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In closing 30
The year was 1951. Just four years earlier, on a bitter afternoon in February, 1947, Imperial Oil Limited had made its great oil discovery at Leduc, Alta. — a discovery so momentous that it helped usher an entire industry and nation into years of prosperity. Then, in 1950, the original section of the interprovincial Pipeline was completed. It was built to carry crude oil from Alberta to Eastern Canada, and it meant that most of the country was being supplied with Canadian oil. But one hurdle remained. Canada's West Coast, separated from Alberta by the Rocky Mountains, was still dependent on foreign oil. The answer was clearly a westward pipeline. One, the Trans Mountain, was already in the planning stage, but an ominous obstacle stood in the way of its construction: the Korean War. It had broken out in the summer of 1950, and by 1951 the entire North American steel industry was mobilized for the war effort. It looked as if the steel shortage would mean a long postponement for the Trans Mountain.

One man who recalls that year vividly is W.O. "Bill" Twals, a vigorous, bright-eyed man living an active retirement in Toronto. At the time, Twals was a rising young executive at imperial and was destined to become, in 1960, the company's president. "C.D. Howe was the country's minister of trade and commerce at the time," he recalls, "he thought it very important to have at least one mammoth project always in the works — not just for the sake of the economy but to help boost the national spirit. It contributed to a stronger sense of nationhood. Well, Howe was impatient with costly and avoidable holdups, whether caused by bureaucratic red tape or other bottlenecks, and being a man of action, he personally intervened to ensure that all the specialty steel needed for the Trans Mountain was made available promptly. He was convinced we needed the pipeline, the oil and the jobs. So, steel shortage or not, he made sure the job was done." Even today, the name C.D. Howe evokes memories in many Canadians of those postwar years, when consultation and partnership between business and government helped fuel an unprecedented era of prosperity and economic nation building in Canada. The continuous consultation of those years also helped to ensure that the development of public policies benefited from the detailed knowledge and views of the sectors of the economy that would be most affected by them. Those policies were therefore more workable and more broadly supported than they would otherwise have been. Says the Montreal economist Dan Cohen: "Those were years of a very constructive relationship among government, business and labor. In fact, the fifties were a golden era for Canada." As Robert Landry, a vice-president of Imperial who lives and works in Ottawa, notes: "There seemed to be an open and ongoing communication based on a spirit of trust and respect for one another's abilities and responsibilities." Another man in Ottawa who looks back on that period with appreciation is Roland Priddle, assistant deputy minister for petroleum in the department of energy, mines and resources. "The national oil policy that prevailed from 1951 until the OPEC-induced crisis of 1974," he says, "was arguably the best and most durable piece of energy policy Canada has ever had. And what I think is particularly instructive about it is that the government developed and implemented the policy through continuous consultation with the petroleum industry. I remember those years as ones of fruitful dialogue. The process of regularly exchanged data and views — in which Imperial played a major role — was most helpful. It served the best interests of all parties — including the consuming public." Later, regrettably, the traditional dialogue between government and business in Canada diminished. In fact, industry and government appeared to have drifted so far apart by 1981 that former prime minister Pierre Trudeau called them "two solitudes." People in both industry and government feel the breakdown did not occur through design but as the result of numerous social and economic changes in the nation's character. Both sectors agree that a key factor in the decline was the emergence in the sixties and
Fediral economic development coordinator Bruce Rawson, in Edmonton helping to bridge the “yawing chasm” between government and business.

The phrase “the yawning chasm” is often used to describe the gap between the public and private sectors, highlighting the need for better communication and understanding. Bruce Rawson, as the federal economic development coordinator in Edmonton, is working to bridge this gap. His role involves promoting economic growth and development in the region, addressing the needs and concerns of businesses and the government. By bridging this chasm, Rawson aims to foster a more collaborative environment where both sectors can work together effectively, leading to greater prosperity and economic success for the area.

Robert Landry, an Imperial vice-president in Ottawa, helping colleagues understand the complex problems faced by politicians and civil servants.

Robert Landry, as an Imperial vice-president, is active in Ottawa, working to help colleagues understand the complex problems faced by politicians and civil servants. His role involves navigating the intricate landscape of government, ensuring that policies and decisions are informed by a deep understanding of the challenges and constraints. By doing so, Landry contributes to the effective governance of Canada, ensuring that the country's diverse interests are balanced and aligned. His work is crucial in maintaining the smooth operation of government and promoting the well-being of Canadians.
development of the Cold Lake project — is currently in Ottawa on loan to the Canada Oil and Gas Lands Administration to bring his expertise to their projects and, at the same time, improve his understanding of government. "I'm sure," says Gossen, "that my term here will mean that both Esso Resources and the government will have a better understanding of each other. We have much more in common than we previously thought in terms of our shared commitment and preferred approach to maximizing Canada's industrial benefits from energy projects. Already I can sense that it's translating into a very practical benefit: a cooperative approach to developing the kind of regulatory and monitoring system that will meet the government's objectives but not be unrealistic in terms of development."

Imperial's role in the industry

that if we do our homework and treat government with respect, it will listen. And we do our homework. I can assure you. Take our policy position on energy, for example. The committee dealing with energy was chaired by Imperial's chief executive officer, Donald McIvor. When you have a man of that calibre and stature giving an enormous amount of time and effort to developing a position on energy. It's bound to have credibility. More and more at Imperial, people in management are accepting the idea that virtually no major policy can be adopted without taking into account the views of people affected by it outside the company, not just in government but in the communities and public-interest groups. This is especially true for Esso Resources, the subsidiary of Imperial that is active in the North. "Building mutual understanding and consensus is aspirations of northern residents for meaningful jobs and business opportunities."

Underhill is adamant that the dialogue is not mere window dressing but a genuine attempt at mutual accommodation. "There are many examples of practical benefits," he says. "One of the most significant is the creation of Shetnach Drilling Limited, a company jointly owned by Esso Resources and corporations operated by Mëni and Denë natives. And the idea for it came directly out of our consultation with northerners. Esso Resources people also consult regularly with the environmental group known as CARC (Canadian Arctic Resources Committee), an organization based in Ottawa. "We meet with them from time to time to discuss some of our general concepts of northern development," says Underhill, "which include issues such as the timing, scale and benefits of projects."

The executive director of CARC, Peter Burnet, agrees that the communication is genuine and useful. "It helps both parties," he says. "to overcome a tendency to stereotype and oversimplify. It permits us to get to know one another and to become more familiar with the other's perception of issues and options. I know we, as a northern resource policy group, certainly obtain a much better understanding of the economic and technical aspects of northern projects through these discussions."

