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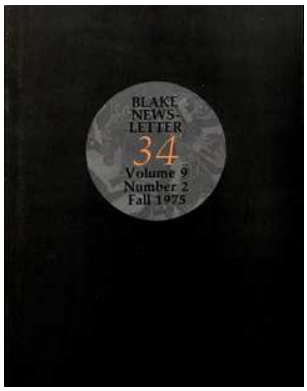


R E V I E W

# David V. Erdman, The Illuminated Blake

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# Reviews

David V. Erdman. *The Illuminated Blake.*
All of William Blake's Illuminated Works with a Plate-by-Plate Commentary. Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1974.
Pp. 416. $7.95, paper.
Reviewed by Edward J. Rose

It has been just over eighty years since Ellis and Yeats published their edition of Blake. That was the last time a book was produced that could be said to be remotely similar in scope to *The Illuminated Blake*, but actually there is *no* work in the critical literature on Blake like Erdman's most recent book. It is the kind of book that nobody but he would have attempted, and it is just as well that nobody but he did, because even Erdman has his problems, some of which are clearly unavoidable considering the difficulties inherent in the monumental task of reproducing every page of each one of the illuminated books while at the same time confining his annotations to a one-page-for-one-page ratio. Despite these difficulties, however, the magnitude of his achievement is strikingly impressive. *The Illuminated Blake* reproduces inexpensively and for the first time in one place all of Blake's illuminated works. The annotations, furthermore, make the material accessible not only to young scholars and beginning students but also to the general reader.

I have called attention to the Ellis-Yeats edition because of the illuminated poems that it reproduces rather than for its very different kind of commentary. Blake is no longer an unknown artist and Erdman has rightly seen his task as that of an annotator who no longer needs to argue for the recognition of his subject. The level of his discourse has struck a happy medium between that of the veteran Blake scholar and that of the writer whose main task is to introduce complicated material to readers who may be seeing most of it for the first time.

Besides the Ellis-Yeats edition there have been other editions, interpretive studies, facsimile editions, and semi-standardized editions (often facsimile types) of *individual* illuminated poems or particular picture series that may be said to bear some *distant* relation to *The Illuminated Blake*. Keynes's and Wicksteed's commentaries on *Jerusalem* and the *Songs*, for example, are probably more like Erdman's annotations than any other commentary in Blake criticism because they examine the two works page-by-page but do not attempt to exhaust their subject, although such an assertion may be debatable in the case of Wicksteed's *Jerusalem* commentary. Keynes's commentaries, like Erdman's, are strongly empirical, even if less speculative. But neither Keynes nor Wicksteed makes the effort that Erdman does to attend to the various details (pictorial and otherwise) on the individual page. Roe's study of the Dante illustrations, Bentley's edition of *Vala*, Damon's *Job* and its successors, and Irene Tayler's book on the Gray illustrations concentrate in great detail on a single work or series of designs, but they do reproduce material in direct conjunction with commentary. (There are, of course, several articles by John E. Grant, Irene Tayler, and me that also reproduce the whole of a series of pictures in conjunction with commentary.) Unlike *The Illuminated Blake*, none of these books and articles anthologizes. In fact, most of these studies are written essentially for the seasoned scholar who knows Blake's other works and can put the specific work involved in some kind of perspective, whereas *The Illuminated Blake* tries to present and comment upon all of the illuminated poems in one volume while trying, successfully I might add, to avoid connoisseur-like notes or the banal. It is likely that *The Illuminated Blake* may become the standard and most functional introduction to the study of Blake as a poet-printer. Books like those of Blunt and Hagstrum serve an entirely different kind of purpose.

While the scope of *The Illuminated Blake* makes it a unique book, the simplicity of its plan and organization is what will make it useful. Erdman reproduces Blake's illuminated works chronologically, most often in actual size but sometimes reduced. *America* and *Europe* are reduced only slightly, but *The Song of Los*, *The Book of Ahania*, *The Book of Los*, and *Jerusalem* (except for pl. 100) considerably. Rarely are the smaller dimensions responsible for the loss of clarity to be observed in the margins and other areas of detail in many of the reproductions included in the volume. Furthermore, Erdman makes a noble effort throughout his annotations to sort out for the reader the salient differences between copies of a given illuminated poem. Because he charts the variations from copy to copy, the chances are good that he may forestall the more astigmatic interpretations that sometimes develop on the basis of only one or two copies. Such interpretations, unfortunately, have not been unknown in past years. Finally, the format of *The Illuminated Blake* is inspired. Because he has turned the book, thereby setting the commentary and the reproduced plate side-by-side on the same page, Erdman makes the reader's job of following his annotations less awkward than is ordinarily the case where detailed commentary accompanies pictures. All in all, the book is well designed.

