

inspection teams and ultimately a peace force. The major powers are the only ones who can take the lead.

"We must recognize," he writes, "the fear of both sides that the risks of giving up weapons on which their national security now depends are greater than the present risk of war." Neither side is willing to give up the right to use force if matters are pushed to a show-down. The price of peace is the end of the cold war but neither side is yet willing to pay it.

Wadsworth realizes that the United States is partly to blame that disarmament treaties have bogged down in conference. We appeared at many meetings poorly prepared. He hails the creation of the U. S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and notes that "we have only begun to give the subject of disarmament the intensity of study and depth of exploration it deserves."

The A.C.D.A. needs more than its present \$2 million appropriation and 100 persons if it is to fulfill its mission for President Kennedy. This is well understood in the White House and by Senators like Humphrey, Clark, and Morse. The price of peace surely includes at least \$10 million annually and 1,000 experts to be devoted to organizing, planning, researching, and negotiating Mankind's survival.

Wadsworth discusses areas for action in settling the cold war. He wants the United States to make its commitment to disarmament crystal clear to the world's peoples, to continue to push "package" proposals even though for the time being they may not be negotiable, and to recognize that there are no "foolproof" safeguards for disarmament schemes—just as there are none for the thousands of armed and pointed nuclear weapons, U.S. and Soviet alike.

Peace objectives, Wadsworth asserts, can be reached "if we desire them enough, and if we have the imagination to act."

How can we [asks Wadsworth] reach international agreement to disarm, to limit national sovereignty, or to set up an international force when we cannot agree on applying the Charter of the United Nations?

In the present atmosphere, it is nearly unthinkable. But if we do not look ahead, if we do not work actively both for a different atmosphere and for progress in the minarmament field, the world may slide irresistibly into the nuclear war no one wants.

It may indeed. The price of peace, however high, is much lower than the price of nuclear war. This book is required reading for those who search for ways to work constructively for the survival of Mankind.

FICTION

Shuttle to Identification



Raymond Williams—"the holiness of life, honestly felt."

"Border Country," by Raymond Williams (*Horizon*. 351 pp. \$4.50), studies the life of a Welsh valley community as a living heritage through which one of its exiled sons is able to recapture his identity. Barry Spacks, who teaches humanities at MIT, frequently comments on British fiction.

By BARRY SPACKS

THIS is a novel which one starts to read with a certain uneasiness, unavoidably I think, for although Raymond Williams began it well before his "Culture and Society," he appears at first to be that awkward figure, the academic cultural historian having a go at fiction. However, if the machinery of the book sometimes labors in the early pages to produce stock figures or pat sociological verdicts, one nevertheless settles in to enjoy the extraordinary wealth of detail, discounting the narrative framework as a mere convenience. And the story is, indeed, simplicity itself: Matthew Price, a lecturer in economic history, returns from London to the bedside of his dying father; we follow his efforts to find a way back to his heritage, while that heritage is further evoked in counterpoint through

the history of his father and his father's generation.

If the reader comes to "Border Country" with a qualified historical interest, he leaves with a reaction little short of reverence. There is holiness here—the holiness of life itself, honestly felt and unsparingly penetrated. To reach for language of the highest praise, what Mr. Williams has ultimately created is a true work of literature.

The craftsmanship demonstrates in esthetic terms the process on which it focuses, the translation of traditional values into the sinews of the present. One feels the strong resonance of the leisurely novels of Mr. Williams's own artistic forebears, the exactly rendered scenes of universal ceremony—birth and marriage, work and death—reminiscent of Galsworthy, Hardy, and George Eliot, of Arnold Bennett at his best as in "The Old Wives' Tale."

But the scene is very much of our own time, "the history of a whole people being changed," where sons become strangers to their origins, where fast lorries turn a village and a way of life into "a name you pass through, houses along the road." It is not only the contrast between England and Wales that Mr. Williams's title points to, but the sterner border between the parochial past and a present so formless that, as one of the characters remarks, "We're getting the results of our own denying, We're getting it all except the life." Matthew Price, after his crossings and recrossings, claims the rights of both worlds, the beauty of his father's integrity and the assurance alive in him as he takes up the special burdens of his own generation.

These two strands are masterfully intertwined. Matthew, estranged by his education, recaptures his identity through a place and "a way of seeing" he had almost lost: through the railway signal box and the gardens on which his father spent his working life, through the mountains, the trains in the valley, the village of Glynmawr as it is and was, the festivals and griefs of the people, the very flavor of their speech and values.

Unpretentious, deeply serious, "Border Country" is a work that illuminates and nourishes the spirit; it is a major contribution to the mid-century renaissance of British fiction.

