Canadian', where it is obvious, from the lack of actual citing entries, that a 'see' reference is meant. It cannot be denied that Mr. Adshead's work will be in use for many years to come, but this — in view of some of the indicated shortcomings outlined above — will be due more to the fact that such an index for the *Canadian Forum* is unlikely to be undertaken again in the near future than to its intrinsic merit.

Peter Greig

WESTERN CANADA

Early Printing in the Red River Settlement, 1859-1870, and its effect on the Riel Rebellion, by Bruce Peel. Winnipeg: Peguis Publishers Limited, 1974. 56p. illus., facsim. \$5.00, paper cover.

In 1862, the Rev. G.O. Corbett was committed to stand trial at a sitting of the General Quarterly Court of Assiniboia, Red River Settlement, on a charge of attempting to procure an abortion on his domestic servant Maria Thomas. Rev. Corbett's place in the history of the Canadian west is normally limited to the account of this incident. Bruce Peel's story of early printing in the Red River Settlement, however, brings to our attention a contribution to the story of the west by Corbett which is seldom recorded, and which was of more lasting significance than his celebrated court case. Peel's account begins in 1859 because in that year Corbett became the pioneer printer of the Red River Settlement with his issuance of a broadside entitled "A Few Reasons For A Crown Colony". How this publication lay entombed in the cornerstone of the Winnipeg City Hall until 1962 is but one of the many intriguing incidents surrounding the documents assembled in Peel's work.

Quite correctly, Peel points out that though this was the first printing in the Red River Settlement it was not the first in the Canadian West. Rev. James Evans had begun the printing of hymns and texts, in the Cree syllabics he had invented, at a Wesleyan Mission near Norway House in 1840. Peel had told this story in his *Rossville Mission Press*, published also in 1974.

A reproduction of Corbett's broadside constitutes the first of a series of twenty-one imprints which Peel uses to illustrate the beginnings of the printing craft in the West. With the exception of the first four, all the imprints are related to the period of the Red River Rebellion of 1869-1870. This series of imprints begins with Riel's invitation of 6th November, 1869, to the English speaking settlers to send delegates to consider measures for the welfare of the community, and closes with Colonel Garnet Wolseley's bilingual proclamation of 2nd July, 1870, a manuscript of which had been brought into the settlement by a "mysterious stranger" and printed under Riel's supervision at the office of the *New Nation* newspaper.

It is not Peel's purpose to re-tell the story of the 1869-1870 Rebellion, but rather to build a narrative related directly to the printing of broadsides, proclamations, etc. during those years. This has been skilfully done by inter-

weaving event and document. Since most of the printing was done by the newspapers in the settlement Peel includes the story of the first newspaper, the *Nor'Wester*, established in 1859 and seized by Riel in 1869, its successor the *New Nation*, and their editors.

If there is any criticism of this publication it is the awkward arrangement of the material toward the end. One questions the need to print the full text of the Laws of Assiniboia 1862 (8 pages) and the Proceedings of the Legislature of 1870 (3 pages). Because these documents were not as susceptible as the others to a single page illustration, and presumably because printing them in full in their chronological place would interfere with the flow of the narrative, they have been relegated to an appendix and are found *after* the footnotes and the List of Imprints. For convenience, the footnotes and the List should have been placed immediately before the index.

Hartwell Bowsfield

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A Bibliography of the Prairie Provinces to 1953, with biographical index, compiled by Bruce Braden Peel. Second edition. [Toronto]: University of Toronto Press [1973] xxviii, 780p. \$45.00

To be 'in Peel' or 'not in Peel' ranks as one of those seemingly-cryptic status symbols to be found as the last word in a bibliographical entry or a catalogue description of a book or a pamphlet relating to Canada's Prairie Provinces. For a number of years now, within the confines of rare bookselling, collecting, and specialist librarianship in the field of Western Canadiana, Peel's bibliography has stood unchallenged as the ultimate authority.

Here in Peel is described and recorded the reality of development in the Canadian Prairie Provinces. The period of the fur traders, the Selkirk controversy, and even the Riel rebellion, belong to its illustrious past, and the more evident evolution of the Canadian Prairies began when fur traders, Selkirk and Riel faded into historical background. The sweat of the people, the hardships of the homesteader and immigrant, the life of the Indians, the building of the railway, in sum the economic, political, and spiritual development of the region: all this and much more is described and recorded in Peel's bibliography. The birth of each settlement and town, with its numerous implicit problems, is but one subject documented in depth.

Listing events in chronological sequence, the subject index of about 120 pages is absolutely formidable. Peel's "Author Index with biographical notes", consuming 150 pages, is the only existing biographical dictionary pertaining to the makers, writers, and recorders of the history of the Canadian Prairies.

It was almost thirty years ago that Bruce Peel confronted his monumental task, and it was twenty-five years ago that I strongly advised against the inclusion of either index, but I must confess that I am extremely pleased that Mr. Peel neglected to take my advice.