

(which has a long, long history in the Church) which displaces Christ from the centre of the Christian message, and works with a more or less deistic concept of God, only extrinsically connected with Jesus, and which, when it does advert to Jesus (as it does rather more often nowadays), leaves out the Ascension and Pentecost, so that one is left wondering just what the point of it all is.

This comes out much more clearly and painfully in the other two books, both of which are the kind of pseudo-spiritual mysticism which is all too familiar. Both talk 'Christian' language, to their own ends, which are not much to do with genuine Christianity; Mrs Toyne even, apparently, has the blessing of an Anglican Bishop, and her book contains a Foreword by the Dean of St Paul's. I'm afraid Bishop Pike was not the only one to succumb to the psychic charms of the Siren. It is some six centuries since the *Cloud of Unknowing* warned us that 'the devil hath his contemplatives', a warning repeated recently by Prof. Zaehner; it is high time that we gave heed. It would be tiresome in the extreme to discuss either of these books in detail; it is more important for us to notice that they both reflect the same situation *vis-à-vis* the gospel. God is more or less abstract, Christ totally so. 'We are really God fulfilling Itself as individual being' (Goldsmith); 'one's Ego is indeed God' (Toyne). Goldsmith specifically dissociates Christ from Jesus, in favour of a universal principle, an eternal 'I AM' which each of us should aspire to claim for himself. Evil does not really exist; all we have to do is escape from illusion (Goldsmith) and matter (Toyne). This obviously makes grace unintelligible, likewise petitionary prayer, as indeed they point out to us. Jesus is simply a great 'Master'. In one very significant passage, Mrs Toyne describes how excited she was to

receive a visit from a spiritual Master (via a medium) who had once been a man, like herself. She apparently has never even considered that perhaps Jesus might fit in here too! Entirely absent is the dynamic of salvation, an inevitable concomitant of such an abstract concept of God and of Christ. Gone is the central Christian pair faith and hope. And of course charity cannot go unaffected—Mrs Toyne lets on, unintentionally and *en passant*, that she is a racialist (a very benign one, I'm sure). Purveyors of this kind of spirituality all seem to belong to the same social and political grouping; I knew exactly what Mrs Toyne looks like, even before I noticed her picture on the jacket flap—they *all* look like that!

Now, I suspect that this kind of 'mysticism' would not pass as genuine Buddhism or Hinduism either; but that it should be able to masquerade as Christianity—even with episcopal blessing—indicates that something has gone very wrong indeed with our presentation of the faith. And isn't it really just the same as in Frossard's case? We have displaced the reality of Jesus Christ from the centre of our proclamation, in favour of a more or less abstract God; we have abandoned the Trinity to logical fireworks, unconnected with salvation. We have forgotten all about the Holy Spirit (as Leo XIII complained). Until we preach Christianity complete, bearing witness in the power of the Spirit that Jesus really is Lord and Christ, it is inevitable that people dissatisfied with our materialist and secularized Churches should turn to this kind of pseudo-spirituality, and think that they have found what it is all about. I wouldn't recommend anyone to undergo the tedium of reading this kind of book; but not one of us can escape the challenge they represent.

SIMON TUGWELL, O.P.

MORALITY AND MORAL REASONING: Five Essays in Ethics, edited by John Casey. Methuen, 1971. 208 pp. £2.50.

This well-thought-out symposium on ethics is the product of a good deal of informal discussion by a group of Cambridge philosophers whose work bears the marks of close co-operative effort. While they do not always agree with each other, they have clearly learnt from each other, and several acknowledge the others' contribution to their own arguments. The result, unlike that of many symposia, is a unity of style and tone which makes the book useful, not only for its individual contributions and arguments but because it reflects some-

thing commonly shared, a unity of mood. Instead of having a set of widely differing essays brought together by an editor whose job has been to knock various heads together, this book gives the impression of having grown naturally out of participation in a common philosophical quest.

