

rock notes

Paul McCartney

George Harrison recently told the press that the Beatles weren't so great, that he's played with better musicians since, and that he has no desire to perform with Paul McCartney again "from a musician's point of view."

Now, in an interview with Melody Maker magazine, Paul McCartney replies to his former colleague: "I don't agree with George. I don't think the Beatles weren't any good. I think they were great. I think he's well wrong with that."

Paul adds that he "reckons" that George's current bass player Willie Weeks, "is a better bass player than me... but still I think the Beatles even had a better thing. I think we had more of an excitement, more of a kind of joy."

Paul McCartney says he's pleased that all four former-Beatles are doing so well these days. "It's nice to see everyone doing it," he says. "I think the others are great now."

I'd always stick up for 'em." He says he particularly enjoys Ringo's and John's new albums. As for Lennon's "Walls and Bridges" L.P., McCartney says, "It's very good, great album, but I know he can do better. I reckon 'I Am the Walrus' is better; it's more adventurous; it's more exciting."

As for his own writing, McCartney says, "I'm not that concerned with 'my talent.' I reckon I can write songs okay, but I'm not that worried about it. I've got no big hang-up about going down in history. I really don't care."

Don McLean

Don McLean says that a lot of people misinterpreted his classic hit "American Pie."

"People had a way of thinking it was some sort of nostalgia thing, but no," says Don. "I way trying to use some form of statement which would bring people in touch with their

musical past and how it relates to today in this society, because (society is.) burning every vestige of its past."

As for being constantly identified with the song, Don recently told the Philadelphia Bulletin, "I'm just glad it wasn't I've Got a Lovely Bunch of Coconuts."

Don says that his new L.P., "Homeless Brother" on United Artists, is a long step beyond "American Pie." "The overall feel is very different," he says. "It's an album about the American hobo and I would say that thematically it's more cohesive" than past Don McLean L.P.'s.

Santana

Carlos Santana says that he finally has decided to drop his highly successful band Santana.

In an interview with Zoo World, Santana says, "I think at the end of this year, it will be the end for me in this band. I know that next year I have to work at another level."

Carlos, who has become a disciple of Guru Sri Chinmoy, says that he wants to work under his spiritual name Devadip Carlos Santana and he expects to call his next band Devadip

by Earth Starship



This year's Christmas production of Theatre 3 is "Alice Through the Looking Glass". The production runs December 11-29 and includes guest appearances by the Alberta Contemporary Dance Theatre. The original live score was written by Larry Reese.

Colombo's Canadian Quotations suffer from uneven quality

by Arnd Bohm

Colombo's Canadian Quotations. Compiled by John R. Colombo. Edmonton: Hurtig, 1974. 735 pp. \$15.00 (Publishers list price).

How great a book this might have been! The intention was laudable: "To help reveal the Canadian spirit through the medium of quotation." The industry is awesome -- practically by himself, Colombo has collected some 6000

quotations in a massive volume that is 2½ inches thick and weighs some 3½ pounds. And yet, those of us who enjoy browsing in Bartlett's, in the Oxford English Dictionary, in Brewer's and in similar reference works, will be somewhat disappointed by this nationalistic chrestomathy because of its uneven quality.

The book is marred by several flaws. First, Colombo has too often used secondary quotations. The frequent

acknowledgements "as quoted in" or "quoted by" explain but do not justify the method which brought in a lot of the material: skimming secondary literature and copying down every interesting quotation that *someone else* had previously brought to the fore. Without a whole team of editors and compilers, it was impossible for Colombo to plow through vast quantities of primary material, despite his tremendous energy. Several questions arise with

respect to Colombo's comments on the sources of his quotations.

Frequently he is very informative on the people quoted, but who are Robert Harlow of Heather Robertson, or, for that matter, Lyndon B. Johnson? Their remarks here will hardly make them immortal. Similarly, why not give credit to Robert M. Hamilton's *Canadian Quotations and Phrases* for preserving that description of our fair city as "big as Chicago, but it isn't all built up yet."?

