CLAUDELLE INGLISH. By Erskine Caldwell. Little, Brown. 1959. 209 pp. $3.75.

Claudelle, an impulsive Southern girl, receives a letter from her sweetheart in the Army. He has met another girl and plans to marry her. Claudelle promptly goes on a compensatory sexual rampage during which she seduces several men, including the local minister. She even tries to seduce her own father. The minister is "unchurched" and begs Claudelle to run off with him. When she refuses, he kills her and commits suicide. At this point, Claudelle's sweetheart returns. He has changed his mind and has come back to marry her. This will probably sell a million copies in hard covers, ten million in paperbacks.

—James Preu

MEANS TO AN END. By John Rowan Wilson. Doubleday. 1959. 287 pp. $3.95.

Means to an End undertakes a particularly valid study in view of contemporary morality: how can a man arrive at some reasonable standard for moral action? "Apprenticeship" best describes the action of this international novel, for Chris Marshall's induction into the business world effects his metamorphosis from emasculated idealism to vital realism. He discovers that his boss cleverly masks a vicious racket; that his own conduct is determined by a choice of lesser evils; and, ironically, that he faces the necessity of adopting the means of vice in order to achieve the end, exposure of injustice and defense of himself.

—Rosa Ann Moore

NINE TOMORROWS. By Isaac Asimov. Doubleday. 1959. 236 pp. $3.50.

Suspense, surprise, and horror characterize the nine uncanny stories in this offering by a biochemist who has published fourteen volumes of science fiction. "Profession," possibly the strangest of the pieces, shows an elaborate system of state testing of IQ's, and education being acquired by machines taped to the heads of the masses. Eventually, of course, the man or woman with capacity for original thought is seen as a rarity. "I'm in Marsport Without Hilda" is a shocker about smuggling tranquilizer drugs from Earth and two-timing one's wife in Outer Space. Several other tales use futuristic material for dressing up the sordid.

—Olive Cross

THE SECRET WAYS. By Alistair MacLean. Doubleday. 1959. 286 pp. $3.95.

The best secret agent England had was sent to Hungary to locate and bring out of the country a highly distinguished English scientist, who in misguided idealism had slipped behind the iron curtain and was about to make a political speech which would be of great assistance to the Communists. The British agent with friends in Hungary moves from one seemingly impossible situation to another until the reader's nerves become nearly frazzled. The book is thrilling, well-written, and gives the reader a very good bird's-eye view of the workings of the Hungarian Secret Police, but is hardly recommended as a bedtime story.

—Hudson Rogers

Nonfiction

PLATO: An Introduction. By Paul Friedlander. Pantheon. 1958. 422 pp. $5.00.

Thanks to the Bollingen Foundation, Professor Friedlander's studies in Plato, which have been standard for two generations of European scholars, are now being published for the first time in English. This volume, the first of three, traces the origins of Plato's ideas, deals with such topics as Demon and Eros, transcendence, the Academy, Plato's written work, Socrates in Plato, Irony, Dialogue, and Myth, and relates Platonic thought to modern philosophers. In chapters treating Plato as physicist, geographer, jurist, and city planner, a portrait of him as the universal man emerges. This is the most thorough and authoritative introduction to Plato that has ever appeared in print.

—Roy C. Moose

TRAGEDY: SERIOUS DRAMA IN RELATION TO ARISTOTLE'S POETICS. By F. L. Lucas. Macmillan. 1958. 188 pp. $2.50.

After thirty years this Cambridge scholar has revised and enlarged his study of the perennially controversial *Poetics* of Aris-

totle. What does Aristotle mean by *catharsis*, by *hamartia*, by reversal and recognition? What, in serious drama, is the place of comic relief, of the chorus, of metaphor, of stage effects, of the three unities? To these and many other questions Mr. Lucas gives an unequivocal reply. Finally, he perceives that though many of the conclusions of Aristotle may be outdated, his art of asking questions cannot be denied. A number of hares that he started are still running.

—Laura Jepsen

JOHNSON AND BOSWELL: The Story of Their Lives. By Hesketh Pearson. Harper. 1959. 390 pp. $5.50.

The idea of working the lives of Boswell and Johnson into one narrative is excellent, and the idea is here reasonably well carried out. Mr. Pearson has used Boswell's own writings for much of the material he presents, neatly selecting, condensing, and quoting. He has also made good use of several journals of the period, especially those of Mrs. Thrale-Piozzi and Madame d'Arblay (Fanny Burney). A disturbing flaw in an otherwise acceptable synthesis is the nagging insistence with which the author "explains" and excoriates Boswell, whom he seems neither to like nor to respect. There are seventeen pictures of persons in the Johnson-Boswell milieu, a bibliography, and an index.

