CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY

Vol. XXXVI November 1965 No. 10

Theology and Modern Literature — Survey

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Introduction

In Randall Stewart's *American Literature and Christian Doctrine,* the author unabashedly abandons "the so-highly-prized, the so-strenuously-inculcated academic neutrality" (p. viii) and pleads for a creatively critical evaluation of modern literature by Christian theologians. According to Stewart, the Christian critic must charge contemporary literature "to give an answer for the faith" that is in it. In the same spirit, John Killinger insists he must "ask hard questions of the creative arts . . . that the critic [the theologian] must judge, or it has nothing at all to say." (See John Killinger, *The Failure of Theology in Modern Literature,* pp. 15, 16)

At the same time, however, because he respects the work of the literary artist, the theologian attempts as much "objectivity" as is possible: he does not identify the writer with one of his protagonists; he seeks to get at the real primacy of a work — avoiding the "heresy of paraphrase"; he does not dichotomize form from content; he does not separate the experience of exposure to a work from the content of the work itself. As Cleanth Brooks states it: "Most of our difficulties in criticism are rooted in the heresy of paraphrase. If we allow ourselves to be misled by it, we distort the relation of the poem to its 'truth' . . . we bring the statement to be conveyed into an unreal competition with science or philosophy or theology." (*The Well-Wrought Urn,* p. 201.)

Both of the above commitments are implicit in the analyses which follow.

The works noticed below are a representative sampling — not a complete catalog — of books which have been published in the area over the last decade. Primary attention has been given to broader studies in the area of theology and modern literature rather than to treatises which examine the work of an individual author. Reference is also made to earlier CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY reviews in this field. Those who wish to pursue a more detailed analysis of works in the area, including the numerous journal articles which have appeared, are referred to bibliographical comments at the end of this article.

ROBERT FROST AND JOHN BARTLETT. By Margaret Bartlett Anderson. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963. 224 pages. Cloth. $5.00. Culled from the letters of Robert Frost to her father, these pages recount the warm, intimate "record of friendship" over several decades between the authoress and her parents. Moving in tone, filled with the "verities of the heart," the manuscript is highly readable. The young in heart nearing the evening of life will particularly enjoy the nostalgic treatment of life in days gone by in Vancouver, B. C., New England, and the idyllic Colorado Rockies.

MAN IN NATURE AND GRACE. By Stuart Barton Babbage. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1957. Paper. $1.50. See the review by Henry W. Reimann in this journal, XXIX (1958), 636.

THE LONG ENCOUNTER. By Merlin Bowen. Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1960. 282 pages. Cloth, $5.00; paper, $1.95. Critic Randall Stewart mused (in *American Literature and Christian Doctrine,* p. 102) that "*Billy Budd* certainly is a brilliant and moving statement of the ultimate Christian lesson of resignation to God's overruling Providence, and it is pleasant, as well as reasonable, to think that Melville in his last years felt the truth of this view." With this view Bowen would quarrel. A central thesis of his work, subtitled: "Self and Experience in the Writings of Herman Melville," is that the old friend of Hawthorne maintained a rela-

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tively unchanging view of the nature of the experienced world and of the part it plays in the shaping and completion of the individual identity. For Bowen, who has similarly atypical views on *Pierre* and *The Confidence Man, Billy Budd* does not signify a sudden conversion or recantation at the end of life. It is not a last definitive statement transcending all earlier formulations. The work, like Shakespeare's *Tempest,* is rather a "self-contained poetic whole." Melville is separated from his heroes: the novelist is not *ipso facto* a diarist. And the final judgment on this battle of the self pitted against the universe is a black one: darkness itself.

WHO IS AYN RAND? By Nathaniel Branden, with a biographical essay by Barbara Branden. New York: Random House, 1962. 241 pages. Cloth. $3.95. This piece of merchandise by the Brandens explicates the creative-selfishness philosophy of "Far-Right Prophetess" Ayn Rand (see article of that title by Charles Frederick Schroder, *The Christian Century,* 78, No. 50 [Dec. 13, 1961], 1493—1495). The book's polemic includes a commentary on the historical and cultural significance of Rand's ethics, an essay on the major implications of her "objectivist epistemology" for the science of psychology, and an examination of her concept of man's relationship to existence, "which holds the key to her literary method." Scorning the need for a social conscience, interdependence, and altruism, Rand's philosophy degenerates from pride into vanity, summed up in the phrase from *Atlas Shrugged:* "I swear — by my life and my love of it — that I will never live for the sake of another man, nor ask another man to live for mine."

THE HIDDEN GOD. By Cleanth Brooks. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963. 136 pages. Paper. $1.45. The noted Yale literary critic here reexamines Hemingway, Faulkner, Yeats, Eliot, and Warren. Lucid preliminary and concluding notes provide helpful summations of Brooks' major theme in his presentation, first given at the Conference in Theology for College Faculty at Trinity College, Hartford. In one sense, God is not "hidden" in the authors that Brooks discusses, because, for the Christian, the *Deus absconditus* is always, paradoxically, identical with the *Deus revelatus.* Evidence of the God *in Christ,* however, does remain "hidden" in Brooks' treatment of these five literary "greats." The not-so "hidden" god is rather *man,* the man of a rekindled humanism. Brooks readily admits that these authors' views of reality are not orthodox "and may not even be Christian," (p. 1); but he feels a Christian can find a great deal in the contemporary literary scene that is heartening and hopeful. Stressing the chasm between great literature and cheap art (*Kitsch*), he hears the former's clarion call to the dehumanized individual to "realize himself as a man — to act like a responsible moral being, not to drift like a mere thing" (p. 4). This affirmation of the manhood of man, he feels, should fill the Christian with a sense of real exhilaration. Much more needs to be said, however, about the "residual Christianity" of a Faulkner (p. 129), or the "substratum of Christianity" in other writers. And the question should be raised as to when these values in and of themselves become an actual *replacement* for the Christian faith.

TRAGIC THEMES IN WESTERN LITERATURE. Edited with an introduction by Cleanth Brooks. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955. 178 pages. Paper. 95 cents. Seven essays include: *Sophocles' Oedipus,* by Bernard Knox; *The World of Hamlet,* by Maynard Mack; *Samson Agonistes,* by Chauncey B. Tinker; *The Tragedy of Passion — Racine's "Phedre"* by Henri Peyre; *The Tragic World of the Karamazovs,* by Richard B. Sewall; *Tragedy of Idealism — Henrik Ibsen,* by Konstantine Reichardt; and *The Saint as Tragic Hero — Saint Joan* and *Murder in the Cathedral,* by Louis L. Martz. The major theme is that tragedy deals with ultimates, "the ultimate oneness of man." Man suffers, but he does not merely passively endure; the tragic hero is possessed of tremendous vitality.

