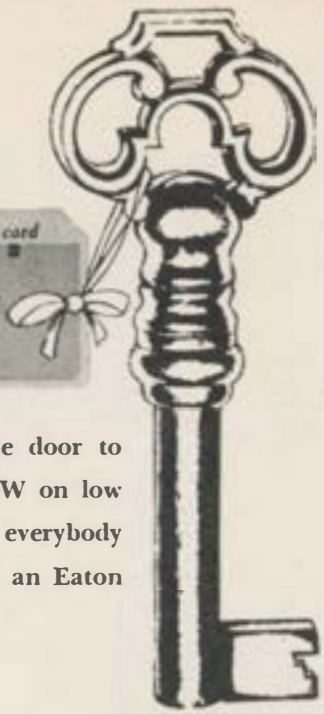


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SPRING 1968

THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN



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This bust of Vilhjalmur Stefansson was paid for by the Icelandic community through voluntary subscriptions. On February 27 this year, Education Minister George Johnson received it on behalf of the Province of Manitoba at a fitting ceremony in the Legislative Building. It was then escorted to the new Manitoba Centennial Centre, there to remain on display as a permanent memento of one of Manitoba's famous sons.

Vilhjalmur Stefansson, explorer, scientist, lecturer, and author, did more than any other man to explore Canada's Arctic regions and to bring them forcefully to the attention of Canadians and of the world. He headed three Arctic expeditions that took up most of the years 1906-1918. He wrote innumerable articles about the Arctic for geographical and scientific magazines. He lectured widely throughout Canada and the United States on the same subject. Among his many books we find such works as "The Friendly Arctic", and "The Northward Course of Empire", where he gives expression to his vision of the North. Through two world wars he was adviser to governments on geographic and survival problems in the Arctic.

Stefansson spent most of his long life (1879-1962) in the Canadian Arctic and the United States; but he was born into an Icelandic immigrant family at Arnes, on the shores of Lake Winnipeg. There, with provincial and federal funds, a Stefansson Park is to be developed as a suitable memorial to this famous native of Manitoba.

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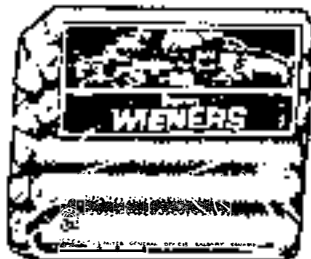
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The Icelandic Canadian

Volume XXVI, No. 3

Winnipeg, Canada

Spring 1968

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A quarterly published by The Icelandic Canadian Club, Winnipeg, Manitoba

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EDITORIAL

Canada's New Century

by Caroline Gunnarsson

An infant among the nations, Canada toddled into the 20th century at going world speed. Geared to the pace of horses and men, progress moved slowly and time was a costly commodity.

Under pick and shovel, activated by human muscle, roads grew haltingly, foot by painful foot, and traffic moved over them at a snail's pace.

Many a road stopped far short of the traveller's destination, too. He roughed it on foot over primitive trails and unchartered wilderness for many weeks of his journey. The people who opened up the land kept ahead of the roads. They settled in islands of isolation, beyond easy reach of the changing world and toiled quietly toward a civilization that shaped itself into a rugged, somewhat insular way of life.

When the new century hurled the world into its first "war to end wars", the first stages of that war were fought with primitive weapons such as cannons, rifles and bayonets. But in the throes of a desperate conflict, human genius produced such brutal tools of death as armored tanks that mowed down life before them, explosive bombs and the subtle device of gases to poison the air.

And sometime during those early teens of the 20th century, while the Canadian nation was still in its forties, horses were hitched to the kind of road-building equipment shown on the

cover of this magazine. For a haul of 500 feet, each of these drag scrapers moved about ten yards of earth a day.

Still a snail's pace by the standards of the sixties, but the arteries of travel were expanding at a quickening tempo. Telephone lines were making their way across the country and other new modes of communication were drawing together the scattered communities. Young men were crossing thousands of miles of prairie and other thousands of sea miles to fight a war on another continent. They were learning to fly airplanes, and the wall of isolation was crumbling. The Canadian nation was one with a world convulsed by violent armed hostility.

This century of speed has wiped out distances. Railways, highways and airways span this vast country from corner to corner, and supersonic jets link it with all parts of the outside world in a matter of hours. There is no outside world and no faction of the human race is a stranger to the other.

There is no escape from the great or small problems of modern living. Wherever in the world they occur, they land on our doorsteps within minutes. News of a drowning in Australia reaches us more rapidly than news of a neighbor's death reached our parents at the turn of the century.

And the wars that did not end are fought before our eyes. Television carries us like a magic carpet onto battlefields on other continents. We

see the horror of it, and we know that any fierce quarrel between nations could unleash weapons to wipe out all life on the other side of the world within hours.

In this 68th year of history's most turbulent century, Canada strides into its second hundred years, a nation ma-

tured beyond its years by events that cut short its adolescence.

A nation with a will for peace, it faces a challenging future that will test its strength in subtle battles of statesmanship, waged for world security against the destructive powers of hate and distrust.



THANK YOU SCANDINAVIA

Thank you, Scandinavia.

Why this note of thanks? Quite simple. It suddenly occurred to us that we had not had an editorial on any Scandinavian country or issue in we don't remember when. And why is that? Again, quite simply, because the good folk who inhabit the five lands of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden have learned to live in such brotherly toleration with each other that they seldom produce that type of raspy news which calls forth editorials and news stories.

It is sometimes said that the Scandinavians deserve little praise for this "because they don't have the problems which other countries and people have." This is true; in many cases they

do not have the same kind or magnitude of social, economic, political, and emotional problems. But that is only a small part of the tale. The Scandinavians, like any other land or folk, could have enormous problems if they allowed themselves to. Instead, they have learned to compromise, to seek peaceful, orderly, constructive solutions. They have made mistakes, but more often they have progressed. They have consciously cultivated a quality of thought and outlook which encourages the best in men.

Thank you, Scandinavia, for the example which you set in this troubled world.

—Christian Science Monitor

CANADA-ICELAND FOUNDATION

Every charitable organization, to which donations are deductible for income tax purposes, has to be registered, under the Income Tax Act. The number of the Canada-Iceland Foundation is No. 0284430-21-21.

ON THE RIGHT TRACK

The following facts seem to indicate that the time has come for stocktaking—taking stock of the Icelandic cultural assets in North America.

The Vancouver Icelandic Canadian Club sold over 85 extra copies of the Centennial number of this magazine. Congratulations are in order to Wilhelm Kristjanson and the Committee serving under him in the production of that number.

The Edmonton Icelandic Society "Solskin" had a centennial project of its own, as did other districts.

The Icelandic Canadian Club of Toronto have bought for its members twenty-four copies of *The Icelanders in Canada* by W. J. Lindal and twenty have been bought by the Vancouver Club. Average sales through ordinary channels in these cities have been made.

Even though some of the stalwarts of the Icelandic-American Club of South California have passed away, the club continues equally active as before. The new editor of *Félagssblaðið* is Sveinn Thordarson. Unfortunately it is still multigraphed.

The Icelandic Society of Northern California, headquarters, San Francisco, is active and will gather strength.

The Vestri of Seattle finally had to fold up but another organization, on a wider base, is functioning there—The Icelandic Club of Greater Seattle.

The Icelandic Society of Chicago has reorganized. The president is Dr.

Valur Egilsson, vice-president, Dr. Leifur Bjornson, secretary, Paul Sveinbjorn Johnson, an attorney.

In New York there is a strong Icelandic organization. Mrs. Svanhvit Josie and Miss Anna Marteinson of Ottawa are ready to further any Icelandic cause; so is Jon Fridriksson of Montreal.

Very significant evidence comes from students taking Icelandic in the University of Manitoba.

Lenore Borgfjord of Arborg, Manitoba, in an interview by a correspondent from Iceland, Þórdís Árnadóttir, last November said:

"This is my first year in the Icelandic Department . . . when I have obtained my B.A. degree I want to go to Iceland and study at the university there."

Richard Hordal of Lundar, Manitoba, is majoring in history at the University of Manitoba and taking a minor in Icelandic. To the same reporter he said:

"When I graduate this spring I hope to be able to go to Iceland—I have to go to Iceland."

Hermann Pálsson, born and raised in Iceland, is Professor of Old Icelandic and Old Irish in the University of Edinburgh in Scotland. Through the grant of a Canada Council Fellowship he is this year delivering a series of lectures in the Department of Medieval Studies in the University of Toronto. A short time ago he delivered

lectures in the University of Manitoba, and on the same visit to Winnipeg addressed the final concert and meeting at the annual conference of The Icelandic National League. In a letter to W. J. Lindal, author of *The Icelanders in Canada*, Professor Pálsson writing partly in Icelandic and partly in English, has said:

"Eg er alveg sammála þér um íslenzkan anda (The Icelandic Mind) sem ætti að geta lifað áfram þótt Vestur-Íslendingar týni móðurmálinu . . ." (in translation, I am in full agreement with you about the Icelandic Mind, which should be able to continue functioning even though Western-Icelanders lose their mother tongue).

Professor Pálsson continues in English: "To be an Icelander in Canada ultimately becomes a matter of taste; just as one can cultivate a taste in exotic food, unusual poetry, or strange music, it is also possible to cultivate a

taste for one's remote national heritage. It may involve the deliberate cultivation of sympathy for one's ancestors and what they stood for, but this is likely to be well-rewarded; such a pursuit would not only give one a great deal of personal pleasure and satisfaction; I also believe that it would have a beneficial effects on one's character."

The future Canadian of Icelandic descent, who feels that such results would follow, will encourage his children to select Icelandic as their third or even their second language in their undergraduate studies.

There are grounds for the optimism of our editor-in-chief who is convinced that if Icelandic Canadians handle their affairs wisely, a hundred years from now there will be more Canadians who have a reasonable command of Icelandic than at the present time.

—Arius Isfeld

NOTICE TO READERS OF THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN

When I accepted the assignment to write a book on the Icelanders in Canada I fully intended to call it "The Icelandic Mind in Continuity". The Centennial Commission quite properly took the position that the names of all the books in the Ethnica Series would have to be uniform and I would have to call mine "The Icelanders in Canada."

What has been called the thesis in the book should be publicised and I am taking advantage of an unfortunate postponement of a two-page advertisement which was to be inserted in the

middle of this number of the magazine. We were not notified of the postponement until after the whole magazine had been set and the pages numbered and ready for the press. To call upon someone to write a two-page article might have caused a week's delay so I decided to take the space, at my expense, to give publicity to the claim that there has been a continuity of the Icelandic Mind (translated by Hermann Pálsson to "íslenzki and-inn"), the thesis which I endeavoured to expound in my book

—W. J. Lindal

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SPIRIT OF 70

by address illustrated by NORMAN S. BERGMAN, President of the Manitoba Chamber of Commerce, at the . . . Concert of The Icelandic Canadian Club, held . . . 27, 1968, in the Parish Hall of the First Lutheran Church, Winnipeg.

