

founded (and for the most part it is merely asserted and not argued), if a philosopher bases his position on false assumptions or argues for it sophistically, the assumptions or arguments must be challenged, and not his motives. Such mistakes can be made without any disordered motivation, as anyone who has tried to teach elementary logic to students will know; and motivational analysis is a dangerous game which two can play: as Frege wrote: 'Never let us take a description of the origin of an idea for a definition, or an account of the mental and physical conditions on which we became conscious of a proposition for a proof of it. A proposition may be thought, and again it may be true; never let us confuse these two things. . . . We suppose, it would seem, that concepts sprout in the individual mind like leaves on a tree, and we think to discover their nature by studying their birth: we seek to define them psychologically, in terms of the nature of the human mind. But this account makes everything subjective, and if we follow it through to the end, does away with truth.' (*The Foundations of Arithmetic*, pp. vi and vii.)

Although there is much to criticize in this book, it is not utterly worthless. An attempt is made in chapter 6 to classify twelve kinds of psycho-analytic hypothesis, which is not entirely successful because some hypotheses come in more than one category, but which nevertheless merits further development. And while psychological analysis must be rejected as a means for criticizing the theories or arguments of others, the philosopher and the psychologist may well find it profitable to scrutinize his own motives as a possible source of bias; Mr Jones's example of raising or

lowering our standards of criticism to suit our attachment to or dislike of a given view is well-chosen. Finally, there is an interesting chapter on LSD treatment, which together with the group training and therapy which Mr Jones advocates may eventually redeem psycho-analysis from being a luxury which only the wealthy can afford.

But when this has been said, the work as a whole remains a public relations exercise; and indeed Mr Jones is unusually honest in making an admission in this direction: 'I have found (perhaps by introspection) that I have to overcome a certain reluctance to criticize the more sacrosanct of Freud's writings . . .' (p. 145). As such it is yet another witness to the present sad state of psychology, and especially of clinical psychology, which in this country has now become a battlefield between psychotherapists and behaviour therapists, neither of whom can resist the delights of polemics. 'Freud and his followers', Mr Jones modestly claims, 'have thrown more light on human thinking, feeling, and behaving, than any other writers in history' (p. 29); but 'The behaviourists' response to the stimulus of Freud's work' (never mind the chronology) 'was a complex of contempt, anger and fear' (p. 30). Or, as a behaviour therapist put it to me the other day, 'Anyone who goes to a psycho-analyst needs to have his head examined'. Meanwhile, the presuppositions which they share go unexamined: that the psychologist must either study mental states by introspection or else external behaviour by experiments; and that models of physical change are appropriate to the study of characteristically human behaviour.

TIMOTHY G. POTTS

#### CRITICISM AS DIALOGUE, by Walter Stein. *Cambridge University Press*, 1969. 253 pp. 45s.

There are literary criticisms of many kinds and also dialogues of many kinds. In his new and fascinating book, *Criticism as Dialogue*, I think that Walter Stein is seeking for a synthesis, a unity. As a Catholic, he calls himself 'a radical Christian humanist'. This could have many definitions but primarily, I suppose, it means a desire to unite, in a way, however difficult, literature (especially poetry), religion and philosophy.

Dr Stein states à propos of the difficulty of our religious and literary problems: 'No one who faces these questions in any depth will be tempted to simple, doctrinaire answers; that is the burden, and privilege, of our time.' He is absolutely right and just. There are many

things which Catholics now have to face and judge for themselves. Literature—being a deep and imaginative expression of life—also has to face these problems.

Dr Stein's book forces us to answer such complex questions as, 'What is literature?', 'What is the value of literary criticism?', and, finally, 'How does all this tie up with our relationship with God?'. He discusses A. J. Ayer's logical positivism while he himself still admits the necessity of metaphysics.

Perhaps one of Dr Stein's most important statements is the following: 'But though linguistic analysis is, in principle, open to all the traditional human pursuits, not excluding metaphysical and theological pursuits, its

impact in this area is rather restricted—a greater force *within* contemporary theology than as a meeting-ground of modern minds as a whole.’