Colombo's desire to be exhaustive is sometimes exasperating. As a rule, famous sayings have won their place because of their apt wit, keen insight into human nature, or historical significance. Where Colombo follows those criteria, he is most successful. It is a pleasure to find priceless lines like Allan Lamport's "If somebody's gonna stab me in the back, I wanna be there" or Bob Edward's remark upon arriving in 1894 "So this is Winnipeg; I can tell it's not Paris." Reading this collection makes clear the importance of the speaker's personality and aphoristic ability in making statements with quote value. There is still something true in De Tocqueville's observation that "The most enlightened, patriotic and humane men in Canada make extraordinary efforts to render people dissatisfied with the simple happiness that still contents them." However, there has never been anything vital in Lady Baden-Powell's after-dinner remarks, and I gag at the insipid banality "Ignorance may find a truth on its doorstep that erudition vainly seeks in the stars," as at the kitsch of

Saskatchewan, Saskatchewan! There's no place like Saskatchewan.

We sit and gaze across the plain,

And wonder why it never rains...

I also fail to see why slogans for beer, bras and Hush Puppies should be preserved simply because they were made up by someone in Canada.

At the root of Colombo's problem is that the "Canadian spirit" has not expressed itself too much in suitably quotable quotations. This is not to say that there isn't a "Canadian spirit". Perhaps a work along the lines of Rosten's *Joys of Yiddish* would have been more successful, in bringing the Canadian voice into print. A good dirty joke, with scatological references to one of our minority groups, is far more authentically Canadian than Northrop Frye on imaginative literature or McLuhan on the "vortex of progress". It is ironic but fitting that the most common of our words, the keystone of many of our wittiest expressions, shit, is indexed only once in a notorious remark of Trudeau's. Incidentally, Trudeau gets eight pages, one more than Sir John A. and sixteen times more than Stanfield (who nevertheless comes through as the better quotestman).

Disturbing also is Colombo's attempt to ride the crest of the present wave of anti-Americanism. He misses no opportunity to put Americans in a bad light as far as Canada is concerned. I suspect that as we become aware with Robertson Davies that being Canadian "is not a thing which you can escape from", we will no longer need those elephant-mouse, sneeze-catch cold kind of comparisons which have been the standard fare of Canadian speakers.

I could probably go on carping, listing various types and citing quotations which ought to be deleted or added, but that wouldn't be fair. Despite the flaws, Colombo has done a lot of work, and work which needed to be done. Now that the territory has been mapped, it will be easier for others to follow, steering clear of pitfalls, deadfalls and pratfalls. Until such sifted editions appear, this must count as the best collection of Canadian quotations available.

An afterthought: it's a bargain at the price, and could make a fine Christmas gift for the person who has everything else.

Film Society presents Male and Female

Male and Female (Edmonton Film Society, Dec. 16, Tory Lecture Theatre, 8 p.m.)

Made in 1919, *Male and Female* was Cecil B. DeMille's first million-dollar grossing film. In the trade language of the time, it was an "all-star" film, meaning that there were none. DeMille was in the process of creating his own stars and his greatest screen creation, Gloria Swanson, was well on her way to becoming the foremost symbol of 1920's glamor.

Freely adapted from James Barrie's play, *The Admirable Crichton*, the film tells the story of an English noble family shipwrecked on an island and saved by the butler who takes charge. A love affair between the butler and the lady provides the romantic and heroic interest. The film comments on British class snobbery and shows the wealthy castaways preserving their absurd rituals intact.

DeMille often used flashbacks to early historical times in his silent pictures in order to contrast or compare the manners of two periods and for the use of spectacle and moral lessons. In this film, there is a Babylonian episode in the butler's dream where he is cast as a king and Lady Mary a Christian slave. It was with such scenes that DeMille was able to add more excitement and action, as well as a strain of eroticism.

Negotiations with James Barrie for the play were slow. Eventually the original had to be scrapped due to objections to the word "admirable" in the title. The publicity department was afraid that the American public, being unfamiliar with the

word, would stay away from the film under the impression that it was a naval picture, a form unpopular at the time. DeMille sarcastically changed it to *Male and Female*, adding, "I guess the sales department and the public will understand THAT!"

Gordon Morash



Tom Meighan defends the slumbering Gloria Swanson in Cecil B. DeMille's silent comedy MALE AND FEMALE, about castaways on a desert island. It's part of E.F.S. CLASSIC series, to be shown Mon., Dec. 16 at 8 PM in the Tory Lecture