—Myrtle Mestayer

THE REALIST AT WAR. By Edwin H. Cady. Syracuse University Press. 1958. 299 pp. $5.00.

This solid volume completes the critical study of William Dean Howells begun in *The Road to Realism*, and is a valuable contribution despite the impression it may give that Howells fought alone to establish Realism in America. The unwary students should know about Grant C. Knight's more readable and better balanced *Critical Period in American Literature*, and Alfred Kazin's near-classic, *On Native Grounds*. But Howells deserves more attention than he commonly gets from modern readers, and a revival of interest in his fiction would be a most gratifying result of the extensive scholarship which this completed biography significantly represents.

—William Randel

THE POWER OF BLACKNESS: Hawthorne, Poe, and Melville. Knopf. 1958. 263 pp. $4.00.

From showing how pervasively Hawthorne, Poe, and Melville were obsessed by the associations of blackness with evil or ignorance, Professor Levin can give a unified commentary on their fiction. In the process he turns up a few original interpretations but succeeds in emphasizing the fabulous imaginations of these early American symbolists. Since this book grew from public lectures in California, his style is pleasantly informal, but for the specialist he becomes tediously repetitious.

—J. Russell Reaver

CHARLES DICKENS: A Critical Introduction. By K. J. Fielding. Longmans, Green. 1959. 218 pp. $3.50.

For the person who wishes to receive a short, compact, concise picture of Charles Dickens' life and work this little book is ideal. The author treats his subject chronologically. Each of the thirteen chapters takes up a phase in the development of the writer and discusses critically one or two of his writings. The analyses of his many novels are superior; the revelations concerning his life as gleaned from recently discovered letters are interesting and sometimes amazing. The author, who is an Oxford scholar, is one of the editors of the forthcoming Pilgrim Edition of Dickens and knows thoroughly his subject.

—Hudson Rogers

TOLSTOY OR DOSTOEVSKY. By George Steiner. Knopf. 1959. $5.75. 354 pp.

This brilliantly incisive book is an essay in poetic and philosophic criticism. Although the emphasis is on Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, the themes are of much larger scope. The epic tradition and the tragic view of life from Homer to Yeats and Aeschylus to Chekov are discussed in the way that they relate to the modern novel. In Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, the author is concerned with two views of God and two views of history which are virtually opposed to each other. Mr. Steiner feels that criticism must return with "passionate awe and a sense of life" to the great universal

questions and the great literary traditions. His book does just that.

—Allan Thomson

LAST ESSAYS. By Thomas Mann. Knopf. 1959. 211 pp. $4.50.

These posthumously published essays on Mann's early idols—Schiller, Goethe, Nietzsche, and Chekhov—represent the distilled thought and study of a lifetime. Mann considers his great predecessors from a double perspective, simultaneously evaluating their historical positions and defining their current importance. His method sweeps away both the formality and the limitations of pedantic scholarship, and the studies are consequently both readable and perceptive. The essay on Schiller is a particularly noteworthy achievement. That on Goethe complements Mann's *The Beloved Returns* of 1940, and the volume as a whole is an indispensable addendum to Mann's collected essays, both literary and political.

—Hardin McD. Goodman

THE ACHIEVEMENT OF T. S. ELIOT. By F. O. Matthiessen. Oxford University Press. 1958. 248 pp. $4.50.

This is the third edition of a critical work which has long been a standard in its field. First published in 1935, it was revised in 1947 by the addition of two chapters on Eliot's work over the intervening decade. Using the poet's statements about his work, the late Professor Matthiessen endeavored to show the poetry as art rather than document; the subtitle, "An Essay on the Nature of Poetry," indicated his larger purpose. Professor C. L. Barber, a former student of Matthiessen's, now adds a perceptive final chapter on the wartime and post-war poetry and the recent verse plays.

—Hassell A. Simpson

EVELYN WAUGH: Portrait of an Artist. By Frederick J. Stopp. Little, Brown. 1958. 254 pp. $4.00.

This book fulfills a definite need for all readers of Waugh, providing them with important biographical information and, what is more, giving the first comprehensive and balanced critical treatment of the author and his works. At last Mr. Waugh is considered not as a mere freak but as a serious literary figure. Of special interest are the sections devoted to a careful analysis of the individual works, a series of analyses which is climaxed by Dr. Stopp's brilliant interpretation of *Mr. Pinfold's Ordeal;* he sees it as a true self-portrait, a work in which Mr. Waugh publicly has sat in judgment on himself.