There are some days when everything seems to go wrong. One does not feel well, or one is tired or irritable—and everyone you meet seems to react to you the same way you act towards them. If you happen to be in a grouchy mood, everyone else seems to be a grouch that day.

There are other days when things just seem to go well. That usually happens on a day when you feel very good.

These statements simply point out that our own attitudes have a lot to do with the way people react to us, and with the way the day has gone. We are the same person, neither brighter, stronger, nor richer. Yet the way we act makes one day a nightmare, another day a pleasant and successful one.

This sometimes applies not only to individuals, it applies collectively as well. Take our province for example.

Manitoba, back in 1870 when it became part of Canada was called the "postage stamp" province because it took in such a small area, (1/6 our present size today). If the people in Manitoba at that time had been pessimists, they could have said:—

"Look at the small area we have here. Our main industry—the fur trade—is not going to be of the same importance. We only have a few settlers. Our main town is so small it will never amount to anything. We are hemmed in by the rocky wastelands of our East, by a barren, useless, frozen, North,

and by all those empty grasslands to the West. Even the buffalo are dying off."

It is a wonder that our first citizens of this province did not pack it up and leave then and there.

Well, we all know they stayed and in two years, this province will celebrate its 100th birthday.

Those early settlers did not come here to bemoan their cruel fate. They had tough times—as difficult as it was for many of our people who lived through the 1930's. But they looked, not inward to what they did not have, but outward to the opportunities that challenged them.

They saw the empty grasslands to the West, not as obstacles, but as opportunities—golden opportunities for golden fields of wheat. They looked on their new province—not as a lonely outpost of the East, but as a jumping-off point to the West. They saw the new railways, not as money sunk into servicing an empty prairie, but as life lines to fill and build the Prairie market—a growing Western market that Manitoba was to service and supply.

They looked outward not inwards. They felt they had growing opportunities, and they built to meet them. The West, the Canadian West, I suggest, was won by optimists.

But something happened to our Western outlook and our spirit in the 1930's. Those horrible depression years affected the whole world. But they

hit Western Canada especially hard, combined with crop failures and drought and dust storms. And we had world-wide economic stagnation that no government, at any level, knew how to deal with. The economic tools we have today were not yet developed.

The Second World War finally ended the depression. Governments had tried to spend their way out of the depression, but the spending was on too small a scale. Only the massive wartime expenditures were large enough to start up the economy of the world and get it going again.

It is a sad commentary on our pre-war economic knowledge that it took a war to end the depression, but it really is the truth.

The depression had left its scars on Manitoba. It left its scars in the blasted hopes and the wasted years. It left its worst scars on the outlook and attitudes of our people.

This depression outlook was not confined to people in government, or to one political party. It affected us all—both in the public and the private sector.

After the Second World War ended, the outlook of many Manitobans was not toward the new opportunities then presenting themselves. The world was at peace—the economy was growing. But Manitoba was still looking through depression-trained eyes.

The hard lessons of the depression—to make do, to conserve what we had, to preserve, to play it safe—these were not the lesson we needed now. We needed instead to learn how to recognize new opportunities—how to grasp them and make the most of them. We needed the same attitude of mind that had built this province in the first place.

It took time for government and business both to change their outlook. And in both sectors the change was

never total—there are still elements in our society unable to change those hard-learned ways of thought.

But there were people who came forward with a new attitude. And our province has grown in the post-war years. We are paying now, in the form of higher taxation, for many things that could have been done for much less money in the early post-war years. We could have built schools and hospitals and roads years ago for a fraction of what they cost us now. Businessmen could have invested in plant and equipment then if credit had been provided, and thus, paid for it by now over and over again—building our economy in the process.

But the change in outlook did take place, and the province changed it. The necessary social needs of a modern society, our utilities, were built to the standard of 20th Century society's requirements and our resources were utilized.

There must always be a balance between what you want and what you can do. You cannot build even the simplest structure without knowing what materials you have available and how you are going to use them.

This was the reason why the Committee on Manitoba's Economic Future, COMEF, was convened in 1961—to assess what Manitoba consisted of economically—and to decide what best use could be made of our potential.

Just as our early explorers charted our physical frontiers, so the COMEF Report charted our economic frontiers. The Report of the Committee issued in 1963, established guidelines and recommendations to assist in our economic development. And those guidelines in the main have been followed.

The COMEF Report pointed out the way to spark economic growth in Manitoba was with a growing and

promising manufacturing sector.

A lot of changes have taken place since that COMEF Report was filed. We are developing our water power in the North so that we will have ample power at a reasonable rate—magnet for industry that becomes more power-hungry year by year.

We are farming our forests. We are mining our minerals, and I believe we still have great mineral resources under our Northern lands. Our agriculture has become more productive and is supplying much of the raw material for manufacturing. We are educating our young people in the skills a modern technological society demands.

But a lot of other things have changed in the five years since COMEF issued its Report. Now the Manitoba Government has decided it is time for a new look at ourselves, and for setting new guidelines for the 1980's.

That is the purpose of the new Commission that the government has established—to set Targets for Economic Development. T-E-D. The TED Commission is smaller in size than COMEF, but its task is similar. It has the groundwork of COMEF, to build on.

The TED Committee, like COMEF before it, is composed of representatives from different sectors of our economy—agriculture, labour, the universities, government and industry. It will enlist the help of many more people before its studies are completed.

COMEF involved a great number of responsible people of Manitoba in the task of investigating and recommending how we could best help our economy grow. The TED Committee will do the same.

The Government also attempted to show a new perspective on Manitoba to both our own people and potential investors in this province.

Just as our pioneers looked out to new opportunities—so must we. Mani-

toba is still in the same geographical position. You cannot pick up the province and set it down somewhere else physically. But the relationships that our province is involved in have changed—and it is these new perspectives that should be emphasized.

Manitoba's early outlook ran with the railways—to the West. Our province's focus was on an east-west axis. And that emphasis was the correct one at the time. Manitoba grew by servicing and supplying the West. We still do so—but as other Western centres grew to service their own areas, our growth must be based not only on the traditional east-west pattern—we must also look north and south.

Northward—we face new opportunities. As transport opens up the North—as new mineral discoveries are found—as the forests are more fully utilized—the population and local market of the North will grow.

But transport through the North and to the continent of Europe brings another dimension to the North. For years the hope of a great trade through the port of Churchill has been dormant—stillborn by the short shipping season. New technological changes hold new hope for fuller utilization of our northern port.

To our South lie new trading opportunities along an historic trade route. Before Confederation, the Red River Carts plied between here and St. Paul. Now there is new opportunity to trade again in the Mid-Western United States.

The Kennedy Round has lowered United States tariffs on many goods, beginning on January 1st of this year.

There are 45 million people in the eight Mid-Western United States, directly to our south. This sub-market of the great United States market is closer to us physically than our traditional market in the Prairies. Trans-

portation and communication facilities are excellent. We must aim for this new market. Our firms must have the necessary products, well designed and packaged, produced with the scale and specialization necessary to compete in the United States.

This is no easy task. But the tariff changes, for the first time, will allow much of our industry to penetrate this market. And the tariff changes in turn, at this moment in our history, with the growth of our manufacturers, zeroes in on the opportunity of a mid-western market. And in this market lies our greatest hope for future economic growth.

It is too early to tell what concrete results will flow from the Business Development Summit Conference. We know that the response was overwhelming. Industrialists, many of them heads of corporations of Manitoba, and financiers from all over the continent attended. We are all hopeful they left here seeing Manitoba in a new light and with renewed interest as a province of new opportunities.

Our own Manitoba people responded enthusiastically.

The intangible benefits of the Conference are difficult to pinpoint—but if they appear as a result of the Conference, we have accomplished our objective and more.

One such intangible is community spirit. The community is Manitoba—all parts of it—working together in a spirit of optimism and confidence in the future that lies in our own hands.

Economic development is the means to a better life for the people in our province—a way of providing the better things of life for our citizens. This better life is what counts—not just the economic changes that help to bring it about.

Manitoba needs a well-balanced economy. And a well-balanced econ-

omy means one balanced between the city and the country. The Province needs both—one helping the other.

After all, Manitoba still depends on agriculture as one of its main natural resources. We are developing our water power, digging up our minerals and farming our forests. But agriculture is still a very large part of our Province's overall economy. Last year agricultural production was over half a billion dollars—its biggest year ever! And in manufacturing, as I have already indicated, a large portion is devoted to the handling and converting of our farm products.

Every province has its own peculiarities. Every one is different, grew differently, and faces problems peculiar to itself.

Manitoba is different in that it is the only Canadian province with half its population concentrated in one large urban centre.

This happened, not by design, but through historical process. Had the railways gone through Selkirk instead of the settlement of Winnipeg, a settlement based on the fur trade and a junction of two rivers, our province might have evolved differently.

But the railroad did run through Winnipeg and Winnipeg did become the distribution and manufacturing centre for the Western prairies. Its growth was reinforced by the migration of rural people to the city due to changes in farming methods and in transportation.

A continued urban growth centred in only one community would not be the maximum benefit of our province, either economically or sociologically.

The location of catalytic growth industries in Brandon — industries whose by-products are other firms' raw materials—has helped to attract industry to a second city.

This growth of a second industrial centre in Manitoba will benefit the Western Manitoba region and the whole province.

And as I have already said, we need both the country and the city—both working together.

It is a necessity for everyone in our province. It is needed for a balanced economy throughout our province so that all parts of Manitoba are economically strong. A man walks best if both his legs are strong. Manitoba will progress best if both its legs, the city and the rural areas, are equally strong. One leg doesn't do the other leg a favour. They go forward together.

Everyone in this modern world has to adjust to changes—and this applies to rural and urban areas alike. None of us can sit still—we have to keep moving to stay in one place. Changes in technology—new methods of agricultural and industrial production—new methods of transportation and communication—all must be taken advantage of. It is not enough to simply stay put—because staying put and standing pat doesn't mean you will preserve the qualities of life you now enjoy—it means they will be lost.

Development of our rural areas, however, is more than a matter of new industries in country locations. It is a matter of the development of rural areas as a **whole**, with the first initiative coming from the people who live there.

When we talk about rural development as a whole, we have a change in approach which in my opinion is a correct one. It is the change that takes place when the emphasis is placed on **people**. What kind of life are the people providing for themselves and how can the Government—their own Government—help them to help themselves achieve this good life.

