

ALASKAN ESKIMOS. BY WENDELL H. OSWALT. *San Francisco: Chandler Publishing Co., 1967. 5¾ x 8½ inches, 297 pages, 14 text illustrations, 10 colour prints, maps, tables, bibliography, index. \$4.00 paper, \$7.25 cloth.*

Everyone concerned with university education should take a close look at this book, although in appearance it is more like the product of a machine than of a man: the distributors (Science Research Associates) are a subsidiary of IBM.

Dr. Oswalt has done significant work on Alaskan Eskimos. His *Napaskiak* (1963) and *Mission of Change in Alaska* (1963) stand in marked contrast to the vast amount of purple prose that has poured out about Eskimos of late; both books were eminently readable, factual and the product of sustained and serious work in the field.

As elsewhere in education, the machine seems to have taken over, and secured another "notorious victory". The book is the first in a series of Chandler Publications in Anthropology and Sociology, so perhaps it may just be possible to pull out the plug before the machine gives birth to the next volume in the series.

"Alaskan Eskimos" deals with the traditional ways of the Eskimo; no mention is made of their current condition. Dr. Oswalt is able to fight off the machine at times and to rise to some heights. In the chapter on "The Individual" (which surely should have started the book) the author seems to think like an Eskimo and at times he writes "from the inside" as it were. He mentions (p. 205) the story of Attungowrah — a truly remarkable Eskimo from Point Hope. Some of the book sounds like a parody: "Murdock (1949, 231-32) regarded the Yuman type as unstable with descent in a state of flux and little internal consistency . . . We find, too, that according to the calculations of Hirsch (1954, 835), the Kuskowagamiut (Yuk) are removed from the Unaligmiut (Yuk) to about the same degree as the Siberian Eskimos (Yupak) and Nuniwagamiut (Cux) are removed from the Unaligmiut. This, however, does not fit with Hammerich's conclusions, nor with what is generally accepted to be the relationships among these dialects." Any student who can memorize these two excerpts — he does not have to *understand* them — is bound to do well in anthropology. At times the book becomes a mere catalogue.

This volume represents some sort of ultimate degree of specialization. Are there a sufficient number of students interested in studying Eskimos to make it worthwhile?

After all, they are among the most studied people in the world and soon there may be more people studying Eskimos than there are Eskimos to be studied. In the words of the old cliché, the book tells us more about Eskimos than we need to know: houses, history, origins, carvings, physiology — all are described, and in exhaustive detail. The book contains line drawings and illustrations in the text, and some excellent colour photographs of artifacts. The text is clean and clear, but the binding is hideous.

Books are written to be read. It is doubtful whether many people will sit down and read this one, although it is an invaluable reference book.

Jim Lotz

CANADA'S NORTH. BY R. A. J. PHILLIPS. *Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada, Ltd., 1967. 6 x 9 inches, 306 pages, photographs, maps, index. \$7.95.*

This book was published on the occasion of the Centennial of Canadian Confederation. The preparation of the manuscript was subsidized by the Centennial Commission. The author was for many years in the Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources as Chief of the Arctic Division and Director of Northern Administration. He has therefore had access to considerable reference material, and has personal knowledge of the plans and policies of the Federal Government. In fact, Mr. Phillips helped to formulate these policies during the important years of change after the establishment of the new department. In addition to his first-hand knowledge of, and great interest in, the region, the author also has a talent as a writer. It is not easy to be entertaining, informative and interesting when dealing with such a wide range of material as that contained in this book. Mr. Phillips manages this, although it is not always light entertainment.

It was right and proper that this book should appear in the Centennial Year. "Whose North?" asks the author in Chapter 6 — and stresses that Canada's claim to its northern lands has sometimes hung by a slender thread. We should not be complacent about it; we still lag far behind other northern nations in our attitude and performance.

