It is nearly 20 years since a history of Swedish lit. appeared in English. *Essays on Swedish Literature*, ed. I. Scobbie, Aberdeen Univ., 1978, 281 pp. (distributed privately by the ed.), is a coll. of 11 essentially expository essays which attempt to follow the main lit. trends from the last two decades of the 19th c. to the present-day. Written primarily for the needs of English-speaking students by a group of univ. teachers, some of the essays concentrate on specific authors, others deal with movements. Although mostly straightforward accounts there are some good passages of crit. writing, as for instance I.-S. Ewbank, 'August Strindberg', pp. 15–24, where with the help of cross-cultural refs the link between the author’s sense of self and his sense of artistic form is established in a guided tour of S.’s language patterns. The lyric poets have, however, received only scant attention which is perhaps inevitable in view of the intention of the book. As a student textbook its value will be immense. Another coll. of essays appears under the title of *Pegas och snöbollskriget. Litteraturvetenskapliga studier tillägnade S. Linnér*, Åbo Akademi, 353 pp. As in any *Fest.* there are wide variations in subject, focus and treatment. This vol. contains 20 essays divided into three sections. Two in the first deal specifically with Swedish authors. B. Loman, ‘Två systrar. Några anteckningar vid läsningen av Drottningens juvelsmycke’, pp. 17–29, dwells on linguistic implications in an examination of the characters of Adolfine and Amanda in Almqvist’s novel. T. Petterson, ‘Den historiska sanningen som problem och nödvändighet hos Eyvind Johnson. En diskussion kring Några steg mot tystnaden’, pp. 31–45, takes the last novel as a basis for his investigation into J.’s arguments on the nature of hist. truth. Of the eight essays devoted to Fenno-Swedish writers in the second section the following four are of interest: B. Hellman’s survey of K. A. Tavaststjerna’s attitude to Russia as reflected in the works in ‘Tavaststjerna och Ryssland’, pp.
79–96; R. Holmström’s account of Hagar Olsson’s crit. method in her early years in ‘Hagar Olssons genombrott som kritiker’, pp. 97–108; P. Wrede’s appreciation in ‘En barnskildring av Solveig von Schoultz’, pp. 155–70, of the short story Ansa och samvetet; and C. Zilliacus’s plea for the resuscitation of H. Olsson’s still unpubl. and unstaged play Lumisota. Among the disparate essays of the third section M. Rajalin’s ‘Särlingskap och stolt ensamhet i Emily Dickinsons och Edith Sodergrans dikt’, pp. 227–45, offers interesting comparisons between the American and Finnish poetesses. An admirable attempt to give a crit. survey of fictional accounts of civil servants and politicians in the years 1965–75 is made by I. Jonsson, Maktens verktøy. Byråkrater och politiker i nutida svensk samhällskildring, Liber, 1978, 153 pp. A bibl. of some 180 books on which the survey is based is appended. A short introd. hist. account documenting the achievements of 19th-c. political writers from Almqvist onwards is followed by a section which recounts the content of seven separate novels, viz. B. Gustafson’s Press, J. Gehlin’s Spindelnätet, P. C. Jersild’s Grisjakten, L. Frick’s Lögnaren, L. Gustafsson’s Familjefesten, G. Hägg’s Lejontecknet, and H. O. Sjöström’s En sakkunnigs kärleksliv. J. singles out under separate headings four different types of civil servant as the concern of the political novels. The penultimate chaps of his study consider the depiction of futuristic societies and the element of social criticism in political fiction. Recognizing the hermeneutic law that interpretation is subject to cultural predisposition, J. concludes with a confession of his own prejudices vis-à-vis the civil service. Although this book cannot pretend to probe deeply it is a pioneering and informative analysis of an important trend in modern fiction. J. continues the theme of this book in ‘Människan i organisationsvärlden’, SLT, 42, no. 1:3–12, which dwells mainly on P. C. Jersild’s Babels hus. If one were to believe present-day lit. guides the 19th c. produced only three dramatists—Atterbom, Stagnelius and Strindberg. N. Halkjaer’s informative and useful study, Den svenska 1800-talsdramatiken och litteraturhistorien. En studie i litteraturhistorisk kanonbildning och några synpunkter på definitionen av populär litteratur (Litteratur och samhälle, 3), Uppsala, Avdelning för litteratursociologi, 1977, pp. 25–87, is one of the results of a research project aimed at analysing the