The Government is not a great

White Father sitting in Winnipeg issuing orders. It is a body of men who are elected by yourselves. It acts in response to your demands. It is not a vague outside force. Government is a tool that you can use, or that you can neglect.

When we talk about the economic development of urban areas, these same principles apply. But the urban area has this advantage—it already has a concentration of services, amenities and population which attract economic growth of its own. Furthermore, the urban area has greater resources for promotion for itself.

This does not mean the Province should leave the cities alone and promote rural development. It means that the efforts of the Government should always keep a proper balance in mind and all our citizens must develop an enlightened attitude that recognizes the total development requirements throughout our province.

Most success in development in Manitoba has come about because people in a community have wanted to help themselves and have done something about it. Early Icelandic pioneers are a good example of this.

The Spirit of '70 Campaign which was launched at the Business Summit Conference, is an attempt to develop that same community spirit, but on a province-wide scale. It is an attempt to develop an interest in the well-being of our own province in as many of our people as possible.

You will be seeing and hearing more about the Spirit of '70 campaign. I would ask your participation in it. We are all of us interested in building a better life in Manitoba. Our economic growth is one of the foundations we can build that better life on.

How can you, as an individual Manitoban help us achieve the economic growth?

You can become aware and knowledgeable about your own province. We have a Manitoba history, a Manitoba environment, a Manitoba situation. Learn as much as you can about this province of ours, including the history of the Icelanders in Manitoba. Their story is not confined to Winnipeg.

You can be a salesman for Manitoba. You meet people from other places. You travel. Take pride in the achievements of your province and let people know about it. The decisions of outside businessmen often depend not only on physical things that can be measured, but on the feeling and spirit of the place where they will locate and expand their activities. One dissatisfied gas station attendant or grouchy store clerk may nullify the effects of a site and market survey that took months to prepare. We may never know exactly why that visiting investor's interest evaporated.

Claude Ryan, the publisher of *Le Devoir*, was recently discussing the downturn in investment in Quebec. He blamed it on the climate of uncertainty in Quebec at present, and went on to say:

"In most of these cases, the investor who decided to choose another province over Quebec is not going to boast of his decision to the Quebec Minister of Industry and Commerce or to a journalist."

The same thing applies here. A potential investor who is discouraged by lack of confidence of the people of this province is not going to tell us why he decided not to do with his plans. His plan is just quietly discarded.

This past Centennial summer the Pan-American Games were held in Manitoba. All of us now know what a resounding success the Pan-American Games were. But beforehand there

were some people who thought that the Pan-American Games would be a failure.

It was only once the Pan-American Games were completed that everyone realized exactly what had made the difference between failure and success. It was total community involvement—the whole-hearted commitment and active participation of the community as a whole. Thousands of people helped to promote and operate the Pan-American Games—and the whole province has benefitted from a job well done.

This is the kind of spirit we must have in our economic development. This involvement of all of us, this awareness of all of us, is what is going to ensure our success. This is the true spirit of "70".

THE SPIRIT OF '70

Now you can feel the beat in
Manitoba,
The big beat booming out the news.
It's a stirring beat, that has us on
our feet
Shaking hands and telling everyone
we meet,
That you can feel the beat in
Manitoba,
A million people on the go.
Give a shout, give a cheer
Tell the world the future's here
Oh man Oh Manitoba, let's go!

It's the spirit, wonderful spirit,
It's the spirit of '70 that's beating on
the drum;
It's the spirit, wonderful spirit,
From the city, from the farm; Oh, you
can feel it come,
That's the spirit, the spirit of '70,
The prairie sky is all aglow,
Give a shout, give a cheer,
Tell the world the future's here
Oh man Oh Manitoba, let's go!

The Spirit of '70 campaign is a program in which we can all promote our province. Nineteen-seventy is Manitoba's own Centennial Year, and the target of the program is economic growth for our 100th birthday. You can help to spread the Spirit of '70.

Economic growth affects every one of us—and every one of us affects economic growth. The "Spirit of '70" items that you will see and use in the months to come are a means of spreading the word that Manitobans are

aware and interested in working together—helping our province achieve the things we want.

I feel that there is a job for all of us as Manitobans. We are almost 100 years old. We have done a remarkable job in this huge province of ours. We are going to do even more if we work together in this spirit. The future of our province, and the lives of each and every one of us—will be bountiful and richer beyond anything we have seen.



Norman S. Bergman of Brandon, president of the Manitoba Chamber of Commerce, is one of 15 members who will make up the full scale industrial commission to report on Targets For Economic Development (TED) for the province of Manitoba.

The commission is to enquire into and report on the present position and future prospects of industrial, commercial and related sectors of the province's economy for the Manitoba department of industry and commerce.

Mr. Bergman served as vice-president and general manager of MacArthur and Sons Limited and associated companies from 1952 to 1958 when he was appointed industrial commissioner for the city of Brandon and manager of the Brandon Chamber of

Commerce. In 1962 he was named general manager of Public Cold Storage Brandon Limited and treasurer of Brandon Poultry Products Limited.

Mr. Bergman has served as a member of the Committee on Manitoba's Economic Future and is a member of the executive committee of the Manitoba Transportation Commission and of the Wood's labor legislation review committee.

He has served several terms as a director of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and in 1965 was elected Manitoba vice-president. He is president of the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce for 1967-68 and earlier this year was appointed regional director of University Scholarships of Canada.

WEEDS

by Paul A. Sigurdson

Weeds! Weeds! Weeds!
 Harrying the farm-barons of Saskatchewan,
 The peasants of the Steppes,
 And the old maid in her plot;
 Crossing borders in silent invasion,
 To swarm neglected places.

Nettles snarl bare ribs of broken homesteads;
 Ragweeds, blotter-leaved, suck at the sun,
 And starve the finer seedlings;
 Foxtail cankers the heifer's mouth;
 And the dry thistle pricks the calloused palm of the farm boy
 To explode his first full-blown curse.

Everywhere weeds,
 Varied and deep as man's sins;
 Creeping in silent protest of civilization:
 Relentless, stubborn, unyielding,
 Feeding on the rottage of the world.

Theirs a primitive independence,
 Renegades of the earth,
 Vandal-like, terrifying;
 Theirs a contempt for selection,
 Waging civil war perpetual,
 Uncontrolled by reason,
 Glorifying in riot;
 Strong weed, strangling weak-weed,
 And the coarse, the tender,
 Without rules.

Long has the weed been enemy,
 Bending man downward, clayward,
 Like faults,
 Which cramp the winging of his dreams.

Even the proud savage feared their stalk,
 Like the creep of warriors from darker alien tribes;
 Self-dissatisfied, he culled,
 Then sowed the chosen seed,
 Killing the wild invaders,
 And taming what was best;
 And from the peace and discipline of weeding,
 Came meditation;
 And a consciousness of destiny;
 And with the honesty of crops in season,
 Came self-assurance,
 And a time for all things.

Soon with the sweetness of the wheat which gave him bread,
 He found life more refined and more abundant.
 Poetry burst from the splash-colored sunset
 To trumpet its life cry in the womb-fresh mornings.

But always the weed-war,
 Harassing through the epochs;
 Always the voracious wild-oat spearing upward,
 Tapping the life-juice for itself,
 Stunting the true oat, its cultured kin;
 And quack, with mile-long fibres,
 Strangling the honest wheat
 With attack subterranean—
 Disorder, vying with order,
 Unreason with reason,
 And undiscipline with discipline,
 In constant see-saw battle,
 With never a sure and final victory.

Man knows this outward war,
 For it is like his own,
 Tormenting through the ages,
 When inwardly he dares confront himself:
 Face of savage, to face of angel-mould;
 Seeing his cool logic,
 Out-flooded by wild blood,
 And his love-law challenged by fang-law.
 His cave-lusts millennium deep,
 Rear up again and yet again;
 Ripping through the hymen-veil of convention,
 In a phallic, or a dagger thrust;
 Sometimes he hides them,

Or tries to flee them;
 Sometimes surrenders,
 Or childishly hopes them out of existence;
 Sometimes, over-filled with dreams,
 He lacerates his own flesh to vanquish them,
 Screaming for their final annihilation.

Early I learned of weeds and the need of pulling them,
 Yielding to a mother's guidance,
 And the silent inner beckoning
 Inbred from a thousand years of skalds.
 But in my witless pubic years,
 How they surged back, the wild jungle grasses;
 How the eager weeds scrambled to obliterate
 My fields, and my mind-acres, fallow and untended.

Was it right that so much of me should go wild again
 So I could flower out my own way?
 Or is God's gift of a desire to explore, a mockery?

I had sown too much, too early, without understanding;
 All the old varieties,
 Tended by long tradition, untested for a new age;
 Innocently I had sown, without question,
 Without thought or criticism;
 Confident of this second-hand perfection.
 Narrowly I had walked and primly;
 Intolerant of strange weeds and man's wider vision;
 Colored by prejudice,
 Living by rote,
 From memorized conventions.

So I sported in the weeds
 Secretly, tremulous, I sniffed their boudoir odours,
 And kissed their sap-full stalks;
 Rapt as if "La-Belle -" held me
 Immersed in the hollow of her dewy bower.

I could be prostrate yet,
 Delirious, flesh-famished, craving;
 But down from the nude sky
 Peace smiled with gentle mockery:
 I thought of child-hours,
 And the soothing depths of solitude;
 I saw again the clouds beckon for communion;

And to my wonder I heard the lark a-making melody;
 And I felt strong upward yearnings,
 And a desire to kill my sweet monotony,
 Preferring pain, or toil, or any new dimension,
 To kill a joy and wait its resurrection.
 So I began to rise again,
 Weeding myself as I went;
 Delighting in a wiser, freer discipline,
 Discovering some weeds which were not weeds,
 But labelled so by prejudice and ignorance;
 And flowers which were not flowers.
 I chose with fuller understanding,
 Beginning a new dream of well-tended fields,
 Deep-loamed and mustard-free,
 And sowing good seeds,
 More yieldful, more universal and man-loving;
 Sowing for eternity.

★ ★ ★

Weeds, weeds, weeds,
 Creeping inward like a living death;
 Preying on our weaknesses,
 Malign, tempting, life-sucking.
 We must learn to live with them.

Weeds, weeds, weeds;
 Indigenous to our clay;
 We cannot kill them.
 Christ, (Oh, thank God!) He understood,
 Pitying that divinity
 Prisoned in flesh.

The weed:
 Our stimulation;
 Our challenge;
 Our point of bearings;
 Where life takes two directions,
 And we leave unity to God.

Weeds, weeds everywhere;
 Deep-rooted as the sins of man;
 Silently, steadily, stealthily,
 Crowding the soul,
 And the wholesome fruitage of the earth.

