loved one to England. She might very well have preserved her mental equilibrium, and had quite a good time, had her status-seeking mother not objected to an earlier suitor, the emigré French monarchist-merchant Laurent Quetton St. George, a man who for all his reactionary political views still knew a 'petite fillette' when he saw one, according to Douglas McCalla.

Lower Canadian history in this period is not one of Loyalists but rather one of growing conflict between the liberal bourgeoisie and the Church. One half of the story is presented convincingly by Fernand Ouellet. His biography of Pierre-Stanislas Bédard, a man who 'read books so voraciously that he sometimes felt nauseated,' is a splendid account of the nationalist and personal aspirations of the rising class of middle-class professionals. Here Ouellet applies his sharply honed social history techniques to reveal many aspects of Lower Canadian socio-economic and political structures in the pre-Rebellion years. The other side of the story – or at least the *canadien* story – is brilliantly told in what is perhaps the finest contribution to this volume, James Lambert's 'Joseph-Octave Plessis.' Here again the social history of the period is recounted in the life of a blacksmith's son who became an archbishop. Lambert expertly dissects the intricate politics of the church attempting to guide its flock through the shoals of British protestantism and emerging *canadien* anti-clericalism. Plessis – 'this little, round, affable ascetic with an iron will and a big heart' – built well. In 1837 it was Plessis's party, not Bédard's, that won the day. The Ouellet-Lambert biographies together explain why.

A dictionary of biography is naturally dominated by personages and personalities. But a work as sophisticated as the DCB reveals more than that. Though it has no separate entry, 'cholera' is a leading character in this volume. As the editors note, thirty of those who died in 1832 and 1834 were stricken by this epidemic. They represent thousands of others. And one need only read birth dates and death dates, and note the number who died in childhood and in childbirth, to glimpse the fragility of life in early nineteenth-century Canada.

James Nicholson's heirs – all of us – are fortunate. Volume VI provides much good reading.

RAMSAY COOK

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Norman Colbeck. *A Bookman's Catalogue: The Norman Colbeck Collection of Nineteenth-Century and Edwardian Poetry and Belles Lettres*. Ed. Tirthankar Bose. Introd. William E. Fredeman. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987. 2 vols. xxxiv, 1059 pp.; \$75 (cloth). ISBN 0-7748-0274-X (vol. 1), 0-7748-0282-0 (vol. 2).

In 1967, William Fredeman, professor of English at the University of British Columbia, persuaded Norman Colbeck, English bookseller and collector for over fifty years, to bring his private collection of more than 13,000 items to UBC. Colbeck had

specialized in poets and essayists of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, adding fiction only when written by the poets he was already collecting. The sole condition of the donation was that a catalogue of the collection be published. Norman Colbeck himself has spent the last twenty years preparing that catalogue which now appears in a handsome two-volume set published by the University of British Columbia Press. This Colbeck collection, coupled with the Angeli-Dennis Rossetti Papers and the Penkill and Leathart Papers, establishes UBC as a research centre for nineteenth-century English literature; and the catalogue, either as a guide to what one might see in the library or as a reference tool, belongs with other such nineteenth-century catalogues as Michael Sadleir's *XIX Century Fiction* (1951) or Robert Lee Wolff's *Nineteenth-Century Fiction* (1981).

As an index of poetic texts published in nineteenth-century England, Colbeck's collection of course is not complete. It is particularly weak in the Romantics, except for the Coleridge items. Nevertheless, it provides many authors not listed in the NCBEL (I counted 57 in the first volume alone), not only such oversights of the Cambridge bibliography as Ella D'Arcy, but many others not noticed by general bibliographies up till now. Colbeck's annotations do not give us the extensive plot outlines, quotations, or reception histories of these long-forgotten texts, as Wolff might do for a Lady Mary Duffus Hardy or a Catherine Hutton, but his listings do make us aware of the range of poetry that was available to a nineteenth-century audience, a range we have sacrificed to our insistence on classics and canons. He has collected nearly 500 authors, 21 of whom are represented by over 100 items (for instance, Yeats with 176 primary items; Masfield, with 141; Morris, with 103; Stevenson with 101; or Swinburne with 120).