THE WELL WROUGHT URN: STUDIES

IN THE STRUCTURE OF POETRY. By Cleanth Brooks. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1947. 300 pages. Paper. $1.35. This volume, by the eminent Yale critic and co-worker of Albert Penn Warren, is a continuing classic in the field. Chapter 11, "The Heresy of Paraphrase," will be of special help to the theologian new to the area of literary criticism.

RELIGIOUS DRAMA 2. By E. Martin Browne. New York: Meridian Books, 1958. 317 pages. Paper. $1.45. See the review by Alfred O. Fuerbringer in this journal, XXIX (1958), 795. Noteworthy for the play on the birth of Christ and the morality play *Everyman.* Browne's introduction on the history and development of mystery plays further enhances the value of the work, as does an appendix offering good suggestions to those who wish to produce medieval drama today. Also in this series are: *Religious Drama 1* (New York: Meridian Books, 1957; 410 pages; paper; $1.45), five plays selected and introduced by Marvin Halverson, and *Religious Drama 3* (New York: Meridian Books, 1959; 317 pages; paper; $1.45), an anthology of modern morality plays selected and introduced by the same editor.

THE LONELINESS OF MAN. By Raymond Chapman. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1963. 170 pages. Paper. $1.90. Psychiatrist-theologian Paul Morentz once said: "Loneliness is still man's basic problem — which stems from his 'original sin' of self-imposed loneliness and isolation from God." It is this problem of man which Chapman attacks. Loneliness does not have to end in despair and nihilism. The sooner one fully confronts it, the sooner one will conquer it. Christianity was founded in loneliness and loss. The manuscript is sprinkled with helpful literary illustrations and analogies. Occasional naiveté mars the approach: "depressed reader" (p. 11), "Here the reader may be moved to protest again" (p. 15), "Now the atheist must snort" (p. 22), etc. The work is somewhat verbose, a little overpriced, and one has the feeling of having "read that before." Still, the message will speak to the heart of every man's problem, particularly if he has not read C. S. Lewis, J. B. Phillips, or Martin L. Marty.

A MIRROR OF THE MINISTRY IN MODERN NOVELS. By Horton Davies. New York: Oxford University Press, 1959. 211 pages. Cloth. $3.75. See the review by David S. Schuller in this journal, XXXI (1960), 264: "A sobering, thoughtful study through which the pompous minister finds himself being deflated and the complacent one uncomfortably awakened."

THE NOVELIST AND THE PASSION STORY. By F. W. Dillistone. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1960. 128 pages. Cloth. $3.00. The Dean of Liverpool Cathedral here offers a book in an area in which relatively little has been written: the "Christ-figure" in secular literature. Although the work is marred by occasional errors (for example, Hyatt H. Waggoner's similar-vein "William Faulkner's Passion Week of the Heart" in *The Tragic Vision and the Christian Faith* is attributed to editor Nathan Scott, Jr., on p. 94), the easily readable study embraces numerous telling insights in treating François Mauriac's *The Lamb,* Herman Melville's *Billy Budd,* Nikos Kazantzakis' *The Greek Passion,* and William Faulkner's *A Fable.*

OF MARBLE AND MUD: STUDIES IN SPIRITUAL VALUES IN FICTION. By C. Hobart Edgren. New York: Exposition Press, 1959. 127 pages. Cloth. $3.00. See the review in this journal, XXXIII (1962), 317. Edgren examines the dualistic "garlic and sapphire" streams in man (Rom. 7:19) in the works of Balzac, Hawthorne, Dostoyevsky, Mann, Conrad, Fitzgerald, and Camus.

CHRISTIAN FAITH AND THE CONTEMPORARY ARTS. Edited with an introduction by Finley Eversole. New York: Abingdon Press, 1957. 255 pages. Cloth. $5.00. The demythologization of Peanuts (with appended cartoons) provides some relief after 29 assorted essays without balance or benefit of a unifying theme other than the book's title. Such men as Malcolm Boyd, Cleanth Brooks, John W. Dixon, Jr., Tom F. Driver,

Hans Egon Holthusen, Stanley Romaine, Nathan A. Scott, Jr., Joseph Sittler, Robert Penn Warren, and Amos N. Wilder write on the situation of the artist, poetry, and the novel; drama, motion picture, and television; music and dance; painting, sculpture, and architecture; the cartoon and comic strip.

THE MODERN TRADITION: BACKGROUNDS OF MODERN LITERATURE. Edited by Richard Ellmann and Charles Feidelson, Jr. New York: Oxford University Press, 1965. 953 pages. Cloth. $13.75. This book sets out to communicate a sense of the complexities and ambiguities of "modernity" in literature. "Committed to everything in human experience that militates against custom, abstract order, and even reason itself, modern literature has elevated individual existence over social man, unconscious feeling over self-conscious perception, passion and will over intellection and systematic morals, dynamic vision over the static image, dense actuality over practical reality" (p. vi). The materials include statements not only by writers but also by artists, philosophers, and scientists. The high cost of the volume may be explained by the size of the book, which offers some 183 selections by nearly as many writers (plus editorial comment). Organization is thematic: Symbolism, Realism, Nature, Cultural History, The Unconscious, Myth, Self-Consciousness, Existence, and Faith.

LITERATURE AND RELIGION: A STUDY IN CONFLICT. By Charles I. Glicksberg. Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1960. 265 pages. Cloth. $4.50. Glicksberg examines the seemingly "blasphemous" writing of 20th-century agnostic writers, which he rather sees as intrinsically "religious" literature. He says of Camus: "Thus we get the paradoxical spectacle of a nihilist who proclaims values that are essentially religious in spirit. Like the Christian mystics of the past, Camus recognized the pervasiveness of evil; he portrayed with compelling imaginative insight the absolutism of the ego, the satanic lure of selfishness, the universality of guilt" (p. 217). The "religious" problem is described as the absence of God, "the relationship of a God who is all-powerful and all-knowing to the evil and the suffering that exist on earth, the contrast between the routine and boredom of life and the crisis of being lost and alone and doomed that the Existentialist hero experiences, the disruption of familiar, human reality by the knowledge of the inevitability and imminence of death, the search for the authentic life on his journey to the end of night" (p. 222). This study is of major significance for those who are still dubious about the thesis that there are "Biblical affirmations" (as William Mueller puts it) in pagan writing. Glicksberg has also written THE TRAGIC VISION IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY LITERATURE (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1963); 187 pages; cloth; $4.50. The object of this book is ". . . to show concretely how the literary consciousness of the twentieth century expresses its tragic vision of life in a universe that no longer bears the intolerable shadow of God's presence."