This quest has two parts, as the editor explains in the preface. The first is with finding answers to the question 'what is it to judge morally?' and the second with the question 'what makes a reason a moral reason?'. With the exception of

Bernard Williams' inaugural lecture at Bedford College entitled *Morality and the Emotions* all the essays are new. Williams' essay attempts to show that while the emotivist theory of ethics—roughly, the theory that either making moral judgments themselves, or distinguishing moral judgments from other kinds, entails the having or the describing of appropriate emotions—is certainly false, nevertheless emotions do enter into the question of ethical judgments in the following way: 'the relevant unity in a man's behaviour, the pattern into which his judgments and actions together fit, must be understood in terms of an emotional structure underlying them, and . . . understanding of this kind may be essential'. (p. 17.) Without such understanding, we cannot properly describe *what* the man is doing.

Roger Scruton's essay *Attitudes, Beliefs and Reasons* takes issue with Williams, at least to the extent that it argues for emotivism understood as the theory that 'moral beliefs are attitudes. To judge something to be morally good is to have or take up a certain attitude towards it.' (p. 25.) Scruton's contribution—the longest in the book, a monograph in itself of seventy-five pages—is argued closely and persistently, with a good deal of subtlety. It is certainly not a crudely reductionist theory. It claims to show that 'emotivism need be neither naïve nor pernicious'. (p. 100.) On the score of naïveté, I think Scruton can certainly be acquitted: indeed, the question that arises is whether it is naïve enough. At least, it is not a theory that can easily be abbreviated to a few slogans for bandying about in handy summaries of modern philosophy. Whether Scruton also succeeds in showing that emotivism need not be pernicious must be regarded as not proven, since his main weakness is that he does not go on to show what kinds of consequences would be likely to follow, either for the individual or society, were emotivism of his kind to be generally agreed upon.

Indeed, except for John Casey's own paper on *Actions and Consequences*, which can best be read, I think, as a philosopher's contribution to certain current topical moral issues, these essays are thoroughly academic in both the best and the worst senses. S. W. Blackburn's *Moral Realism* tries to show that, whatever may be meant by saying that a moral judgment is true, it *cannot* mean that such a judgment corresponds in any way with a state of affairs (p. 101). Yet this does not mean, as the unwary reader might have thought, that 'the notion of

moral truth, and the associated notions of moral attributes and propositions, disappear when the realistic theory is refuted'. (p. 124.) J. E. J. Altham, in *Evaluation and Speech*, discusses the place of *standards* in moral attitudes, including those with a high emotional content. In doing this he seems to be carrying Williams' argument a stage further. Both of these essays are dense and technical, and in themselves rather remote from everyday moral concerns. But they do illustrate the mood of some current philosophy—demanding, detached, wary of anything that might be labelled 'relevant' by those who demand 'relevance' of all worthwhile academic activity. I sympathize with that wariness: but I must confess I found it hard to keep awake during the reading of these pieces.

John Casey's own essay is very different, if only because it might be useful to people actually faced with certain moral dilemmas. It is part of a running argument about whether principles such as 'It is always wrong to do X whatever the consequences of not doing so' can be given coherent rational sense. In the context of the abortion debate, and particularly the 'mother or child' dilemma, the argument here pursued is extremely relevant, because it shows—convincingly to my mind—that those who take such 'absolutist' views as the one stated above have no need to worry when they are called 'irrational' or 'conservative'. The first accusation is without foundation, the second—so Casey seems to imply—is misleading and not necessarily offensive. The most useful point he makes, in discussing the problem for the obstetrician facing the 'mother or child' dilemma, is that the doctor's own view of his own role must enter into the very description of the moral dilemma itself. So must *our* view of his role enter into *our* judgment of his problem. To say, for example, that by not killing the baby the doctor is 'letting the mother die', at least where this is said by way of condemnation of the doctor for callousness or subservience to irrational principle, is wholly misguided, since such language is wholly inappropriate to the situation and the doctor's role in it. Such a condemnation makes sense only if one is prepared to revise, and to ask the doctor to revise, the traditional role of the medical man in such situations. When such revision is suggested, the results look a good deal less humane than many humanitarian pro-abortionists think. In any case, *this* question is itself a moral one, the settlement of which

must inevitably wait upon all those complex problems that attend any moral question. While Casey does not, himself, side with the 'absolutist' as against the 'consequentialist' he does give the former a great deal of very valuable and damaging ammunition. My only regret is that he does not develop his objection to calling the 'absolutist' position *conservative*.