Colbeck lists the authors alphabetically; the items, chronologically. He provides for each book 'title-page transcriptions, pagination, facts of publication, and notes on other significant bibliographical points, including provenance' (p. xxxii). There may be some readers who will regret the lack of an absolutely standardized description, but the results are often fortuitous. We are reminded, for instance, of the numerous errors in the original edition of *The Wind among the Reeds* or of the rarity and value of some of the pirated editions of Wilde's works. As a bibliography of variant issues, the catalogue once again surprises us with corrections to an Oscar Wilde variant in Stuart Mason's bibliography or offers a Yeats item that does not appear in Wade.

The specialties of the collection include numerous manuscripts and autograph letters, interesting presentation copies, exceptional finds, and many books with exclusive limitations. Many authors have one or two letters (Stevenson, Morris, Symons, Masfield, G. Moore) and others have many, such as Michael Field's letters to John Gray. There is an unpublished manuscript poem by Symons, or Thomas Hardy's autograph and pencil markings in books that were in his library. Unbound sheets of Christina Rossetti's *Verses* (1847), privately printed at the Polidori Press, with the rare cancellandum, T.E. Brown's *Betsy Lee* (1871), of which no other copy is known, and A.H. Bullen's *Hakewill's 'Apologie'* (1915), of which no other copy has been located, are found here along with presentation copies of Rossetti's *Poems* (1870) to Browning, Yeats's *The Land of Heart's Desire* to Constance Gore Booth,

and Hardy's *Time's Laughingstocks and Other Poems* to Florence Henniker.

If there are any criticisms to be made of the *Catalogue*, they are in the omission of certain elements such as an index that would have helped with the cross-referencing; or perhaps a list of manuscript items; or illustrations of some or many of the rare book bindings, title pages, or manuscripts. Despite the lack of an index, the catalogue is a record of publishing in the period, a portrait of the age, a detailed account, in some instances, of the bibliographical variants of particular editions of individual authors. Together with manuscripts, inscriptions, dedications, marginalia, and book plates, the lists provide us with a wonderful sense of the interconnectedness of authors and texts.

The collector himself looms large in this narrative of the books' histories. We may not have Wolff's wonderful plot summaries, but we do have a sense of the man who has single-mindedly pursued the thousands of books – the variants in bindings, in lettering, in sewing, or in first printings of poems in book form, if not in the author's own collections. The mind is present that has surveyed the authors' individual bibliographies, and there is a certain vicarious pleasure as Colbeck adds a new variant or discovers a lost text. At times, he appears to us sitting in his apartment treasuring in his hands the object he is describing in the catalogue – we move from card file or computerized listings of title, date, and factual description of binding colours, material, and lettering, to the intimate space of Colbeck's home.

This is done, as well, in the Preface by Colbeck and the Introduction by Fredeman, reminding us of Sadleir's 'Passages from the Autobiography of a Bibliomaniac.' The catalogue, in both Colbeck's and Fredeman's minds, is to be not only a record of the books held in the UBC library, but a record of the achievement of one man's lifetime of collecting. It is, of course, 'A Bookman's Catalogue.' We follow him from his early childhood, establishing a lending library from his kitchen for his schoolmates, through to his introduction to A.J.A. Symons and the First Edition Club, and to the establishment of his bookselling business, an adjunct, Fredeman says, to his avocation of collecting. We follow him through various estate auctions in England as he amasses an impressive collection, and finally to the wooing of him and his collection to UBC. We are fortunate that UBC was willing to fund this project and that Colbeck was willing to give his collection such a hospitable home. The catalogue will be indispensable for prospective researchers in nineteenth-century poetry and belles-lettres.

MARY O'CONNOR

(Mary O'Connor is an assistant professor of English at McMaster University. Her book *John Davidson* was published in 1987 by the Scottish Academic Press.)

J. Brian Gilchrist, comp. *Inventory of Ontario Newspapers, 1793-1986*. Toronto: Micromedia Limited, 1987. vi, 72 pp.; \$49.00 (hardbound). ISBN 0-88892-596-4.

The *Inventory of Ontario Newspapers* is a project undertaken through the National Library of Canada's decentralized programme for Canadian newspapers. Under this