In his Introduction Erdman raises two difficult points that all critics of Blake must confront if they intend to annotate pictures. These relate to the reading of the pictures and the description of color where the reproductions are in black-and-white, as they are in *The Illuminated Blake*. On the first point, Erdman remarks that "Blake's pictures are never full translations of the text. And these notes attend to the text only as it relates to the pictures. . . . Even when I seem to be telling 'the story of the pictures,' it should not be supposed that a story of the poem would be the same or even have the same plot. When I have introduced, as a way to present the meanings of

the pictures, a synopsis of a whole illuminated poem, it should be tested against one's own full experience of the text and pictures, separately and together" (p. 14). This is a necessary compromise, of course, but it leads unavoidably to various imbalances in the annotations. It does invite the reader to read attentively and critically. The imbalances appear because sometimes the commentary is descriptive (almost exclusively) whereas at other times it is largely interpretive. Color is even more difficult to deal with, and while Erdman does a good job so far as consistency is concerned, his descriptions are impossible to keep in one's mind, even though he tries earnestly to simplify them. I have come to the opinion myself that any attempt to say this object is red (what kind of red!) and that object is blue (what kind of blue!) is as frustrating to the writer as to the reader. Furthermore, neither writer nor reader can consistently visualize or remember the colors (their tints and shades) with only the black-and-white as a guide. Finding verbal equivalents while looking at the color plates themselves is difficult enough. The chaos begins when the viewer moves from plate-to-plate and then copy-to-copy. Trying to recreate the visual impact of a colored plate through verbal equivalents is worse than writing program notes for Bach and Mozart. Nevertheless, in a volume of this sort some reference to color is necessary because it is part of the job of sorting the differences between copies of one poem. It also underscores Blake's instinctive antipathy for sameness or monotony, which as Erdman observes, "Blake loathed."

Erdman's chronological survey begins with the *All Religions are One* and *There is No Natural Religion* plates. And while the annotations are largely right on the mark, one wonders if some of these plates should not have been enlarged after the fashion of the two enlargements Erdman does make for two of the plates from *The Gates of Paradise*. And although Erdman assumes "that every graphic image in Blake's illuminations has its seed or root in the poetry" and that "A failure to find the textual referent is a failure to see something that is there" (a principle which I have never fully accepted), Erdman does not say all that much in his annotations to *All Religions are One* and *There is No Natural Religion* about the relation of the text to the accompanying designs; that is, he makes little attempt to account for their suitability or their being there at all. The random references to the illustrations Blake made for the *Night Thoughts* often omit obvious parallels (more to the point than some that are cited), for example, the woman, child, and bird in *There is No Natural Religion* a5 in series Two and *Night Thoughts* 27. Erdman is also misled on occasion by other critics. The palm (annotations to *All Religions are One*, 5) rather than simply "'a traditional emblem of immortality and resiliency'" which "'may . . . symbolize the continual renewal of the same basic forms in nature' (Essick)" is, instead, traditionally the symbol of victory. This meaning, which is Roman in origin, became in Christian symbolism representative of the triumph of the martyr over death. The palm tree is specifically associated with St. Christopher, who used the tree as a staff on his pilgrimages. According to one legend, after bearing the young Christ (see *Songs* 28) across a river, he drove it into the earth where it took root (see *All Religions are One*, 7 and, by the way, *Night Thoughts* 68).

The narrative tendency of much of the commentary is often tiresome, although probably unavoidable in a book of this sort. Even in his commentary on the *Songs*, Erdman's text tends to narrate rather than concentrate on deep-down interpretive analysis and much of his narration is obvious. Blake was an intensely intellectual man and not a story-teller. This reviewer would have preferred less emphasis on the story line because the concentration on the narrative elements does not tell us what Blake is trying to achieve either on a given page or in the illuminated poem as a whole.

Erdman has problems with his bird identifications, so much so that any veteran birdwatcher is likely to cry out raucously at such identifications as those made on pages 124, 131, or 173. It is, of course, difficult to gauge Blake's intentions or, perhaps, to assess honestly his skill at bird drawing, but whatever kind of birds these are, they are either not ravens and eagles or not very well drawn ravens or eagles.