LOVE AND DEATH IN THE AMERICAN NOVEL. By Leslie A. Fiedler. New York: Criterion Books, 1960. 603 pages. Cloth. $8.50. This hefty volume is admittedly eclectic in its selection of native authors from 1789 to 1959 (even Ayn Rand is missing). Montana professor Fiedler overtly credits several wellsprings for his posture: C. S. Lewis' *The Allegory of Love;* Marxist thought; Sigmund Freud; Carl Jung; and D. H. Lawrence, with special emphasis on Freud. More literary and discursive than scientific and "critical" (there are no footnotes), Fiedler's treatment sees American literature as almost pathologically incapable of dealing with adult sexuality, and driven toward an obsession with death, incest, and homosexuality. Fiedler is a competent writer. His work is an intriguing resource for provocative, and often atypical, evaluations of works which run the gamut from *Huck Finn* and *The Bear* to *Marjorie Morningstar* and *Lolita.*

THE NOVEL OF VIOLENCE IN AMERICA.

By W. M. Frohock. Boston: Beacon Press, 1964. 238 pages. Paper. $1.75. This study of American novelists — repeatedly reprinted — is vivid and exciting reading and should command the attention of any student of the contemporary literary scene. Frohock's concern is the "novels of violence" in our land — "novels of erosion" and "novels of destiny," which have become part of our patrimony. He treats John Dos Passos, Thomas Wolfe, James T. Farrell, Robert Penn Warren (around whose neck, he feels, hangs "the South" like the carcass of a dead albatross), Erskine Caldwell, John Steinbeck, William Faulkner ("the finest writing in English today . . . master of the 'novel of destiny'"), and Ernest Hemingway (his early work is viewed as his best). Reminiscent of Edmund Fuller's *Man in Modern Fiction* is the biting chapter on "The Menace of the Paperback," with an incisive analysis of the paperback's "incentives for author and publisher to turn out fifth-rate novels." Most moving of all is his concluding treatment of James Agee ("the question of wasted talent"). Among the many reasons Frohock lists to account for the fact that there are no new major novelists in America (this reviewer would suggest that John Updike is a strong candidate) Agee is a classic example of the final one: "America now maintains so many areas in which a creative talent can find room for exercise that a writer whose gifts at one time would have assured us a long series of good fictions is now invited to divert his energies in a dozen different directions." (P. 212)

PERSPECTIVE ON MAN: LITERATURE AND THE CHRISTIAN TRADITION. By Roland Mushat Frye. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1961. 207 pages. Cloth. $4.50. This work ranks among the top handful in the volumes here reviewed. Not only does it approach the area from a balanced, "orthodox" Christian viewpoint, there is also rich sermonic meat for the preaching parson in a number of classic quotations. Frye begins his work with a little-known quotation from Luther (from a letter to Eoban Hess, 1523), wherein he averred: "I am persuaded that without knowledge of literature pure theology cannot at all endure" (p. 13). Quoting Charles G. Osgood, he sees secular literature as a servant serving us "as the sycamore tree served Zacchaeus, to gain a clearer insight of the Incarnate Truth." (P. 20)

The first chapter deals with the problem of demythologization (Bultmann) versus accommodation. Frye maintains the validity only of the latter with its clear positing of a "reality behind the symbols" (p. 41). He states: "Accommodation abides by the original symbols and works through them, whereas demythologizing would replace the original symbols and myths with an abstracted and contemporaneously structured idea" (pp. 39, 40). Next Frye proceeds from an able denigration of glandular writing, "at best broken, clouded, and distorting," to the literary masterworks which portray the full gamut of man: great and miserable, powerful yet frustrated. In this high country he examines the nurture of beauty, the nurture of understanding, and the nurture of compassion (pp. 65, 66). This literature (except it be that of the Christian faith) does not lead us to the City of God. It may not be "a Jacob's ladder by which we can climb to heaven, but it provides an invaluable staff with which to walk the earth" (p. 79). A fine balance of Law and Gospel comes through repeatedly in the study. An apt distinction between sins and sin ("originating sin") comes through in the discussion of the Atonement. The latter part of the book discusses the questions of death, identity and guilt as they are met in the literary masterpieces of a distinctively Christian imagination. The closing chapter further traces Christian's pilgrimage from the Dark Wood of Error to the City of God. Frye has also written *God, Man and Satan: Patterns of Christian Thought and Life in "Paradise Lost," "Pilgrim's Progress," and the Great Theologians.*

RELIGIOUS TRENDS IN ENGLISH POETRY. Volume V: *1880—1920, "Gods of a Changing Poetry."* By Hoxie Neale Fairchild.

New York: Columbia University Press, 1962. Cloth. 633 pages. $10.00. "Hitherto it has seemed legitimate to assume that to study the religious ideas expressed in the poetry of a given period is to study the spiritual temper of the period as a whole. That assumption still retains some validity, but it grows more questionable as we draw nearer to our own times. Despite strong countertrends . . . the 1880—1920 period displays a gradually widening chasm between the poet and his environment and hence between poetry and other human activities" (p. x). Essentially a book "about religion as it exists *within the realm of poetry,*" this massive tome is the second last in a series by Fairchild, emeritus professor of English, Hunter College of the city of New York.

SHAKESPEARE AND CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE. By Roland Mushat Frye. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1963. 314 pages. Cloth. $6.00. Frye's purpose here is not to discover the personal faith of Shakespeare, but rather to examine whether the bard was a Christian propagandist or not. His conclusion: Shakespeare's works are essentially *secular* and "the ethics which were relevant to the area of Shakespeare's literary concern might be drawn with equal propriety from non-Christian as well as Christian sources"(p. 8). Of particular interest to the Lutheran theologian are chapters 3 and 4, which present a provocative listing of Luther's quotations covering views on liberal education and the need for study of the pagan classics and contemporary literature. Luther calls those who suggest that a knowledge of Scripture alone apart from the classics is sufficient "irrational brutes." In his sermon "On the Duty of Sending Children to School," to the objection that a child may through such exposure become a heretic, he replied, "Well, you must run that risk."

MAN IN MODERN FICTION. By Edmund Fuller. New York: Random House, 1958. 171 pages. Cloth. $3.50. Fuller's popularly written study, now available in paperback, is a salutary "minority opinion" with respect to the modern writer. Fuller sees many authors writing not out of the heart but out of the glands, and decries the spate of novels which view man as an ironic, biological accident, clasped in the vise of economic or biological determinisms. A more recent study is his BOOKS WITH MEN BEHIND THEM (New York: Random House, 1962; 240 pages; cloth; $3.95).

MAN IN THE MODERN NOVEL. By John Edward Hardy. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1964. 228 pages. Cloth. $5.00. Hardy, professor of English at the University of Notre Dame, addresses himself to the question "What is the special significance of the theme of the self and the effort to know it, the quest for identity, in the literature of the twentieth century?" (p. 3). His work considers 11 different novels and their treatment of "the self in a community of selves."

