never sat down to write a book to carry out a theme."³ It may be true, as

¹Saturday Night, January 18, 1936, p. 12.

²Ibid. ³p. 21.

Roy Daniells has said, that Callaghan has a personal sensibility rather than a body of explicit doctrine.¹ It may also be true that Callaghan would agree with Karl Stern, who has written that "the uniqueness and sanctity of the human person can be grasped only by contemplation. It is elusive to discursive reasoning."² Writers who incline toward explicit doctrine and discursive reasoning are more apt to use the essay than the novel. Nevertheless, though Callaghan has denied that he writes books to carry out themes, and though personal sensibility seems more evident in Callaghan's writing than a discursive reasoning process or a body of explicit doctrine, the novels are novels of ideas; the themes are there. True, great themes do not make great books, but as Melville said, you must have a mighty theme if you are going to write a mighty book. And the critics seem to agree that Callaghan's themes, if not always mighty, are always significant, always worthy.³ A few examples should indicate that Morley Callaghan's thematic concerns are among the thematic concerns of major fiction.

Hugo McPherson has noted that the characters in

¹"Literature: Poetry and the Novel," The Culture of Contemporary Canada, ed. Julian Park, p. 36.

²p. 287.

³While reading the Callaghan criticism, I kept a list of what the critics see as Callaghan's thematic concerns in the individual stories and novels, and in his work as a whole. Of the fifty themes on the list, none could be considered insignificant. Most of them would probably have been sufficiently "mighty" to satisfy Melville.

Callaghan's fiction are involved in a quest for significance.¹ Many of Callaghan's people know or sense that there is something better than their humdrum, insignificant existences and want to achieve it. Callaghan's first published story, "A Girl with Ambition," offers an example of the quest for significance at a low intellectual and socio-economic level as does the first novel, Strange Fugitive, in the person of the strange fugitive himself, Harry Trotter. At a higher spiritual and intellectual level, Mike Aikenhead of They Shall Inherit the Earth, Harry Lane of The Many Colored Coat and Sam and Anna of A Passion in Rome are involved in quests which would put meaning in their lives. Finally, we have Father Dowling of Such Is My Beloved, Kip Caley of More Joy in Heaven and Peggy Sanderson of The Loved and the Lost, who try not only to add significance to their own lives but to the lives of others as well. The theme which Salvador J. Fajardo perceives as basic to Callaghan's work is not inconsistent with the quest for significance. Fajardo says, "The basic theme of Callaghan's fiction seems to be the search for an alliance between the deeper spiritual values in man and his activities as a social being."² The group of heroes and heroines previously named could also be used to substantiate Fajardo's claim.

George Woodcock has noted that the conflict between

¹Queen's Quarterly, Vol. 64, p. 352.

²Pp. 107-08.

sacred and profane love is often a basic situation in Callaghan's work, a conflict between what Woodcock calls "the slender, somewhat frigid wife figure and the abundantly fleshed amoral mistress."¹ What Callaghan seems to have implied, in the novels, is the difficulty of finding the two types joined in an individual woman, whether the difficulty be the fault of the woman who cannot be both wife and lover, or the fault of the man who cannot consider his woman both as wife and lover. Harry Trotter of Strange Fugitive was torn between his wife Vera and his mistress Anna; John Hughes of It's Never Over between Lillian and Isabelle; Peter Gould of A Broken Journey between Marion Gibbons and his mistress Pat; Harry Lane of The Many Colored Coat between Mollie the socialite and Annie Laurie, the lady of leisure. The only male-female relationship in the novels which seems properly proportioned, in its conjoining of spiritual and fleshly love, is that of Anna and Mike in They Shall Inherit the Earth.

In the Encyclopedia Canadiana, under the "Morley Callaghan" entry, there appears this statement: "The novels are all variations on the same theme: the plight of the individual unable to conform to the social pattern of the times."² R. E. Watters has remarked similarly that "a recurrent theme is the plight of the individual who is

¹Canadian Literature, No. 21, p. 25.

²Vol. 2, p. 170.

unable or unwilling to surrender his individuality under pressures toward social conformity."¹ Statements similar to these appear throughout Callaghan criticism, and they are unquestionably accurate. Pressures to conform to the social pattern bring on Father Dowling's madness and the deaths of Kip Caley and Peggy Sanderson. Each of Callaghan's main characters has a large measure of individuality which various representatives of the social norm try to destroy. This mighty theme is prevalent in contemporary fiction, even though few mighty books have resulted from the use of the theme.