—C. E. Tanzy

BRAVE NEW WORLD REVISITED. By Aldous Huxley. Harper. 1958. 147 pp. $3.00.

In the light of subsequent events, Huxley reexamines the predictions implied in his satirically utopian novel, *Brave New World,* published some twenty-seven years ago, and on the basis of his findings writes an admonitory essay. He now sees that at the time of the novel he underestimated the speed with which the regimentation, stultification, and enslavement of humanity were being effected. Against the ultimate causes, which are over-population and over-organization, he recommends, in general, education for freedom, and, in particular, birth control, legislation against hypnopaedia (mind-manipulation), and the breaking up of Big Business and Big Government.

—C.

BENNETT CERF'S BUMPER CROP. Doubleday. 1959. 1,463 pp. $5.95.

In two unabridged volumes, here are humorist Cerf's best-sellers: *The Life of the Party; Try and Stop Me; Good for a Laugh; Laughter Incorporated; Shake Well Before Using.* This witty raconteur is not above sophisticated puns, quips, and tall tales; he is best in sparkling anecdotes about statesmen, writers, actors, athletes, the famous and near famous. Also he relays the favorite funny stories of such personages as George Santayana, J. Edgar Hoover, William Saroyan, Oscar Levant, Gertrude Stein, Quentin Reynolds, John Kiernan, Somerset Maugham. It is hard to believe that this much humor could be so good, but it is.

—Olive Cross

THE SEVEN WORLDS OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT. By Edward Wagenknecht. Longmans, Green. 1958. 325 pp. $6.50.

This book is the contribution of Professor Wagenknecht of Boston University

to the centennial celebration of the birth of Theodore Roosevelt. It consists of seven chapters, or essays, each describing one of TR's "worlds": Action, Thought, Human Relations, Family, Spiritual Values, Public Affairs, and War and Peace. Wagenknecht writes readably, brings in numerous anecdotes, and presents TR as one of the most human—even the most lovable—of Presidents.

—J. N. Hook

Professional Books and Pamphlets

THE AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOL TODAY. By James Bryant Conant. McGraw-Hill. 1959. $2.45, hardbound; $1.00, paperbound.

This book is one which the *Journal* ordinarily would feature in a major review, such is its importance, but by the time this issue is published the book will have been widely reviewed and discussed. Indications are that it will be one of the most widely-read books on American education. Both professional critics of the schools—the Bestor camp, for example—and the foggy "generalists" in professional education will be chagrined by the book, for as John W. Gardner, President of the Carnegie Corporation, which financed Conant's study, points out in the Foreword: "Much of the argument over education is coming from people who are *not* really interested in facing problems as they exist. They are interested in venting their prejudices and in beating one another about the ears with slogans and battle cries." Two major characteristics cause this book to stand out in glaring contrast to most books by non-professionals, such as those by Arthur Bestor and Hyman Rickover: (1) It is based on personal study of high schools; Dr. Conant visited fifty-five high schools in eighteen states. (2) It is completely constructive.

To the professional educator it will appear that Dr. Conant, in his sections on "Characteristics of American Education" and "A Unique Feature: The Comprehensive High School," has discovered that the Dutch have taken Holland. But, as the author himself suggests, this report will be read by many people who wouldn't be caught reading a book by a professional educator.

The section on "Recommendations for Improving Public Secondary Education" is getting the major attention. Those recommendations relating specifically to English are as follows: (1) four years of English should be required for graduation; (2) a "three-track" system of ability grouping should be established; (3) half the total time given to English should be devoted to English composition; students should write, on the average, one theme per week; (4) no English teacher should be responsible for more than 100 pupils; (5) A school-wide composition test should be given in every grade; students who do not score on the eleventh-grade test at a level commensurate with their abilities as measured by an aptitude test should be required to take a special course in English composition in the twelfth grade; (6) those students in the ninth grade who read at the level of sixth grade or below should be given classes in English and social studies by special teachers; (7) developmental reading programs should be available on a voluntary basis for all pupils.

No doubt, recommendation "4," one reiterated for years by the NCTE, will bring loudest cheers from English teachers themselves. Recommendation "5" will need careful interpretation; as it stands it could lead schools into some unfortunate, as well as helpful, practices. Recommendation "7" reveals that Dr. Conant's concept of "developmental reading" is far narrower than that of most people in the fields of reading or English.

The influence of this report—and it will be widespread—should be, on the whole, salutary.

—D. L. Burton

EDUCATION AND FREEDOM. By H. G. Rickover. Dutton. 1959.

Admiral Rickover does not speak directly to the English teacher, but the implications