Book Reviews

The Tempter. Norbert Wiener. Random House, New York, 1959. 240 pp. $3.75.

Norbert Wiener, ever the student of communications, has turned his creative efforts to yet another form of this protean process. In his novel, *The Tempter*, he has tried to communicate to his readers a description of the complex interactions among science, engineering, and business and of the intimately related complex set of moral problems arising therefrom. Unhappily, there is so much noise mixed with the signals that it is difficult to decide just what message Wiener intended the reader to receive.

This is the story of Gregory James, written in the form of an extended autobiographical letter, or confessional, to the son of Mordecai Williams, James' mentor and employer, who was also the head of the Williams Control Corporation, with which James had been so closely identified. James records his rise from an immigrant "greenhorn" to chief engineer; during this process the success of James and of the firm is assured through an elaborate industrial version of the shell game. James recognizes the importance of a general theory of controls developed, but not patented, by a crochety, independent, and poverty-stricken Englishman, who is also his friend. In order that Williams Controls can get the jump on its competitors, it must appear to own the patents for such ideas and their development. This is accomplished by feeding the ideas to Domingues, a vain, but aspiring, Mexican engineer on the campus of a small American college, who had been a college friend of James in Europe. Domingues' talent for original thinking is limited, but his ability to embroider (and make his own) the thoughts of others is good. Meanwhile, the control concepts are developed into hardware by an imaginative engineer on the Williams Controls staff. Williams Controls, with much fanfare, buys the ideas from Domingues, who patents them and gets all the publicity, while the staff engineer (quiet and unassuming) gets a raise, and his younger engineering associates get disenchanted. The Englishman is offered a substantial sum, but, compared with that paid Domingues, trivial and he—naturally—rejects it.

From time to time, James is concerned with the basic morality of his actions, but for him the possible immoralities implied in my brief description of the plot are balanced by his good intentions, his admiration for Williams, and his estimate of the requirements for loyalty to the firm to which he has committed himself (and which has done very well by him). He further explains his actions, if he does not excuse them—though the reader is not sure that this distinction is clear in the protagonist's own mind—by admitting that he needs a comfortable standard of life and that he enjoys participating in the business of business (both of which, he presumes, derive from his comfortable childhood life as the son of a well-to-do Armenian rug seller and scholar). But at the end of the book, James is unhappy about the way things have turned out and about his part in them, and the reader is unhappy with the quality of the insight and analysis Wiener has provided. This is especially so with regard to the protagonist's limited exploration of the place of science and its special morality in those businesses which use the services of scientists and creative engineers.

James implies that, with his later wisdom and hindsight, he would have done things differently had he been given another opportunity. But it is not at all clear to me *what* he would have done differently and, more important, *why* he would have done it. Given his conflicting set of values, one suspects that if James had followed an alternate set of decisions, he would have been unhappy with their outcome, too. He might have been truer to the values of friendship involved with the Englishman and to the value of integrity between scientists, but what then of his friendship for Williams and his estimate of the validity of a business-engineering value system which he accepted and which many scientists find most useful, both for the standard of living it provides and for the opportunity of extending science it affords.

Wiener's public statements and essays, as well as his choice of plot and preoccupation in this novel, have made it abundantly clear that the moral problems posed are profoundly important ones to him. As such, one could hope for an outspoken and insightful study of these problems, developed in ways which Wiener, with his experience and integrity, may very well be uniquely qualified to perform. These are, of course, tough (and perhaps insoluble) problems, and Wiener has certainly done a service by pointing out, to those readers who have accepted the prevalent public-relations image of science and engineering, that these problems of morality also plague those businesses and personalities that use and are used by scientists and engineers. (And he does demonstrate the role of our archaic patent system in these problems.)

Nevertheless, Wiener does not give the reader the basis for resolving these moral dilemmas, nor does he consider them in general and specific forms with sufficient depth to enhance substantially the reader's capacity for his own fruitful exploration of the dilemmas posed.

DONALD N. MICHAEL
Brookings Institution,
Washington, D.C.

Administration and Policy-Making in Education. John Walton. Johns Hopkins Press, Baltimore, Md., 1959. 207 pp. $5.

Administration and Policy-Making in Education is no handbook of administrative practices or manual of management procedures. Its theme is at the theoretical level. Policy-making, observes Walton, is not done by administrators or by scholars, but by the people and their legislative representatives (page 77). Consistent with this, he thinks of community surveys and citizens' committees as means of ascertain-

ing and developing the popular consensus (page 84).