The renewal of dialogue is under way — between industry and government and between industry and a variety of public-interest organizations. At times, points of view are bound to differ and common objectives may not be possible. But such disagreements, when moderated by mutual respect, can be healthy and creative, and there is ample evidence that the commitment to consultation, from all sides, is genuine. In particular, government and business appear to be moving toward a healthy awareness of each other's value and of how, in the dangerous seas of a harshly competitive world economy, we are all shipmates. We really do need one another. What is at stake is more than the ultimate success of the various sectors' respective plans: it is nothing less than the long-term prosperity, unity and strength of Canada."

PENCILING THE PURVEYORS OF POWER

The fine art of the cartoonist

BY JACK BATTEN

Randy Gossen, former production manager of Esso Resources' heavy oil department, on loan to Canada Oil and Gas Lands Administration in Ottawa.
"I'll tell you what's the hardest part of political cartooning," Wicks, always the clever one, said at a lunch gathering not long ago. "It's writing the captions. That's hard because I can't blink my eyes. It's written in invisible ink."

"Yeah, but here's the last word," said Dick Gibson, who writes the Toronto Star as a layout artist and a situation, or general, cartoonist. "Maybe there are only 30 political cartoonists in Canada, but compared with the United States and probably every other country, we're doing very well. Right now, Canada has the best political cartoonists in the world."

Dick Gibson may be close to the truth. His assessment has at any rate received plenty of support from foreign observers who have examined Canadian political cartooning in recent years. When Edmund Wilson, the esteemed American literary critic, took a measure of Canada's artistic scene in 1961, he went home celebrating the genius of Duncan Macpherson, the Toronto Star's resident cartoonist. "Macpherson's cartoons," Wilson wrote in his book O Canada, "are the work of a vigorous imagination, which, taking its cue from political events, expands them into gratifying fantasies...I do not doubt that the originals of his drawings will hang someday in Canadian galleries."

And in 1961, when William Feaver, an editor of England's Lancet, said "the death of a political cartoonist is one of the very rare events that do not immediately command a page of photographic reproduction," Macpherson's work was included in a special index of Canadian politicians. The world he knew, and how he thought and drew, would hang someday in Canadian galleries.

The history of the country's political cartooning began in the 1870s with a rabble-rousing self-starter from Whitchurch-Stouffville, Ont., named John Wilson. Bepau, a man whose enthusiasm was not matched by his talent, was a political cartoonist for the Stouffville News. His cartoons were more than a reflection of his political beliefs; they were a commentary on the world of politics itself. His work was characterized by its boldness and honesty, and it became a mirror of the times, reflecting the struggles and challenges of the day.

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Duncan Macpherson, wit, imagination and intellectual aggression

launched in 1873. Bengough's cartooning style tended to be rudimentary and a bit naive, but still engaging. But, as the Observer's William Feaver puts it, "What Bengough lacked in technical facility, he made up for in flair." His zesty attacks on politicians of the day rang true to his large Canadian audience. Bengough was especially rough on Sir John A. Macdonald, whom he referred to as "no chief stuck in trade," and his image of the former prime minister — a gruff, unshaven man — has lingered in the popular imagination for more than a century.

As a cartoonist, Bengough was working in a genre that was too young to have developed a tradition of its own. Cartoons, which constitute a fundamental ingredient of superior cartooning, reaches back 500 years to its origins as a spin-off of the Italian Renaissance. And such consummate cartoonists as James Gillray, the 18th-century Londoner with the biting touch, and Honoré Daumier, the 19th-century Parisian who was sent to jail for satirizing King Louis Philippe, elevated the form to high art. But pure political cartooning dates only from the 1860s, when Punch established itself in England as a showcase for drawings that lampooned politicians and their policies. The idea spread rapidly to North America, where many magazines soon made space for political cartoons, and it was J.W. Bengough who became the first such artist to make his mark in Canada. Indeed, Bengough's work was a mixture of comedies and hostility, and in his choice of subject matter — everything from American influence to the anhedral about nationalization and the struggles between French and English in Canada and between the provincial and federal governments — he anticipated much of the future of Canadian comic art.

Daily newspapers weren't enthusiastic about cartoons being a regular feature of their political coverage until Henri Julien arrived at the Montreal Daily Star in 1888. Julien, a gentle and affable man, was one of the few cartoonists that lacked Bengough's cantankerous qualities but offered more sophistication in drawing. His cartoons were more about ideas than politics, and they were published in The Star's daily edition, making them available to a wider audience.

The Star, newspapers across the country had accepted the notion that cartoons were an integral part of the editorial mix.

During the following half-century, cartoonists of talent emerged in every region of the country. A handful drew cartoons that, in the Bengough manner, carried tough-minded messages: Donald McRitchie of the Halifax Herald vigorously criticized Ottawa for its neglect of the Maritime provinces, and Stew Cameron of the Calgary Herald was so relentless in his strafing at Alberta's Social Credit government of the 1950s that premier William Aberhart blasted him in public as "that economic cartoonist." But for the most part, pre-1950 cartoonists adopted a gentle touch that was more in the tradition of Henri Julien. Arch Dale of the Winnipeg Free Press, perhaps the most influential of the period's cartoonists, made a career out of poking playful fun at the political forces that caused confusion to the already muddled, ordinary Canadian citizen. And in his 12 years at the Montreal Star, Arthur Rahey, a thoughtful cartoonist, stuck up for a set of thoroughly genteel values. S. Morgan-Powell, the paper's drama critic, wrote, in 1935, that Rahey's "never vicious." Morgan-Powell's remark was intended as the ultimate compliment for a cartoonist.

"It's a pretty shaky job, cartooning," Robert Chambers, the long-time cartoonist at the Halifax Herald, said in explaining the relative blandness of his generation's cartooning style. "You just want to do something that's
going to please your soul."

In the 1950s, however, the idea that the cartoonist's role was strictly to brew the line of editorial clichés began to fade. "It was Duncan Macpherson at the Toronto Star who changed all the rules," says Peter Desbarats, dean of the University of Western Ontario's graduate school of journalism and chairman of the Pickers, a 1979 study of political cartooning. "Macpherson made it clear that he wanted the same editorial freedom in his cartoons as his paper's political commentators had in their columns. And he got his way."

Thus, Macpherson burst uninvited from the Toronto Star's editorial pages with cartoons that radiated sarcasm and wit, wickedness and intellectual aggression. He presented a new force in cartooning, and at the same time he brought high art to the field. His drawings embraced intricate grace and demonic passion, and at their most potent they invoked, wrote the American author Edmund Wilson, "a more warlike and grotesque Louis Carroll."