The Icelandic Mind In Continuity

The three directives to themselves, which the Icelandic people have placed upon permanent record, emphasized in the Centennial book, *The Icelanders in Canada*, are:

I brook no blemish in myself.

A root Norse philosophy of life.

**Give Strength to our people, diminish their tears
On their course to a kingdom of God.**

From a poem composed by Rev. Matthías Jochumsson of Iceland in 1872, now the National Anthem of Iceland.

**Think not in years but in ages,
Claim not at once but in stages,
Only then life on earth will endure.**

From a poem by the Canadian poet, Stephan G. Stephansson, composed in 1904.

A fourth, which is an interpretation of life as well as a directive, can be added, which brings the continuity to the year 1968. It is found in a poem by Paul A. Sigurdson, Morden, Man., a Canadian of Icelandic descent, and, as is but natural, was composed in the English language. (The poem, entitled "Weeds", in free verse, appears in this issue of the magazine.)

This is the word-canvas which the poet has placed before mankind:

**The weed;
Our stimulation;
Our challenge;
Our point of bearings;
Where life takes two directions,
And we leave unity to God.**

It is not the adversities in themselves, but the use to which those adversities were put which developed the mental and moral capacities of the Icelanders of olden times, and has carried forward as shown in this poem.

QUOTATIONS FROM "THE ICELANDERS IN CANADA"

The Teutonic, or Scandinavian age, disappeared, but out of the ashes (in Iceland, 1120-1262), phoenix-like, a new culture was born, (p. 57) . . .

The power of the Germanic heroic age was being transformed into purely Icelandic strength (p. 64).

A small group of Icelanders of the first three years of New-Iceland, provided a pattern which clearly showed the Icelandic mind at its best. (p. 150).

The two world giants, the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics rightly oppose geographic expansion by force. There can be penetrating economic expansion and there can be expansion through undue influence, both of which, in effect, may border upon force. (p. 328).

There is one world and there is one God, one Creator, a Universal Mind—no matter what words are used. (p. 328).

What is emerging as part of the integration (of the Icelanders), or perhaps in spite of it, is a growing sense of duty to an asset—a cultural asset . . . If the harvest, as revealed in the statistics, appears to indicate that the Icelandic approach has found its way to Canada, then there has been a continuity of the Icelandic Mind in Canada . . . Then the responsibility rests upon all Canadians of Icelandic descent to maintain that distinctiveness and make known the foundation upon which it rests. Then it matters little that the outer vestments are purely Canadian. (p. 467).

EXTRACTS FROM REVIEWS AND COMMENTS

I have now read the book and I find it extremely interesting. You have gathered together a great deal of valuable material and, not only pertaining to the Icelanders in Canada, but also impressive quotations on the people as well as the culture of Iceland in general. I am sure that your book will be referred to widely in the future.

Sigurdur Helgason, President, Loftleiðir Icelandic Airlines, Inc., New York City

Mér þykir sérlega vænt um þessa bók af því að hún er svo glögg og skilmerkilegt yfirlit yfir sögu, sem hillir uppi í meiri fjarska en önnur íslensk samtíðarsaga, en hefur meðfram þess vegna ekki minna aðdráttarafl. Það ber og til, að ég hef miklar mætur á höfundinum og sé í hendi mér, þótt ég hafi enn ekki getað lesið bókina vandlega, að hann hefur leyst af hendi mikið verk sér til sæmdar og öðrum til varanlegra nytja.

Sigurbjörn Einarsson, Bishop of Iceland.

Eg er alveg sammála þér um "íslenzkan anda" (Icelandic Mind), sem ætti að geta lifað áfram, þótt Vestur-Íslendingar týni móðurmálinu. . . . (He continued in English.) "To be an Icelander in Canada ultimately becomes a matter of taste; just as one can cultivate a taste in exotic food, unusual poetry, or strange music, it is also possible to cultivate a taste for one's remote national heritage. It may involve the deliberate cultivation of sympathy for ones ancestors and what they stood for, but this is likely to be well-rewarded: such a pursuit could not only give one a great deal of personal pleasure and satisfaction: I also believe that it would have beneficial effects on one's character."

Dr. Hermann Pálsson, Professor of Old Icelandic and Old Irish Studies in the University of Edinburgh, Scotland.

You have completed an enormous task and the book is an outstanding achievement . . .

Vilhjálmur Thor, of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Washington, D.C.

CENTENNIAL MEDAL FOR WELL KNOWN RESIDENT



G. J. Markusson

The name of another Parkland area resident has been added to the long list of Canadians who have received Centennial medals.

Gisli J. Markusson, Pennock area farmer and active community worker, received the medal recently.

Mr. Markusson was born in Winnipeg in 1899, and came to the Pennock district in 1906. He attended the public school there, and farmed in the district until 1966.

Throughout his lifetime Mr. Markusson has taken an active and absorbing interest in community affairs.

For 31 consecutive years he was a member of the local school board, serving as secretary-treasurer and chairman during various periods.

In 1934 he was elected to the council of the Rural Municipality of Churchbridge No. 211 for nine consecutive years and as reeve for five years, retir-

ing from office in 1949.

During his term of office he advocated and worked for the formation of a Union Hospital District in the area. This became a reality, leading to the construction of a 32-bed hospital in the town of Langenburg.

From its inception, Mr. Markusson served as vice-chairman and later as chairman of the Langenburg Union Hospital Board.

He was a member of and vice-chairman of the original Yorkton School Unit Board No. 36, representing subunit No. 6. He is past president of Concordia Lutheran Church (Icelandic) and a charter member of the Concordia Lutheran Church in Churchbridge.

For many years he was secretary-treasurer of the Bredenburg Northern Rural Telephone Co., and also served as president of the Bredenburg Telephone Service Board.

Mr. Markusson took an active part in the Pennock and the Bredenburg wheat pool committee. He was a member of the Bredenburg United Grain Growers' Bredenburg local committee for several years.

Since retiring from farming Mr. Markusson and his wife, the former Elin Hinrikson of Churchbridge, now reside in Saltcoats. They have one son Joe, who operates the original farm, and two daughters, Mrs. Margaret MacIver of Yorkton and Mrs. Kristin Sauser of Churchbridge. They also have six grandchildren.

From Yorkton Enterprise

SOLEY

By ELINBORG LARUSDÓTTIR

Translated by W. Kristjanson

I recall vividly the time when Soley was brought into the room where I lay. A gaunt child's face peered over the top of the basket stretcher. What I thought most arresting about her face were the large, dark-gray eyes, lively, searching, giving the impression that their search would never be completed.

When the nurse removed the coverlet, there was revealed the merest skeleton of a body. The young girl's bare legs protruding from the folds of her dress were like pipe stems, small as a baby's arm. The muscles shrunk so that every nerve and sinew stood out. There were sores on her insteps.

She was placed in a bed and a cover spread over her. "This is a living corpse", I thought to myself. "Her eyes show life, but the body speaks of death."

As for Soley herself, she had apparently no worries and was happy to be in hospital, for she asked immediately if patients there did not get well at once. "I know" she added, "that I shall get better here."

Soley was examined the following day. She had a considerable temperature and her strength was at a low ebb. Her faculties, however, were alert and she was cheerful and jovial. She did not have the slightest fear of her illness. She did not realize that the white plague is an aggressive foe and has laid many people low, and she lay in her bed like a child without a care.

We soon became acquainted. I found her to be childlike and sincere and unusually intelligent and entertaining. Her family lived in the West Country and there she had been brought up.

Soley was sixteen years of age, something that few would have believed, on seeing her. Judging by her size, she could just as well have been only eight years of age.

When Soley was three years her parents emigrated to America, leaving her with an aunt, a married woman. This aunt died, a victim of the white plague. Then little Soley herself became ill. No one dreamed that there was any danger. "It was nothing but a dry cough and a little temperature." As far as I could make out, it was nearly a year later that there was any thought of sending her to the sanatorium.

On board the ship on which she had passage there was no room for her except in the hold. On their arrival in Reykjavik, Soley was carted like a bundle of goods from the hold to the warehouse. I thought this treatment outrageous and expressed myself to that effect. To this Soley replied:

"I knew no one and I was very comfortable there. They phoned the doctor at once and the automobile came for me".

"How did you get these sores on your feet?" I asked.

"I ran a temperature all winter and I was always on my feet. The living room is rather chilly, for there is no heater there. Even if there had been one, there was no fuel for it. I was often cold."

"This has pulled you right down", I said. "Why in the world did you not stay in bed?"

"That was impossible; there are so few to do the work. I had no desire to

do so, and I wasn't so ill that I couldn't be on my feet. I had only a tiny little cough, this tickling cough. I perspired at night and I felt tired. That was all. I think I could very well be on my feet, but that doesn't seem to be the custom here. I am certainly not that ill."

Soley looked at me with a questioning gaze, as if to divine what I thought or knew. I studiously avoided her eyes and busied myself with making criss-cross creases in the bedspread.

"See", I said. "Now I have made a ship, and we can sail to any country we wish."

She smiled and said, "I have thought about that. I have a longing to sail. When I get over this indisposition I shall go to America, to Mother and Dad. I have often thought about this trip and longed for it."

She stared into space as if she saw something there that invited close inspection. A gleam in her eyes indicated a pleasant thought. I understood that she had travelled in spirit all the way to America.

Soley had read much and was better informed than is usually the case with young people of her age. She was familiar with all the Icelandic sagas; she had read them many times over. The parts that had especially thrilled her, she knew practically verbatim. She absorbed learning like a sponge and had a vivid memory.

She played chess, and was much better at the game than I, as she was in so many other things. She was an avid player and I had to play several times a day. Somehow, it was not possible to refuse Soley when she asked for something. Her eyes were then so wonderfully soft and beseeching.

She studied and planned every move, and moved her pieces with precision, as I have seen experienced players do. When I made some foolish move, she

obviously did not like it at all, and would make a sound of exasperation:

"This is utter nonsense. Why do you do this! Now you'll lose a pawn. You expose your pieces to mortal danger".

After such miscues of mine, the game was soon ended, with me being check-mated. We would then put the board away, but it would not be long before she suggested beginning again.

After one such game, Soley remarked:

"I have so often thought of life being like a game of chess. I realize when I hold one of these pieces in my hand that it is made of wood, but what do we know about ourselves, or the meaning of life, or what is expected of us?"

"Sometimes I think life is governed by chance. Chance seems often to decide, not we. For example, when my parents went to America, I was so small that they had to leave me behind, because they didn't dare to take me with them on such a long ocean voyage. If I had gone with them, I certainly would not be here now. Perhaps I would never have become ill. But, like many others, they went to seek their fortune in the New World.