THE LOST IMAGE OF MAN. By Julian N. Hartt. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1963. 131 pages. Cloth. $4.00. Hartt, Noah Porter professor of philosophical theology at Yale, discusses authors like James Joyce, D. H. Lawrence, William Faulkner, Albert Camus, Alan Paton, Alberto Moravia, T. S. Eliot, Arthur Koestler, and Graham Greene. His contention is that the modern writers have negated our "image of man." But he nevertheless does see in Alan Paton's *Cry, the Beloved Country* one example of the "perfection of hope," the coming of the true eschatological community, and the day of God's kingdom.

FREUDIANISM AND THE LITERARY MIND. By Frederick J. Hoffman. Second Edition. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1957. 350 pages. Cloth. $5.00. Hoffman's book has become almost a standard in writers' circles because Freudianism has become a near-religion for many a modern novelist, essayist, and dramatist. The author claims that writers in the last decades have been too completely under the influence of Sigmund Freud — and that they have welded their themes to Freudian ideas to such an extent that the Freudian picture of man has grown into the American conscious-

ness more so than any other "theology" in recent times. The idea is that man is composed altogether of subconscious, conscious, of ego, super-ego, of parts and partitions which can be neatly dissected, described, and which can be disturbed or cured almost at the will of the partitioner. The world Hoffman depicts seems almost glamorous. But the picture is lacking in detail. "The failure, then, of the Freudian promise is a failure to see in man the image of God, and this failure cannot help but communicate itself — not only to the paper and to the cover of the book but also to the spirit of the reader, who, looking into the mirror and expecting to find himself there, finds instead only a paper image — an animal cutout which can, in no way, explain the high mystery and the high glory of man." (Walter Riess)

SPIRITUAL PROBLEMS IN CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE. Edited by Stanley Romaine Hopper. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957. 298 pages. Paper. $1.50. This volume is based on lectures given at the Institute for Social and Religious Studies of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America during the winters of 1948 to 1949 and 1949—1950. The 18 essays in the work are by a variety of noted contributors and are designed to bring into sharper focus the religious significance of the deeper themes of current literary works. Included is one of the most frequently quoted articles on the relation of religion and literature in our day, "Religion and the Mission of the Artist," by Denis de Rougemont. This symposium is hardly light reading, but the test of time has already proved it classic in its field, and it is a standard bibliographical entry in many college courses. Of it Amos Wilder has said. "[It is] the best single example of how far joint discussion of aesthetic questions has gone today."

RELIGION FROM TOLSTOY TO CAMUS: BASIC WRITINGS ON RELIGIOUS TRUTH AND MORALS. Selected and introduced by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1961. 450 pages. Cloth. $6.95. The pungent pen of the well-known Princeton scholar sets the stage for this series of pieces, many in complete form. In the 44-page introduction the editor eschews the charge that the selections point to a definite conclusion. His concern rather is that men have more curiosity about the feelings, thoughts, and sufferings of their fellows; that their disagreements be more responsible and more human; and that their "humbition" (that rare fusion of ambition with humility and humor) be increased. Kaufmann feels that the story of religion from Tolstoy to Camus is "to a large extent the story of a manifold refusal to face the responsibilities Tolstoy faced" (p. 44). The former receives the giant's share of the pages, for the editor feels students of religion have not given him the attention he deserves. Of all the purifiers of religion in the century covered, Tolstoy is viewed as the greatest and most original contributor and challenger, "whether we classify him as Christian or heretic" (p. 8). Kaufmann feels much of the most renowned religious writing since then is a form of escape literature, although the unique output of Camus is given its due. Noteworthy is his indictment of Schweitzer, who Kaufmann feels retreated from the acute problems which Camus and other Europeans remained to face. Authors cited include Fyodor Dostoevsky, Pius IX, Leo XIII, Friedrich Nietsche, William Kingdon Clifford, William James, Josiah Royce, Oscar Wilde, Sigmund Freud, Morris Cohen, Morton Scott Enslin, Martin Niemöller, Malcolm Hay, Karl Barth, Emil Brunner, Pius XII, Jacques Maritain, Paul Tillich, John Wisdom, Albert Schweitzer, and Martin Buber. This title is also available in a Harper Torchbooks paperback edition, with three additional chapters, a total of 479 pages at $2.95.

THE FAILURE OF THEOLOGY IN MODERN LITERATURE. By John Killinger. New York, Abingdon Press, 1963. 239 pages. Cloth. $5.00. Killinger treats Faulkner, Hemingway, Wolfe, Fitzgerald, Camus, Nietzsche, Greene, Melville, Eliot, Lewis, and others. He defends the thesis that "Theology *qua* theology has not made a

very definite impact on contemporary literature — certainly nothing like that it registered in the times of Dante and Milton" (p. 35). Killinger's work is well written and exhibits the careful balance necessary in respecting the rightful roles of both theology and literature.

THE LABYRINTHINE WAYS OF GRAHAM GREENE. By Francis L. Kunkel. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1959. 182 pages. Cloth. $3.50. Kunkel is critical in his analysis of Greene's work, yet has a warm spot in his heart for it. Since Greene's writing is at the top of the list of "must" works which the Lutheran theologian should read and refer to his interested people, Kunkel's study must not be overlooked for a depth analysis of this rare, "Christian novelist's" literary productions. Kunkel does not take the novels and plays separately, but treats them synthetically in examining the major themes and ideas, the characters and their reactions to moral crises, the ethical and theological occupations of this writer so preoccupied with the evil in man's life. Greene's own life is brought in when relevant to the fiction (a risky business at best, and highly debatable). Throughout the pre-Roman Catholic, Roman Catholic, and post-Roman Catholic novels, Kunkel depicts the haunting spell of a writer who "is a voyager within as well as a voyager without" — the man on a quest toward self-awareness who travels to discover himself, to make maps of his own dark interior. With ample quotes from Greene's works throughout his study, he spells out the multiplicity of crosses in Greene's works: "the sign of the cross, the cross that every man is called upon to bear in life, the double cross, and the crisscross of intrigue" (p. 34). Readers of Greene will especially appreciate Kunkel's analysis of Scobie (*The Heart of the Matter,* pp. 127, 128), his examination of Greene's critics, the image of the priest, the element of suicide, the plays, and the role of dreams. The latter two areas are treated separately and seem to replace what could have been a helpful *summa* to the study. Much more should have been said on what is definitively "Christian" in Greene's writings. Nevertheless this work is a most helpful treatise; indeed, it will be catalyst enough to drive many readers to Greene's works for the first time.