It was mentioned in Chapter V that Callaghan has made use of the important "innocence" theme throughout his writing career. In 1956 the anonymous author of "Prodigal Who Stayed Home" wrote, "[Callaghan's] theme throughout the years has been much the same, the innocent and how the world handles and mistreats them."² A. H. Cheyer and F. W. Watt, both writing in 1961, have made similar statements. Cheyer said, "A theme of recurrent interest to the author is the interrelation between genuine innocence and a persistently corrupt world."³ According to Watt, Callaghan's recurring concern is to answer the following question: "How does

¹"Canadian Literature in English," Collier's Encyclopedia, 1965 ed., Vol. 5, p. 318.

²Saturday Night, May 12, 1956, p. 22.

³Wilson Library Bulletin, Vol. 36, p. 265.

natural goodness . . . fare in our world?"¹ These statements of theme are quite similar to each other and also to the preceding statements relating to the pressures on the individual to conform to society; the innocent is merely one type of individual who often finds conformity impossible. To the Callaghan critics, "innocent" is a word to be applied to those rare persons who are better than their fellows. However, Callaghan's innocents are of two types. One type, represented by Anna Prychoda of They Shall Inherit the Earth and Vera Trotter of Strange Fugitive, are "innocent" in that they are "not guilty." They are passive innocents, and the world does with them what it will. Callaghan's crusaders, however,--Father Dowling, Kip Caley, and Peggy Sanderson--are not only innocent but are militantly trying to do something to change the world about them. Society will let Anna and Vera lead their quiet, innocent existences, but the aggressive innocents must apparently be crushed.

The quest for significance, the quest for higher spiritual values, the conflict between sacred and profane love, individualism and conformity, the innocent in the modern world--these are a few of Callaghan's themes, and they are the themes of major fiction. They are overlapping themes and in fact are often varying ways of saying the same thing, but none have argued that the themes are unworthy,

¹University of Toronto Quarterly, Vol. 30, p. 403.

that Callaghan is trying to do something not really worth doing.

* * * * *

Callaghan can be seen to be a writer who has high artistic aims and who is concerned with significant ideas. How does he fulfill his aims and carry out his ideas? Though there will be some overlap, a threefold breakdown of Callaghan's manner of execution--into method, style, and attitude--may be helpful.

The Method

Before the "dark period" simplicity seems to be the word which most accurately describes Callaghan's method. In the Weaver interview, Callaghan speaks of the way he wrote during the early years:

I was simply writing in direct contact with my material, you see, so the whole problem of being a literary guy didn't enter into it at all. The question was whether I was telling the truth and making a point about a character. I didn't know whether my writing was very, very good or very, very bad.

.
You see, the great thing is to write without any sense of literature. And I was able at that time to write without any sense of literature. It was just a matter of bringing my mind into contact with the material and saying what I wanted to say. That's a wonderful way to write.¹

In the early work Callaghan had an uncomplicated, direct feeling about his writing, and the feeling resulted in novels and stories which were uncomplicated and direct. In 1935

¹P. 4.

H. J. Davis said of the work Callaghan had produced up to that time:

His method is a simplification which is not unlike that of some of his contemporaries in descriptive painting. The effect is clear and bright; the eye immediately takes hold of the pattern of coloured surfaces, and recognizes the general character of the landscape rather than a particular place. . . . The point would not be worth considering so carefully if it were not that this method of simplification is, I believe, characteristic of Mr. Callaghan's art as a whole.¹

The clear, bright effect of the simple pattern which Davis speaks of was consciously rendered, as Callaghan's statements in That Summer in Paris and elsewhere attest. Beginning in 1951 with The Loved and the Lost, however, Callaghan began to widen his scope. The pre-war novels, especially the first three books--Strange Fugitive, It's Never Over, and A Broken Journey--focused on one or two or three individuals. Toronto was not to those books what Montreal and Rome were to the most recent three books. In Such Is My Beloved, They Shall Inherit the Earth, and More Joy in Heaven, symbolic representatives of various social and political factions were introduced--the judge, the bishop, the politician, the communist, the successful executive. Hence the middle period novels are more "complex" than the early novels, which primarily concern interpersonal relationships. In The Loved and the Lost and The Many Colored Coat, though the scope is limited to the city of Montreal,

¹"Morley Callaghan," The Canadian Forum, Vol. 15 (December, 1935), p. 398.

it becomes almost panoramic. Finally, in A Passion in Rome, the endurance of the human spirit, past and present, is symbolized in the juxtaposition of the two "passions"-- Sam and Anna, and the rebirth of the church.