"When I am well, I am going on a large ship to America, to the Rocky Mountains. I can imagine how my parents will welcome the child they left behind".

Soley leaned back and gazed into the distance, as if in a trance. I think she saw the Rocky Mountains and all she expected to await her there.

Now I began to dress and to be on my feet all day, but Soley was always in bed. Her temperature rose and her cough became more pronounced and unremitting. Red spots showed on her cheeks, with pallor between. The breathing became shorter and more difficult. But she never complained.

"I am no doubt gradually getting a little better", she would say. Then I would look away, to avoid those questioning eyes, which I could sense following me around the room.

Sometimes she was fretful, like a little child, and longed for this or that. But she complained to no one except the Superintendent. She sensed with her childlike intuition that she could trust him. She would then ask for something or other that was not on the menu. If it was available, it was given to her without question.

Once she mentioned that she could not see out the window, the way her bed was turned. She could not see, she said, what the weather was like.

The doctor rearranged her pillows and changed her position in the bed. She looked at him gratefully and smiled with one side of her mouth.

"I feel better now", she said, "but when can I get up? Won't that be soon? I long so much to get out into the sunshine."

She often expressed her desire to be out in the sun. Then the doctor would look uneasy and he usually thought of something that required him to hurry away.

Once she did not let it go at that, and called after him, "When?"

The doctor did not pause, and said, without looking back:

"By spring. It is too cold for you to get up now. Spring will soon be here".

I understood full well. I knew that there could be only one kind of spring for her. But Soley smiled, and counted on her fingers the months till spring.

Usually I spent my rest periods indoors, and when I returned from my walks Soley welcomed me as if I had been away for weeks. "I get so tired of being alone", she said.

About this time she received a letter

from her parents, with an enclosure of five dollars. What rejoicing! She read the letter over and over, day after day, and inspected the bank note.

"I know", she said, lowering her voice as if confiding a secret to me, "that they are going to send me my passage money and this is the beginning. Next time they will probably send me a larger sum, so it will not be long until I have enough for the passage."

This unexpected joy seemed to cause a temporary improvement—it did not last long. Soley grew weaker day by day. Her face became even thinner and less recognizable, and her eyes more dull. Her strength was ebbing and she was no longer able to sit up in bed.

One day when I returned from a walk, I saw that she had been crying.

"Sit down beside me", she said. "I should like to ask a favor of you and you must not deny me this." She took my hand.

"If I am to die, I would like to die in this room, here with you. I don't want to be taken alive to the death room and die there. That place is far colder than death itself."

I felt a sharp stab of pain in my bosom and I had to turn away, so that Soley should not see the tears I was unable to restrain. With an effort I said, "I promise you—if this happens." This seemed to soothe her, and she smiled at me.

We had long since given up our chess. She had neither strength of mind nor of body for the game. Now, there was no further mention of the journey across the ocean and to the Rocky Mountains.

Power of mind and body ebbed together. Her vocal organs were losing their strength and her voice, which had been so clear, was becoming indistinct, the enunciation woolly. She suf-

ferred a good deal and began to complain of pain in all parts of her body. Large beads of perspiration sprang out on her face. Only her eyes showed life. Occasionally there was a flash of animation; usually they were dull and lifeless. As I mentioned previously, it was long since she had become too weak to sit up in bed.

I was not a little startled when I returned from my walk one day and heard a steady ringing from one of the wards. "Somebody is dying now", I thought to myself, for the bell did not ring like that unless it was a matter of life and death. I looked at the number on the switchboard. It was from my room.

What did I see when I entered? Soley was sitting up in her bed, ringing the bell insistently. Her face had a grayish yellow hue and her eyes were unnaturally bright.

I was so surprised that words failed me. I did not understand what was happening. I even thought that a miracle had happened and that she was getting better.

"It is good that you came", Soley said. "Do you see the sun? I want to go out, now. I want my clothes. I'm getting up. Spring is here. Don't you see the sun?" As she spoke, Soley gestured into the distance. "I must put

on my clothes and get across the ocean, to the Rocky Mountains. My clothes!" Her voice rose almost to a shout.

I put my arm around her shoulder, to give her support. "Yes! Yes! You shall have your clothes—all that you want. You will certainly get across the ocean to the Rocky Mountains."

"Do you think so?" she said vehemently. "Oh, I see the sun there, the flowers—and everything. Oh! All these long years, and now I am going to the Rocky Mountains."

The last words were indistinct, and the voice trailed off. Her strength was ebbing. She fell back, limp, and breathed her last. I rang the bell, and the nurse came in and performed the last rites. She closed her eyes and covered her face.

I stood by Soley's bedside, and looked at her. I wished that it had been her fortune to cross the Atlantic, in good health, and to reach the Rocky Mountains—and home, for now I understood at last that in reality she had had no other home. I raised the sheet for a last look at her face to bid her a last farewell. She lay there, with a smile on her lips. Her spirit was freed of its earthly fetters. Could anything now obstruct her journey across the ocean, to the Rocky Mountains?

Mrs. S. J. Tergeson was elected president at the annual meeting in February of the Gimli chapter of the Icelandic National Club at Gimli, Man. J. B. Johnson was named vice-president, Mrs. Laurence Stevens secretary, Mrs. Ingrid Einarsson assistant secretary, Adolf Holm treasurer and financial

secretary, I. N. Bjarnason assistant treasurer and Mrs. Ingrid Stevens archivist. Committees for the year were named. The meeting, held in the auditorium of Gimli Lutheran Church, was preceded by a program of entertainment. J. B. Johnson presided.

MATTHIAS the poet and human being as I got to know him

by DAVID STEFANSSON

English translation by GUNNAR MATTHIASSEN

The name of Rev. Matthías Jochumsson (1835-1920) has a particularly deep significance in the history of Iceland and Icelandic literature. His fellow-countrymen endearingly refer to him as séra Matthías (Rev. Matthías), but besides being a church minister, séra Matthías was a poet, a playwright, an essayist, and a distinguished translator of Shakespeare, Byron, Tennyson, Ibsen, Tegnér, and Topelius to mention some of the more important names. North Americans of Icelandic descent have no doubt sung or heard others sing Rev. Matthías Jochumsson's most widely known verse, the Icelandic national anthem, *O, guð vors lands!* (Our country's God!).

When Rev. Matthías Jochumsson died, at Akureyri in 1920, a young poet from the rural area north of that town, Davíð Stefánsson from Fagriskógur, had just made his debut as a poet of unusual promise. From that year until the time of his death in 1965, Davíð Stefánsson's position as the most celebrated poet of the Icelanders was never challenged.

Visitors to the capital city of northern Iceland will discover that the former homes of Rev. Matthías Jochumsson and Davíð Stefánsson have been given the status of national shrines preserving the memories of these two eminent citizens of Akureyri, both of whom had become living legends long before they took leave of this world.

Shortly before his death in 1965, Davíð Stefánsson wrote his memories of Rev. Matthías Jochumsson in the form of an article. The first part of this article is presented here in an English translation by the eighty-five year old Gunnar Matthiassen of Los Angeles, Matthías Jochumsson's only surviving son.

The following explanatory remarks are intended for those who have not had the opportunity of acquainting themselves with Icelandic literature.

- 1.) Ólafur Davidsson, Davíð Stefánsson's maternal uncle, was an eminent folklorist and a collector of folktales.
- 2.) *Skuggasveinn* is one of Matthías Jochumsson's plays. *Fjalla-Eyvindur* by Jóhann Sigurjónsson is the best known theatrical work ever to be written by an Icelander.
- 3.) The humorous effect of the expression 'Ertu kominn, landsins forni fjandi?' (Have you arrived, you ancient foe of our nation?) is partly created by the circumstance described here. Also, it must be remembered that this is in fact the opening line of Matthías Jochumsson's well-known poem in which he addressed the 'ancient foe' of the Icelanders, i.e., the polar ice

PART I

It was on a silent autumn evening in Fagriskógur that the poetry of Matthías Jochumsson first came to my observation. The grandfather clock was ticking away the time, and the hallowed sabbath, so evident in the old sod houses, hovered all embracing.

I was eight years old and the only listener, as my father read to me the poem that Matthías had written about the events that led to the assassination of Snorri Sturluson. My father enjoyed particularly classical and beautiful poems and his reciting of this one gave clear evidence of his remarkable understanding and admiration. At the termination of his reading of the poem

I was so upset by the account of the tragic passing away of the great Snorri that my father found it necessary to pacify and comfort me.

Regardless of my limited understanding, I later proceeded to read the poems and it was soon evident to me that what Matthías had written was so rich in wisdom that every Icelander should read it and attempt to understand its wisdom. When I viewed his picture on the cover of the book, I got the impression that it was not a true likeness of him. Surely he must have been more distinguished looking. His sideburns were not in style nor in keeping with his personality as revealed by his poetry. I had heard Matthías mentioned often, both at my home

and Hofi in Hörgardal, where I often visited my grandparents. The name of Matthías was always mentioned with great reverence and gossip rumors were always discounted. Certainly "stuffed-shirt citizens" and miserly penny pinchers could not by any means understand a man like Matthías who saw no significance in material gain. This quality in his character was vividly displayed when once he met a wealthy farmer on the street and handed him one crown. The farmer was surprised when Matthías said, "Yes, take it. It may do you some good." Perhaps he thought the farmer might know better than himself as to how to handle the money. He had thus relieved himself of his last crown. Could anyone give more?

Late one evening he entered the room of two young men who were tenants in his house. On their table he placed several letters lacking postage stamps. He asked one of the men to buy postage stamps for these letters and take them to the mail-carrying ship which was about to leave port. At the same time he "plunked down" on the table twenty-five aurar and said, "You will please do this for me my dear friend, and you may keep the change".

During the early part of his stay at Akureyri Matthías found that a few residents were antagonistic towards him. This was to be expected because these people could neither understand him as a person nor his high-level dream world. In many ways they tried to belittle him, but their efforts at this were ignored by all my close acquaintances. In my mind there was no blurring cloud. How he fared as a minister of the Gospel, I was not fully aware, but it was rumored that in his pulpit the orthodox dogma did not predominate. On the other hand, his hymns and poems in general were

highly accepted and thus he came to conquer the hearts of his fellow men.

While still a child I saw Rev. Matthías on the street in Akureyri as he was engaged in his habitual humming of a melodyless mumbling. I recognized him immediately without being told who he was. He was a heavy set man with strong features and this assured me that his picture on the cover of his book did not present a true likeness. I stood there gazing at him and looking forward to telling my folks about having seen him.

