

setting. From Dr Busia, well known for his outspokenness in the political life of Ghana, we might have expected more radical comments about the British churches. I feel that there is a chapter missing from this book; I hope that

Dr Busia will write it for us soon so that we may see how our urban churches really look from the outside and can consider some of the implications of such a view for action.

JOAN BROTHERS

THE CAVE AND THE MOUNTAIN: A STUDY OF E. M. FORSTER, by Wilfred Stone. *Oxford*. 55s.

This is, in many respects, a highly impressive book: formidably well documented, engagingly written, and full of acute critical observations. It is, therefore, all the more disconcerting to have to record that it left me with a final impression very different from anything Mr Stone could have wished to convey. There is an initial cause of difficulty in the method he has chosen to follow: without attempting to write a full-scale critical biography of Forster, he has devoted as much space to the man as to his works, and much of what he says about him is exceedingly interesting. I was particularly grateful for what he has to say about Forster's ancestral connection with the Clapham Sect, and for his account of the Cambridge Apostles, and such enigmatic but influential figures as McTaggart and Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson; these early chapters make a valuable addition to the intellectual history contained in J. K. Johnstone's *The Bloomsbury Group*. There is an irresistible charm, also, in the many pages of photographs which trace Forster's personal and literary progress from England to Italy, Egypt and India, showing us, among other things, the view from Forster's undergraduate rooms at King's and the house at Stevenage that was the original of *Howards End*. Yet there is an inevitable danger that so much concentration on background and source material will get in the way of the literary assessment of Forster's books, and Mr Stone succumbs to it rather often. There is, in fact, a basic split between what clearly emerges as his personal devotion to Forster and his admiration for him as the exemplar of a rare and valuable kind of liberalism, and his critical awareness of the failings and limitations of Forster's fiction.

Mr Stone seems, for instance, to be very conscious of the faults of *The Longest Journey*, a peculiarly tiresome and mawkish piece of autobiographical special pleading, and he draws attention to many of them; at the same time, he still finds the book worthy of an excessively detailed discussion extending over thirty pages. In his account of *Howards End* the division

between Mr Stone's critical honesty and his desire to identify himself with Forster's intentions becomes almost grotesque. After devoting several very severe but quite just pages to the ways in which the novel fails, he observes, in an astonishing *volte-face*: 'But as a technical experiment this is an important novel, and perhaps even a great one'. This is a meaningless statement, and Mr Stone should have realised it. No amount of technical interest can give greatness to a novel that patently lacks it. In general, his chapters on Forster's Edwardian novels and stories left me more than ever convinced that those books represent a pretty thin achievement, despite the charm of *A Room With a View* and the genuine thematic interest and local successes of *Howards End*. If this were all Forster had produced I cannot imagine that long books like Mr Stone's would be written about him: Forster's literary output during those years compares very poorly with the work produced at that time by coarser-grained writers like Wells and Bennett. *A Passage to India* is the one assured masterpiece, and Mr Stone gives quite an illuminating account of it, though I can't feel that his lengthy disquisition on Hindu metaphysics is as essential as he implies, and his conclusions about the novel differ very sharply from my own. In the last analysis Forster does not seem to me so important or so successful a writer as is often currently assumed, and as Mr Stone is at such pains to assert, and this fact will sooner or later have to be recognised, even though many of his personal attitudes will continue to make a strong appeal.

As I have said, one of the strengths of Mr Stone's book is the excellence of its documentation, though he can hardly be said to have mastered the valuable art of knowing what to leave out, and I could have dispensed with the choric mumble of commenting footnotes: 'Contrast Jean-Paul Sartre . . .', 'See Shelley . . .', 'Compare T. S. Eliot . . .', 'Consider D. H. Lawrence . . .' If these observations were crucial they should have been worked into the text, otherwise omitted. There are also a few

errors. Mr Stone repeats the common assumption that no-one in England took the novel seriously as an art form before Henry James, although there is a great deal of evidence to the contrary in Richard Stang's *The Theory of the*

Novel in England 1850-1870. Mr Stone is certainly mistaken when, on p. 152, he implies that Well's *The Time Machine* is a Utopia, and on p. 112 he says *Persuasion* when he means *Mansfield Park*.
BERNARD BERGONZI

GOD AND GOLEM INC. by Norbert Wiener. A comment on certain points where Cybernetics impinges on Religion: *Chapman & Hall*, 1965. 18s.

Wiener was probably one of the most brilliant intellects of the century. To review a book by one who took his B.A. in mathematics at the age of 14 would be enough to daunt any reviewer, were it not for the fact that Wiener was always possessed of a great humanism, and this small book is fittingly his last will and testament, for in it he returns from his mathematical treatises to deal once more with the subject matter of his earlier 'The Human Use of Human Beings' – the impact of cybernetics on the world of ideas and on society.

Many readers will find his discussion of the relation of religion to cybernetics misplaced, in the sense that the God of which he speaks seems somewhat distantly connected with the God of the Christian theologians. But to a great extent we should recognise that this is the fault of the theologians for failing to talk in a language which allows members of any other discipline to understand the content of theology. As Wiener

says, 'If we are to treat knowledge only in terms of Omniscience, power only in terms of Omnipotence, worship only in terms of the One Godhead, we shall find ourselves entangled in metaphysical subtleties before we shall have really embarked upon the study of the relations between religion and science.'

Wiener cares passionately about the use and misuse of cybernetics, the abrogation of responsibility to the machine by man, and the implications of his brainchild for society. And the man who will probably be seen to have been responsible for the greatest revolution of the century, the development of artificial intelligence, is of a sufficient stature to leave us his own epitaph, 'Render unto man the things that are man's and to the computer the things that are computer's.'

Highly recommended, even at the page/price ratio of 95 pp. to 18 shillings.

NEVILLE MORAY