In 1961 Tony Emery wrote, "I have always found Morley Callaghan an outstandingly dull writer."¹ A reader who prefers the exotic, the dramatic, the violent, the action-packed, as Emery perhaps does, will find Morley Callaghan's work "outstandingly dull." Callaghan's subtle, sober, underplayed method is not now in fashion. But observe Sinclair Lewis's statement about the first short-story collection,

A Native Argosy:

No one today is more brilliantly finding the remarkable in the ordinary than Morley Callaghan. Here is magnificently the seeing eye. He makes pictures that one will remember for years after the more exotic and obviously dramatic chromo has faded.²

Emery apparently saw the ordinary in the ordinary, Lewis the remarkable in the ordinary. Emery would perhaps prefer the exotic, the dramatic, as would many readers, which is why the books of James Michener and Mickey Spillane sell hundreds of thousands of copies, but Callaghan has not chosen to write of the few exotic aspects which Canadian life does possess.

Edmund Wilson and Walt McCaslin have both written of

¹Saturday Night, December 9, 1961, p. 43.

²Quoted on the dust jacket of Morley Callaghan's A Broken Journey (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932).

the sobriety, the "grayness" which characterizes much of Callaghan's work. Wilson says that the reading public in England and America, "whose taste in contemporary American fiction has been formed by the exploiters of violent effects . . . does not find itself at home with, does not really comprehend, the more sober effects of Callaghan."¹ Callaghan has compared the writing of fiction to the millinery business, and his particular style of hat is out of fashion right now. McCaslin notes that

there is a deceptive grayness about his books that might have discouraged our more action-oriented public. Callaghan's style is neither line-clever nor exuberantly paced, though satisfaction awaits the reader who will take the time to "move in" with the characters and permit himself to be drawn into their daily affairs.²

Edward Albee has said that the playgoer should enter the theatre without preconception but with education, with an open mind but a full mind.³ Morley Callaghan's books must be entered in the same way. In the case of Callaghan's work, "education" and a "full mind" would consist of the knowledge that, as Henry James said, "the house of fiction has in short not one window, but a million."⁴ Callaghan's window is not Hemingway's window, or James Michener's window, or Mickey Spillane's window, and the reader who anticipates

¹The New Yorker, November 26, 1960, p. 226.

²Saturday Review, November 11, 1961, p. 28.

³Address on the occasion of the fortieth anniversary of the Yale Drama School.

⁴From the Preface to Portrait of a Lady.

or demands novels that are like somebody else's novels is going to be disappointed. The statements by Wilson and McCaslin are indicative that one reason for Callaghan's failure to fulfill his possibilities as a writer is a factor for which he can hardly be blamed: an uneducated public and critical taste which makes a reader unable or unwilling to "take the time to 'move in' with the characters and permit himself to be drawn into their daily affairs."

The simplicity, subtlety and sobriety of Callaghan's method have resulted in characters who must be "lived with" to be appreciated. Callaghan's people, especially in the stories, are "little people" as a rule, and it takes time to get to know them and to sympathize with them. Robert Weaver, for example, has apparently never become really acquainted with Callaghan's characters. Writing in 1946, he used the past tense of Callaghan's work since at that time Callaghan had not produced a novel for nine years. He said, "Morley Callaghan, one of the few [Canadian] novelists to write consistently about immediate problems, unfortunately was content to develop characters apparently devoid of will or intellect."¹ Though Callaghan had yet to create Peggy Sanderson, Harry Lane, Sam Raymond and Anna Connel, it seems strange that Weaver would deny intellect to Mike Aikenhead, will to Kip Caley, and both will and intellect to Father Dowling.

¹"Notes on Canadian Literature," The Nation, February 16, 1946, p. 198.

One final characteristic of Callaghan's method is the untidy nature of his endings. Many of Callaghan's stories and some of the novels seem merely to stop; there is often no denouement in the usual sense of that term, no tying up of loose ends. For example, Callaghan's first novel Strange Fugitive ends with the death of Harry Trotter, not with the aftermath of the death or the effect of the death on Vera or Jim Nash, but with the death itself. In A Broken Journey Marion Gibbons goes back to town alone, after having an affair with the fishing guide. She leaves Peter and Hubert at the boarding house, talking of Mexico. We can only presume what will become of Marion or Peter, or what the experience in the Algoma Hills has meant to them. Our only certain knowledge is that the novel has ended.

The untidy nature of Callaghan's endings is no doubt related to his reluctance to pass judgment. As Edmund Wilson has said, Callaghan's novels "center on situations of primarily psychological interest that are treated from a moral point of view yet without making moral judgments of any conventional kind."¹ Roy Daniells says Callaghan is "always driving at the problem of individuality, perennially unwilling to be jockeyed into premature conclusions, ever on the lookout to see what the individual . . . is going to do."²

¹The New Yorker, November 26, 1960, p. 226.