"After Duncan arrived, cartoonists found their sense of independence," says Terry Mosher, the brilliantly iconoclastic cartoonist who draws for the Montreal Gazette under the nom de plume Aislin. Mosher offers a definition of the cartoonist's role that probably applies to most of his contemporaries. "The job of the person who does the work I do," he says, "is to point out the disease and not suggest a cure. If you suggest a cure, then you become guilty of trying to be a prophet yourself."

Along with their corrosive attacks on politicians and politicians, the Macpherson-era cartoonists introduced a vivid variety of artistic approaches. Aislin, who leans heavily on cowboys, cowboys cartoons that are filled with foreshadowing and black comedy. By contrast, Ken Power's dazzling drawings for the Vancouver Sun somehow manage to be simultaneously light-hearted and threatening. Jean-Pierre Gervais of La Presse specializes in cartoons that hit with the sneaky rush of a dart, while at the Hamilton Spectator, an expatriate Cape Bretoner who signs his work simply "Blaine," produces elaborate masterpieces in the brush technique.

"When you add up all the supremely gifted artists who seemed to appear in our newspapers during the last couple of decades," Peter Desbarats sums up, "what you have is a gold-age of cartooning." Deducts, moreover, considers it both essential and inevitable that the golden age will continue, for cartoonists, he says, "represent the only acid bite that's left on the editorial pages of this country's newspapers. The editors themselves are growing so soft that the pages seem almost outdated. But the cartoonists and their messages are getting in with such speed and impact that they can significantly influence one's perceptions, politicians and political views."

Paul Fox, an eminent political scientist of the University of Toronto's Erindale College, points to one specific example as evidence of the cartoonist's potential for shaping public perceptions. Fox is convinced that Duncan Macpherson's cartoons hastened the downfall of John Diefenbaker. Macpherson," says Fox, "converted Diefenbaker from a ridiculous figure to a ridiculed figure by continually drawing him as Marie Antoinette, as a crazed fellow waving his head and so on. Once the mighty are mocked, it's the beginning of the end, and in Diefenbaker's case, many people in the country who had flocked to him in the 1950s had their second thoughts reinforced or even suggested by Macpherson's cartoons."

The relationship between a cartoonist and his or her editor is one of conflict as well as collaboration in the entire field of journalism—a craft noted for the clash of convictions and commitments. "In general," says Richard J. Doyle, for many years the editor-in-chief of Canada's national newspaper, the Globe and Mail, "cartoonists are temperamental people, and I always dealt with them with a certain trepidation. You wonder for does it different. To me my time I tried to offer only the direction I thought helpful and in a way that would not found helpful but in general every cartoonist has to feel he or she walks an independent road."

During my early years as editor of the paper, the cartoonist would attend the daily meeting of the editorial board; he'd draw his ideas from the meeting. I was never certain that was the ideal way—he thought, that he spend his hours in his own contemplation. That's the way it is now. Often the biggest fans of the cartoonists are the very people who are their favorite targets—the politicians themselves. They never seem to relish the treatment. Adrian Raising, for one, is both pleased and bewildered by this phenomenon. Raising is a brigherner newcomer among the nation's cartoonists, a 27-year-old resident of Salspring Island, B.C., who, drawing in a puckish, zany style, produces five cartoons a week for the Victoria Times-Colonist and receives wide syndication throughout North America.

"Politicians are forever ringing me up and asking for the original of a cartoon in which I've lampooned them," says Raising. "It doesn't matter what I've said about them or how I've portrayed them. In fact, it's usually when I've been particularly nasty that they say, 'Oh well, it'll make a wonderful decoration for my office.'"

Ed Franklin, the cartoonist whose ornate caricatures have distinguished the Globe and Mail in recent years, says the requests for cartoons by politicians who have been the subject of them sometimes exceed all reason. "One fellow, for instance, who thought every cartoon I did of him. He got so mad, I don't know where he put them all.

Part of the explanation for such an apparently bizarre reaction among politicians is that they do not give and take of their profession, they've learned the grace of forgivness. René Lévesque typically displayed such generosity in 1977. That was the year when Aislin won the National Newspaper Award for his cartoon of a man with empty pockets that depicted an ascendant Lévesque, his pants around his ankles. Announcing, 'We can't afford to lose our heads....' At the awards dinner, it was Lévesque who made the presentation. "I'm not going to torture the audience to the point that his belt was fastened, and I'm not going to torture the audience to the point that his belt was fastened, and I'm not going to torture the audience to the point that his belt was fastened."

But there's another element that explains the politicians' fondness for cartoons that mock and tease them. "Ego," Ben Wicks says. "The politician..."
AN IMPERIAL TRADITION

A healthy workplace for all

BY KENNETH BAGNELL

It is now more than 20 years since Rachel Carson, a gifted American scientist and author, wrote Silent Spring, a graceful, eloquent book that deals with the misuse of pesticides and which has become one of the most influential books of the century.

In fact, its more fervent admirers hail Silent Spring as the forerunner of the environmental movement, which has evolved over the years until it embraces, in the public’s imagination at least, not only the issues of land and water, but the very quality of life.
it's not just chemical hazards: it's noise, it's radiation, it's anything that is a potential danger to Canada's working people.

Today, industrial hygiene at Imperial is pursued with the same seriousness of intent as it was by John Johnston in the early fifties, but while he worked alone in the first years, today there are nine full-time industrial hygienists, with backgrounds in various facets of science, all working full-time on industrial hygiene issues, and reporting directly to the company's president or to his designee.

In the quarter century he spent with Imperial, John Johnston was a well-liked employee, known both for his technical abilities and for his concern for the health and safety of his co-workers. He believed in a cooperative approach to safety, and in the importance of involving everyone in the process. He was known for his ability to keep things running smoothly while always looking out for the best interests of the company.

Johnston, and the man who hired him, Imperial's first medical doctor, the late Dr. Russell Birrell, took occupational health seriously, perhaps as seriously as any Canadians of their day. But even then they could not have foreseen how serious it would one day be taken by society at large. "Safety and health in the workplace is one of the most important concerns of the decade," said the former federal labor minister André Ouellet, last year, "will be one of the vital social problems facing the country in the years ahead." In the late seventies, the federal government set up a fully independent agency, the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety, which has on its staff specialists in medicine, law, toxicology and other professionals who devote their entire careers to the workplace safety of Canadians. And yet, even with all the progress that has been made in the past several years, the challenge remains.

