the best representatives of both camps: his discussion of the role Monet played in Proust's evocation of Combray is masterly, and his *explication* of the hawthorn episode is a model. It is because Cocking is on the one hand scrupulously precise, as well as uncommonly perceptive, in his handling of key moments in the genesis of the novel, and on the other hand responsive to Proust's text as imaginative literature, that one listens so respectfully to his dissection of the elements that made up Proust's literary sensibility and intelligence. This kind of analysis is not an easy thing to do; it is so tempting to ride a hobbyhorse, to exclude what does not appeal. To be able to write with such understanding about both music and painting is an achievement which is worth much more than double the merit of each of these excellent papers taken singly.

The review articles make interesting reading, as we see Cocking receiving the fruits of other scholars' reflections. He can be enthusiastic, he can be skeptical. He is always courteous, even when firm, as in his confrontation with Ricardou. Always he tests what he reads against his own point of view, modifying the latter when he needs to, though never having to revise it radically.

The only case where Cocking seems to have had second thoughts is in the paper on the coherence of *Le Temps retrouvé*. Cocking says frequently that Proust's attempts to reconcile his intelligence and his imagination are philosophically incoherent. Evidently he thought that he should examine these doubts critically, and the result, while it does not stand the original notion on its head, is more nuanced and less critical. But characteristically, he does not conceal his former misgivings.

The result is a truly humane piece of criticism, which sets up the critic not as a god or a judge, but as a responsible reader, scrupulously fair to the evidence, and interpreting it with wisdom and understanding. This rich and enriching book must henceforth occupy a central position on the shelves of every Proustian, but everyone interested, however remotely, in questions which are in some way connected with the study of an author like Proust, could read it with profit and delight.

Anthony R. Pugh

STANLEY S. ATHERTON
Alan Sillitoe: A Critical Assessment
London: W.H. Allen, 1979. Pp. 215. £7.50.

This "Critical Assessment" is the second full-length book on its subject. The first, Allen R. Penner's *Alan Sillitoe* (New York: Twayne, 1972), was a useful study. Unfortunately its handling of working-class sources and background—essential, given Sillitoe's preoccupations—had to be brief on account of the demands of the Twayne series format.That format, which almost exclusively is reserved for the academic reader, requires an emphasis on close reading of the text but satisfies very little of the general reader's curiosity about the origins of Sillitoe's art. Dr. Atherton does not attempt text-by-text analyses of stories and novels as an alternative to the readings made in the earlier study. Because his book concentrates on the origins and sources of Sillitoe's creativity, it complements rather than duplicates Penner's work.

Atherton's chapter on reviewer's reactions to Sillitoe's early work illustrates how widely that writer was regarded as an original talent when he began to be published. Many of the other chapters are designed to uncover the roots of this originality. Literary novelty in this case seems to owe much to the dearth of convincing working-class fiction before *Saturday Night and Sunday Morning* (1958), especially by writers from a thoroughly proletarian background. Through an examination of Sillitoe's origins—his childhood and family, his native place, class, and environment, his military and other maturing experiences, the literary influences that affected him, and the relationship of these sources to the earlier (pre-1968) novels and stories, which are here the main focus—a convincing case is made for the unprecedented vividness and accuracy of Sillitoe's portrayal of the British working-class experience. The key chapters (4,5, and 6) are those where evidence of working-class conditions and attitudes inside and outside the fiction are compared. The strategy is not to read the fiction for the reader but to contextualize it for him.