²"Literature: Poetry and the Novel," The Culture of Contemporary Canada, ed. Julian Park, p. 45.

Finally, in the words of Milton Wilson,

The special talent of Morley Callaghan is to tell us everything and yet keep us in the dark about what really matters. He makes us misjudge and rejudge his characters over and over again; we end up no longer capable of judgment¹

These three quotations should indicate the effect of Callaghan's loose endings on many readers. Callaghan's refusal to make overt judgments forces the reader to misjudge and rejudge. When the last page has been turned, the issues have not always been fully resolved. The result is that the book and its issues continue to live after the book has been shelved. As Milton Wilson says, Callaghan "writes to release his characters, not to explain or embalm them."² Not all readers can readily accustom themselves to the lack of resolution in the novels. Again, Edward Albee's advice to theatregoers and Henry James's statement about the house of fiction are appropriate. If a reader is accustomed to entering a piece of fiction with the preconceived notion that the denouement should be marked by a parceling out of rewards, punishments, wives, husbands, conclusions and resolutions, he will be disappointed with many of Callaghan's novels and stories. If, however, the reader will enter Callaghan's room in the house of fiction without preconception, and will not demand a denouement covered with pink bowknots, he will find that Callaghan's books and stories, which are

¹Tamarack Review, No. 22, p. 90.

²Ibid., p. 92.

not like anybody else's books and stories, can give satisfactions different from those available in anybody else's fiction.

The Style

It is hoped that the excerpts from his books which have been included in the previous pages may have been sufficient to convey the flavor of Callaghan's writing. Reactions to the style have been varied: the way a critic reacts often seems to have been predetermined by the attitude brought to the fiction. As Milton Wilson has said, "What for one [critic] is an austere rejection of witty epigrams and ingenious metaphors, for the other is an inability to handle words with grace, invention, and precision--a lack of proper respect for language."¹ Callaghan's views on style were discussed in Chapter II under the subhead "The Zola of Toronto: Strange Fugitive." Though Strange Fugitive comes closest to being a practical result of Callaghan's stylistic theory, his prose since then has been generally direct and free of obscurity. As H. J. Davis says, Callaghan's style "is pedestrian, as perhaps good prose should be. He has avoided elaborateness and all forms of extravagance."² That word "pedestrian" has often been lifted from context to be used in a pejorative sense, though Davis obviously had no

¹Ibid., p. 89.

²The Canadian Forum, Vol. 15, p. 399.

such intention. Milton Wilson has given the best short description of Callaghan's style; he calls it a "coarse-grained, serviceable, burlap style."¹ This description reflects Callaghan's view of his style's function--it has a job to do, and therefore its greatest virtue is not getting in the way.

The Attitude

Though Morley Callaghan's attitude in his fiction is difficult to define, the various descriptions of the attitude that critics have recently put forth are quite similar. As early as 1936 reviewer "S.Y." makes the following comments:

Mr. Callaghan is genuinely interested in holding up to view all the small, human relationships that get blurred irrationally because two people who love each other dearly are unable to be articulate or honest at the moment when situations are saved. The unpredictable flecks of disharmony in daily life that mar and distort intimate relations, the delicate nuances that make for conflict--these are the incidents which the author examines with more than the analytical eye. Having seen them and understood them, he records them with compassion and his tender insight is more rewarding than the raw ability of Hemingway to make us see or feel without any hint of anything as spiritual as compassion.²

The word "compassion" appears twice in the preceding passage, which makes "S.Y.'s" comments somewhat out of the ordinary for 1936. Most reviewers and critics at that time were speaking of Callaghan's Hemingway-like objectivity. In the last few years, however, "compassion" has become the fashion-

¹Tamarack Review, No. 22, p. 91.

²New York Times Book Review, September 13, 1936,

able--and accurate--word to describe Callaghan's attitude. In his review of That Summer in Paris, Robin Matthews says, "The power of the work arises in large measure from the peculiar interest and compassion everywhere shown for human weakness and complexity."¹ In 1964 the editors of Canadian Writers: A Biographical Dictionary said that Callaghan's stories express "compassion for the insignificant individual or the outsider,"² and in that same year James Robertson MacGillivray concluded that "Morley Callaghan has been a humanitarian realist all his career, describing with compassion the misfits, the outcasts and the morally bewildered in urban society."³

Edmund Fuller says that "the shiftless, the drunk, the amoral, and the wards of society," have been treated as "the beautiful little people" by John Steinbeck and William Saroyan.⁴ "Compassion" has also been used to describe the attitude of these authors toward their characters, but it is probable that "sentimentality" would be more accurate. In any event, the "compassion" of Morley Callaghan and the "compassion" of Steinbeck and Saroyan are worlds apart. The latter seem to romanticize and sentimentalize their characters

¹Queen's Quarterly, Vol. 70 (Autumn, 1963), p. 464.