Erdman tries to establish a distinction between the serpent and riding children on *Thel* 6 and *America* 11, but no such distinction is tenable, at least pictorially, despite what one might say of the relation of the design to the texts of the two poems. Also, in his discussion of the *Songs*, Erdman says some strange things. For example, when discussing the frontispiece to the *Songs of Innocence* (p. 43), he describes the cloud as a "cloud-blanket." Why? It is clearly a cloud and not a blanket or a blanket of clouds. Then he speaks of the "nakedly dressed bard or piper." While nakedly dressed is less than an adequate description and not in the least unusual in Blake's work, the figure is clearly a *piper*, since he carries a pipe. It is disappointing to read this kind of unnecessarily indecisive description of the obvious (there are enough details in Blake's pictures where it is almost impossible to be decisive), and then read such a fine passage as that on the "Holy Thursday" poem in *Innocence* (p. 60): "That this richly embroidered title and twelve lines are what Blake makes of the street between them is suggested by a whiff of smoky flame. . . ." This is the way to look at a Blake page. The reader wonders then why Erdman writes about page 2 of "Night" (p. 62) as follows: "The text *displaces* [my italics] the foliage of a tall oak (to guess from the leaves). . . ." While it is perhaps debatable whether the tree is an oak or not, the point is that the words of the poem *are* the leaves. Erdman still does not make this kind of pictorial metaphor clear on p. 80 (*Song of Los*, 7) and misses it altogher in "The Clod & the Pebble" picture when he repeats in his own way the food-chain nonsense of earlier criticism. This is a brilliant design that has yet to find a commentator equal to it.

The reader wonders again what happened to Isaiah in the discussion of "The Little Girl Found" poem in the *Songs of Experience* (p. 78) and the less than satisfying extrapolation of the butterfly cycle in "The Sick Rose" commentary. Omissions of this sort make the reader restless, and while he understands that some are caused by the limitations of space, he cannot understand why more is not said when the pages are not full. Page 111 is a case in point. Nothing is said of the Pegasus motif (mentioned elsewhere) or the relation between the design at the top of *MHH* 14 and the picture of the Elohim Creating Adam (see also *Night Thoughts* 12). There are many unfilled pages.

The illustration at the bottom of *MHH* 15 (p. 112), rather than having much to do with the plumed serpent, should be compared to the traditional emblem of the serpent and eagle in combat, which extends from the Persians and Greeks to Shelley (see *Prometheus Unbound* and *The Revolt of Islam*, canto 1) and Nietzsche (see Zarathustra's Prologue). There is a helpful article by Rudolf Wittkower in the *Journal of the Warburg Institute*, vol. 2 (1938-39), pp. 293-325, entitled "Eagle and Serpent, A Study in the Migration of Symbols."

It strikes me that the interpretation placed by Erdman on the "bareness" of the lettering on *MHH* 18 (p. 115) is fanciful. I feel this way about many of the squiggles on many of the pages. Rather than serpents, worms, or coils of communication, they are simply just squiggles. By "just" I mean they are decorative or wholly pictorial and do not have symbolic or verbal significance. I think also that while our modern eyes see Jew and African as Londoners, as Erdman's do, Blake was addressing himself, in fact, to three, *not* two, classes: Jew, African, *and* Londoner (see *MHH* 26, p. 133).

There is no doubt that the monster at the top of *America* 4 (p. 142) is a basilisk, as Kathleen Raine suggests, and it is, indeed identifiable in some ways with Orc, but the reasons for that are that the basilisk is half-cock and half-snake. This is, by the way, the plumed serpent--hence Orc. In early Christian symbolism the basilisk was often associated with the Antichrist or the dark power. The dragon, lion, adder, and basilisk symbolized in demonic parody the four beasts of Revelation. They certainly were so interpreted by St. Augustine and other early Church fathers.