It has been argued in this journal, not least by the distinguished editor, that some kinds of 'absolutist' position are revolutionary rather than conservative, and that it is the consequentialist, especially the situationist, who is the true conservative. But that is an argument that these academic academics do not venture into.

BRIAN WICKER

TWENTIETH CENTURY VIEWS: The Brontës; ed. Ian Gregor; Prentice-Hall Inc. (price not given).

As reach-me-down literary criticism goes, the 'Twentieth Century Views' series has been fairly impressive. It glints with the lust of a quick commercial kill, and exploits student inexperience, anxiety and overhastiness in objectionable ways; but only a relatively small percentage of its titles are critically risible; most have the minimal merit of reprinting at least one or two valuable pieces, and the best volumes are lively as well as trendy, densely-packed as well as suavely packaged.

All such anthology-making has its flaws, and Ian Gregor's welcome contribution on the Brontës is no exception. It begins with a dismally stodgy piece by C. P. Sanger on legal and genealogical aspects of *Wuthering Heights*, written with all the verve and dash of a gynaecological text-book; the piece is helpful as a reader's guide to the sheerly factual complexities of the novel, and one can dimly see the editorial point behind its inclusion; but some other way of supplying this information (perhaps cutting everything but Sanger's useful family-tree of characters?) was surely possible. One or two of the chapters have a thinnish feel about them, and even the valuable ones by Robert C. McKibben on 'The Image of the Book in *Wuthering Heights*' and David Lodge on 'Charlotte Brontë's War of Earthly Elements' suffer from a narrowly imagistic critical focus. Lodge's article, examining the imagery of fire in *Jane Eyre*, is superbly detailed and sensitive; but—like all criticism of its kind—it is remarkable how little it actually says: how little its subtle stylistic probings elicit any correspondingly subtle moral insights.

In a sense, the book's title is misleading. This reads like a book about *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre*, not like a study of the Brontës: there is almost nothing about Anne Brontë and little about the rest of Charlotte's fiction. Some attempt to sketch in a wider context would also have helped. We have got beyond the point of viewing the Brontës' novels as some weirdly marooned phenomenon, wholly contextless and *sui generis*, but not yet to the point

of anchoring their achievement more firmly within the complex structures of feeling of their time. Throttled and repressed creativity, imaginative strivings both protected and furthered by a cannily prudential hard-headedness, human relationship as possessive power-struggle, the victimized, modestly subservient 'social' self at odds with an 'authentic', forcefully assertive identity which lurks beneath: these may be 'universal' concerns, but there seem good reasons why they break to the surface so astonishingly in English society in the disturbed 1840s.

What is there, however, is for the most part interesting, acute, and well worth having. Philip Drew writes excellently on, among other things, Heathcliff, that thoroughly villainous figure so readily falsifiable in the fine mesh of a Jamesian critical sensibility, and John Hagan adds a persuasive, soundly sensible piece on Catherine. Mark Kinkead-Weekes, in a chapter which manages to be balanced but not vacillating, holds in admirable tension the 'Grange' and 'Heights' views of Emily's novel, although he is surely mistaken in holding that Charlotte saw social convention as merely vacuous. On the contrary, she was concerned with the wary, calculative negotiation of an absolute, passionate commitment in terms of the conventions, and so, by an aesthetic sleight-of-hand, with securing both Romantic fulfilment and social acceptance at the same time. The political ambivalences of *Shirley* or the emotional ambiguities of *The Professor* surely indicate this, as does *Jane Eyre's* (or *Lucy Snow's*) schizoid commitments to 'inner' and 'outer' worlds simultaneously. (Something of this view is conveyed in this volume in a convincing piece by Andrew Hook.) The value of Professor Gregor's symposium, however, is that it stimulates precisely this kind of critical debate, steering as it does a middle course between monolithic unity and sheer eclecticism. Finally, it is good to see an original chapter by Denis Donoghue on Emily's poetry, which appears here for the first time. TERRY EAGLETON