meted out to him in life by referring to Griswold's Anthology (1842). In it but three of Poe's poems are printed against nineteen by Mr. Jones Very and seventeen by Mrs. Sigourney. America disliked Poe and was reluctant to hail as a great artist the rather discreditable person they knew. They preferred him when he was making a success of journalism. An epitaph written by Stoddard probably represented the consensus of opinion in America at the time of the poet's death :

> He might have soared in the morning light,
> He built his nest with the birds of night!
> But he lies in dust and the stone is rolled
> Over the sepulchre dim and cold;
> He has cancelled all he has done or said
> And gone to the dear and holy dead,
> Let us forget the path he trod
> And leave him now to his Maker GOD.

In Europe it is thought that for redemption from ignominy Poe had to await the judgement of men of another tongue, for Baudelaire and the Symbolists were the first to hail Poe as genius and to raise him up to the high pedestal of world fame.

The Mind of Poe, though not intended for the general reader, is of great importance to those who specialise in American literature, and indispensable to a proper understanding of Poe. The evidence so assiduously assembled has been generously offered and many students must be grateful to Professor Campbell for presenting in this compact form the result of years of research.

U.P-H.

PETER ABELARD. By Helen Waddell. (Constable; 7/6.)

Those who have had the joy of acquaintance with Miss Waddell's earlier works have proof of the infinite labour of which the present book is the fine flower. The *Wandering Scholars,* in which she entered so intimately into the hearts and minds of the Clerks Marvellous of the twelfth century and earlier; her *Mediæval Latin Lyrics* of which some, in exquisite translation, here reappear, were as its offshoots. But in the novel there is no impression of erudition; she has attained such complete mastery of her material that she can seize its essence. She is Taliesin, on whose lips, after year-long stirrings of Caridwen's cauldron, fell the three bright drops of wisdom.

The book defies analysis; the usual terms are too static for its vitality. One reaches the end, heart-wrung by vicarious anguish, exalted and dazzled by sheer beauty—a beauty so intrinsic, that only deliberate reflection reveals something of the

superb art by which it is conveyed—the transparency, the compression, the gradation of lights and shades, the heroic pruning of subsidiary incident, the elimination of all that art cannot transmute in fresh creation, that does not quiver with the sap of life. There is no 'background,' no canvas on which the story is depicted, no fringe of picturesque but extraneous fact, nothing that is not absorbed and quickened by the action.

> 'For weeks the sun had risen and set in unfathomable cloudless blue: there was warmth even in the starlight. All September the Ile de Cité had lain in a trance of heat, yet not the lifeless heat of August: there was a shiver of expectation in the early morning, exhilaration in the heavy morning dews.'

The descriptions are not so much seen as felt and lived. In the same way the characters reveal themselves from within: a movement, a significant attitude, and the mind conjures them up as vividly as though they had been known in the flesh. Abelard with all his complexity, his fascination, his soaring ambition, his latent humility, his agonised sensitiveness, and, withal, a strain of child-like simplicity; Heloise, 'dew of the morning, crystal, but with the fire of sunrise in it,' as she is described by Gilles, the engaging old Canon, author of uncanonical but lovely poems, whom even St. Bernard loves; Bernard himself, young, inexorable, of great charm (and it is not easy for those who care for Abelard to do justice to Bernard); Pierre de Montboissier, an ardent boy, monk of Cluny, one day to be its great Abbot; the tragic figure of Fulbert, Heloise's uncle, artless and pompous, declining to dark insanity—they all remain, haunting realities, long after the book has been closed.

The love story is told in beauty. Whether by the author's conscious intent or no, over Abelard his almost compatriot Tristan has cast his green mantle—there is the same intimate association with the blossoming earth, with the seasons, with the beasts, the same sense of mighty and irresistible magic, and also, the same dark element, the ugly fact of trust betrayed, bringing inexorable nemesis. 'Thine Uncle whom I shamelessly betrayed . . . .' So Abelard himself would write thereafter. Miss Waddell does not minimise that betrayal, but rather, by her picture of Fulbert deepens its malice even more than the known facts demanded. And yet, what she has shown, 'the absolute of human passion,' is the order of nature in its highest exaltation, a pagan glory, rendered in fullness because for her that order is but a middle-kingdom. And thus George Moore's famous *Heloise and Abelard* is infinitely outdistanced. (It is a notable fact that the materialist and sensualist are bound to the particular, the fragmentary, the setting of fact by fact, and can-

not attain to synthesis, possible only to those who walk with the Spirit—a confirmation of the old teaching of the Schools that the power to apprehend universals is something divine. There can be no unity of thought severed from the supreme Unity). To Abelard, even at the height of his passion, comes a glimpse, a summons:

> ' " Peace in Thy Heaven "—the words rang in his head, coming from he knew not where. He stood dumb, a slow fear mounting in him like the uprising of a cold spring. It was as though he had seen his destiny: *and having Thee to have naught beside.*'

The terrible climax casts its shadows before: in Abelard's terrors and forebodings; in Heloise's wild prophecy, on the eve of their marriage, ' The grief that is to come will be no less than the love that went before it'; in a grim chapter from Origen, how ' it is a far graver thing to bear one's sin, than to pay the fine of death '; in a searing moment of vision, that ' somehow, some day, they would take her from him. And he would live, live years, live his long life, without her.'

But that climax, when it comes, is but part of a greater pattern. At the end of the book, to Abelard, maimed and outcast, when the intolerable waters are at his throat, and he is broken, not so much by the physical injury (in which he could see the penalty of his sin), but by the cruel injustice of the Council of Soissons at a time when—we have his own words—' from sincere love of our holy faith I had written all that I did,' there comes the comfort of the Holy Ghost of which he speaks, the mystical revelation of God.

There the author leaves him. ' Through what sore discipline of body and soul, through what crucifixion of his pride must he still go, before he saw the Kingdom of God? ' It is the forecast of the years of anguish at St. Gildas, the final humiliation of Sens; a tale, but for that underlying pattern, almost too sore for telling. And yet we hope that she will tell it, and soon.

B.B.C.

' Ecce Homo '? By Francis X. McCabe, C.M., LL.D. (The Bruce Publishing Company, Malwaukee; $1.00.)

This popular demonstration of the divinity of Christ from the Gospels may do much good if it can be got into the hands of the many professed Christians who hold Our Lord's Godhead to be a matter of doubt and even of indifference.

M.B.