

In the course of his career, Laurier is shown to be a highly skilled politician, who handled divisive issues with great tact, and who was always strongly committed to the goal of national unity. Yet the author reveals both his strengths and weaknesses realistically and explains Laurier's eventual fall from power.

Both books have a pleasing format, and they are extensively illustrated. *Gabriel Dumont* suffers, to some extent, from the lack of suitable maps, and the reader must refer to an historical atlas to follow some parts of the text intelligently. *Wilfrid Laurier* could have included more documentary quotations: there is little evidence of Laurier as the persuasive, silver-tongued orator. On balance, however, both books will add an important human dimension to the study of Canada's military and political history.

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Ivon Owen and Morris Wolfe, ed.
THE BEST MODERN CANADIAN SHORT STORIES.
Edmonton: Hurtig, 1978
318 pp. \$12.95.

James H. Pickering, ed.
FICTION 100.
New York: MacMillan, 2nd edition, 1978.
1086 pp. \$5.95 paper.

Two recent short story books, *The Best Modern Canadian Short Stories* and *Fiction 100*, show in contrast just how much Canadian literature has come of age.

The American-edited book is a typical short story anthology, ordered alphabetically and including most of the well-known British, U.S., and foreign language (in translation) writers: Poe, de Maupassant, Chekhov, Kipling, Joyce, among many others. It contains not one Canadian story, despite the editor's association with a university in the border state of Michigan.

The Owen and Wolfe collection by its excellence emphasizes this omission, which I can attribute only to ignorance of the existence of any quality Canadian short stories. An oral reading of one of them, "A Broken Globe" by Henry Kreisel, impressed my class of students training to teach high school English, even those who seemed prejudiced against Canadian literature. All the stories are different: different in authors (all the famous Canadian fiction writers

like Laurence, Richler, Munro, Roy, together with some worthy newcomers), in settings, types of characters, points of view, style and themes; and all 24 are good, most much better than some of those included — probably for historical interest or to represent science fiction and mystery genres — in the Pickering anthology.

The books are intended for different audiences. The Pickering book is for students in introductory university fiction courses; there are Questions for Study at the ends of the stories, and appendices which include biographical notes and a glossary of literary terms. The Canadian anthology is an effort to acquaint a general audience with developments in Canadian short fiction since 1960, the publication date of *Canadian Short Stories* edited by Robert Weaver. However, I see no reason why the 1978 anthology could not be used as a university or junior college text, certainly for Canadian literature courses but also for courses in modern short stories.

If one were to use it for a Canadian literature course, one could use the importance of region in colouring the content of some of the stories, which are ordered from West to East, from Vancouver to an island off the coast of Labrador. If one were to use it for a course in modern short stories, one could organize it around point of view, from first person in "One's a Heifer" by Sinclair Ross, to third person restricted in "So Many Have Died" by Joyce Marshall, to third person omniscient in "A Grand Marriage" by Ann Hébert. Other groupings around theme or character or style are also possible.

The major advantage of the Pickering collection is its price: 100 stories for \$5.95. However, I think its neglect of Canadian contributions to this short fiction genre makes it inappropriate for use in Canadian universities or colleges unless it is supplemented by either the older paperback, *Canadian Short Stories*, or, preferably, by the newer Owen and Wolfe collection.

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