personally and the matter not be spread to other "interested" but not involved people. Drumming up support is the cause of many problems becoming insoluble for years to come and much party strife in the school and society.

Our staff has attempted to avoid the pitfalls of frequent and unnecessary retentions. We have attempted to teach each student enrolled by the board and assigned to the classes. We will continue to the best of our ability to recommend the best grade placement for each child's benefit. We are committed to work with each parent and we ask for your continued support. ■ ■

Book Reviews

Style and Class, *by Sietze Buning; Middleburg Press, 1982; 127 pp., paper.* (Reviewed by G. VanDer Schaaf.)

Style and Class is Sietze Buning's second book of poetry. When Mr. Buning is not busy writing poems, he teaches literature at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The college treasurer cannot spell "Sietze Buning" correctly, and so Sietze is forced to accept paychecks made out to "Stanley Wiersma."

In *Style and Class,* as in Wiersma's first book, *Purpaleanie,* the reader hears two voices. The first voice is that of the Dutch immigrants who settled in N.W. Iowa a hundred years ago, bringing to that place a strong and simple faith in God, a faith which found expression in a vital and vivid antithesis that gave order and meaning to every activity secular or sacred, from plowing to praying. This is the voice of men who sang psalms while driving six-horse teams, who debated supra- versus infralapsarianism in country kitchens over saucers of cooling coffee, who, following the testimony of the Spirit in their hearts, would lose a field of corn to a hailstorm rather than harvest on the sabbath. It is the voice of women who gathered eggs, helped with the milking, fixed dinners for 18-men threshing rings as a matter of course, baked pie, bread, and chicken for classis, and still found time to teach the children their catechism and hear their bed-time prayers. This first voice is the voice of the *vaderen en moeders in Israel* who now are gone to glory. In *Style and Class* their voice speaks again, and we would do well to pay heed.

The second voice is that of Sietze Buning. Sietze is a son of the immigrants, an heir of the first voice who has grown up and away from N.W. Iowa, geographically from the place and, in

some instances, spiritually from the state of mind. It is a voice that examines and probes the practices and peccadillos, the strengths and foibles of the first voice. Sietze's voice laughs and loves, scolds and sorrows. It is the voice of a man who has made a long journey only, at last, to find himself home again.

Wiersma uses these two voices to develop his theme of "style and class." Style is that grace, that certain flair in life which can be put-on, that can be acquired. Class, on the other hand, is more a quality of being. It is never acquired: it is something that is only had. It is never emulated: it is always the genuine article. For example, a congregation that cracks not a single smile during hilarious pulpit hi-jinks has class because "On state occasions, royality is not amused." And whereas it is a matter of style that secular musicologists now consider the Genevan Psalter to be a work of art, it was pure class that enabled Sietze's father to know that all along.

The poems collected in *Style and Class* are both entertaining and thought-provoking. There is in even the funniest of them a meditative quality that will give the reader pause and prompt him, perhaps, to examine his own lifestyle a little more closely. Hear the voices in this book. Smile at them, laugh with them. Shake your head at them, disagree with them even. But hear what they have to say.

Style and Class and *Purpaleanie* may be ordered from:

The Middleburg Press
Box 166
40 Third Street N.W.
Orange City, Iowa 51041

A Trilogy; The Singer; *1975, 151 pp.,* **The Song;** *1977, 168 pp.,* **The Finale;** *1979, 175 pp., Calvin Miller, illustrated by Joe De Velasco, Inter Varsity Press, $4.75 each volume, paper.* (Reviewed by D. Harbach.)

Calvin Miller is a pastor in Omaha, Nebraska. He is a well-known author among the Baptist churches. He has written other works such as *Poems of Protest and Faith, A Thirst for Meaning,* and *Transcendental Hesitation.*

This is a three-volume boxed set written as a mythical poetic narrative, retelling parts of the New Testament. Written in dynamic prose-poetry, *The Singer* covers the gospel accounts, *The Song* faintly resembles the book of Acts, and *The Finale* attempts to parallel the book of Revelation. I will briefly treat each volume, then give an over-all opinion of the three books.