While I was attending High School in Akureyri, I saw Matthías many times as he walked along the street. At such moments a peculiar sensation gripped me, as if I had suddenly been confronted with a towering mountain. It was not to be expected that we would follow the same path, I being a bashful student only fifteen years of age and he being the number one national poet, close to eighty years old. I was, at the time, living in an attic in the less prominent part of town and he was living at Sigurhæðir. Occasionally he would recite poems for the students in the school auditorium. He claimed it was proper that the poets should read or deliver their own poems to give them full expression and meaningful emotion. It was the opinion of several others, however, that others would be better suited for delivery of his poems. Sometimes he would mumble as if he were talking to himself and this resulted in much mirth on the part of the smart alecks.

At one time I was very proud of myself for receiving the honor of being chosen, along with two other students, to pay a visit to Sigurhæðir. One of us had been assigned the duty of approaching him about giving a talk at a festive occasion at the school. We were all attired in our best suits these having first been thoroughly brushed

to remove any feathers or lint present on them. This was necessary because the beds were the only furniture to be found in our rooms and consequently we were in the habit of sitting on them. Our hair was combed in a style that left a lock reaching down over one cheek. Thus we set forth on our journey. We felt inwardly some anxiety as we knew of our shortcomings in proper deportment and manners, being young lads coming from the countryside; but we had a feeling that Matthías would overlook our shortcomings. Our leader was noticeably silent, undoubtedly organizing his address so as to be able to give the proper impression. The other two of us were only to be witnesses at this assignment. When we arrived at his home we found him outside. We all doffed our hats but were too excited to have the presence of mind of identifying ourselves.

"Oh, what are your names my dear friends?" he asked.

We told him.

"Yes, I am well acquainted with your families, past and present. You are all of good stock. Come in. You are all welcome."

We were in seventh heaven over the friendly reception. Our worries had vanished completely. His attitude made us feel that we belonged to him completely. We remained outside for a while as Matthías talked and we listened. As we were entering the house he turned to me and said,

"What is your name again my good boy?"

I offered my name again.

"Quite right. You are the grandson of Reverend David from Hofi and his wife Sigrithur. She is a beautiful woman. How is she?"

"I think that she is well," I replied.

"That is fine. I knew Olafur Davids-son well. He was a man of great know-

ledge and had an inquiring mind. It caused me great sorrow when he drowned in Hörgá. Now, be so good as to step inside."

He went in ahead of us and when we were all seated the leader of our group cleared his throat and explained our errand which was, on behalf of our schoolmates, to ask the National Poet if he would honor us with his presence at a school function. We felt that our leader had delivered the message admirably.

"I welcome the opportunity with pleasure". What do you want me to talk about?"

"It may be of your own choosing. Anything will be gratefully accepted," I replied.

"I can talk about most anything between heaven and earth," said Matthías. "Do you want me to talk about poetry, science, art, history, ethics, aesthetics, Darwinism, philosophy, theology, Shakespeare, Paul the Apostle, Christianity, Dogma, Aborigines and Berserks, Socrates or myself?" He spoke this way at some length while we sat gaping and wondering in astonishment. Our leader repeated that the topic of his talk was to be entirely of his own choosing.

"Perhaps it will be for the best if I talk as I feel at the occasion," he replied. "I will be able to decide on something of interest to the audience, but what shall we talk about now while you are here?"

We had little to suggest. Then Matthías began talking and continued without a letup for an hour and a half. His mind knew no limit. His discussion ranged from the darkest periods of history to a dream world of the future, through years and centuries, from earth to the heavens, and to our earliest existence. He referred to prophets and philosophers, often spicing his ideas with English and

Latin. He talked to us as if we were highly learned and gifted. Our leader uttered an occasional yes or no but the principal substance of his orations was beyond our comprehension. We simply could not digest all this flowing eloquent wisdom. We felt humiliation at our ignorance but were filled with admiration for this noble-hearted patriarch. When Matthías had completed his discourse we all rose from our seats. We realized that time had escaped us and that we had detained the famous bard beyond a reasonable time.

"What are your names my dear boys?" he questioned again. We told him.

"Oh yes, that is right," he replied. "Now farewell and God be with you."

He followed us to the door and we doffed our hats as we left the house. We had seen and heard the poet laureate, and had sat with him in his house! This filled us with great pride.

When I read from the collection of his letters, the speech he gave us on our visit comes to mind. In many ways in these letters he shows his mastery of words, ranging from minor to major scales, and from black, through grey, to white. Through all that he writes so eloquently is found a main current manifesting reverence and warmth for all that is true and noble.

After my first visit I built up my courage to pay him other visits but I felt they were not frequent enough. I felt a lack of daring to impose myself upon such a learned and famous man. However, he always received me with open arms.

Once I took along some cognac to enliven the conversation. Our conver-

sation led to reviewing the works of Johann Sigurjonsson.

"Yes, Jói, he is damn good. He has the gift of a genius when writing for the theatre."

Then the talk drifted to *Skuggaveinn* and Matthías admitted that this play was somewhat outdated. He surmised that if the author had been writing *Skuggaveinn* now it would receive a rating at least equal to *Fjalla-Eyvindur*.

When I was leaving Matthías said. "Please give my regards to your grandmother and tell her I am going to dance with her when we arrive in Heaven." When I conveyed this message to the old lady she smiled sweetly.

Once when attending an entertainment at Akureyri given by the town's male choir, I was sitting in the balcony and noticed that all except one seat were occupied. The singers and musicians were in readiness on the stage. The conductor was in his place but why did he not lift the baton? Why was he gazing at the empty seat? Finally the door opened and in came Matthías, mumbling as was his habit. The audience looked around wondering. Just as Matthías took his seat the choir burst out with force, "Ertu kominn landsins forni fjandi?" In translation this means, "Have you arrived, you ancient foe of our land"? An awesome feeling gripped the listeners, but Matthías showed no emotion and made himself comfortable in his seat. He simply smiled at the choir as if saying, "Scream as loudly as you want to. The polar ice does not deserve anything better. I am well experienced with a variety of treatment.

(to be continued)

65°

The above is the name of an English-language quarterly that was launched last fall in Reykjavik, Iceland. The Editor and Publisher is Amalia Lindal, and the Business Manager is Ásgeir Þór Ásgeirsson. The sixty-fifth parallel of Latitude crosses central Iceland, whence the name. The editorial office is at Laufarveg 59, Reykjavik. On the masthead it is stated that the magazine is a "Literary Quarterly on Contemporary Icelandic Life and Thought."

Greetings are extended by Ásgeir Ásgeirsson, the President of Iceland, in these words:

"It is indeed an imaginative and courageous project to launch a quarterly in English, on Icelandic life and culture. The Magazine 65° is a welcome addition to Icelandic publications. While congratulating the editor on the birth of the magazine, I like to express my sincere wish that it will enjoy a long and fruitful life.

Ásg. Ásgeirsson,
President of Iceland.

In this first number of 65° there are articles on different subjects. One is on Engagement and Marriage in Iceland by Björn Björnsson; another is on Population and the Standard of Living by Eirika Anna Friðriksdóttir—both articles well written and informative.

The leading article is a report on a survey conducted by Pétur Guðjónsson and entitled *The Habits of Icelanders*. The author is a graduate of Menntaskólinn in Reykjavik. He has completed his second year at Harvard University where he is studying for a B.A. degree in Social Studies. He per-

sonally conducted a survey in Reykjavik. A questionnaire containing 204 questions was sent out and numerous individuals were interviewed. The author reports that "some trends have already appeared, and the ones that seem most interesting and astonishing will be briefly discussed. Of the 49 three are repeated here.

1. Reykjavikans do not want to live close to their kin, absolutely not in the same house, since they feel that the presence of their kin will limit their growth and independence.

27. In spite of much talk, adultery does not appear to be very common.

34. Most marriages in Reykjavik are reasonably happy "with no tremendous love, no hatred, but a 50-50 existence."

The author reaches this somewhat surprising conclusion:

"It seems to the researcher that Icelandic society today is characterized by one word: Materialism. Despite all talk about the literary spirit in Iceland, Icelanders are intelligent people, well-informed and industrious, but far from being intellectual."

A page and a half is devoted to humour. One anecdote reads as follows:

"The Eternal Thirst"

Several years ago a thirsty Reykjavikan took advantage of his hosts' hospitality to steal his boots, his sheepskin parka and several books. When the police made his acquaintance he had sold both boots and parka for a bottle, and, thus fortified, sat in a restaurant reading the books."

The editor, Mrs. Baldur Lindal, was born in Boston, Massachusetts, and, while a student at Boston University specializing in journalism, she met Baldur Lindal from Iceland who was doing postgraduate work in chemical engineering. A courtship started at the International Students Club in Cambridge and they were married in 1949 and have lived in Reykjavik ever since. They have four boys, Rikki, Jakie, Eirikur and Tryggvi.

The front page cover of the 35 page first number of the magazine shows two maps of Iceland; one is right side up on which a page from an original Icelandic Saga has been superimposed; the other is upside down on which words in English are irregularly scattered, such as transition, techniques, literature, fishing, etc.

The annual subscription abroad of 65° is \$4.00, American currency.

W. J. L.

MY PAL

by BOGI BJARNASON

We met that first time in a mirror facing a snack-bar on Hastings St., Vancouver, B.C.—the old saloon-days type of mirror, wide and clear. Shoulder to shoulder on stools, we had not spoken, but his reflected glance was a friendly “Hi” Pal”, which I reciprocated. We then fell to conversing, with the result that he insisted on paying for both snacks, in the process displaying a roll of bills “fit to choke a cow”. I was impressed.

In days and weeks following we met frequently, he on his rounds as a salesman of sorts (I was not to learn till much later what it was he peddled). Like myself a bachelor we met often at nearby restaurants, and in time took to looking in at each others’ digs, affably and unceremoniously. Having much in common we ‘hit it off’ in the friendliest fashion. It appeared to me that he supplied something I much needed, the intimacy of a fellow-human, for at times I was lonesome. When he leaned an elbow on my shoulder and spoke into my ear, almost conspiratorially, I felt the ‘lift’ of belonging. He was like that.

Yet he puzzled me; I couldn’t quite make him out. Well-off and carefree, dressing expensively and in style, if not always in the best taste, he was an agreeable companion. That my girl Mary did not approve of him, even to the extent of “either he or I”, was not enough to break my bond with him. His apartment was usually in a mess of disorder, the bed unmade, his clothes strewn about on the floor. That was just his way, and he made no excuses for it. Take it or leave it. Who cares!

★ ★ ★

I had a desk-job with a finance concern that paid well, work that I liked, and my savings account grew at a satisfactory rate. Young and healthy and with no dependents I could look forward to a career of security and comfort. In spare time I worked diligently at a mail-order course leading to a degree in economics and a better position. All very well.