Various ways have been thought of to foster more knowledge and enthusiasm for the north by agencies concerned. In the summer of 1967, for example, 45 "big-business tourists" were taken on a trip of many thousands of miles through the Arctic by the

Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Mr. Phillips writes about another venture, in his own day, when the Department of Northern Affairs staged "one of the boldest tourist projects ever tried in Canada". The Federal Government restored as a historic site an old theatre in Dawson and managed to interest prominent Broadway show business people in producing a musical comedy ("Foxy"), and getting it and its orchestra into the Yukon. (There must be material for a hilarious book in this episode alone.) The production costs of "Foxy" were set at \$125,000, but it was not clear what the operating loss might be, since that would depend on the audience that managed to get there. One would not expect such a venture to make money (it obviously did not), and a question might be raised as to how far one should experiment in attempting to make the Canadian Arctic less of an economic liability.

Revenues from renewable resources and the tourist industry have been negligible, so far. The main sources of income are from mineral production. During the last 15 years Government investment has changed the Arctic. Roads, airfields, hospitals, schools and administration centres dot the map, and when oil and gas and large mineral deposits are developed, there will be even more radical change. Then the repayment will begin, with interest, and the work of people like Mr. Phillips and his colleagues will be appreciated.

The book is intended to fill the gap which has existed in the literature on the Canadian North regarding "what the North is all about, what it looks like, how it all began, and what is there for today and for tomorrow". The author agrees that to encompass so broad a theme as Canada's North, past and present, within a single volume, one must risk accusations of superficiality. One can, naturally, do this, although I do not think it is particularly relevant. Each item discussed in the book can be, and in many cases has been, treated in greater detail elsewhere. The gold rush, for example, is covered in twelve pages, and one fondly recalls Berton's "Klondike" of ten years ago.

The first chapter, "The Setting", deals with sea ice, the arctic islands, the mainland, the aurora, the plants and animals, permafrost and climate, all in 23 pages. Clearly, only a rough picture can be outlined. (By the way, "wind-chill" is not loss of the body's warmth through radiation, but rather cooling caused by air motion.) However, the book is not intended to be a scholarly work on a specialist subject. It has an interesting résumé of Canada's history of discovery due to the fur

trade. It has a survey of political development and recent history, transportation and communications, the social legacy, an inventory of resources, science, literature and the arts. In short, it has about everything and, it seems, not too many mistakes. However, there are some. It was not the water of the east Greenland coast that was too cold for fisheries until recently—it still is—but rather the west coast water. Also, "the pumping of the Japanese current into the Arctic" is not what some dreamers have recently discussed, in order to produce a milder Arctic. This would clearly not produce any beneficial change and, anyway, the Japanese current is far away from the Bering Strait. Rather, it is pumping arctic water out over a Bering Strait dam, thus allowing greater inflow of Atlantic water. Although this scheme is far from convincing at present, it is the sort of talk that people pick up and accept as a clear-cut "scientific" project. Responsible authors should, at least, present the rudiments straight, or the public is led doubly astray. It may well be that our knowledge is now so great in detail that it is becoming impossible for one man alone to write an omnibus account of a region. If this is so, then Mr. Phillips' book will stand, I think, as a good example of a lost art.

His narrative of the important years since 1953, when the Canadian Government had to choose one of two sharply different courses, stands as significant Canadian literature. The alternatives were, either to set up a single supergovernment of the North and declare it to be a special area, or to treat the North as Canadian and not to convert it into a special compound. The latter course was followed, untidy and confusing though it was, and it has been frustrating to all involved. However, they deserve the gratitude of the Canadian people for the progress made, and Mr. Phillips deserves it in addition for describing the situation so well.

Svenn Orvig

GLACIERS OF THE ANTARCTIC. By JOHN MERCER. *Antarctic Map Folio Series Number 7. New York: American Geographical Society, 1967. 11 x 17 inches, 10 pages, 6 figures, 2 tables, 4 loose-leaf maps. \$3.50.*

This folio is one of a sequence in the Antarctic Map Folio Series which attempts to summarize the present state of knowledge of the Antarctic. A previous folio dealt with the continental ice sheet and this one, as the title implies, logically limits itself to a sum-