THE AMERICAN ADAM: INNOCENCE, TRAGEDY, AND TRADITION IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. Edited by R. W. B. Lewis. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1955. 204 pages. Cloth, $5.50; paper (1959), $1.35. See the review by Henry W. Reimann in this journal, XXVIII (1957), 471. From the literature of 1820 to 1860 Lewis presents the convincing thesis that there was a native American mythology. "A pastor who is alive to the need of understanding the contemporary man to whom he brings the Gospel will profitably read and study this book. In particular, Lewis will help reveal to him America's Calvinistic roots."

THE PICARESQUE SAINT. By R. W. B. Lewis. New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1956. 317 pages. Paper. $1.95. This text, published in hardback in 1956 and paperback in 1961, is one of the most significant in the area under review. It is a required text in the course in its field at the School for Graduate Studies of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Lewis' essential task is the discussion of several intimately related themes — and several representative writers: the erotic motif in Moravia; human reason in its compassionate workings in Camus; the conversion of the political ambition into the charitable urge in Silone; the conversion of darkness into light and the old into the new in Faulkner; the interplay of the more than human with the less than human in Greene; and Malraux, who represents all of these things or versions of them. What emerges is something of a hero, something of a saint, and something of a rogue (*picaro*) — a representative human figure that seems *the* representative figure of the contemporary novel to Lewis. Lewis describes the thought of Moravia ("Eros and Existence") as ". . . the sexual view, the view of human relations and of everything that arises in or impinges upon human relations as beginning and ending in the sexual encounter" (p. 37).

Moravia's hero is a stranger "in a universe suddenly emptied of illusion and light," an exile fatally deprived "of the memories of a lost home country or the hope of a promised land." Revolt is improbable; man lives in a painless hell of indifference, contempt, sickness, weariness, poor judgment, equivocation, deceit, crime, smallness, ugliness, conformity, bitterness, unhappiness, solitude — the hallmarks of Moravia's writing, the very titles themselves. Because of the unique challenge which Camus presents to the Christian faith, rising above the nihilism, malaise, or defiance of many writers to a "new humanism," the chapter, "Albert Camus: The Compassionate Mind" is especially helpful in gaining insight into the late, great French author's work. The progress in Camus' "secular conversion" is sketched out: solitude — nihilism — absurdity — participation — sharing — society. The Christian reader will want to answer Camus' recorded attack on "the leap" of faith, which probably reflected Nietzsche's "weariness that wants to reach the ultimate with one leap, one fatal leap, a poor ignorant weariness that does not want to want any more; this created all gods and afterworlds" (p. 78). Lewis' analysis of Camus' view of Christianity is also cause for debate. He asserts that the only fragment of Christianity seemingly perceptible to Camus is "an extreme, an unmodulated otherworldliness . . . that became the core of early Protestantism and of its doctrinaire antagonism to the natural and human. The God whom Camus, following Nietzsche, had declared dead was a God who in fact had not been alive very long; he had been created in the polemics of Martin Luther." Checking footnote 24 (pp. 301, 302), the Lutheran reader may want to ask: Does Lewis know the full body of the writing of Luther about his God? Does Lewis make a proper distinction between the *Luther*-an doctrine of *man* and the doctrine of *sin* in his charge? Does he do justice to what he calls Luther's "typically reckless exclamations" in the light of the age to which Luther spoke? The form of Silone's writing is the theme of the chapter "Ignazio Silone: The Politics of Charity," a form which comprises for Lewis "the most effective image of human experience that contemporary fiction has devised" (p. 110), and which portrays "the best image of sacrificial human heroism that contemporary fiction can offer" (p. 178). But regardless of the *imitatio Christi* on the part of some of atheist Silone's characters, it is questionable if his trustfulness should be described as "Christian" (p. 110) rather than "religious." In the chapter "William Faulkner: The Hero in the New World" Lewis calls the creator of Yoknatapawpha County "the representative American writer," for he "contains and exploits more of the fertile contradictions of his country than any other writer since the great age of fiction in the nineteenth century" (p. 186). Greene ("Graham Greene: The Religious Affair") is for Lewis the representative *religious* novelist *who* writes of a world of "the boredom, the horror, and the glory" (p. 222). He establishes the source of existence as twofold: supernatural evil and supernatural good. Only persons who fall prey to one or the other really come alive. Two sides of the coin appear alternately in his writing. Religion is frequently an insidious, a perverse, an exhausting and life-denying emotion; conversely there is the celebration of the meanest of men as the image of God. Of particular note is Lewis' treatment of the priest's giggle (*Power and the Glory*) which maintains the immense delicate balance between *picaro* and saint and which prevents what in so many other "Christian" novels turns the literary into the crassly didactic. Lewis aptly points out "the *choice* between the love of man and the love of God" which is evident in much of Greene's work. Scobie, for example, "really loved God," but his wife not unjustifiably complained that "he certainly loved no one else." In contrast, he shows how Camus' characters evinced a "whole-souled involvement with man" (p. 267). Malraux, finally, is treated only briefly, but the key question of his hero emerges poignantly as the leitmotiv of much of the more recent writing. It is not only "What is man? What is this human

life? . . . Rather, it is a question about those questions. Not even, as yet, what is man? but rather, does the question itself make sense?" (p. 289). *The Picaresque Saint* does its job superbly of putting the finger firmly on the pulse of the representative men and key themes of contemporary fiction.

THE BORDERLAND. By Roger Lloyd. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1960. Cloth. 111 pages. $2.50. A restrained British humor draws one into this book, which is a discussion of "the Borderland" where "the professional theologian and the (theologically) amateur artist, who interprets his thought to a wider audience than he can ever hope to attract for himself, meet and join hands" (p. 16). Lloyd treats such works as *Robinson Crusoe, Tom Brown's School Days,* a rich variety of poetic lore, and, among other writers, Charles Williams, Dorothy Sayers, Emily Bronte, and G. K. Chesterton. The selection of works and authors is somewhat happenstance, but Lloyd makes his point: "the true monarch of the Borderland, where [literature and theology] meet on equal terms, is God Himself in the act of inspiring" (p. 109). In his estimation God's "inspiration" is at work as much or as little in the writing of literary artists as in that of apostles and evangelists in Scripture. He feels the literary artist has "at last won the unreserved and glad recognition of the church as a theological teacher on equal terms and of a like authority with his more professional senior" (p. 50). But he notes that the Incarnation and the uniqueness of Christ's "judicial murder" on the cross are singularly absent from the "Borderland" passages. "The impression one would get is that Christianity consists of three major affirmations about Creation, the Forgiveness of Sin and the Life of the World to Come." (P. 60)

LITERATURE AND THE IMAGE OF MAN: STUDIES OF THE EUROPEAN DRAMA AND NOVEL, 1600—1900. By Leo Lowenthal. Boston: The Beacon Press, 1957. 242 pages. Paper. $2.95. This time the interdisciplinary concern is not literature-theology, but the sociological approach to literature. "Through an analysis of the works included in this volume, an image may be formed of man's changing relation to himself, to his family, and to his social and natural environment, from the beginning of the seventeenth to the threshold of the twentieth century" (p. ix). Chapters include: The Spanish Writers, Cervantes, Shakespeare's *The Tempest,* the Classical French Drama, From *Werther* to *Wilhelm Meister,* Henrik Ibsen, and Knut Hamsun.