The Singer purposely seeks to develop a struggle between Christ and Satan. It begins with the parallel of the beginning of Christ's public ministry, retells several miracles, depicts the confrontation with the scribes and pharisees, the suffering on the cross, the conquering of hell,

and ends with an appearance after his resurrection from the dead. The principal characters are the Singer (Christ), World Hater (Satan), and Madman who is healed from madness by the Singer's song.

The Song is characterized by a struggle between Madman, whose name is changed to Anthem, and World Hater, who takes on the disguise of a young man named Sarkon, who also seeks to win all the people over to his side against Anthem. In this book Anthem spreads abroad the truth that the Singer lives. Anthem befriends Everyman and together they spread the truth and at the same time seek the city of the Poet King. The later part of the book involves the persecutions of the Singerians brought about by the craft and deceit of Sarkon.

The Finale begins with the main character, the Dreamer, viewing the future. The next exciting part concerns itself with the War of Fire in which Dreamer repeatedly flees the hunting down and death of the Singerians, who anticipate the glorious return of the Singer. The last part pictures the victorious return of the Singer to an earth almost destroyed by the evil power of the World Hater. Subsequently, the Singer defeats the World Hater, binds him in chains, and rolls him over a ledge into the Canyon of the Damned.

If you enjoy reading poetic narratives, then you will find these books worth adding to your list. Calvin Miller does a superb work in prose-poetry. You will find the first and last books to be the best. If you also enjoy mythical settings and characters then you will find *The Trilogy* a true delight and exciting reading.

A word of caution to those who do not like books of a mythical bent. Do not read these books for they will surely be offensive to you.

My objection to these books is that they try to represent the New Testament from a mythical viewpoint. Included in my objection is the obvious Arminian picture of Christ's work of salvation (the Singer is dependent upon the will of the Singerians in regards to their salvation). Miller would have been better off by not attempting so close a parallel with the New Testament but instead purposely presenting a mythical didactic struggle in which the victory is centered in one person representing the just and upright.

Cults of North America, *by Earl Schipper.* (Reviewed by J. Booth.)

The book on cults by Earl Schipper can certainly be recommended as a guide for the study of the cults, for group study or for individual study. The cults that are included in the book were chosen because of their appeal to people and because they are

cults that we are liable to come into contact with today.

The cults that are included in this guide are as follows: Jehovah's Witnesses, Church of the Latter-day Saints, Christian Science, First Unification Church, and The Way International. As the author mentions in his book, the last two cults have appeared recently and have quickly gained converts among young people.

The material on each cult is easy to read and understand. There are many facts included that make each chapter interesting reading. Each chapter introduces a cult by giving some history on the movement and information about the leader. Then the author presents the basic beliefs of that cult. The focus is on a cult's teaching about the person and role of Jesus and the nature of God, on a cult's teaching on the role of Christ and the importance of human works in salvation, and on a cult's teaching concerning the authority of the Bible. Each chapter ends with discussion questions and it lists other resources for further study.

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In trying to present a subject from the Christian viewpoint, the Scriptures must be effectively related and integrated with the subjects taught. Correlating the Bible with a subject, or using the Bible in teaching a subject is not the same thing as integration on the ground level. Take language for instance. It is not enough to go to the Bible and find verses showing how we should speak, though this is very important and is a vital part of Christian education. Nor is it sufficient to use Bible portions to instruct in public speaking, though again, this has its place in the Bible-centered program. Christian teaching must go farther and show how God is the author of language and has purposes unique to Himself in giving it to man. God is a communicative God. He has communicated His mind to man in His Son, Jesus Christ, Who is called the Word of God; and in the Bible, which is His written revelation. In creating us like Himself, He desires to communicate to us and recommunicate with each other on a human level, yes. But more so, to fellowship with God. There are many secondary uses of language, but this is primary.

quoted from
"Integrating the Bible with Other Subjects
in the Christian School"
by Herman Fransen