It is impossible, of course, to say everything in a volume of this sort, but there are many curious omissions involving pointed cross-references and important observations. I have already suggested a few, but here are some others: *NNR* a1 (p. 27) should be compared to the *Paradise Lost* and *Comus* pictures; some comment is called for on the Wicksteed annunciation-reading of "Infant Joy" (p. 66); the cloud-rider in the "Introduction" (p. 72) to *Songs of Experience* should be compared to the child cloud-rider in the "Introduction" to *Songs of Innocence;* "The Human Abstract" Urizen-figure (p. 89) should be compared with the figure of Urizen on *BU* 28 (p. 210). The poison tree figure recurs pictorially throughout Blake's work, including the *Night Thoughts*, but no comment is made (p. 91); the serpent-leviathan on *MHH* 20 (p. 117) should be compared to the one in the Job illustrations; *MHH* 24 (p. 121) bears comparison not only with the famous color print of Nebuchadnezzar but with *Night Thoughts* 299. *VDA* i (p. 125) is indeed a large face; Blake does this elsewhere, but there is no comment. *VDA* ii (pp. 126-27): the title page commentary misses the rainbow parody of the cave and, most important, *Night Thoughts* 81. *A* 1 (p. 139): this is a pictorialization of the human abstract tree described in that song and should be so noted; the design on *A* 2 (p. 140) should be compared with designs in *The Gates of Paradise* and *Night Thoughts* 13. *SL* 1 (p. 174) should be compared with *BU* 17 (p. 199. *BU* 9 (p. 191) should be compared with *GP* 3 (p. 270) and my old association of the *GP* figures with the four Zoas (see "The Structure of *Jerusalem*"); some comment is needed on the modified embryo or fetal position taken by the figure on *BU* 16 (p. 198) in comparison with *BU* 8 (see also *BU* 22); for another lion not unlike that on *BU* 23, considering what we can see of him, see *Night Thoughts* 25. Picture traditions, such as that of St. Jerome, do not always have verbal equivalents. Is Urizen a kind of St. Jerome? Considering the fact that Erdman poses many questions (perhaps too many), I guess I am entitled to one of my own. The discussion of *M* 2 (p. 218) calls for a comment on other Blakean comets, such as the one on *Night Thoughts* 149; the commentary on *M* 19 (p. 235) cries out for a comparison between the three wives and three daughters shown here and those who are to be seen on *L'Allegro* 6 and *Il Penseroso* 12.

Erdman's vision of a little Blake scrambling around in the margins of the *Milton* plates has never seemed altogether convincing to me, at least not in most cases. The feature-less figure in the top right margin of *M* 23 is a case in point, but there are many others. It is not that Blake was above cartooning (or even doodling) in the modern sense, but that the selection of certain figures in the margins as William or Catherine Blake is often simply arbitrary. Many marginal definitions like the "flat dark hand with spread fingers" that is supposed to be growing out of a vine in the lower right margin of *M* 44 (p. 260) are not only purely speculative, but essentially meaningless when noted without interpretive comment or without being placed in some kind of context.

What Erdman takes for a "black" penis on *M* 32 (there are other debatable observations of a similar kind) is perhaps pubic hair and certainly shadowing or shading. In his discussion of *M* 36 (p. 252), which is generally sound and even impressive, Erdman again overlooks the shading and thus sees only circles instead of globes. The diagram is not one-dimensional any more than are the drawings of William and Robert Blake. The globes are shaded so as to indicate their spherical shape. Perhaps the way to visualize *M* 36 is to see it after the fashion of an atomic model in which the various neutrons and protons are strung together.

Erdman notes the Cerberus that confronts the pilgrim, Milton, on *M* 46 (p. 262). We get a better view of him in the illustrations to *Paradise Lost*. The serpent-rooster Erdman sees is, of course, another version of the basilisk whose components are clearly seen here. The scene is Dantesque and could well illustrate "The Mental Traveller." Similarly the cruciform emanation and somewhat serpentine wheat men on *M* 50 recall vaguely the caduceus (at least pictorially) and certainly point at a vegetative harvest. At the end of *Milton* Blake had not yet transfigured the harvest into a mental or aesthetic act. I am not sure that much that has been said about the illustration on *M* 50 is really to the point. At any rate, more needs to be said in detail about the figures and the relation of the final design to the poem as a whole.

*GP* 2, 3, 4, and 5 should be compared to the Zoas and *GP* i to the butterfly cycle and/or *J* 2 where Erdman does refer to *GP* i. I think also that Erdman partly misreads *GP* 19, the illustration of which can be compared to several flying and bat-devils in Blake's work from the serpent-Satan of the *Paradise Lost* designs to *J* 6 and the Job illustrations. My point, however, is that Blake would never have believed that Satan who is the God of this World could be a "better help than no dreams at all," even "for temporarily lost travellers." (See my *Explicator* reply of January 1964, vol. 22:5).

