

book and is aimed at producing lots of giggles.

There seems to be absolutely no serious intent to *Mr. Reez's Sneezes*. Its absurd story is based on comic exaggeration — a tried-and-true form of comedy. Mr. Reez is jet-propelled by his pepper-induced sneeze out of his apartment window to a whole lot of places, causing some things to happen. An adult reader will perhaps be troubled by trying to figure out what direction Mr. Reez is going, as he flies over an African terrain, then a Moscow-like city, then a tropic rain forest, then, apparently, South America. Things happen as he flies through the air, and some of the incidents are amusing in themselves, but there is little sense of one event leading to another — they just pile up aimlessly until another sneeze happens to fly him home. Some pictures show him flying left across the page and some right, which adds to the sense of confusion, but Suomalainen's water colours are whimsical and appealing.

Sandy Odegard is a former teacher now concentrating on writing and grandmothering.

Anne Analyzed

L.M. Montgomery and Canadian Culture. Eds. Irene Gammel and Elizabeth Epperly. U of Toronto P, 1999. 267 pp. \$25 cloth. ISBN 0-8020-4406-9.

This collection of nineteen essays draws together a very diverse body of work on L.M. Montgomery's engagement with, and impact on, Canadian culture. The contributors include creative writers as well as academics from a variety of disciplines, and the volume as a whole combines approaches derived from cultural studies, social history, and textual and materialist criticism, together with narratives of individual readers' encounters with the Montgomery books. The literary critical pieces examine Montgomery's vision of the cultural distinctness of her region and country, while her negotiation of the cultural shifts which took place in Canada during her lifetime is the focus of several historically-based chapters. A further group of essays analyse the popular consumption of Anne Shirley through text, film, and cultural tourism.

The editors have successfully organized these disparate elements into a cohesive whole by means of their lucid introduction and thoughtful structuring of the book. It is clear that many of the authors have read each other's contributions since they comment on one another explicitly and include useful cross-references. This sense of dialogue between the chapters reflects the genesis of the book in two international symposia at the University of Prince Edward Island. The collection is almost entirely composed of new work with the exception of two pieces which, one suspects, were included for the sake of the authors' names. One of these, Margaret Atwood's Afterword to the McClelland and Stewart NCL edition of *Anne of Green Gables*, is intelligent and entertaining but is readily available in the original format. The other is a *New Yorker* piece by Calvin Trillin, "What do the Japanese see in *Anne of Green Gables*?". The sarcastic tone of this article is far from illuminating in the

present context, and most of the information he gives is presented in greater detail, and in a more analytical fashion, in another essay in the volume by Japanese professor Yoshiko Akamatsu.

The "reflection pieces" which are interspersed with the academic articles add a dimension of personal response, increasing the stylistic and tonal range. Apart from occasional descents into misty-eyed reminiscence, these pieces are a valuable component of the book and assist the editors' aim to break down disciplinary and genre boundaries. Sharon J. Hamilton's "Anne Shirley and the Power of Literacy," cast in the form of an interview, constitutes an impressive testimony to the influence of Anne over the life of an individual reader and thereby offers some clues to the source of Montgomery's enormous appeal.

The majority of the essays in *L.M. Montgomery and Canadian Culture* centre on the Anne series, although a few of Montgomery's least known novels — *A Tangled Web*, *The Blue Castle* and *Jane of Lantern Hill* — are also discussed. In addition, there is one excellent essay by E. Holly Pike on the Emily novels, and one piece on Montgomery's poetry. All these Montgomery texts, especially the Emily trilogy, yield important insights relating to Canadian culture, and it is a pity that there was not space for further commentary on them.

Different parts of this collection will appeal to different readers, but I enjoyed three essays in particular. Carole Gerson's "'Dragged at Anne's Chariot Wheels': The Triangle of Author, Publisher and Fictional Character" offers a persuasive analysis of the effects on Montgomery of the constant demand for sequels to her first novel, and Gerson's is also one of the best-written pieces in the volume. Mary Henley Rubio's "L.M. Montgomery: Scottish-Presbyterian Agency in Canadian Culture" uses contextual information about the religious and moral traditions inherited by Montgomery to great effect in analysing certain aspects of her life and writing. Theodore F. Sheckels, in "Anne in Hollywood: The Americanization of a Canadian Icon", gives an account of the drastic changes made to the original story for the 1934 film of *Anne of Green Gables*. Drawing on various historical, postcolonial and feminist insights, Sheckels goes on to suggest why these changes were made and why L.M. Montgomery and her fans did not object to them.

L.M. Montgomery and Canadian Culture departs from much existing Montgomery criticism by replacing the emphasis on her gender with an emphasis on her nationality (although the feminist slant is retained in certain essays). The editors' contention that most Montgomery scholars have neglected to discuss the specifically Canadian dimensions of her work is just, and this collection does much to rectify this omission. It contains a substantial amount of original and interesting material, and uses current critical approaches while avoiding abstruse jargon entirely. A further strength is its acknowledgement and exploration of inconsistencies, shifts and ideological tensions in Montgomery's thought and writing. Most of the contributors resist the temptation to contain or deny these contradictions and instead debate their causes and significance.

Faye Hammill teaches at the University of Liverpool. Her doctoral thesis and published articles are on Canadian women writers, including Montgomery, and their responses to literary culture in Canada.