It is quite appropriate that the longest chapter in this study is a survey of "The Literary Tradition of the Working-class Hero." This section deals with Disraeli, Mrs. Gaskell, Dickens, Mark Rutherford, Gissing, Morrison, and with Sillitoe's own hero, Robert Tressell, all in some detail. A discussion of three "between-the-wars" novels rounds out this succinct yet comprehensive account of the literary predecessors of the postwar books and plays which caught the fancy of the British public in the late fifties and early sixties. Atherton's initial chapter deals with the mood of the so-called "Angry Decade." Taken together, the two chapters illustrate vividly that, in maintaining solidarity with his class, Sillitoe is in literary terms an "outsider" figure. In intimately portraying the working-class as alien and alienated, he is much less representative of literary currents than other writers of his time. While his Smith and his Arthur Seaton are antiheroes (probably Atherton should have used the term "protagonist" rather than "hero" in many of his discussions of working-class novels), they differ basically from the antiheroes of the Angries. First, Lumley in *Hurry on Down*, and the other figures created in his memorable mould, are cop-outs from their society. Sillitoe's characters keep defiantly to their community, even if it appears to the middle and upper classes to be a cultural wasteland. Second, other contemporary writers who share with him a similar class origin lack the thoroughgoing and convincing character of Sillitoe's working-class orientation and imagination. In the case of such writers (and most are figures quite apart from the Angries), one may frequently find prototypes for their protagonists in the prewar literary tradition of the working-class hero. By contrast, Sillitoe's best characters are arresting and uncompromising in their class affinities, and are a new departure in British fiction for being so.

While the second-last chapter, a survey of recent work, is helpful, it was written before the release of *The Second Chance and Other Stories* and *The Storyteller*, a novel with a protagonist who denounces socialism. These recent works suggest that the third chapter—on Sillitoe's views on writing and his aims as a writer—may need revision before a further critical study of his work is released. In his account of these views, Atherton's range does not extend beyond those expressed before 1975. If the focus in this study is restricted to the earlier fiction, and room is left for another scholar to delineate Sillitoe's development into the 1980s, the satisfying complete nature of the present study is based on the sound conviction that the early work is the base line for the ultimate assessment of this writer. Only when the early achievement has been validated as an original contribution to fiction, and this Dr. Atherton accomplishes, can we have the perspective necessary for assessing Sillitoe's later and his new work.

Kenneth MacKinnon

HERMANN LENZ
Erinnerung an Eduard
Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 1981. Pp. 199.

Erinnerung an Eduard ("Remembering Eduard"; 1981) is the latest work by the well-known German author Hermann Lenz. In 1927, at the age of fourteen, Lenz received as a gift the collected works of the German *Biedermeier* poet Eduard Mörike (1804-1875), and discovered in the course of his reading a strong affinity with Mörike's values and outlook on life in general. His preoccupation with the Swabian poet has, in fact, lasted since that initial encounter, and this story is eloquent testimony to a degree of preoccupation and an abiding sense of indebtedness that have lasted a lifetime.

Erinnerung an Eduard comprises the fictitious memoirs of Otto Nestle, the narrator, who in 1879 looks back on his long friendship with Eduard Mörike. The story begins in 1823, when Otto meets Eduard in the city of Ludwigsburg during the holidays. Both are students, but Nestle suffers from the fact that he does not belong to Mörike's intimate circle of friends, although they grew up together. He is the outsider, the quiet observer who sees clearly how much Eduard's encounter with the beautiful and mysterious Maria Meyer changes him. When the relationship threatens to destroy Eduard, he flees to Stuttgart accompanied by his friends. Otto is also fascinated by Maria but resists her. During the following decades, the lives of both friends unfold. Otto finishes his studies and becomes a private tutor to an aristocratic family, living a withdrawn life in a castle in the countryside, where he meets Countess Valerie who falls in love with him. But Otto renounces her and prefers his solitary existence on the fringes of society to marriage and family life. Eduard, on the other hand, lives the conventional life of a professional and family man, but only his literary achievements bring success and happiness. In the end both men conclude that a life of compromise as well as a life of renunciation are necessary and good.

Fiction and fact are artfully interwoven. The theme of withdrawing into a world of dreams and reminiscence is again at the center of this latest work by Hermann Lenz. Otto Nestle, the protagonist of *Erinnerung an Eduard*, shows in many ways autobiographical traits similar to other characters