Atwood, an engineer at Esso Chemical, carried out a company-wide safety audit aimed at identifying workplace hazards and recommending solutions to prevent them. The audit identified a number of issues that needed attention, including the need for better training, improved communication, and better equipment. The results of the audit were presented to the company's management, who agreed to implement the recommendations. The company also developed a new safety policy that was communicated to all employees.

The performance of the company when he took on the job was not perfect. But the company had been Imperial and wanted to improve it. After several years of work, the company had reduced the number of accidents by 50%. The company was able to maintain this level of safety through the following actions:

- Implementing a new safety policy
- Conducting regular safety audits
- Providing training to all employees
- Improving communication between management and employees

The company's safety performance was evaluated by the International Loss Control Institute in Georgia. It consists of a checklist of 20 points against which a company's safety performance is rated. The company's performance was evaluated by the Institute.

Atwood, who has been with the company for five years, said the improvement was a result of the company's commitment to safety. "We have made a real effort to improve our safety record, and the results are evident," he said. "Our goal is to continue to improve our safety performance, and we are confident that we can do so."
place by place, point by point.” Imperial adopted the program several years ago, and while the company's employees keep striving for a still better record, they've already chalked up some impressive achievements. For example, employees of Esso Resources Canada Limited, Imperial's resource development subsidiary — where the work can be a bit hazardous by nature — have earned the coveted Four Star Award at such operations as Cold Lake and Judy Creek and the drilling rig known as Number 3, which has been used throughout the Beaufort Sea, a region that puts a safety program to its toughest test. But last year, workers at the Niton Gas Plant, an Esso Resources operation about 160 kilometres from Edmonton, really set a new record when they won the Five Star Award, an achievement so great that no other group in North America has ever won it. “By this accomplishment,” said Frank Bird Jr., president and executive director of the International Loss Control Institute, “your organization becomes the pace-setter for safety-program activities throughout the entire world.” It was quite an accomplishment, one that lends credibility to imperial's position as a top safety performer in the Canadian petroleum industry. Imperial pursues a safe working environment not just because accidents can have tragic human consequences, but because they result in lost time and production. The company tracks its record for both human and corporate reasons, and it may be excused for feeling some pride in its achievement. Last year was its best since it began recording the frequency of injuries on the job almost a quarter of a century ago. An indicator of the company's excellent record is the one provided by Ontario's Industrial Accident Prevention Association (IAPA), which records the frequency rate of injuries resulting in lost time. For all industries in Ontario, the 1983 rate was about 5.5 percent; for Imperial it was 0.5 percent. And across the company there are illustrations of why Imperial's injury rate was so low. In 1983 the company's refinery in Dartmouth, N.S., where many people work, completed five years without a single accident resulting in lost time. And at the end of 1983 at the Esso Research Centre in Sarnia, employees completed almost five-and-a-half years without a lost-time accident. “The company's safety record is improving year by year,” says Neil Murray. “I think it's the result of increased safety consciousness among employees and the concern, caring attitude of the company.” More and more time is being spent by many of Imperial's industrial hygienists in discussion with government officials, sometimes to provide special expertise — on chemicals, noise, air quality in the workplace and so on. But often it's to discuss ways in which government regulations for occupational health and safety are to be applied. Neil Murray, a tactful man, measures his words carefully when he talks about government regulations and occupational health and safety: “I don't think any one of us should have reservations about the right and responsibility of government to be involved in protecting the environment in which people work. And I think it can be demonstrated that Imperial has a good record when it comes to fulfilling government occupational health standards. But I have to add that there is a tendency for regulations to become self-perpetuating. They can become so pervasive that people in our field have to spend an inordinate amount of time on paperwork and on things that have to do with bureaucracy rather than occupational health. One way this could be avoided would be to involve industry early in the process of formulating regulations so that it could make a contribution to their being valid and applicable.” One positive example of the cooperative approach is the establishment of a project called WHMIS (Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System). When it's in operation, which will probably be in 1987, the system will provide instant and accurate information for workers and employers anywhere in Canada on any substance in the workplace that is causing them concern. One of the men deeply involved in the creation of the system is Doug Cook, manager of environmental coordination for Imperial and a member of PACE (the Petroleum Association for Conservation of the Canadian Environment), who is participating in the project with representatives of both provincial and federal governments, industry and labor. “It is a good example,” says Cook, “of how various levels of government and labor along with industry can work in a cooperative way for the benefit of all.” The situation is unique: a symphony orchestra providing the inspiration needed by a city eager to recover its sense of achievement. This is the role the Montréal Symphony Orchestra has been playing for some time, and it illustrates the close relationship that exists in Québec among the arts, politics and economics. For six months last year, a picture of the orchestra's conductor, Charles Dutoit, was featured on billboards and buses throughout the city. It was accompanied by the message "La forêt, une ville (a city ... call it proud)" and an address letter below it: written Montréal. A similar message was broadcast regularly on radio and television with strains of Ravel's Boléro from one of the orchestra's hit recordings playing in the background. The ad was part of a long-term campaign to promote Montréal, launched by the city last year. The message: Mayor Jean Drapeau wanted to express was that world-class achievements were within the grasp of Montréal, if only they were owned by their divisions. The city badly needed a success story to restore initiative and dynamism. The Expo were, at one point, prime candidates for civic starch, but they were overtaken by the Montréal Symphony Orchestra, whose rebirth was unfolding like a public relations dream. It began when Charles Dutoit stepped in at an anxious rehearsal in 1977. He set long-term goals for the orchestra. Performance standards increased perceptibly as musicians displayed greater virtuosity and professionalism; audiences responded warmly to a more subtle and varied sound. Confirmation that something momentous was indeed happening came after Dutoit penned the orchestra's recordings for Decca's London label began winning international awards with astonishing regularity. Dutoit himself was gaining a reputation as a musical jet-setter — he now conducts almost 100 concerts around the world each year. He was also becoming more widely known in Canada, where he is frequently featured on the front pages of local newspapers and in numerous publi-
tions that otherwise have very little interest in classical music. He gained further recognition through his marriage to the couturier Marié-José Drolet, head of the Hudson Institute of Canada and an extremely prolific business writer.

Dutoit and his orchestra were readily expected as the vehicle for Mon-
treal’s campaign by politicians and business leaders, whose involvement was crucial not only to reassure the sense of purpose that would take Montreal out of the doldrums but to provide financial fuel. The campaign’s costs for 1983 and 1984 were $5 million. A portion of this was donated by the city, another by the private sector and the rest in the form of information and publicity services provided by the media.

