

stronger organizational ties between corporations and local governments and associations; "communitarian institutions," such as the workers' syndicates in northern Italy, would be charged with regulating and protecting industries within their regions. Though it has romantic elements, Piore and Sabel's visionary scheme will certainly figure in future economic debates.

BLOODS: An Oral History of the Vietnam War by Black Veterans
by Wallace Terry
Random, 1984
311 pp. \$17.95



After a decade of silence, the veterans of the Vietnam conflict have begun to speak out. In this book, Terry, a former *Time* reporter in Saigon, has skillfully edited the taped recollections of 20 black survivors. These veterans run the gamut—ordinary lads, semiliterate dropouts, a Marine sergeant major, an Air Force colonel who refused to knuckle under during seven years as a prisoner of war in Hanoi. Several reminiscences of ground combat seem to verge on fantasy; many evoke the brutality, comradeship, and bravery of whites and blacks alike. The younger veterans bitterly recall the racial tensions of the 1960s and '70s, the neglect (and worse) shown by the homefolks toward the men returning from the unpopular war America had sent them to fight. Angry or proud (or both), most of Terry's "bloods" are superb storytellers.

Arts & Letters

THE COLLECTED STORIES
by Dylan Thomas
New Directions, 1984
362 pp. \$16.95

Known primarily for his poetry, the Welshman Dylan Thomas (1914–53) was also an accomplished spinner of tales, as these 40 stories vividly attest. The earliest ones, initially rejected by his publisher because of their "obscenity," are haunting, somber fantasies, surreal accounts of death, spirits, and strange happenings. In "The Orchards," for instance, an apple farmer goes mad with unnatural love for "flesh-and-ghost" scarecrows. Thomas's turn from the macabre to

more conventional narrative, as in his autobiographical *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Dog*, is signaled most clearly by the introduction of humor: "What's the weapons, Mr. O'Brien?" "Brandies at dawn, I should think, Mrs. Franklin." The poet's hand is evident throughout these tales, as striking similes—a drunkard is described "carrying his dignity as a man might carry a full glass around a quaking ship"—punctuate the narrative flow. Most of the later prose was written for broadcast, including his widely acclaimed "A Child's Christmas in Wales."

**ENCOUNTERS
WITH VERDI**

edited, introduced,
and annotated
by Marcello Conati
translated by
Richard Stokes
Cornell, 1984
417 pp. \$25

The reclusive Giuseppe Verdi (1813–1901), leading Italian composer of the 19th century and creator of *Rigoletto*, *La traviata*, *Aida*, and other great operas, comes to life in these 50 firsthand encounters. Recalling their meetings with the master are singers, composers, writers, critics, journalists; they take note of everything from Verdi's personal manner ("unaffected and affable") to his second occupation, agriculture. The selections by editor Conati, a composer and pianist, also treat readers to the maestro's opinions on music and musicians. Though he thought that all great music "must be thoroughly national" and wanted, himself, "to be nothing but Italian," he was unenthusiastic about that most German of German composers, Richard Wagner: "He seems to be overstepping the bounds of what can be expressed in music." Wagner's "philosophical music" was incomprehensible to the composer who believed that "simplicity in art is everything." That simplicity marked Verdi's art and life. Wrote one admirer: "Verdi was a genius with the soul of a child."

**FROST: A Literary Life
Reconsidered**
by William H. Pritchard
Oxford, 1984
286 pp. \$15.95

Few literary reputations have been so drastically revised as Robert Frost's (1874–1963). Lawrance Thompson's three-volume biography, completed in 1976, showed that behind the prevailing popular image of Frost as a