

'mystic' is a highly opaque term that has too frequently been used to refer to people who often say quite different things. Wiredu uses phrases like 'the language used by mystics' and 'the unity which they are supposed to experience'; but these expressions are backed up by no detailed exegesis. 'I will not multiply quotations from mystics', says Wiredu, who actually only cites (without references) two sentences from Eckhart and a part of a sentence from Ruysbroek. It should be urged in response that for any useful discussion of mysticism quotation is essential. At the beginning of his own discussion Wiredu refers to a brochure of the Theosophical Society which alludes to 'the universal experience of enlightened seers'. According to Wiredu the allusion is 'a reference to what is commonly known as mysticism'. (pp 99-100) It would have been better for Wiredu to have asked whether there

is a distinct phenomenon rightly called mysticism.

I imagine that many philosophers will read Wiredu in order to find out what he says about truth. It might therefore be worth adding in conclusion that this is often less than illuminating. The following argument is typical: 'If truth is categorically different from opinion, then truth is, as a matter of logical principle, unknowable. Any given claim to truth is merely an opinion advanced from some specific point of view, and categorically distinct from truth. Hence knowledge of truth as distinct from opinion is a self-contradictory notion.' (p 115) But there is a difference between having an opinion and being right. And when an opinion has been advanced it may be both that the truth has been stated and that we can know so.

BRIAN DAVIES O P

THEY STAND TOGETHER, The Letters of C. S. Lewis to Arthur Greeves (1914-1963), ed. Walter Hooper. Collins. 1979. pp 592. £8.95.

From 1914 until his death in 1963 C. S. Lewis kept up a more or less regular correspondence with the man he regarded as his "first friend", Arthur Greeves, and many of Lewis' letters and a very few of Greeves' survive, and these are now published in full in this volume, together with explanatory historical material provided by the editor, Walter Hooper. It is plainly a major source for the understanding of Lewis' life and character. Lewis felt that he could write more freely to Greeves than to anyone else, so this is a peculiarly intimate record of his development, his changing interests and reactions to things, and his various domestic and personal problems. Even apart from their value as a historical source, many of the letters also contain worthwhile observations of a literary or of a moral, religious nature, which are sufficient to give this book a real, if uneven, interest in its own right.

The editor has, as always, worked faithfully and has done us an excellent service, except that, like most editors, he is inclined on occasion to gloss things which need no gloss, and to pass by silently on the other side when the reader really would like some assistance. Thus, for instance, a reference to

"Kingsley's *Water Babies* is glossed: "Charles Kingsley, *The Water Babies* (1863)", which most readers could probably have managed without; but no comment at all is vouchsafed to the reader who finds himself wondering what on earth is going on in Letter 195 in which Lewis offers simultaneous congratulations and condolences to Greeves about something or other which has evidently been a heroic sacrifice to Greeves, but whose nature escapes us entirely. Maybe the editor knows no more about the matter than we do; but since he normally displays an enviable omniscience, it would have been reassuring to be informed that for once he too was stumped. On the whole, he is lavish in his provision of biographical material; for example, anybody who is mentioned in the letters, from Heads of Colleges to taxi drivers, is given a potted biography in the notes, and can be tracked down in the Index.

It is a pity that the publishers, as so often, could not be bothered to print the four or five Greek words properly. This insult to the reader spoils what is in other ways a very well produced book.

SIMON TUGWELL O P