

Robert Lowell, like W. H. Auden in the 1930s and '40s, often lacks passion; some of Lowell's works, to borrow a phrase from Wallace Stevens, are "literary activity," not "vital activity." As for Allen Ginsberg's "syntactical sawdust": "The impression of density in writing is created by penetration into the subject, not by leaving out articles, prepositions and connectives." For all his sometimes harsh appraisals, Simpson accomplishes the task of a good critic—he sends us back to the poetry.

INJUSTICE: The Social Bases of Obedience and Revolt. By Barrington Moore, Jr. M. E. Sharp/Pantheon reprint, 1979. 540 pp. \$7.95

Why do people rebel? Why does injustice sometimes lead to revolt and sometimes to passivity? Social historian Moore asks Big Questions. He answers them by closely examining specific cases: India's untouchables, Nazi concentration camps, the French and Russian revolutions. About one-third of his book is devoted to a study of Germany's alienated working class during the period of rapid industrialization between 1848 and 1920. In almost any circumstance, generalizes Moore, "the workers' idea of a good society is the present order with its most disagreeable features softened or eliminated." A handful of minor reforms instigated by trade unions sustained German labor's conservatism, even after World War I had discredited the monarchy, the bureaucracy, and Big Business. Human beings are inclined to grant rulers (good or bad) moral authority, observes Moore; pessimistically, most men view injustice as inevitable. If the events of 1789 in France and 1917 in Russia are any indications, no revolutionary movement succeeds "until decay overtakes the apparatus of repression."

ESSAYS OF E. B. WHITE. 288 pp. \$5.95.
LETTERS OF E. B. WHITE. 702 pp. \$7.50. Edited by Dorothy Lobrano Guth. Harper reprints, 1979. Boxed set, \$12.95

The essayist, according to E. B. White, "can be any sort of person—philosopher, scold, jester, raconteur, confidant, pundit, devil's advocate, enthusiast." During his long career at the *New Yorker*, where 22 of these 31 compositions first appeared, White has tried on all the essayist's hats. Whether he is describing his affection for his Maine farm or explaining his benign fascination with New York City, the combination of wry wit and simple truth is White's specialty. A city dweller, he finds, "is likely to keep on the move, shopping for the perfect arrangement of rooms and vistas." Country folk prefer permanence, and even the death of a pig is "a departure which the community marks solemnly on its calendar." Dying railroads and old Fords, among other subjects, are nicely limned by White.

The "man who has written a letter is stuck with it for all time," White once remarked. He need not fear posterity. More than just his good humor holds the reader's attention to his letters, variously addressed to friends, readers, writers, and notables between 1908 and 1976. White has devoted a lifetime to writing ("a blank sheet of paper holds the greatest excitement there is for me"), and the most striking aspect of his correspondence is the substantial portion of it that he devotes to talk about his chosen craft. (Indeed, his letters were nominated for a 1976 National Book Critics Circle Award in the category of *criticism*.) No writer, he reflects, "begins to get good until he gets shed of tricks, devices, and formulae." Few have done their "shedding" better than White. His letters—to James Thurber, John Updike, Groucho Marx, Felix Frankfurter, and others—are immensely enjoyable mini-essays.

New Books by Fellows, Former Fellows, and Wilson Center Staff

- FIRE IN THE MINDS OF MEN.** By *James H. Billington*. Basic Books, 1980.
- PARADOXES OF EDUCATION IN A REPUBLIC.** By *Eva T. H. Brann*. Univ. of Chicago, 1979.
- PRESENT DANGER: Towards a Foreign Policy.** By *Robert Conquest*. Hoover, 1979.
- BLACK FILM AS GENRE.** By *Thomas Cripps*. Ind. Univ., 1979, paper (cloth, 1978).
- THE YUGOSLAVS.** By *Dusko Doder*. Vintage, 1979, paper (cloth, Random, 1978).
- DEMOCRACY AND DISTRUST: A Theory of Judicial Review.** By *John Hart Ely*. Harvard, 1980.
- POLITICAL PARTIES IN WESTERN DEMOCRACIES.** By *Leon D. Epstein*. Transaction, 1979.
- YOUNG RUSSIA: The Genesis of Russian Radicalism in the 1860s.** By *Abbott Gleason*. Viking, 1980.
- THE DANGERS OF NUCLEAR WAR.** Edited by *Franklyn Griffiths* and *John C. Polanyi*. Univ. of Toronto, 1979.
- WEAPONS: The International Game of Arms, Money and Diplomacy.** By *Russell Warren Howe*. Doubleday, 1980.
- THE DECLINE OF BISMARCK'S EUROPEAN ORDER: Franco-Russian Relations, 1875-1890.** By *George F. Kennan*. Princeton, 1979.
- THE ELUSIVE QUEST: America's Pursuit of European Stability and French Security, 1919-1933.** By *Melvyn P. Leffler*. Univ. of N. C., 1979.
- STORYTELLING AND MYTHMAKING: Images from Film and Literature.** By *Frank McConnell*. Oxford, 1979.
- VICTORIA OCAMPO: Against the Wind and the Tide.** By *Doris Meyer*. Braziller, 1979.
- PATHS TO THE AMERICAN PAST.** By *J. R. Pole*. Oxford, 1979.
- THE PURSUIT OF EQUALITY IN AMERICAN HISTORY.** By *J. R. Pole*. Univ. of Calif., paper, 1979 (cloth, 1978).
- THE SCIENCES IN THE AMERICAN CONTEXT: New Perspectives.** Edited by *Nathan Reingold*. Smithsonian, 1979.
- NATIONAL PARKS: The American Experience.** By *Alfred Runte*. Univ. of Nebr., 1979.
- MARX.** By *Peter Singer*. Farrar, 1980.
- PRACTICAL ETHICS.** By *Peter Singer*. Cambridge, 1980.
- THE CUBS AND OTHER STORIES.** By *Mario Vargas Llosa*. Harper, 1979.
- A HISTORY OF RUSSIAN THOUGHT: From Enlightenment to Marxism.** By *Andrzej Walicki*. Stanford, 1979.
- PERJURY: The Hiss-Chambers Case.** By *Allen Weinstein*. Vintage, 1979, paper (cloth, Knopf, 1978).