CHRIST AND APOLLO: THE DIMENSIONS OF THE LITERARY IMAGINATION. By William F. Lynch. New York: Mentor-Omega Books, 1963. 254 pages. Paper. 75 cents. This paperback by noted Roman Catholic intellectual Lynch is a "heavy" work — it cannot be read hurriedly; it requires contemplative study. Lynch attacks the theory that literature is an esoteric and isolated phenomenon, that it has "absolute autonomy." Instead, he calls for the writer to present the *realities* of the world (Christ) rather than to depict the dream and fantasy world (Apollo). A variety of authors are treated in the areas of tragedy and comedy, the creative and the historical.

THE CELEBRATION OF THE FLESH. By Arthur C. McGill. New York: Association Press, 1964. 190 pages. Cloth. $5.00. McGill treats the works of T. S. Eliot, Robert Frost, and Wallace Stevens. He identifies poetry with the "fleshly" aspect of experience and contends that "to hide from the flesh for the sake of the spirit is to miss the Christian life. It is this danger which gives special meaning to the enjoyment of poetry."

PSEUDONYMS OF CHRIST IN THE MODERN NOVEL. By Edwin M. Moseley. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1962. 231 pages. Cloth. $4.95. "Almost every important writer in our milieu has one time or another utilized Christ as a *leit-motif* or as a major symbol. I am not referring to the flood of novels which attempt to recreate a facet of the Scriptures for better or for worse, such as *Ben Hur, Quo Vadis, The Nazarene, The Robe,* but to sincere books which enrich contemporary themes by the employment of the chief objective correlative of our culture. . . . The most repeated

cluster of symbols is abstracted from the traditional Christian lore, in which the popular reader of the Western World professes at least a vague belief. The correlative of Christ is the *something* through which the Western writer frequently gets at *everything*" (pp. 34, 35). "Christ has come constantly to symbolize man's trap *and* man's freedom" (p. 216). "Using Christ as a central or recurrent symbol, the artist then may express himself, employ a universal frame of reference, handle the current climate, and speak to every reader in every time. Whether or not they effect changes in the environment, the strategies revolving around Christ as a dramatic symbol are infinite in their aesthetic wisdom. Their appeal to the reader is eternal" (p. 221). The above quotations represent a distillation of the themes in Moseley's book, one of a few thus far available which treat the literary problem of the Christ figure. Moseley assesses the elements of Christ-symbolism in *Lord Jim, Crime and Punishment, Fathers and Sons, Sons and Lovers, All Quiet on the Western Front, The Great Gatsby, Light in August, Passage to India, Grapes of Wrath, Bread and Wine, Man's Fate, Darkness at Noon, The Stranger,* and *The Old Man and the Sea.*

THE PROPHETIC VOICE IN MODERN FICTION. By William R. Mueller. New York: Association Press, 1959. 183 pages. Cloth. $3.50. See the review in this journal XXXIII (1962), 54. In trenchant fashion Mueller observes that "the novelist will not save us, but he may well bring us to the knowledge that we are in need of salvation." The bulk of the work explores the ways in which six writers, Joyce, Camus, Kafka, Silone, Faulkner, and Greene, have dealt with the problems of vocation, the Fall and its fruits, judgment both human and divine, the idea of the remnant, suffering, and love.

THE ART OF LITERATURE. By Arthur Schopenhauer. Trans. T. Bailey Saunders. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1960. 114 pages. Paper. $1.45. "A fool knows more of his own business than a wise man does of others," so Schopenhauer quotes the Spanish proverb at one point in his treatise. But it is a wise old fool who in this classic has given us witty and universally applicable discourses: On Authorship, On Style, On the Study of Latin, On Men of Learning, On Thinking for Oneself, On Some Forms of Literature, On Criticism, On Reputation, On Genius.

One of the most prolific writers in this field is Nathan A. Scott, Jr. REHEARSALS OF DISCOMPOSURE (New York: King's Crown Press, 1952. 294 pages. Cloth. $4.00) is an early work of his, in which he set about to demonstrate the presence of the themes of alienation and reconciliation in some representative works of Kafka, Silone, D. H. Lawrence, and T. S. Eliot. A broader study, and one from which the beginning reader in this area would profit, was MODERN LITERATURE AND THE RELIGIOUS FRONTIER (Harper, 1958; 138 pages; cloth; $2.50) which developed the thesis that "The theological community must, in other words, enter into a dialogical relationship with the social sciences, with therapeutic psychology, with imaginative literature — and it must do this because of the very nature of Christian theology itself; for, though the content of the Christian faith can never be derived from an analysis of human existence (since it represents something '"spoken to" human existence from beyond it'), this 'content' is always determined by the nature of the questions upon which the kerygma must be brought to bear" (p. x). Scott feels that the literary intelligence is the best of our time. "For the great writers of the modern period — say Joyce and Lawrence and Kafka and Eliot and Auden, to mention only a few — seem to have traveled farther than most of the rest of us and seem to have thrust us more exactly upon the centers of our distress than any other class of modern thinkers has succeeded in doing" (p. xi). He sees as his task the discovery of "ways of bringing the literature of our period to 'the level of religious emergence,' where it may be apprehended as 'testimony' and as the vehicle of the 'ultimate concerns' which define the spiritual situation of our age."

THE TRAGIC VISION AND THE CHRISTIAN FAITH (New York: Association Press, 1957; 346 pages; cloth, $4.50), a "Christian assessment of the literature of tragedy" by various contributors, was reviewed in this journal XXXI (1960), p. 514, by Henry W. Reimann, who stated: "If Tillich's conclusion that the history of culture is also a course for systematic theology is correct, and if we need a theology of culture, here is the essay type of material produced by gifted teachers of literature and theology which must necessarily prepare the way for the fuller appropriation of this vast and complex field by systematic theologians."