As I have said elsewhere, what we see on the first plate of *Jerusalem* is Blake-Los entering his own poem: the Jerusalem that he builds in England's green and pleasant land and amidst those dark satanic mills about which he writes at the beginning of *Milton*. The door on plate 1 of *Jerusalem* may also be found in several of the *Night Thoughts* illustrations.

It is difficult to cover all the ins and outs of Erdman's commentary on *Jerusalem*. For example, while he could have said much more about *J* 14, *J* 15 is a model of pointed clarity and brevity. His discussion of plate 2 of *Jerusalem* is essentially sound, but could benefit from a forward look at plates 92 and 96 where all traces of Jerusalem's insect life have disappeared, a development, as I have said, that is of special importance (see *TSLL*, 1968). On *J* 9 Erdman rightly picks up the piper of Innocence but, perhaps because he does not think it appropriate, chooses not to draw the reader's attention to the poison tree posture of the prostrate body (found also in the *Night Thoughts* designs), which is borne out by the central idea of the page. On *J* 11 he argues hard and well for a Swan-Los, but I think the question is still far from being resolved.

In his discussion of *J* 23, *Night Thoughts* 22 would be more to the point than *Night Thoughts* 299. Miners there (*NT* 22) are underground. Similarly, Erdman's point about the "first explanation of the term 'Spectre'" is rather cryptic considering all that is said about the Spectre in *The Four Zoas* and *Milton*. Attention should be called to the design in the right margin of *J* 42, since it is about the best example of the *figura serpentinata* in Blake's work. In fact, one of the weaknesses of *The Illuminated Blake* is its failure to take compositional, purely pictorial, and strictly decorative effects into account.

So far as *J* 54 is concerned, the four heads are more likely to be understood as those of the four Zoas than just four rocky fragments. That is, they are the four Zoas that are to be found buried in every man. That they are the Zoas is even more obvious on *J* 92, where Erdman finally speculates on this possibility. They are also, of course, pity, wrath, reason, and desire.

The little figure on *J* 62 may be Blake, but could easily be (as in *Milton*) a surrogate for the reader, confronted here by the body-text. As I pointed out, the phrase "Eyed as the Peacock" (literal and imaginative as it is) describes an eye for every pore, a visionary skin that unites feeling with sight. *J* 62 suggests the opposite, even the mockery, of infinite-eye vision distributed all over the body. The kind of Indian headdress worn by Albion-Enceladus (see Melville's *Pierre*) crowns the visualization of the *engraved* man, that is, Samson who has made a sepulchre of himself--a sun-son unable to rise from his earth-tomb-body he has sometimes knowingly and sometimes unknowingly fashioned in accordance with his nightmarish introspections.

The employment of the worm in *J* 63, especially at the loins (the place of the last judgment), invites comparison with the *Elohim Creating Adam* and the *Red Dragon and the Woman Clothed with the Sun* (the version in the Brooklyn Museum), although such a comparison is perhaps not as striking as the relation between *J* 64 and *Night Thoughts* 7, which Erdman quite rightly emphasizes. The figure on *J* 67 is obviously stretched out on a kind of rack, but what is more interesting is that the chains are carried over from *J* 65, a technique that Blake often employs. For example, *J* 25 should be brought forward into the discussion of *J* 69. The two plates are intimately related because of the sacrificial orgy that is celebrated on both pages.

I do not think the discussion of the swan on *J* 71 goes well with the discussion of *J* 11, and the discussion of *J* 72 is very disappointing because it fails to extrapolate on *J* 54. The same could be said of *J* 74, *J* 71, and *J* 63. The discussion of *J* 75 unfortunately does not relate the picture of the seven-headed, ten-horned (sometimes seven-crowned) dragon and whore to several of Blake's watercolors for the Book of Revelation, including *Night Thoughts* 345 and, perhaps, *J* 50.

The commentary on *J* 77 could well be expanded. There is space, which is not the case in the discussions of several of the important plates between *J* 92 and *J* 100, but little more than the obvious is recorded. Also, the somewhat comic anticipation of Rodin's famous thinker on *J* 78 may have overtones not included in Erdman's commentary. The cock, while a component of the basilisk is, after all, a symbol of Christ. There is a connection, therefore, between *J* 78 and *J*

76--so much for brave chanticleer. In a similar way the phallic worm of *J* 82 should be compared with those seen earlier, especially the loins-hugging one on *J* 63. Finally, it is not clear to me (on *J* 84, p. 363) what the amalgamation of the Druid and Christian *churches* would imply. From Blake's point of view, not much I think. There is not much hope in such an ecumenical movement, at least not for a radical poet-painter-prophet who is perpetually politically left and forever spiritually right. So much for *via media*.