A Long Nose for Tomorrow's News

"Voyages to the Moon and the Sun," by *Cyrano de Bergerac*, translated by Richard Aldington (*Orion*. 289 pp. \$6), demonstrates that the real-life seventeenth-century satirist and author of prophetic science fiction is even more colorful than the legendary romantic figure popularized by Rostand. Otis Fellows has written several studies of the French Enlightenment.

By OTIS FELLOWS

THREE centuries have passed since Savinien de Cyrano de Bergerac first burst forth upon this world to give evidence through fact and fiction that he had a touch of genius as wayward as it was bizarre. As for the facts, he was a Parisian by birth, a soldier and duelist of no small repute, and a freethinker with a studious, original turn of mind, an active pen, and a long nose.

When, almost forty years ago, Richard Aldington, poet, novelist, and critic, first brought out his unexpurgated translation with commentary of Cyrano's fictional voyages into outer space, he was able to shed considerable light on their author. The present volume is an attractive reprint of Mr. Aldington's 1923 version. The Introduction and Notes still make informative reading, but they fall short of what—in the light of recent developments in scholarship and science—a reader in 1962 has a reasonable right to expect.

Furthermore, the tone, slightly defensive and a little apologetic, that runs through the Aldington presentation no longer seems justified. It is now common knowledge that Edmond Rostand's dramatic portrait of Cyrano has little foundation in reality. It is even conceivable that the swashbuckling hero and pining, frustrated lover immortalized by the famous play is of considerably less interest today than the boldly speculative flesh-and-blood writer who was the friend of Molière and disciple of Gassendi.

Cyrano's cosmic voyages—they have often been called "comic" as well—are as entertaining and provocative in the 1960s as they were when Aldington first began work on his edition, and



—From the book.

Cyrano de Bergerac—a prophetic imagination.

they are far more timely. This seventeenth-century "madman" had the effrontery to propose that the stars were so many suns that could well be the centers of other planetary systems, and as late as 1910 his official biographer greeted this notion with "*Quelle idée folle!*" His fiction offered other

ideas even more fantastic, more wildly absurd: man could travel from France to Canada within a few hours; he could take an extraterrestrial journey—and even reach the moon—by utilizing a series of rockets and the forces of attraction (the laws which Newton was to discover and define some thirty years later); he could observe the continents of the earth succeed one another far beneath his cabin as it was jet-propelled through outer space. In fact, Cyrano's prophetic imagination seemed to know no bounds.

But these stories are more than early examples of science fiction. They are brilliant parodies of the imaginary voyage by a man who was in the vanguard of contemporary scientific thought. Even more, they are highly significant and devastating satire directed against man's ego, his stupidity, superstitions, prejudices, social abuses, and intolerances.

Moving with extreme caution in this area, Mr. Aldington is not of much help to the uninitiated, and such important controversies in the history of ideas as that of beast-machine and man-machine, for instance, are given short shrift. He has not failed to point out in passing, however, the debt that such master satirists as Swift and Voltaire owed to their long-nosed forebear. Like theirs, Cyrano's spirit was bold and free. Still, never was Swift more vitriolic or Voltaire more mordant in ridicule against the human race than Cyrano quoting his judges on the Sun as saying that he was not a monkey as he had boasted, but merely a man.

Birth of a Faith, American Style

"The Devil's Rainbow," by J. C. Furnas (*Harper*. 331 pp. \$4.95), recreates in fiction the extraordinary man who founded the Mormon Church. Paul Darcy Boles is a novelist and short-story writer.

By PAUL DARCY BOLES

BRIGHAM YOUNG, the Saint Paul—or the Stalin—of the Mormon Church, and first of the twelve apostles of Joseph Smith, would have found plenty to carp at in J. C. Furnas's fine novel, which deals in freewheeling but beautifully sure style with that church's origins. But any reader sensitive to a sure eye for human values and a wonderfully perceptive ear for speech

rhythms can only stand up and cheer. This is an exciting, honestly robust, often very funny, often extremely moving story that never once sacrifices humanity to a thesis or joy in life to a term-paper design. One feels that it *was* like this; that from the moment Joe Pomeroy, narrator of the novel, opens with "Even Mom and me knowed about him, and we lived way out in the woods and when the weather was bad we might go a month at a time and never speak to a living soul . . ." to the last word he says on the subject, this is the goods, the light behind the life, the deep-rooted and final, definitive fictional insight into the amazing Joseph Smith.

Many "historical" novels have a certain gusto, a lively thrust of power which, if it doesn't pardon excesses, at