But the attention lavished by the press on Dutoit and the orchestra can’t be explained solely as the result of well-timed publicity. There had to be some real achievement to push them into the limelight to such an extent — and over the past several years there— certainly has been. The orchestra is now such a flourishing concern that sponsorship for a year-round concert season are relatively easy for it to obtain. In fact, its prestige is such that provincial authorities have promised to underwrite the financing of a $10 million concert hall to be built in the centre of Montreal on land donated by the real estate firm Cadillac-Fairview. In its case the orchestra’s rejuvenation is the perfect example of what Montreal wants for itself.

Success resulted in a great extent from the musical revolution Dutoit initiated as conductor and artistic director after the musical revolu-
tion brought about by Zarin Mehta, the orchestra’s managing director. “I feel,” says Dutoit, “that we must popularize the image of the orchestra. My attitude toward the public reflects this sentiment — that we have to demystify the orchestra, but without going too far. It must project an image of class we can be satisfied with.”

The quest for a broader audience has taken the orchestra out of the concert hall and onto the streets — where crowds assemble: parks and shopping plazas. In the fall of 1983, in music to mark its 50th anniversary season, the orchestra gave a free concert at the Forum, featuring Beethoven’s Choral Symphony. It succeeded beyond all expectations, not only because it attracted a large audience but because it helped break down the barriers that keep many people away from live symphonic music.

Gilles Poirion, music critic for Le Devoir, feels that one important reason for the tremendous impact that Dutoit has had is his close involve-
ment in the life of Montreal: “Dutoit’s arrival represented a turning point,” he says. “He is the first director to be aware of the fact that his job requires other things than a baton and conc-
erts.” This attitude was reflected in Dutoit’s methodical assessment of Canadian composers and artists. It was the absence of any meaning-
ful involvement with the French-
speaking community that had almost fed to the orchestra’s demise in 1973. The problem that broke out then was a traumatic one because it affected both the orchestra’s finances and its relations with the public. The crisis surfaced abruptly with an announce-
ment in November, 1973. In the orchestra’s president, Robert J. Brück, that the organization would have to close down. The reasons given for this were the unmanageable size of the accumulated deficit and the lack of government support for a summer concert season. The then prime minister, Pierre Trudeau, who had been approached personally for help after the Canada Council had decided it wouldn’t save the orchestra, responded rather cau-

tiously. He pointed out that the Montreal Symphony Orchestra was the most generously subsidized or-
chestra in the country and that it should look for broader support within the community it served. “Montreal’s English-language citi-
zens have accorded strong, generous and continued support to the orches-
tera ever since it was founded,” he said. “But the MSO (Montreal Symphony Orchestra) has not succeeded in estab-
lishing itself as an institution ‘belonging’ to Montreal’s French-language community to anywhere the same ex-
citement.” He then attributed the organiza-
tion’s acute financial problems to what he called “this unfortunate fact.”

It was not clear exactly what the orchestra should be doing in order to “belong” to the community it served. There were many debates about whether to hire a larger number of graduates from local conservatories or to remain relentlessly for the highest international standards. People also discussed the question of whether the orchestra’s repertoire should be aimed at the masses or at the cultured few. The answers were not forthcoming until after Dutoit took his stride in 1978. The orchestra weathered the 1973 crisis, thanks to a last-minute grant from the province and a generous response from the public. But that was only buying time. Rising costs made it obvious that a totally new approach was necessary. In the end, it meant operating on a new basis altogether, as well as developing new relationships with the public and the musicians.

Montreal is a city where two language communities must come to terms with each other and where the arts are often perceived as expressions of cultural identity. Indeed, the very basis on which the Montreal Symphony Or-
chestra was founded in 1951 was closely related to this diversity. At the time there was another symph-
omy orchestra, the Montreal Or-
chestra, which gave regular Sunday concerts under the leadership of Douglas Clarke, who was dean of the faculty of music at McGill University from 1939 to 1955. That orchestra was very closely identified with the English community, and was probably responsible enough to catered to that community’s interests. Provincial authorities were eager to provide an outlet for local conduc-
tors, composers and conservatory graduates, and they offered a sub-
sidy to promote that end. But wanting to maintain its freedom, the Montreal Orchestra turned down the grant. The money was then given to the Montreal Symphony Orchestra. Since the two orchestras were relying on almost the same personnel, there were several attempts to merge them. All of these, however, were unsuccessful.

The Montreal Orchestra eventually ceased operations in 1941. Over the years, the Montreal Symph-
omy Orchestra has had a number of distinguished conductors and direc-
tors: Wilfrid Pelletier (1955–60), Desiré Défay (1969–52), Otto Klemperer (1948–58) and Igor Matvejevich (1958–61). But the most prestigious one was no doubt Zarin Mehta, who was hired in 1960 at the age of 21. He stayed with the orchestra until 1967, when he was succeeded by Franz-Paul Decker, who served until 1975. The next artistic director was Rafael Frühbeck de Bar-
gos, who left in the middle of a three-
year contract. The search was on for a
The orchestra became an object of popular affection.

The orchestra's mission must be to make itself available to the largest number of citizens possible.

Yet the most significant change that Dutoit brought to the orchestra is linked to his musicianship. He has given it what is usually called a French sound — that is, a kind of transparency whereby each group of instruments is heard clearly and distinctly. Such a style is usually contrasted with the so-called German sound, which calls for the blending of the various strains into a unified whole. The French sound as typified by Dutoit leaves much more to the individual's imagination — it calls for a greater degree of personal involvement by the listener. The German sound, on the other hand, is more authoritative and calls for the listener to be much more submissive.

These distinctions are of great psychological importance at a time when French Canadian society seems to be emerging from a period of ideological conformity and entering a new phase of individualism and personal achievement. It is quite possible that Dutoit would have had very little impact had he come to Montreal only five years earlier, in the heyday of nationalism.

The involvement of French Canadians in the corporate world and their newly discovered taste for business activities have found a certain reflection in Dutoit, and this helps explain the fascination he has aroused among civic planners eager to rebuild the city's economic base.

"There is only one point on which I am very demanding and that is discipline," says Dutoit. "As I have a great deal to do, I need a certain efficiency. I am very hard in this respect. But otherwise I keep telling the musicians that the conductor is merely one of them." In his work, he leaves nothing to chance, and he stresses his belief that the conductor should not trust to instinct alone. "The conductor needs to put things in some kind of context," he says, "to provide access to the language of the composer and his message."

