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## Recent Books of Note--October 1979

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RECENT BOOKS OF NOTE

Let the Oppressed Go Free, 1861-1867, Volume V of The Letters of William Lloyd Garrison. Edited by Walter M. Merrill. Harvard. \$37.50.

Professor Merrill of the English Department at Drexel University worked with the late Louis Ruchames, and in their original scheme this volume was one of three assigned to editor Merrill. A final volume for the period 1868-1879 is planned.

Selected Studies in Bibliography, by G. Thomas Tanselle. University Press of Virginia, Box 3608, Univ. Station, Charlottesville, Va. 22903. \$15. 506 pp.

This work includes Tanselle's incisive essay on "Editing of Historical Documents," "Some Principles of Editorial Apparatus," and other writings which have provoked much new thinking within the editing profession. A sample:

Scholarly editors may disagree about many things, but they are in general agreement that their goal is to discover exactly what an author wrote and to determine what form of his work he wished the public to have. There may be some difference of opinion about the best way of achieving that goal; but if the edition is to be a work of scholarship -- a historical reconstruction -- the goal itself must involve the author's "intention." The centrality of that concept to scholarly editing can be illustrated by W. W. Greg's "The Rationale of Copy-Text," which, in the quarter century since it first appeared, has established itself as the most influential document in modern editorial theory.\* . . . Although Greg did not address himself to the question of a precise definition of "author's intention," it is clear from such a summary that he considered the goal of an edition -- and he was speaking of an "old-spelling critical edition" -- to be the reconstruction of a text representing the author's final wishes about the version of his work to be presented to the public. . . .

(\*Greg's essay appeared in Studies in Bibliography, III, 19-36).

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