Most important of all, in my opinion, is the remark that, ‘So it is that literary, rather than philosophical, investigations carry the major burden of metaphysical consciousness in modern Britain. . .’. Dr Stein places a great responsibility on literature, and in particular, I would say, upon poetry. Thus, he gives modern literature an astringent touch, and says, ‘After all, the author of *The Waste Land* is also the author of *Four Quartets*. Whatever, “touched by emotion”, underlies these two poems, they can hardly both be *equally* decisive, or decisive in the same sense. . . .’

The author goes on to consider the philosophical, as well as literary, value of Yeats and Brecht. Always he is searching for a synthesis, but the one weakness of his book is to weld, too forcefully, philosophy and literature. He goes on to question whether there is such a thing as ‘Christian criticism’ and concludes with some wise remarks about F. R. Leavis. Dr Stein says, ‘Dr Leavis is at pains to distinguish this irreducible function of “the intelligence and sensibility together” from the neighbouring activities of the sociologist, philosopher, or theologian’. And the answer which this author finds is this: he declares boldly, ‘The first duty, then, of the Christian in criticism is to be indeed nothing less than a critic’. This I applaud.

It is now that Dr Stein ceases to theorize and starts to consider particular works of literature: ‘Unless we are content to leave the deepest creative thinking of Hopkins and Yeats, Lawrence and Eliot, suspended as uncoordinated forces within “tradition”, or in our own minds, we must put our trust in procedures however hazardous, designed to bring them into dialectical relation. Assuming that *King Lear*, *Three Sisters* and *Waiting for Godot* all have some claim on our attention . . . may it not be profoundly relevant to question them. . . .?’

This is surely true, and every work of art is a dialectic, a response between the creator and the reader or critic. Dr Stein is sensitive to literature, whether poetry or prose, and, in the midst of his philosophical argument, can say, ‘Samuel Beckett is, in many ways, the exact antipode of Lawrence. . . . He (Lawrence) would *not* have appreciated the endlessly clowning cosmic belly-aches in *Waiting for Godot*. . . .’

I think the most subtle and interesting criticism in this book lies in the author’s consideration of *King Lear*, in particular, and in the closeness of tragedy to the absurd. He compares *Lear* with some of Chekhov’s plays and discovers that ‘the “criss-cross of tears and laughter” that makes up *The Seagull* or *Three Sisters* is certainly among the most significant inventions of modern art; but it is as far removed from the criss-cross of *Lear* as Dr Dorn and his valerian drops are from the unavailing medicine of the Fool.’

Of Eliot and his later plays, Dr Stein wisely declares that ‘Failures, among the works of a great writer, have to be taken seriously’. This is, in the most literal sense, a terribly important truth. We love *Four Quartets*, but we do not perhaps (I speak personally here) greatly admire *The Cocktail Party*, *The Confidential Clerk*, or *The Elder Statesman*. This is, I am sure, not because Eliot’s gift had gone but that he was using a medium, drama, which, despite *Murder in the Cathedral* and *The Family Reunion*, was not really suited to his genius.

In *Criticism as Dialogue*, Dr Stein considers many important literary matters, such as the relation of Christian belief to tragedy. But, finally, I think that his *particular* comments, his sensitive appreciation, are more important than his major thesis. Theorizing about literature can be very sterile or, perhaps worse still, a kind of clever game. But this writer and critic has important things to say and he should be read and appreciated.

ELIZABETH JENNINGS

**THE ORIGINS OF MODERN ENGLISH SOCIETY 1780-1880**, by Harold Perkin. *Routledge and Kegan Paul*, London, 1969. 465 pp. £2 16s.

Professor Perkin’s book illustrates how over a long period of radical economic and social change, which inflicted great suffering, and also corrupted by proffering great material temptations, at every level, Christianity had a humanizing effect. In nineteenth-century England Christianity made a remarkable advance

on a wide front, while on the Continent it lost ground to secular and explicitly anti-religious forces. Professor Perkin confirms the validity of an old and unfashionable view of Victorian England, that is, of England *before* she began to register the influence of ‘socialism’ under its several aspects. ‘Between 1780 and 1850 the