Then one day my pal, by now quite intimate, told me about an “order”

he belonged to, which he thought might interest me. A secret society, its members knew and experienced much that was denied to the common run—a world of new dimensions. He then offered to sponsor me for membership, the initiation a slight formality, the fee but nominal. The initiation was a not unpleasant pinprick, but which would leave a tell-tale mark recognizable to other members of the brotherhood.

I fell for it, and in the days and weeks to come he was to administer many such pinpricks, each a pleasurable experience that I looked forward to and craved for more often. Each one cost a trifling sum; but so what! What was the good of money if it didn’t bring you enjoyment?

The thing that bothered me, if only for a moment, was that I felt less keen about my work, and my concentration suffered. For days I had not touched my homework, feeling the delicious ease of “so what?” Another little shot in the arm and things would right themselves.

★ ★ ★

Then one day My Pal walked in. The door unlocked, he didn’t bother to knock. “I’ve come to stay.” With not so much as a ‘by your leave’ he appropriated my favorite chair—in effect, took charge of my home. He rifled the fridge, slept in my bed, while I made-do on the couch in the living room. I sat and stood and acted

as he ordered me, without much question. I was his utter slave.

In the days and weeks that followed (having lost my job) I did as he bid me, and he was insatiable. I used up my savings, and when that was done he started pawning my furniture, including all my better clothing. Came the time that I could not pay the rent and we were evicted. Even then he was no less demanding, and I was forced to measures I had heretofore not thought of—stealing from department stores and dealing with “fences” who would pay but a fraction of the worth of the article. He—My Pal—took everything I could gather, adding dire threats should I fail to make good.

I stole once too often and in consequence spent three months in duration. That was hard to take, and I’m not recommending it. Emerging, with the word of the warden in my ear, “Don’t come back”, I was no sooner on the street than My Pal confronted me. “Good. Get to work!” But now I had a record, which made things more difficult. My Pal made no allowances for this. When I started to remonstrate he blackened my eyes, adding what I already knew, that I had to find the means, or else — —.

I am writing this with the aid of a candle in the corner of an old freight shed, cold and hungry. What is ahead God only knows.

● Dedicated to all those who, out of curiosity or seeking a thrill, take that first “fix”.

THE MIDWINTER GATHERINGS

The annual midwinter gatherings held in Winnipeg the latter part of February were this year reduced to four.

They opened on Sunday, February 25, with the usual type of service held in the First Lutheran Church on Victor St. An unusually large number of people attended. The service part was conducted by Dr. V. J. Eylands, assisted by Rev. P. M. Petursson. Hymns were sung by the choir joined in by those in attendance, and Mrs. Lincoln Johnson, sang a solo. Dr. Richard Beck delivered an inspiring address and afterwards refreshments were served in the lower church parlor.

The Monday evening concert was under the auspices of Frón, the Winnipeg chapter of The Icelandic National League, all in Icelandic. Miss Caroline Gunnarson read a selection and Dr. Richard Beck delivered an original poem. Duets were sung by the Westdal sisters, Carol and Laureen. Miss Heida Kristjansson gave a piano solo and a piano duet was played by Carol Westdal and Helga Stefansson.

Dr. V. J. Eylands gave an address which he entitled "Sverð andans". The address has been published in Icelandic and at least parts of it should be translated and made available to the general public. Skuli Johannsson, the President of Frón, was in the chair.

The Icelandic Canadian Club decided to drop the Tuesday luncheon this year. Protests were heard, and the incoming executive will probably give thought to reviving it or finding a substitute.

On Tuesday afternoon Rev. Philip M. Petursson, the President of The Icelandic National League, presented a bust of Vilhjalmur Stefansson, the

Arctic explorer, to Dr. George Johnson, representing the Government of the Province of Manitoba. Later the bust was formally accepted by Mr. M. B. Steinkopf, President of the Manitoba Centennial Corporation for installation in the Manitoba Centennial Centre.

The Icelandic Canadian Club concert was held on Tuesday night and the Parish Hall of the church was packed. Miss Heather Pinchin sang a group of songs, Miss Louise Bundnick played a violin solo and a piano solo was rendered by Mrs. Kerrine Stewart-Hay, née Wilson.

Norman S. Bergman, President of the Manitoba Chamber of Commerce, gave an address which appears in this issue of the magazine.

The following scholarships were presented:

Gordon Gislason, the Icelandic Canadian Club Scholarship.

Janis Johnson, the Icelandic Good-Templars Scholarship.

Sandra Sigurdson, the Mrs. Kristin Johnson Scholarship.

Paul Nielson, the George Magnusson Estate Scholarship.

Richard Hordal, the Jon Olafson Scholarship.

T. R. Einarson, the Harold Olson Scholarship.

Janet Madden, donor of scholarship anonymous.

Garnet L. E. Ulyot, Lenore Borgford, Meba Eliasson, Martin Keli McNicholl and Ingrid Roed, were awarded Canada-Iceland Foundation Scholarships.

All the scholarships were for \$100 except the Good Templar scholarship which is for \$200.00

Mr. Leifur Hallgrimson, the President of The Icelandic Canadian Club presided.

The final concert, conducted in Icelandic, was under the auspices of the Icelandic National League, and was presided over by the Vice-President S. Aleck Thorarinson. Magnus Eliasson recited three poems. Mrs. Eve Allen née Thorvaldson sang solos and Miss Snjolaug Sigurdson played a piano solo.

An address was delivered by Hermann Pálsson, who is Professor of Old Icelandic and Old Irish in the University of Edinburgh, Scotland. He is at present on a year's leave of absence lecturing in the Centre for Medieval Studies, in the University of Toronto.

The address is being published in Logberg-Heimskringla, and references will be made to it in the next number of the magazine.

Following the concert, and as has been the custom, the President of the League resumed the chairmanship. The following were elected Honorary Members of the League.

Dr. George Johnson, the Manitoba Minister of Education.

Emil Jonsson, the Minister of External Affairs, Iceland.

Professor Hermann Pálsson, of Edinburgh University.

Rev. Philip M. Petursson, President of The Icelandic National League.

All the concerts were held in the Parish Hall of the First Lutheran Church and after each concert light refreshments were served in the lower church parlor.

SOME SURPRISES IN O.E.C.D. STATISTICS

Each year the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development prepares a table of comparative statistics showing "the diversity of the economies of the 21 member countries". Space limitations prevent showing the full comparison, but we are able to show here Canada's position, at the end of 1966, relative to its major trading partners.

In the complete table, there are some surprises for those who measure their country by statistics. It is relatively well-known, for instance, that Sweden has overtaken Canada in Gross National Product per capita, but who would have believed that Iceland is

also ahead. Canada stands fourth, at \$2,670 (U.S.) of GNP per head, after the U.S. (\$3,840), Sweden (\$2,730) and Iceland (\$2,850).

(The above figures show the order to be as follows: United States, Iceland, Sweden, Canada.)

Not far behind are Switzerland, Norway, Germany, France and Denmark, all of which count more than \$2,000 of GNP per capita.

Iceland shares with Canada the distinction of harboring the smallest number of inhabitants per square kilometer.

—Fin. Times, March 18-68.

BOOK REVIEWS

FIRE AND ICE

Reviewed by George Hanson

FIRE AND ICE: Three Icelandic Plays by Jóhann Sigurjónsson, Davíð Stefánsson, and Agnar Thórðarson, with an introduction by Einar Haugen. Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1967, 266 p. \$5.95.

Although Iceland has a literary tradition, second to none in the world, going back centuries, modern drama came to Iceland only a century ago with Matthías Jochumsson's *Útilegumennirnir* (The Outlawed Men, 1862). Once the theatre became established, drama became rich and varied.

Three of the chief dramatists of the twentieth century are represented in this volume of the "Nordic Translation Series." Only forty years separate Jóhann Sigurjónsson's *The Wish* and Agnar Thórðarson's *Atoms and Madams*; yet three generations of writers are represented.

Jóhann Sigurjónsson was the first and likely the greatest dramatist in Icelandic literature. During his short life (1880-1919) his works, especially *Björg Eyvind og Hans Húsfri* (Eyvind of the Hills and His Wife), known in Icelandic as *Fjalla-Eyvindur*, met with great success in Copenhagen and other Scandinavian countries.

Based on a legendary Faust-like scholar in Icelandic history, *The Wish* (Danish, *Ønsket*; Icelandic, *Galdra-Loftur*) ranks among the greatest plays in Icelandic drama. Early in his life Sigurjónsson was an admirer of Nietzsche, and from the works of the German philosopher is seen Loftur's will to power, so strong that he feels he can bring about the death of Steinunn—with a wish.

Steinunn does die, but he who "wished" her death dies himself at the altar of the Hólar Cathedral as the voices of conscience intone: "Woe! Woe! Woe" and the voice of Bishop Gottskald the Grim, long dead and from whom Loftur wanted to get the infamous Red Book, pronounces: "In the darkness—before thou wert born—evil cleft thy will."

The Wish is a powerful work. The character delineation is masterful, showing in the characters of Loftur, Steinunn, and Disa the poles of evil and good.

The second play in this excellent collection comes from the pen of Iceland's national poet of the twentieth century, Davíð Stefánsson.

Based on an Icelandic folktale (see Jón Arnason's *Íslenzkar Þjóðsögur og Æfintýri*, *The Golden Gate* is the story of the journey of a soul—"Sálin hans Jóns míns—The soul of my John"—carried in a bag by his wife, a long journey from earth to heaven. Jón was a good-for-nothing husband, but his wife's love and will were strong enough to carry his soul, protesting all the way to the "golden gate" of heaven attended by Saint Peter.

The play, with music by Dr. Páll Ísólsson, was first presented in Reykjavík in 1941 and later in various parts of Europe, including the Edinburgh Festival of 1949.

The last play, *Atoms and Madams*, was written by Agnar Thórðarson, a librarian at the National Library and one of the leading contemporary dramatists of Iceland.

Iceland has experienced a new and unknown postwar prosperity on which Agnar Thórðarson has written a

powerful satire. The complete breakdown of a family comes about as Senator Thorleifur Ólafsson, his empty-headed wife and restless teen-age daughter are unable to withstand the temptations of a corrupt society. The old values and traditions remain in the person of Sigmundur Jónsson, a farmer who looks foolish and out-of-place among the upper-middle class society of modern day Reykjavík.

THE NORDIC COUNCIL: A Study of Scandinavian Regionalism

240 pp., charts, maps, index. \$7.50

by Stanley V. Anderson

The five countries of Scandinavia have found a "middle way" between anarchic use of force and political amalgamation in the field of international relations. Among themselves, they will neither fight nor unite. Instead, they follow the way of cooperation in a persistent joint effort to increase mutual advantage. Their attempts to foster similarities and eliminate hampering differences contribute to that mutual advantage and create what can best be described as regionalism.