Dutoit's views on music and music-making have received unqualified support from the orchestra's management, which is unusually entrepreneurial. Zarin Mehta, who had been an influential member of the board for several years, was appointed the orchestra's managing director in 1981. A charter accountant by profession, he is able to combine a keen business sense with a profound appreciation of music. His father, Mehemet Mehta, is still active as a symphony conductor and his brother, Zubin Mehta, is the music director of the New York Philharmonic.

"There is a certain feeling in this province, which also exists in the orchestra, that in order to be truly successful one must have international recognition," says Zarin Mehta. "And while we are first and foremost a Montreal orchestra we must make an impact outside the province if we are to satisfy the pride of the people."

A strategy designed to satisfy the city's pride meant that the orchestra had to assume some risks. In the end it was able to do so because of the close understanding between the conductor and managing director. Their most rewarding gamble was probably the decision to start making records.

"We invested money in making records," says Mehta. "A hundred thousand dollars — that's what the recordings cost us last year. When we first started, we didn't know whether we would make technically good records. We knew that Decca was a wonderful recording company, but how good the sound would be and how well the orchestra would fare competing in the international market nobody knew."

Tours have also become an integral part of the orchestra's activities. It returned this spring from a successful European tour and is planning another tour, to the Far East, for next February. These ventures, which at first drained the orchestra's meager financial resources, are now attracting corporate sponsors. The next objective is to whittle down the accumulated deficit. In the Montreal Symphony Orchestra the city has been provided with a symbol of its new goals and expectations. This is not to say that Charles Dutoit and Zubin Mehta have produced Montreal's transformation, but rather that they have made people aware that something is changing in the social climate. The frustrations of a previous era took their toll, but now the mood is definitely turning to one of action and optimism.
team, were preparing for the Games of the XXlllrd Olympiad to be held in Los Angeles. Among them was Alex Baumann of Sudbury, Ont., the world-record holder in the 200- and 400-metre individual medleys. He was practising four different strokes, switching from one to the other as he swam his daily 15,000 metres — every week he swims about the width of Lake Ontario and half again as far. And Victor Davis of Waterloo, Ont., the world-record holder in the 200-metre breaststroke, was toning up after an all-out workout the night before — he burns up 3,000 calories each day. When Baumann and Davis stood up in waist-high water, the crowd could see the small maps that each had tattooed on their chest in a burst of patriotic passion. By the inside pool, the swimmers were studdied with scores of local swim-club members. They were observing the training techniques of the other half of the Olympic team, whose white Fiero swim caps flowered the 30-metre pool. The onlookers might pick out Tom Ponting of Calgary, the Commonwealth champion in the 100- and 200-metre butterfly, or Marie Moore of Dartmouth, N.S., who had just won the women’s 200-metre butterfly at the Esso Cup Olympic trials held in Etobicoke, Ont. The promise of most of the competitors seemed palpable. It would be realized, in part, at the 1984 Olympics, which turned into triumph for Canadian athletes, especially the country’s swimmers, who came home to a nation bursting with pride over their 10 medals — four gold, three silver and three bronze — and the three world records, established by Alex Baumann and Victor Davis, both 20 years old. Anne Ottenbreit, an 18-year-old swimmer from Whitby, Ont., won the 200-metre breaststroke to become the first Canadian woman to win an Olympic gold medal in swimming. The country’s new pride in its swimming celebrities was, in the view of many, long overdue. Until recently, few of us even realized that at the ’76 Olympics, the fast in which Canada participated, swimmers won eight of our 11 medals. “Swimming has suddenly become a glamor sport, thanks largely to Baumann and Davis setting world records,” David Stubbs, the team’s information officer, told reporters.

But Baumann and Davis, whose good looks and enthusiasm have lighted up a television commercial and a documentary film funded by Imperial Oil Limited, are only the two most visible stars in Canadian swimming. Below the swells lies a cross-country surge of enthusiasm for the sport. Swimming has become our third most popular physical activity, following only walking and cycling, and has more than doubled in participation since 1982, according to the Canadian Swimming Association (CSA), which estimates that 7.5 million Canadians — 36 percent of the population — participate in swimming. Ease Swim Canada, a skill-development program primarily for youngsters, has 40,000 participants in 280 communities across the country. The Canadian Amateur Swimming Association (CSA) — which is celebrating its 75th anniversary this year — reports that Canada has 13,000 competitive swimmers registered in about 300 clubs. “We now have perhaps the best club system in the world,” says Nick Thierry, editor of the authoritative Swim magazine.

Yet while the number of young competitors has remained steady for several years, the number of adults participating in the sport has grown from a ripple to something of a tidal wave. “Adult swimming in Canada has increased by a good 10 percent a year during the last five years,” says Carol Judd, CSA’s manager of participation services.

About 3,000 of those adults have become involved in competition through more than 125 CSA-sponsored Masters Swimming Clubs, which offer fitness training and sheer fun as well as inter-club meets. Organized about 10 years ago in Canada, the Masters program is designed for people of 20 years and older who can swim about 10 lengths of a pool or more, says Judd, who has coached at a Masters club in Ottawa. “Across the country the program involves a real mix of people; those who have been involved in the sports or through clubs as youngsters and a number of others who just love to swim.” About half the participants compete. After carrying out a survey of Masters swimming, Judd discovered that the number of people the program was reaching was only a small portion of those who wanted to participate. “We realized that we should jump into the vacuum of fitness programming for adults,” she says. As a result, CASA is introducing Aeta Canada Swimfit, a totally recreational adult fitness program that is jointly sponsored by Fitness Canada and the insurance company Aeta Canada.

“It’s the only noncompetitive national fitness program in Canada designed for adults,” Judd says. By the end of 1985, CASA is predicting that at least 25,000 people will be involved in the program at 400 pools. Swimming is a sport that can be enjoyed by a great variety of people. They can be senior citizens, like Marie-Reine Lemay, a 71-year-old Quebecer who, after learning to dog-paddle at 58, now swims daily and competes in Masters meets, or they can suffer from physical conditions that prevent them from participating in many other sports — 15-year-old Mike Edgson of Nanaimo, B.C., who is blind, started swimming three years ago and set four world records at the 1984 International Games for the Disabled in New York.

It is a sport that has been touted as one of the best forms of exercise. An American study, prepared by the President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, found swimming and running to be the most effective exercises to build cardiovascular and muscular endurance. Indeed, medical experts say that swimming may be the most effective cardiovascular conditioner of all — and it has the benefit of causing far fewer injuries than running or jogging. Despite the advantages of swimming, however, Canadians haven’t always leaped into lakes and ponds with abandon. As S.F. Wise and Douglas Fisher noted in Canada’s Sporting Heroes, “To 19th-century man, water was a dangerous element and swimming something of a foolhardy adventure.”