One of the great values of *The Illuminated Blake* is that it will provoke close study and detailed comment on Blake's illuminated poems. Let us hope that comment will be imaginative and illuminating. Erdman's book will also show the new reader and remind the old that Blake was a pictorial artist and that it is a mistake to treat him *only* as a conventional poet.

It is doubtful that anyone except those who can do without *The Illuminated Blake* will be able to make the best use of the whole of it, but that is true of most books. It will quite naturally serve those best who do not really need it, since it will be used most often as a memory stimulator by those who already know the originals (as well as the Trianon facsimiles) or have easy access to a representative number of them. Its effect on the serious student or neophyte Blake scholar will probably be mixed. Of course, the good it will do will far outweigh the bad. Despite the fact that it cannot always be read without a regular printed text (except, perhaps, as Erdman recommends, with a magnifying glass), the beginning reader of Blake will get a good sense of what the thrust of a real Blakean page is.

Some of the reproductions in *The Illuminated Blake* are not easily decipherable, so that if the reader really wants to follow Erdman in detail, he will have to have better reproductions than many of those that are included in this volume, but Blake is not always easy to reproduce. I speak in the main of the interlinear and marginal areas of representative pages. If the reader depends only on the reproductions in *The Illuminated Blake*, he will often have to take Erdman's word for it, not because his interpretation may differ, but because he simply cannot make out the details that Erdman says are there.

The information on pp. 14, 15, and 21 in the Introduction, it seems to me, should be given in greater detail. Furthermore, it belongs with the information on pp. 8-9. The asterisk which appears often in the annotations is never identified, so far as I can discover. It also would have been helpful for Erdman to have explained the technical rudiments of Blake's printing process. Such an explanation belongs in a volume of this sort because it answers fundamental questions about how Blake produced the plates.

It is to be hoped that *The Illuminated Blake* will go into either a second printing or, better, a second edition so that Erdman will get a chance to rectify or, at least, modify various passages, not to mention the typographical errors. Let us hope that his publisher is listening. Some of the photographic reproduction work should be redone. The book is too good to be so badly served as it sometimes is by lapses in production. Always formidable, often brilliant, sometimes uneven and unnecessarily obscure, *The Illuminated Blake* is an invaluable contribution to Blake studies. It is unfortunate that Erdman does not resort more vigorously and judiciously to the critical literature on Blake. He seems at times to cite only what he happens to remember, but perhaps this is a niggling point; for, while there are many minor points with which to take issue throughout the volume, there are no major blunders. *The Illuminated Blake* is an astonishingly successful book on the whole.

## Martin K. Nurmi. *William Blake.* London: Hutchinson University Library, 1975. Pp. 175, 8 illus. $1.95, paper.

Reviewed by Paul M. Zall

Those who have long since despaired of keeping a body count in Blake studies will be cheered by the appearance of a Blake volume in Hutchinson's series for students and general readers. The focal point is Blake's poetry, however, abstracted from his art ("it has not been possible to give much attention to his art"), and for that reason alone will probably cause consternation among Blake camps of whatever critical persuasion. But this is a book for beginners, and should be greeted accordingly, with all due allowance for puns ("a Woman of Experience") and topicality ("Blake was not a male chauvinist").

The overview in this respect is very good, with an introductory chapter enticing beginners with visions of good things to come ("as we shall see later") and a biographical summary that gives much Blake in brief compass. Successive chapters then lead through the early verse--stressing the metrics in *Poetical Sketches*, then the philosophical countersystem in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell*--gradually snaking through Blake's more complicated mythic structures. While the seasoned Blakean may scoff from the trenches at the redundancy inherent in this method, it seems to fit the needs of new recruits.

Of course the method risks the oversimplification of *Cliff's Notes*, but there is little of that here, except in a statement about *The Four Zoas* being "one of the very greatest works of literature" (p. 26)--alas not demonstrated in the introductory chapter in which it appears nor in the ultimate chapter where the poem is discussed in detail and the aid of both Erdman and Frye is invoked. Or in the discussion of "The Tyger," plateless, where after four pages of possibilities we are given a series of questions asserted to be logically unanswerable--with no suggestion that logic is not the only way to answer them. Or in the discussion of *The Marriage*, where the student and