In 1964 Scott edited still another symposium, titled THE CLIMATE OF FAITH IN MODERN LITERATURE (New York: Seabury Press, 1964; 237 pages; cloth; $5.95), with such contributors as John McGill Krumm, W. Moelwyn Merchant, Ralph Harper, Paul Elmen, Kay Baxter, E. Martin Browne, Ralph J. Mills, Jr., Martin Jarrett-Kerr, C. R., and Chad Walsh. Jarrett-Kerr, incidentally, should be remembered for his STUDIES IN LITERATURE AND BELIEF (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1952). Scott calls this study essentially an "interim report" on how the world of faith and the world of literature are converging.

THE NEW ORPHEUS (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1964; 431 pages; cloth; $7.50) is a collection of 22 essays by distinguished literary artists, critics, and theologians of a variety of denominations. *The Christian Century's* reviewer, Robert Detweiler (LXXXI, No. 29 [July 15, 1964], 913) described this work as "the most incisive and yet most comprehensive attempt to date at defining 'the problems, the methods, and the aims of Christian poetics.'" He went on: "So how are the Christian artist and critic to react? They must discover ways of creating and judging literature that are neither didacticism on the one hand nor mere echoes of the independent artistic personality on the other. Thus Denis de Rougemont defines art as 'a calculated trap for meditation' that invites theological interpretation. . . . The Christian critic must attempt to form a theonomous connection between literature and faith. . . . On the whole, Professor Scott's collection represents the best and most advanced thinking on a Christian theory of literature and deserves the attention of the growing body of scholars concerned with the problem."

THE THEOLOGY OF ROMANTIC LOVE. By Mary McDermott Shideler. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1962. 243 pages. Cloth. $5.00. This is a very competent study of the theological implications of the writings of Charles Williams. The tack point is the analogy between the romantic experience and the Christian faith. Frequently obscure in meaning, replete not with logic but veiled imagery, Williams' writings will be brought into focus for many of his devotees by this thorough treatment of his productions, which included 38 books and monographs over a variety of fields.

THE LOVE ETHIC OF D. H. LAWRENCE. By Mark Spilka. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1955. Cloth. $4.00. See the review by Henry W. Reimann in this journal, XXVIII (1957), 782: "A member of the English faculty at the University of Michigan gives a sympathetic analysis of the novels of the controversial Englishman whose major works were published in the twenties and are still being edited. . . . Here again is another prolegomenon for the Christian doctrine of man."

AMERICAN LITERATURE AND CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE. By Randall Stewart. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1958. 155 pages. Cloth. $3.50. Stewart's book is of particular value for the student of theology and literature because it gives a penetrating analysis of the 200-year American historical backdrop against which and out of which North American authors write today. It is also Stewart who candidly disclaims any neutrality in his approach and who is accordingly open to challenge at a number of points (i.e., cf. his overt bias concerning Dreiser, p. 119). He writes from a frankly Reformed orientation. The script of the retrospective drama is quite readable and a host of "greats" from the past people the stage: Jonathan Edwards, Jonathan Swift,

Tom Paine, Thomas Jefferson, Ben Franklin, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Walt Whitman, Lanier and Dickinson, Hawthorne and Melville, Stephen Crane, Theodore Dreiser, Ernest Hemingway, Robert Penn Warren, and finally William Faulkner — whom Stewart sees as "one of the most profoundly Christian writers in our time" (p. 141). Stewart applies the designation "Christian" subjectively, however; a profound doctrine of original sin seems to be its primary criterion. And the case for Faulkner's "Christian" writing is further argued on the basis of his recurrent use of the word "prevail," which, Stewart reminds us, is a definitively Biblical word. Stewart should reread Faulkner's humanistic Nobel Prize acceptance speech, however, and see the word in the context Faulkner gives it: "*man* . . . shall prevail" (italics ours). The book progressively examines the rationalist, romanticist, the naturalist, and the "Christian" writers. This reviewer places it among the half dozen "first" works to be read, chiefly for its apt depiction of the historical prelude to the contemporary scene.

AMERICAN WRITING IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. By Willard Thorp. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1960. 353 pages. Cloth. $5.00. The position of this review — following that on Stewart — is not only alphabetical. Thorp's study is an excellent sequel to *American Literature and Christian Doctrine* and comprehensively details the major literary genres since the turn of the century, highlighting the renaissance beginning about 1912. Before then it was a period of "hammock reading;" since 1950 Thorp sees a "literary pallor." Though spiritual and/or theological themes are not examined per se, this overview is of unusual significance for the theologian. "Typical writer" summations conclude each of the chapters, which are topically and chronologically arranged.

MODERN LITERATURE AND CHRISTIAN FAITH. By Martin Turnell. Westminster, Md.: The Newman Press, 1961. 69 pages. Cloth. $2.50. "Some thirty years ago Professor I. A. Richards congratulated Mr. T. S. Eliot on effecting, in *The Waste Land,* what he described as 'a complete severance between his poetry *and* all beliefs.' Mr. Eliot replied, tartly, that he found the statement 'incomprehensible.'" The quotation illustrates the question to which Turnell addresses himself: Does religious belief hinder an author, or nourish and strengthen his creative ability? The three very brief essays in this minuscule volume are written in a vivid rostrum style and comprise "Contrasts in Modern and Medieval Poetry"; "The Shaping of Contemporary Literature (Lawrence, Forster, Virginia Woolf)"; and "Problems of Belief in Claudel, Mauriac, and Greene." No theologian should miss this one. Note the conclusion: "These [Christian] writers are serious. Their characters behave appallingly; they are not simply a prey to all the vices, they introduce fresh horrors which only people who had mulled over the text-books of the theologians — particularly the moral theologians — could possibly have thought of, but they do not reduce humanity to a 'temperament,' an 'appetite,' to a bundle of instincts or, as I said earlier, to a herd of rutting animals like the characters in a novel by Henry Miller. They do remind us on every page that human beings, however vile, have immortal souls; that the alternatives salvation-damnation are the greatest reality, indeed the only reality, in the world." (P. 69)

T. L. S.: 1962 ESSAYS AND REVIEWS FROM THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT. New York: Oxford University Press, 1963. 240 pages. Cloth. 21/—. A richly varied anthology including book critiques over a wide range and selected from a year's issues of *The* (London) *Times Literary Supplement.*

WAIT WITHOUT IDOLS. By Gabriel Vahanian. New York: George Braziller, 1964. 256 pages. Cloth. $5.00. Vahanian here offers a companion volume to his *The Death of God.* Intending his essays as literary criticism, and not as "a so-called Christian interpretation of secular literature," he treats Hawthorne, Melville, Faulkner, Eliot, Auden, Saint-John Perse, Dostoevski, Lagerkvist, and Kafka. His thesis: "Modern literature in particular is not as much concerned with dethroning God as with destroying those

images according to which man projects himself as the missing link between the ape and God."