²P. 16.

³"Canadian Literature (English)," The Encyclopedia Britannica, 1964 ed., Vol. 4, p. 761.

⁴P. 33.

by pretending that the worse they are in the eyes of society, the better they are in actuality. Callaghan's compassion is of an entirely different sort. He sees and he reports with objectivity, but somehow the feeling that he understands arises out of "the total context of characters, actions, and conditions that he sets before us to represent his world."¹

* * * * *

One important question remains. We have said that Morley Callaghan's premise throughout his writing career is that man has possibilities on this earth which he is not achieving, and that "the great sin" consists in not making the most of one's possibilities as a man. Yet, many of the heroes and virtually all of the lesser characters fail to fulfill their possibilities. Other heroes who do more nearly achieve their possibilities are driven mad or are killed for their pains. These unhappy endings have caused many to see Callaghan as a pessimistic, fatalistic writer, a conclusion which is not in accord with certain of Callaghan's statements or with certain inferences, based on the novels, which we have made about Callaghan's view of life.

The apparent contradiction between what Callaghan has said and what his books have said is very similar to the apparent contradiction between William Faulkner's work and his

¹Ibid., p. 75.

Nobel Prize speech, and Faulkner's answer could well be Callaghan's. When Faulkner was speaking at West Point, a questioner asked him how he had helped man endure by lifting up his heart. Faulkner answered,

It's the writer's privilege, his dedication too, to uplift man's heart by showing man the record of the experiences of the human heart, the travail of man with his environment, with his fellows, with himself, in such moving terms that the lessons of honesty and courage are evident and obvious.¹

That is a very fine statement, an enlightening statement. Callaghan would doubtless have shouted "Hear, Hear!" because it so well expresses what he himself has tried to do. Is it not true, though Father Dowling goes mad, and Kip Caley and Peggy Sanderson die, "that the lessons of honesty and courage are evident and obvious" in their stories? Again at West Point, a cadet asked Faulkner, "Sir, in many of your works you deal with perversion and corruption in men. How do you feel this uplifts your reader, exemplified in courage and honor?" Here is Faulkner's superb answer:

Well, the easy answer is, it may show them what I don't think they should do, which is easy and glib and meaningless. I think that the reason is that one must show man; the writer, the painter, the musician wants to show man not in his--not when he's dressed up for Sunday, but in all his phases, his conditions; then the very fact that to see man in his base attitudes, his base conditions, and still show that he goes on, he continues, he has outlived the dinosaur, he will outlive the atom bomb, and I'm convinced in time he will even outlive the wheel. He still has partaken of immortality, that the aberrations are part of his history, are part of himself maybe. But within all that is the same thing

¹Joseph L. Fant and Robert Ashley, Faulkner at West Point (New York: Random House, 1964), p. 48.

that makes him want to endure, that makes him believe that war should be eradicated, that injustice should not exist, that little children shouldn't suffer.¹

Many people heard Faulkner's Nobel Prize address, then looked in Faulkner's novels to see whether he had done what he claimed to have tried to do. Then, they began asking themselves questions, questions similar to those put to Faulkner by the West Point cadets. Faulkner's answers indicate that regardless of the pessimistic overtones of his novels, he is optimistic about the possibilities of mankind.

Morley Callaghan has similarly written novels which have often been read as pessimistic statements of man's possibilities. It is hoped that this study has made it plain that Callaghan is not the pessimistic, morally flabby writer he has been accused of being, that Callaghan does have a coherent view of existence and of man's place in it. It is also hoped that the preceding pages have shown Callaghan to be a writer who deserves a higher position in the literary pantheon than has been granted him. On the basis of the quantity and quality of his output, his high aesthetic ideals and aims, the significance of his themes, the adequacy and straightforwardness of his method and style, and his commendably compassionate attitude, Morley Callaghan is truly a major author.

In 1960 Morley Callaghan said, "I have lived a life of humiliation." When one looks back over Callaghan's career,

¹Ibid., pp. 54-55.

one can understand why Callaghan made the remark. But the remark is not true. Callaghan would be well advised to pick up his John Bunyan, to note in The Pilgrim's Progress that when Christian found himself in the Valley of Humiliation and menaced by Apollyon, he struck out with his two-edged sword and soon continued on his way. Morley Callaghan is talented and energetic enough to do the same.

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