Stanley V. Anderson's book describes and explains Scandinavian regionalism by illuminating its most prominent organ, the Nordic Council. Founded in 1952, the Council is the official consultative assembly of Members of Parliament from Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden, whose cabinet members attend its annual meetings. While the countries of northern Europe have not integrated,

There is a comprehensive introduction, including bibliography of works about and by the writer, to each play. In addition, there is a most helpful general introduction to Icelandic drama by Einar Haugen. Each play is presented in a fresh translation. Here, for the first time in English, is a collection of Icelandic drama of the past half century.

they have functioned successfully as a distinctive region. Scandinavia now comprises a passport union, a common employment market, and a reciprocal social security area; uniform laws exist; and economic integration is taking place under the aegis of the European Free Trade Association.

Professor Anderson's extensive research represents the first attempt to explain the process of regional decision making in Scandinavia. The factual materials upon which the study is based are not available elsewhere in published form. In the author's opinion, each cohesive area in the world is a laboratory for the student of international organization. Heretofore, the Scandinavian experience has been ignored, but the present study shows how the concepts of regionalism must be refined to take this experience into account.

Indispensable for students and scholars of international relations in general and regionalism in particular, this work will also be worthwhile for general readers who have an interest in Scandinavia.

Stanley V. Anderson is associate professor of political science at the University of California, Santa Barbara.

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IN THE NEWS

DR. OLSEN OF EDMONTON
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Dr. Gordon Benedict Olsen, F.R.C.S.

Dr. Gordon Benedict Olsen, of Edmonton, Alberta, was made Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of Canada in January, 1968.

Dr. Olsen was born in Winnipeg in 1938, the son of Mr. and Mrs. O. B. Olsen, formerly of Winnipeg and now of Calgary. He took his secondary school education in Calgary and received his M.D. from the University of Alberta in 1962. He was Resident Intern in General Surgery at the University of Alberta Hospital, in Edmon-

ton, 1962 to 1967, and is presently Teaching Fellow in Surgery at the Faculty of Medicine, University of Alberta.

Dr. Olsen was married to Miss Lorna Beth Hughes of Calgary in 1951. They have three children.

Dr. Olsen plans to practice General Surgery in Kamloops, British Columbia.

★

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

David Jon Thompson, who is a son of Helga, a daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Jon Tryggvi Bergman, is the Executive Assistant to Hon. Joe Greene, the Minister of Agriculture in the federal government.

The late Jon Tryggvi Bergman was one of the early building contractors among the Icelanders in Winnipeg. The office of the Minister of Agriculture is in the Sir John Carling Building, Ottawa, where David Thompson can be reached.

★

Pharmacist James Thorkelson, of Winnipeg, is on a CUSO assignment in Tanzania. Instead of working in Muhimbili Hospital, he was asked to teach pharmacy, which he is doing though a novice, relying heavily on the teaching instruction he received at the

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CUSO Orientation Course before leaving Canada. He is living in Dar es Salaam and finds "life here just too good to be true."

★

RONALD W. KRISTJANSON APPOINTED INDUSTRIAL WORKSHOP MANAGER

Ronald W. Kristjanson has been appointed by the Society for Crippled Children and Adults of Manitoba as Manager of its Industrial Workshop at 592 Notre Dame Avenue, Winnipeg. He replaces Mrs. Nan Murphy, who retired recently.

Ronald was psychologist at Stony

Mountain penitentiary before joining the Society in 1963, where he has been supervisor of assessment and job training.

★

OBTAINS ATHLONE FELLOWSHIP



Michael Guy Skafel

Michael Guy Skafel, a son of Dr. and Mrs. E. J. Skafel, of Brandon, Man., has been awarded a 1968 Athlone Fellowship for two years of advanced studies in engineering at a university of his choice.

Michael Skafel took his first two years of science at Brandon College, now the University of Brandon. He then went to the University of Saskatchewan in Saskatoon where he obtained his Masters Degree from the same university on a National Research Council Scholarship. Since then he has been employed at the research telecommunications establishment, at Shirley Bay, Ont. Mr. Skafel has not yet decided at what university he is going to take this special advanced work in Engineering.

★

★

Jon L. Swanson, BA/61, has been appointed Executive Assistant to the

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★

ANNOUNCEMENT

W. J. Lindal, author of The Icelanders in Canada, desires to make the following announcement.

The Centennial Commission fixed a deadline for the publication of the "Canada Ethnica" series. Only two of the authors were able to meet it— Mrs. O. Woycenko and he. Both had half the prescribed number of books printed in a rush to meet the deadline as a result of which there were some typographical and other errors. In the second printing the errors were corrected.

If anyone who bought from the first lot prefers a copy of the corrected book he may send the book back to the publishers and a new one will be sent to him free of charge.

Mr. Lindal also wants to point out

that the Centennial Commission asked The Canada Council to select the authors and they, in turn, appointed a special committee to make the selection. The personnel of that committee has been kept a strict secret. All he knows is that it selected him to write the story of the Icelanders in Canada.

★

Vilborg Kjartansson was elected president of the Icelandic Canadian Club of Toronto, Ont. at the annual meeting last fall, succeeding Kris Kjartansson. Hannes Petursson was named vice-president, Laufey Brown recording secretary, Ruth Laban corresponding secretary, Don Gislason librarian and Harold Broughton auditor. Named hostesses were Erla Macaulay and Emily Ridding. Barbara Kristjanson heads the membership committee and Begga Petursson the social.

★

THE ICELANDIC CANADIAN CLUB OF BRITISH COLUMBIA SCHOLARSHIPS



Miss Leslie Magnusson



Miss Joan Doris Anderson

Winners of the Icelandic Canadian Club Scholarships for the Academic Session 1967-68 are Miss Leslie Magnus-

son and Miss Joan Doris Anderson, both in attendance at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver.

Two scholarships are offered each year to students of Icelandic origin attending an institute of higher learning in British Columbia. Awards are primarily on the basis of academic excellence. Chairman of the Scholarship Committee is Dr. Robert E. Helgason.

Miss Leslie Magnusson, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. G. Leslie Magnusson, 7310 Boundary Road, South Burnaby, B.C., has won one of these Scholarships for the second time. Last year Miss Magnusson entered the University of British Columbia after a consistent honours record in high school. She was chosen in the summer of 1966 to take part on a French-English Student Exchange Programme. Miss Magnusson maintained her excellent record in her First Year at the University of British Columbia in the Faculty

of Science. She is registered this year in a Science Major programme in the Faculty of Education.

Miss Joan Doris Anderson is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur H. Anderson, 6779 Humphries Avenue, Burnaby, B. C. During her high school career Miss Anderson maintained a high scholastic average while participating in student organizations and sports activities. Her marks in the Government of B.C. Scholarship Examinations in June, 1967, earned for her a Norman MacKenzie Alumni Scholarship for entrance to the University of British Columbia, where she is now registered in the Faculty of Science. Miss Anderson plans to enter the Faculty of Medicine at the University.

The Scholarship fund is a continuing project which is fostered and maintained by the Icelandic Canadian Club of British Columbia with the support of its members and friends. —C. G.

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Some 100 Icelanders and numerous friends attended the Thorrablot celebration in February of the Icelandic Society of Chicago, Ill. Society president Dr. Valur Egilsson, a Chicago dentist, presided and the program included a reception, banquet and dance as well as a showing of the film depicting the eruption and emergence from the sea of volcanic Surtsey off the south coast of Iceland.

★

Skuli Johannsson was re-elected president at the annual meeting in February of the Icelandic society Frón in Winnipeg. **Prof. Haraldur Bessason** was named vice-president, **Pall Hallson** secretary, and **Jochum Asgeirsson** treasurer. **Gunnar Baldwinson** was named financial secretary, **Hrund Skulason** assistant secretary, **Heimir Thorgrimson** assistant treasurer and **Valdimar Laruson** assistant financial secretary.

★

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Dr. Valur Egilsson, dentist, was elected president of the Icelandic Society in Chicago, Ill., at the annual meeting in January. **Dr. Leifur Bjornsson**, physician, was named vice-president, **Paul Sveinbjorn Johnson**, lawyer, secretary and teacher **Kristvin Helgason** treasurer.

★

Miss Lilja Stephenson was elected president at the 20th annual meeting in October of the Victoria Icelandic Women's Club at Victoria, B.C. It is the only Icelandic organization in the city. **Mrs. Sigrídur (Sadie) Johnson** was named secretary and **Mrs. Sara Ormiston** treasurer.

★

Mr. and Mrs. Laugi Johnson of Hnausa, Man., were honored on their 50th wedding anniversary at a gathering in October in Hnausa Community Hall. Present were seven of their nine children, daughters Mrs. Thorey Johnstone, Mrs. Christine Rutledge, Mrs. Rosa Tomasson, Mrs. Evelyn Bardarson, Mrs. Bernice Moroski and Eleanor Johnson and son Marvin. Unable to attend were sons Wallace and Eddie. The toast to Mr. and Mrs. Johnson was proposed by S. V. Sigurdson.

★

Lillian Joan Sigurdson, a graduate of the University of Manitoba, in Nov-

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ember was awarded a scholarship by the Icelandic Board of Education to study at the University of Iceland for two years. Miss Sigurdson is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Sigurdson of Lundar, Man.

★

The Gimli Centennial Booklet was published last summer by the Gimli Women's Institute. It is a 43-page publication with 68 pictures, and is entitled Glimpses of Gimli, Past and Present. Mrs. R. R. Howard of Gimli compiled the material and the book, which sells for \$1 per copy, may be ordered from her at Box 1019, Gimli, Man.

★

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NEWS TAKEN FROM

FJELAGSBLAÐIÐ

Icelandic Sagas

A complete edition of the Icelandic Sagas will be published in Iceland soon. The set, consisting of 42 volumes, was last published in 1957, but has not been available for several years.

The price for a complete set will be 16,000 kronur or approximately \$280.00. The volumes will be bound in black leather with gold lettering. The publisher also plans to make a book case available for those who wish to purchase one with their set.

— — —

200,000 Icelanders

Well, it took 1100 years, but the population in Iceland has reached the 200,000 mark. The growth has been slow and not at all continuous throughout the country's history. The number of Icelanders was reduced down to 39,000 people after 9,000 persons died in "Móðuharðindunum" in 1782. The number of Icelanders in 1801 had grown to 47,000 with 307 of them residing in Reykjavik.

— — —

NATO Meeting

Over 300 NATO delegates will gather in Reykjavik next June 24th for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization regular spring meeting. This is the first time the organization holds a major meeting in Iceland. The facilities of the University of Iceland will be used to house the business meetings.

★

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