Yet Toronto’s Dolphin Club,
Swimming had become well established in Canada by 1913, when these properly clad Torontonians enjoyed an afternoon at a beach. Victor Davis (right) leads for victory at the Olympics, and (far right) Gordon Thomson, president of Eco Petroleum, at the Eso Cup.
seven years. Imperial has been the major corporate sponsor of amateur swimming in Canada, contributing more than $3 million to CASA.

"Imperial has had a significant and positive impact," says Doug Fraser. "The company has allowed us to do a lot of things that just weren't possible before — like promoting our athletes — and we've learned a lot from it." The most public of its contributions were the funding of a high-profile television commercial, which promoted the company's support of several programs in amateur swimming, and a one-hour documentary about Alex Baumann and Victor Davis, The Fast and The Furious, which was televised nationally by the CBC and later used to help raise funds for CASA.

The company's involvement in swimming began in 1978 with a $600,000 grant, which was given to CASA over three years to pay for coaching assistance at four of Canada's finest swim clubs, travel expenses to an annual national competition and overseas tours for selected amateurs. This year, Imperial has donated a total of $255,000. Some of the money supports major competitive and training programs at eight Canadian universities and 16 top-ranking CASA swim clubs. Imperial hasn't slighted the youth programs either. This year, for instance, an ambitious national program called Esso Swim Canada, which was introduced in 1981, is encouraging 40,000 youngsters to participate in the sport. They are introduced to the basic skills — starts, strokes and turns — by 3600 trained instructors, and awards for achievement are given as the participants progress at their own rates. Future world-class swimmers who emerge from this program can meet more than 400 competitors — girls of 13 and under and boys of 15 and under — at the Esso Youth Championships, which are held biannually. This year's winners represented Canada at the Scottish National Championships in Edinburgh. "We think of the Esso Youth Championships as a springboard to the senior team," says Trevor Tiffany, CASA's chief coach and the chief coach of Canada's 1984 Olympic swim team.

Today, the symbol of national achievement in swimming is the Esso Cup, a handsome, silver-plated trophy awarded to the most outstanding swimmer at the annual cup finals, the first of which was held in 1980. The event is the major amateur swim meet, and this year served as the Olympic trials — Alex Baumann won the cup with his world-record, 400-metre individual medley.

Gordon Thomson, president of Esso Petroleum Canada, is the chairman of the Swim Canada Foundation, which was formed last year to help attract more sponsors for Canadian swimming. "The foundation," says Thomson, who has devoted a great deal of time to it, "hopes to expand community support for both recreational and competitive swimming and to provide any support it can for the development of Canada's national swim team." Heather Sibley, Imperial's publicity and promotion coordinator, has had an affair of the heart with competitive swimming for many years. She vividly recalls the final night of the 1984 Esso Cup: "It was so moving when they brought out the members of the Canadian Olympic team. There they were on their way to represent our country. If I hadn't seen so far I would have cried."

The team members then gathered at the University of British Columbia for three weeks prior to the Olympics. They swam for five hours a day and more and slept in dorms, where the bulletin boards bore the "Code of Conduct for Canadian Swimmers," whose first tenet states: "Swimmers should strive for excellence (according to their ability)."

It was a happy training camp, with Alex Baumann and Victor Davis — the catalysts — getting up at 6 a.m. to jam team members doors with pennies. It was a serious camp too, with Trevor Tiffany, the chief coach, talking about CASA's stated goal that Canada become the number 1 nation in swimming by 1990. "It's not an unrealistic goal," said Tiffany, who came to Canada from England, where he had coached Martin Smith to an Olympic medal. "Our problem is that not many people believe it's possible. They think I'm a dreamer. Our swimmers don't understand how good they are. We — Canadians — don't understand how good we are."

A month later, in the post-Olympic glow, Trevor Tiffany was saying, "Now perhaps some people will start to believe Canadians can accomplish things. I think it's a feeling that will be reflected right through society and help us in this next Olympics. We've got a lot of people excited about everything — about the swimmers, about the whole Olympic team, about just being Canadian."

I notice that nearly everything written about marriage these days makes it seem like another problem in an increasingly complicated world, like income taxes or acid rain. Why SpelL It and MarrY? Eating Your Way Out of Marriage and A Step by Step Guide to Obtaining Your Own Divorce are a few titles I've seen recently. "If you love me, put it in writing," says one family kit sold by a store near my home. Nobody seems to pay much attention now to the good things about marriage, like, well, for instance, the special relaxed feeling between married friends. I noticed this feeling particularly a while ago during an evening my wife and I spent with a couple we have known for years. There's something about the easy and familiar relationships we share, about knowing one another and one another's marriage well, that I enjoy. That's why we meet for the evening, starting right in talking while one couple is still out under the porch light, getting into the subject without preliminaries — the awful cost of men's haircuts or something that one of us was just reminded of that happened 35 years ago or an argument that took place on the way over. "We'd have been here 20 minutes ago...."
when he tells this story his wife says cynically, “You couldn’t have been looking at her face.”) and he gives his delighted soft hothing sound.

Marriage, it seems to me, was a less successful experiment in his life than in mine today. Whatever else we felt about marriage as we went through its various stages, we thought of it more as something in the very nature of things that people do. Now we probably got our attitudes to a large degree, with out realizing it, from our parents and their friends and neighbors. Not that these people had a leg to stand on our street — and no doubt those troubles were kids had no idea of or, if we had, didn’t take seriously —

on his knees along the edge of his lawn with his grass shears, would say through the bucket (never mind the bucket) to his hound, “Ehleb is raising an awful row this morning,” and his neighbor, whose garden stretched out right up to his, would say something like, “When Marilyn gets like that I just let it go in one ear and out the other,” and the advice would need a helpful technique for what I recently saw described by a psychologist as “the marital cathartic precipitate.”

To us kids, marriage seemed a normal part of the whole structure of life around us. There may have been

The cards, wedding and flowers had been around for some time, and I thought that as an insurance against anything that might happen to our marriage I would like to have something that would have more than a temporary effect. So I went to my publisher and told him I was thinking of getting married and he said that’s fine and that he would be very happy to help me find a suitable person to marry. I told him that I didn’t really want to get married but I was just looking for a way to make the cards I had bought for my friends less expensive. He suggested that I get married to someone who didn’t care about the cards and I said that was a good idea and we started planning the wedding.

The wedding itself was very simple. We got married in a small church and the guests were all our friends. The flowers were all white and the reception was at home. We had a small cake and some champagne and we all had a good time.

