

Moon"). Franklin has also omitted a prefatory argument for the legitimacy of science fiction as literature, since, he says, "that is no longer necessary."

In his "Introduction," Franklin states that: "There was no major nineteenth century American writer of fiction, and indeed few in the second rank, who did not write some science fiction, or at least one utopian romance" (p. ix). His selection illustrates this with a set of important stories from the work of Poe, Hawthorne, Ambrose Bierce, Edward Bellamy, and a number of lesser known writers.

After dealing with Hawthorne and Poe separately in valuable introductory essays to the three stories of each of these writers, Franklin classifies the remainder of the selections into groups. His sections are: Automata (Melville, "Bell Tower"); Marvelous Inventions; Medicine Men; Into the Psyche (Bierce, "A Psychological Shipwreck"); Space Travel (Irving, "The Men in the Moon"); and Time Travel (Harben, "In the Year Ten Thousand"). Each of these sections is prefaced by a short (in some cases all too brief) essay on the background of the theme and the authors of the selections.

Without exploring the full import of their work on later developments in science fiction, Franklin's essays on Poe and Hawthorne establish them as important early contributors to the genre. The question of Poe's paternal relationship is queried; and Hawthorne's futile attempts to be realistic are seen in the perspective of his other creative impulses.

One of Franklin's passing remarks indicates a fertile area for critical speculation. He says that the birth of American fiction at the height of gothicism and romanticism did not permit American writers to develop realistic tendencies until the end of the century. It may be that herein lies the literary foundation of the pre-eminence of Americans in the field of twentieth-century science fiction.

Although one would have welcomed an extensive bibliography of other nineteenth-century American science fiction, this is still a more than usually valuable anthology for both teachers and students of the genre.

William Prouty

PETER K. GARRETT
*The Victorian Multiplot Novel:
Studies in Dialogical Form*
New Haven: Yale University Press,
1980. Pp. 227. \$17.50.

This book grapples with the structural problems of Victorian novels, particularly the "loose baggy monsters" of Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot, and Trollope. In it Garrett reacts against two opposing views of a novel's structure: the traditional notion, derived from drama, of a central plot complemented by one or more subplots on the one hand, and Jacques Derrida's notion of "free play" on the other. Garrett proposes to make the case for "dialogical form" as a way of avoiding the rigidity of the former approach and the incoherent randomness of the latter. By "dialogical form," a term adapted from Bakhtin, the author refers to the "voices"—points of view, structural principles, perspectives—which compete for the reader's attention and remain unsilenced at the novel's end. Gone are the usual distinctions between main plot and subplot and the links (Garrett calls them "interrelationships") between them, and instead is a discussion of the forces which make these novels ambiguous. Most prominent among these are the interplay between development of character and static, descriptive detail (between what Garrett calls the "temporal" and the "spatial"), and closely allied to this, the complex relationship between the narrator's detached perspective and his attention to minute detail.

After the theoretical abstractions of the introductory chapter (a kind of *pons asinorum* for non-structuralists) Garrett turns to Dickens's use of these basic patterns before offering a treatment of his mystery plots in the late novels. One of the most stimulating sections of the book, this chapter follows the shifting significance of mystery in these novels as concealed information becomes less important to the working out of the plot and as Dickens's attention turns to mystery as an aspect of human relationships in *Our Mutual Friend*. In discussing Thackeray, Garrett's thesis is that while Dickens adapted already-existing forms, Thackeray rejects their arbitrariness in his attempt to reach the truth they obscure. Next, Garrett explores the principle in George Eliot by which each character becomes an "equivalent centre" with a

moral right to the reader's attention. And in *Daniel Deronda*, structurally much simpler than *Middlemarch*, he detects a tension between the novelist's palpable intentions and the ambiguity of the novel itself. In the concluding chapter, a consideration of Trollope, the key word is "eccentricity" both in the sense that Trollope is fascinated by his characters' idiosyncrasies and in the further sense that, since Trollope's novels are less coherent than those discussed earlier, apparent protagonists tend to get shunted from the center of the novel.

The underlying point of this book is beyond dispute: we must not oversimplify the structures of these novels when we read or teach them. Beyond this, however, the success of Garrett's argument depends on its language. While there are many fresh insights, the book's larger themes are not so much new as expressed in a new language. We are offered a different way of talking about the switching narrators in *Bleak House* and the theme of community in *Middlemarch* for example, but I am not sure how much further the vocabulary in itself takes our understanding of these books. Some readers will no doubt find that Garrett's approach through this language will yield substantial dividends; others will find it (and Garrett's fondness for "developmental," "interrelationship," and circumlocutions like "vocational opportunity") frustrating and liable to smother the very vitality and exuberance which the book sets out to discuss.

John Miller

ANN ABADIE, ED.

William Faulkner: A Life on Paper
Jackson, Miss.; University of Mississippi Press, 1980. Pp. 125.
\$5.00.

This is the book of a T.V. life of Faulkner produced by the Mississippi Center for Educational Television. It was shown under the same title on the Public Broadcasting Service on December 17, 1979, and again on August 11, 1980, and seems to have been a rare treat for those (unlike this reviewer) having access to PBS.

The film succeeds as book, too. About half is print. A narrator (Raymond Burr in the film) unobtrusively guides us through the plot of Faulkner's life, allowing its drama to be recalled in passages from the novels, letters, interviews, and by a cast of fifty or so characters who knew Faulkner at home in Oxford, in Hollywood, and in the literary-academic world. Chief among the witnesses from home are Faulkner's daughter, Jill Faulkner Summers, and Emily Whitehurst Stone, the wife of Faulkner's best friend, Phil Stone. Apparently this is the first time that Mrs. Summers has spoken publicly of her father, and she does so with candor and with compassionate objectivity about his drinking bouts. Mrs. Stone is rich in anecdote about the Falkner family and Faulkner. Howard Hawks, Lauren Bacall, and Sam Marx recall the Hollywood years. And from the literary and academic worlds we hear from Robert Penn Warren, Malcolm Cowley, Joseph Blotner, Carvel Collins, Stephen Longstreet, and Tennessee Williams.

The other half is image: a hundred and thirty frame enlargements from the film reproduced in T.V. format and stilled upon the page. These show us the contributors, scenes of actual Mississippi and of Yoknapatawpha (these latter being somewhat blurred, a bit "like looking into an aquarium" as Faulkner wrote of Jackson Square in *Mosquitoes*), and Faulkner himself at all ages and in his many roles as wanderer, aviator, husband and father, writer, Nobel laureate, equestrian, Southern gentleman. The Beardsleysque cartoons of W. C. Handy and his band, and of Faulkner falling upon Phil Stone's neck after the shattering separation from Estelle Oldham, reproduce very well and remind us of Faulkner's energy and humor in another form, as well as his gift for line.

The editor has selected wisely and achieved a fine balance. There is no sentimentality or nostalgia, here, nor, thankfully, any staryeyed manufacture into cult-figure (of Art or the South) of an eminently charismatic man. What comes through, strongly, is the unique blend of roguish and deeply-caring humanity that was the man who wrote the novels: who did so, because it was fun to write and a good way to earn a living; who nonetheless struggled to make the novels right. Howard Hawks, Mrs. Stone, and Jean Stein speak of Faulkner's exceptional listening power: clearly he was a writer after James's heart.