

New in English

The Tuning of the World, a Pioneering Exploration Into the Past History and Present State of the Most Neglected Aspect of our Environment: The Soundscape, R. MURRAY SCHAFER, McClelland and Stewart, 1977.

R. Murray Schafer is one of the world's great listeners (as well as a composer of music and a professor of communications). In this pioneering book, he concludes that we have moved from a hi-fi past, when distant waterfalls could be heard with exquisite fidelity, to a low-fi present, in which an urban pedestrian cannot distinguish a jack hammer's racketing from the general din. This book is a delight—it tells us, loud and clear, about the way we think sounds sound—joyful, harsh, frightening. It also softly but persuasively argues that if we do not control the rising racket, we will eliminate the coo, the murmur, the tinkle, the whisper and the wind's audible caress from our lives.

An Appetite for Life, CHARLES RITCHIE, Macmillan, 1977.

Mr. Ritchie, who served as Canada's Ambassador to the United States from 1962 to 1966, has

previously published selections from his 1937 to 1945 diaries, *The Siren Years*. He had intended to follow with excerpts from the diaries of the next decade, but while thumbing through his old notebooks, he found himself reading entries from September 1924, the beginning of his eighteenth year.

He was entranced. Should he publish them? He recognized the danger. The diaries of a public man are safe from the worst kind of ridicule; they can be excused, whatever their merit, by the fact that they are properly historical. Those of an eighteen year old, if published, must be the diaries of a very perceptive young person. Mr. Ritchie's are.

They are charming, they are instructive, they are historical. They tell us what life was like when the century was barely out of its own teens and when the gentry of the English-speaking world was still unself-consciously in charge.

Mr. Ritchie is not, by strict definition, a professional writer. *An Appetite for Life* should be kept out of the hands of all the hopeless, published plodders who think that they are. That he should be so talented (when they are not) is just unfair.

New in French

[REVIEWED IN ENGLISH]

Le Parti Québécois: de la fondation à la prise du pouvoir, VERA MURRAY, Hurtubise HMH, 1977.

Those who used to ask "What does Quebec want?" now ask "Why?" and "How?" Political scientist Vera Murray provides meticulous, impartial answers in *Le Parti Québécois: de la fondation à la prise du pouvoir*. It analyzes the election of November 15, 1976, (won by the Parti Québécois, which advocates the peaceful separation of Quebec from Canada) and examines the official party documents from 1961 to 1976, as well as newspaper and magazine articles. There are relevant interviews and an in-depth study of the structures, ideas, tensions and people of the party.

SHEILA FISCHMAN

Le Temps des otages: Québec entre parenthèses, JEAN PARÉ, Editions Quinze, 1977.

Jean Paré, forty-three, is the editor-in-chief of *L'Actualité*, Maclean Hunter's monthly French-

language magazine. He is a native of Quebec who has worked in Europe (and Ottawa), visited China and Israel and even touched down in Toronto from time to time. A distinguished translator, he won the first Canada Council translation prize for his French version of the Ted Allan-Sydney Gordon biography of Norman Bethune. *Le Temps des otages* is a chronicle of Quebec between 1970 and 1976.

Sociologist Marcel Rioux writes in a preface to the book that "Paré's irony and sarcasm aren't gratuitous, they're a reaction to the mess he sees us making of our society and our habitat; he protests against the factitiousness surrounding us, against politicians riveted to their temporary images, who cultivate appearances to avoid seeing reality—and their own lack of it."

The tone of the essays ranges from caustic to affectionate, depending on the subject. Originally written for newspapers and magazines with a the-