

child off from his rightful inheritance of English Poetry. While still at school he should indeed sample the heady whimsy of much of the Romantic movement, the intensely personal explorations of the Lake Poets, the humility and wonder that touches life with a delicacy strange to metropolitan children unaware of a pre-industrial world. But such an experience requires from ordinary young people a degree of mutual and linguistic sophistication rare unless they are peculiarly and happily gifted and many a future businessman or engineer is permanently alienated from poetry at this mid-secondary school stage by the failure of enthusiastic teachers to understand the imaginative and emotional needs of modern pupils.

In appreciating this problem and attempting to solve it in the Albemarle Books, the editor has performed a most useful service. This work is not to be recommended as a bedside book, however; for it was after midnight when this reviewer had read almost every single poem in Book One, with that sort of guilty feeling one gets from being lost in an Encyclopaedia. But although few of us read poetry by the hour one has no feeling of mental flatulence from this delightful introduction to poets such as John Wain, Carl Sanburg, Patrick Kavanah and Christopher Logue, to mention but four.

It was pleasant to see leading Americans printed, and even happier to find that an English editor was capable of breaking through the usually chaste bounds of provincial English educational thought to include Commonwealth and South African writers. On his next revision—and I would suggest that this anthology is destined for a long run if it is capably handled—it would be possible to suggest new names. Of course, it is *always* possible to do that, and not particularly clever.

Grading is always a problem, and ultimately must refer to a particular pupil context; but accepting that, there did not appear to this reviewer to be a sufficient movement of development from the beginning of the first book to the end of the second. One can read both books without discovering the principle applied in the grading at all.

Format, general appearance and price are all very satisfactory. This book is one that experienced teachers will want to use.—B.W.R.

### **English Critical Texts**

D. J. Enright & Ernst de Chickera (O.U.P.)

The texts range from the 16th to the 20th century and include Philip Sidney, John Dryden, Alexander Pope, Samuel Johnson, William Wordsworth, S. T. Coleridge, P. B. Shelley, John Keats, Matthew Arnold, T. S. Eliot and F. R. Leavis. In other words, the backbone of Saintsbury's *Loci Critici* is reassembled. The large classical component that Saintsbury

used has been relegated in somewhat reduced form to the "Classical Appendix" and two modern critics have been added.

Of course, in assessing the value of such a work two points occur. Should students have access to other people's *opinions* at all, or should they first learn to *respond to literature* as a *first-hand* experience, and only much later enquire what men and women of repute have thought? Does the study of critical writing not perhaps lead to a stuffing of minds with other people's ideas—all, no matter how good, second-hand? There are many university lecturers in English who would regard the collecting of critical comment with some suspicion. And yet there is no doubt that if we, as readers, are to move from mere liking or disliking of what we read to a more articulate and rational position, we must provide ourselves with the literary tools. And a judicious examination of approaches made by men of lively mind and real sensitivity may help the student to organise and to actualise his own incoherent reactions more rapidly than the slow process of trial and error. No other discipline would permit the student to pursue so cumbersome a learning process as the mere recapitulation which is frequently involved in the protest against the use of opinion and reaction other than one's own. So perhaps there is still a need for a work of this sort. The title limits the contents to *English Critical Texts*, but whether the compilers intentionally limited their collection to the work of Englishmen or whether by "English" they intend all who use the English Language, is indeed doubtful. It seems odd to exclude for instance all American critics. One thinks of *The Art of Fiction* by Henry James, and Edgar Allen Poe's thoughts on *The Poetic Principle*. John Crow Ransom has written on Poetry, and is rewarding to the student of informed critical thinking.

The Editors themselves offer in their introduction a most pleasant essay on literary criticism, which this reviewer found most stimulating and pleasantly provoking. With the addition of some American work, possibly a little Australian, and perhaps something more than Mr. Leavis—such as the writing of John Wain, who is often well worth one's attention, this book would have presented a better front. Perhaps publisher and authors would keep this in mind when—as we hope—a second edition is to be considered.—B.W.R.

### **The British Search for the Northwest Passage in the Eighteenth Century**

Williams

Glyndwr Williams has produced a gripping story of the hazards of 18th Century naval exploration in the North Seas and has shown real insight into,