THEORY OF LITERATURE. By René Wellek and Austin Warren. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1956. 368 pages. Paper. $1.65. This paperback is now a standard bibliographical reference in university literature courses. Together with Cleanth Brooks's *The Well Wrought Urn,* it should command the attention of the theologian examining the rubrics of literary criticism. But *Theory of Literature* is not literary criticism pure and simple, as the authors insist: "We have sought to unite 'poetics' (or literary theory) and 'criticism' (evaluation of literature) with 'scholarship' ('research') and 'literary history' (the 'dynamics' of literature, in contrast to the 'statics' of theory and criticism)." The work is "a systematic analysis of literature in the United States and Europe, defending literature as art rather than as the creature of historical and psychological environment . . . [it is] a reasoned defense of the creative imagination, which is to be judged for the fruits of its labor without dependence on the crutch of custom."

MILTON AND THE ANGELS. By Robert H. West. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1955. 237 pages. Paper. $5.00. See the review by Henry W. Reimann in this journal, XXIX (1958), 539: "West, who teaches at the University of Georgia, has analyzed the angelological background of Milton in Christian tradition, in scholasticism, and in the occult and Platonic revivals of 17th-century England."

THE NEW WRITING IN RUSSIA. Translated, with an Introduction, by Thomas P. Whitney. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1964. 412 pages. Cloth. $6.95. Vasily Aksenov, Yuri Kazakow, Victor Rozov, Yuri Nagabin, and Vladimir Tendrayakov are represented among others in this superb collection of the works of modern Russian writers. "Humanity and the Russian people are the heroes, and the new writers tell of them with grace and beauty, revealing their loves, hates, dreams, ambitions, fears, and frustrations." The conflict between the writer and the government, and the important role of literature in the U. S. S. R., are also treated in Whitney's extensive introduction.

THE EDGE OF WISDOM. A Source Book of Religious and Secular Writers. By Robert S. Wicks. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1964. 278 pages. Paper. $3.50. The most recent volume on the scene as of this writing — and a highlight of this collage — is Wicks' compendium of theological-literary *hors d'oeuvres* at which the "religious" and the "secular" converge. A rich variety of current well-known *pieces* are incorporated. The contents include Basic Definitions; The Nature of Man and the Human Situation; Whence Cometh Our Salvation — God, Man, or Natural Process? and An Introduction to Ethics. An appendix lists readings in the Bible which "may be useful to those who would like documentation for what is referred to in the text as the 'biblical point of view.' The readings are categorized under the headings and themes that were used in developing this view." Beyond the obvious homiletical value of the latter, this volume can be an excellent resource for discussion groups engaged in the arena of debate over theology and modern literature. Further, the work is reasonably priced.

THEOLOGY AND MODERN LITERATURE. By Amos N. Wilder. Cambridge: Harvard Universtiy Press, 1958. 145 pages. Cloth. $3.00. See the review in this journal, XXXII (1961), 509. "A recurring theme is that in the best work of contemporary poets, novelists, and dramatists you often find yourself 'in the midst of a far more searching debate on moral and theological questions than is found in much of the religious literature of our time' (p. 53)." Wilder's work is a continuing classic in the field. Prof. Burton Wheeler of Washington University in St. Louis, calls it "perhaps the most valuable volume yet published in the field, an exceedingly important study."

THE IMAGE OF MAN IN AMERICA. By Don M. Wolfe. Dallas: Southern Methodist University Press, 1957. x and 482 pages. Cloth. $5.00. See the review by Ar-

thur Carl Piepkorn in this journal, XXX (1959), p. 74: "Is this depravity in man rooted in his genetic structure? Is he innately evil, as some philosophers contend? Or is this depravity merely the extension of the environmental pressures under which he lives? (p. 5). The purpose of this essay in intellectual history by a Brooklyn College English professor and Milton scholar is to show how American thinkers have answered these and similar questions."

Conclusion

Of all the foregoing books, the reader beginning his study in this field might give his first attention to the works by Frye, Lewis, Mueller, Scott, Stewart, Wicks, and Wilder. Their journal articles — and a host of other references in drama, poetry, the novel, and general criticism — have been collated as a most helpful resource by Burton M. Wheeler of Washington University, St. Louis, under the general title "Religious Themes in Contemporary Literature," in *The Journal of Bible and Religion,* XXVII (1959), 50; XXXII (1964), 50; and XXXII (1964), 133.

In Lutheran circles, a number of journal articles have also treated this subject area in recent years. Typical of them are:

Robert Conrad, "Who Are the Modern Christian Writers?" *This Day,* XIV, No. 1 (September 1962), 20.

Donald Deffner, "How Today's Literature Can Help You." *This Day,* XV, No. 1 (September 1963), 16; "The Christ Figure in Contemporary Literature," this journal, XXXIV (1963), 278—283; and "The Paperback in the Pew," this journal, XXXII (1961), 453—465.

Tom F. Driver, "The Church, the Theater, and the World," *Dialog,* I, No. 4 (Autumn 1962), 48.

John H. Loose, "Modern Literature and the Christian Faith," *The Lutheran Quarterly,* XVI (1964), 99.

Marie Malmin Meyer, "Literature and the Church," *Response,* I, No. 1 (Pentecost 1959), 15—22.

Gerald Thorson, "The Religious Significance of Modern Literature," *Response,* II, No. 1 (Pentecost 1960), 17—24.

Sue Wienhorst, "Theological Responses to Modern Literature: A Methodological Inquiry." *The Cresset,* XXVI, No. 5 (March 1963), 8.

In retrospect on the overall literary production in this interdisciplinary dialog, poetry seems to have received less attention than the novel or the drama.

But an even more important volume is still missing from the shelf. In this case it is a book which the theologian, not the literary critic, must write. Of course, it would open-mindedly ask the question first of all: "How well does this writer enlighten my *understanding* of the nature of man?" And then would follow a reexamination of the New Testament doctrine of the nature of man — and the besetting question as to just which protagonists in contemporary literature most closely approximate our understanding of post-Adamic man. It would seek to determine which writers — while remaining true to their craft — have portrayed a picaresque saint who best reflects the *Biblical* portrait of man — as stated once before in this journal:

"The balance must be found somewhere between the admission of man's radical, personal perversion and rebellion against God, and the God-given knowledge that natural man is still a creature of the Almighty. It must come somewhere between an extreme, extra-Biblical doctrine of 'total depravity,' and an overly optimistic view of what 'good' there is left in man. It must deal with the confessional principle that sin is not the substance but *accidens* of man's nature, that man and sin are to be distinguished from each other. It must deal with the distinction between the loss of righteousness before God and the remaining remnants of Godlike reflection or reproduction." (Donald L. Deffner, "The Christ-Figure in Contemporary Literature," CONCORDIA THEOLOGICAL MONTHLY, XXXIV [1963], 282).

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