After the wedding, we went on our honeymoon to a small island in the Caribbean. We had a lovely time there and we both came back with a new appreciation for the beauty of the world.

We have been married for five years now and we are both very happy. We have two children and we are planning another wedding for our daughter this summer. I am glad I was able to get married at a young age and I am grateful to the man who helped me make that decision.
In Closing

I left Rome early one morning — a damp, noisy morning last spring — and took the train through stretches of vineyards and moonlight silences and on into the Alban Hills, to Monte Porzio Catone, an old town of a few thousand people not far from Castel Gandolfo, the summer place of popes and where friends were expecting me. I stayed several days in a lodging called la Giovannella, where the turning of my key in the lock seemed the only sound of the morning all the while I was there. The air was light and dry and the gardens were blooming with the colors of the tulip and the jonquil and the rose. Beyond the oaks that shaded the street, the olive groves were thick upon the hills; only the full glory of the Italian summer was yet to come.

One evening, while the sun was still high, I left my hotel and walked up a steep hill, along a sidewalk of old stone and made my way to the centre of town, to the piazza, where I was to meet two friends, Pietro Violetti, who ran a local business, and Alberdino Soffa, who was from Canada but had once spent a sabbatical in Italy, living in Monte Porzio Catone, and had now come back to see the town again. They were waiting for me, standing in front of a small bakery on a corner of the square, which was jammed with parked cars.

"I have been thinking," said Pietro, a slender man with a full mustache and an ascot at the neck of an open shirt, "that before you leave we should go to Renzo’s for dinner. His is the real trattoria." As he spoke, he made those small gestures of the fingers, as if to say that Renzo’s — where he and his wife and children often went — the food was not only authentic but touched with special nuance. It was true Italian food, he seemed to say, not coarse but refined. We started out, crossing from corner to corner, stepping between the empty cars and climbing hilly streets, which centuries ago had been the routes of mule carts.

We found it, a modest doorway, earth colored, among gray two-storied buildings that shut their windows. It was on Via Giuseppe Verdi. There was a sign above the door, red letters upon a yellow background, announcing "da Romoletto," and inside, a brief narrow entrance led to an open hearth on the left and a display of food and a tiny kitchen on the right. Beyond both was the dining area, a room with a low ceiling, sensible tables with plain cloths and folding chairs. We were early, there was hardly anyone in the room, and we sat at a corner table not far from the kitchen.

"The best food," Pietro said, "is the food that is not too sophisticated. I mean food that is pure and fresh and given a preparation that is just right — not too much. The pizza is like tomato for example. They should not be taken for granted. It is a shame to treat them so much, so heavily, that the real taste is no longer. And you know, you must take your time in eating, not too much rush. So with the wine too, for the wine at Renzo’s is wine you will have nowhere else. It is from the vineyard of his brother, which was his father’s and before that, his grandfather’s."

Renzo was a man of medium height in his late forties, with an informal, tidy style — shirt and tie under a green V-necked sweater and a ring of keys at his right side. He did not drop a menu on the table or stand with a pad to take our orders.

He sat down. He called for some wine. A group of 10 — women in silk dresses and men in off-white suits — sat at the next table. They were, someone suggested, film people from Rome. The room began to fill with the soft murmur of Italian conversation, and Pietro and Alberdino, speaking sometimes in pure Italian, sometimes in Renzo’s own dialect, began to talk of the things one often talks about in Italy — family and food. When Renzo answered their questions, he spoke with the civilized modesty that you come to expect in Italy, especially in the pensions and trattorias.

He began, when a child of about 12, working for his father serving food in the trattoria that had been in the family for years. When he was in his thirties he went to Rome and opened one of the small canneries that are common near the Piazza Barberini and in Trastevere. But as soon as he was able he came home to Monte Porzio Catone, in the land of Castelli Romani, to be with his family. "It was around 1970 when I came back," he said. "It seemed the natural thing for me to be with my family. Soon I was doing much of the cooking and then I was able to take over for my father. But we are together. You see my mother, who is now 72. And with her is my wife. And this is my wife’s mother. And the other woman is a cousin. Soon my brother will be here.

He stood up. He simply told us what he offered and after several brief sentences and small smiles, that he went away and returned with the first of several courses, a primo, which was a soup, light and clear, with only a hint of onion in the aroma. I thought he had returned to the kitchen but Pietro said he had gone out to a market that was open down the street to get some cheese and basil, which he would then add to other ingredients — including that morning’s tomatoes — to prepare the second course, called carpace, a specialty of the region. His mother was already at work on the main course, a fine passa dish of lentuccia, which, when it arrived, seemed to fill our entire corner of the room with warmth and a feeling of expectation fulfilled.

Renzo returned to the table. He was telling us of the regulars at the trattoria — local business people at noon, more and more visitors from Rome in the evening. "I did not know until just a little while ago," he said, "that the ambassador from Canada had come. He was here for lunch. And the ambassador from Paraguay. He has come a couple of times with his wife. But mostly it is our own people, from the town or from nearby places like Frascati."

He was asking how our food was and nodding in a sage, almost scholarly way, when his brother, Angelo, the wine maker, arrived. He greeted his parents, his other relatives, an old man sitting alone nearby and then, seeing Renzo standing at our table, came over and after a word or two from his brother began to talk of his vineyard. "It is not large — about two hectares, divided into two sections. The older section produces the better wine, whose vines are pruned carefully and not permitted to overproduce. About 25 barrels a year are enough. The wine is for a few trattorias, for Renzo and for the family. It is, of course, white wine, for while we produce a lot of red wine in the region, it is white that the land and climate are best suited for. And I try to produce it in the old way — not with an array of modern apparatus to control this and that. I have to use steel tanks — I don’t use barrels for I cannot get barrel cleaners anymore — but that is as far as I go with modern things. I bottle it myself, as did my father and his father and his father."

It was a light wine, golden and fragrant, young and meant to be enjoyed while young. And it was Angelo’s gift to us.

We said our goodbyes to Renzo and all his family at about 10 o’clock. We went outside. Even then, the sky all over the town seemed to hold a hint of light, as if it did not want to surrender the last trace of the sun. We walked down the hill, past old men murmuring outside pizzerias, past a lone teenager sitting on a bicycle as if he planned to linger for hours to come, soon, too soon, I left Monte Porzio Catone. It may be years before I return, but I’m glad that some chance of springtime took me there and that for a few brief days I was able to share, not just the things of table and vineyard, but the intangibles of the file that is lived there — so few and so imponderable.