Cognizant of the smothering bureaucracy that characterizes large enterprises, Walton quotes with approval Rickover's sapient sentence, "Somehow every organization must make room for inner-directed, obstreperous, creative people; sworn enemies of routine and the *status quo*, always ready to upset the applecart by thinking up new and better ways of doing things" (page 196). How? Let the housekeeping and bookkeeping functions of education be routinized and performed by personnel for whom routine is not uncongenial. Even in the educational program a certain precision of scheduling is indispensable, but this "may give the organization enough stability to allow a great deal of freedom in the pursuit of nonroutine undertakings if the distinction between the two is recognized." Once the organizational necessities are met, the temptation to subject all additional activities to them should be resisted.

It is administratively necessary to assign classes, a room, and a time schedule to each teacher; but it is not administratively imperative to assign him a methodology of teaching that corresponds to the method used by every teacher in the school. "Freedom of method, particularly with intelligent, experienced, and educated teachers, would lift an unnecessary burden from the educative process and allow for greater originality, imagination, and creativity." These need to be fostered, and a certain quality of parsimony (not in a pecuniary sense!) of administration can contribute to that end. Walton's conceptions of the role of administration seem to me to be correct and well-stated.

M. M. CHAMBERS
Center for the Study of Higher Education, University of Michigan

George Catlin and the Old Frontier. Harold McCracken. Dial Press, New York, 1959. 266 pp. Illus. $18.50.

George Catlin, Episodes from Life among the Indians and Last Rambles. Marvin C. Ross, Ed. University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 1959. 354 pp. Illus. $12.50.

George Catlin, the mid-19th century painter of our Western Indians, who gave us important recorded data about his observations among these people, has been much neglected for the last century. For a brief interval in the 1830's and 1840's he was greatly acclaimed in the United States and in Europe. Later his materials were plagiarized, and interest in his works died out, except among a few Indian specialists.

With discriminating judgment Harold McCracken, one of the foremost authorities on the paintings of the American West, has picked pertinent passages from Catlin's five books about the Indians and, with infinite adroitness, has woven among them his own arrangements of important supporting data to give a succinct summary of Catlin's dominating experiences with the North American Indians.

Much of the lack of appreciation of Catlin's work resulted from the incredibly poor illustrations reproduced in his books. McCracken has made a most important contribution to rescuing Catlin from obscurity by accompanying the text with the first major gallery of accurate reproductions—165 plates, many previously unpublished, 36 in excellent color. Good reference notes, bibliography, and index are included, but not the useful, original Catlin numbers.

Although this book gives a good insight into the individual character of Catlin's Indian paintings, it provides little interpretation of the artist's personal life.

The Ross book is entirely an editorial project which does not furnish any original research data about Catlin. However, it does make several useful contributions to information concerning the artist's work. The foremost of these is that it brings into print 150 reproductions of paintings, most of them hitherto unpublished. The ones wisely chosen are from the Cartoon collection, which were apparently painted in the field; in contrast, the others were painted in the studio. The fine printing on coated paper has brought out very well the quality of the original paintings.

The second contribution is the use, for the first time, of all the available paintings made during Catlin's trips to South America in the 1850's. A third useful contribution (one that makes reference to them much easier) is the proper arrangement, by tribal area, of the landscapes with the portraits. Ross has also included the original painting numbers, a bibliography, and a thorough index.

The editor has failed to exercise any critical analysis or judgment in selecting the materials used—for example, the illustration (No. 100) of the Aleutian Islanders dressed in Plains Indian costume; and he did not bother to give the modern equivalents of the tribal names used by Catlin. It is indeed fortunate that the book supplements rather than overlaps the much more scholarly McCracken volume.

ROBERT A. ELDER, JR.
Division of Ethnology, U.S. National Museum, Smithsonian Institution

American Handbook of Psychiatry. vol. 1 and vol. 2. Silvano Arieti, Ed. Basic Books, New York, 1959. 2098 pp. $25.

It is with tongue in cheek that one writes a brief review of a work of two volumes (2000 pages), weighing almost 10 pounds, and written by 111 authors. The first volume contains seven parts with 49 subsections, each of which is a separate article. The second volume has eight parts with 50 articles. Some of the articles have more than one author. The industry of the editor and the editorial board inspires awe.

The books represent, to use the words of the chief editor, "a serious effort on the part of the authors to present the development, concepts, trends, techniques, problems and prospects of psychiatry today, in a form useful for both the expert and the beginner, in which every leading school of thought and every major approach is included." He adds further along in the preface, "Each author was requested to cover his special field; he was free to express his personal point of view, but he was asked also to present alternative conceptions and to reduce his private terminology to a minimum, or to define it immediately."

In the face of goals this ambitious and in a field wherein facts are few and opinions many, it truly is surprising how closely the editors and the authors have approached at first try what they had in mind. While a few of the articles are not up to the general standard and appear to have been written in haste, most of them would rate good to excellent. Most of the authors have taken the pains to include an ample bibliography on their topics, and this adds greatly to the value of the books.

The *Handbook*, first of all, can be thought of as a textbook of psychiatry.