

accept as the dawn of a new era.' I think, though I find it hard to believe, that Mr Holbrook has been carried away by rhetoric here. For, first, it is more than merely crude to lump together cinema and TV on the one hand and comic strip and popular paper on the other. Cinema and TV are capable of profound and sensitive re-creations and explorations of experience (and how much it is possible to do without using words at all was shown by the brilliant miming of *Silent Song*). Even if Mr Holbrook's illiterates do not watch these elements of cinema and TV, it is perhaps easier to guide them towards such elements, and so towards fresh awareness through them, than it is to get them to read difficult or 'difficult' books and so achieve the greater maturity which is the desideratum.

Secondly, I think that, hurrying too fast down his chosen path, he has fallen into a pit. Just what is literacy? It is an ability to read certain signs and understand them and make elaborate and subtle signs of the same kind in return. But—always granted that the word, written or spoken, i.e. verbally conveyed concepts and images, remains the subtlest and most useful of all signs—words are not the only ones. In terms of the electronics engineer and his diagrams, Mr Holbrook may be, I certainly am, illiterate. These are signs I cannot read and use, even if they are signs which operate within a very small field compared with those which operate on the printed page from Chaucer to Auden. Equally, it seems to me, there is a possibility of a literacy of other visual media (assisted to a greater or lesser degree by

the spoken word) open to those who have been irremediably damaged by bad teaching in conventional literacy. It may not help them to fill in forms, but it may assist them along the road to maturity, which, *vide* Mr Holbrook's first title, is the more important goal.

Those are fortunate who have been taught by Mr Holbrook, or at Basingbourne, or by teachers trained in the spirit of these two books. The second book under review is an excellent practical help for the student teacher: it is a series of exercises, largely based on children's writing, designed to bring the student teacher face to face with the reality such as he or she will find it in the classroom and the exercise-book, the scrawl, the mis-spellings, the ludicrous grammar and the real creative push conveyed by them, and to help him or her to establish some methods and concepts for dealing with these efforts.

It is with the less fortunate that I have had recently to deal—the drop-outs of secondary education, those who never got within sniffing distance of even an O-level or C.S.E. ('you're joking, sir'), the day-release technical students, apprentice bricklayers, plumbers, electricians, in whom an insuperable (I mean this literally, I tried very hard to overcome it) hostility to book-literacy has been built up. Mr Holbrook's principles remain valid, but I shall not try to make these pseudo-adults write. I want first to make them speak.

I should add, perhaps, that I greatly admire the Levellers, Jeremiah and Mr Holbrook.

ANDREW WEATHERHEAD

A MIND AWAKE, An Anthology of C. S. Lewis, edited by Clyde S. Kilby. *Geoffrey Bles*, London, 1968. 252 pp. 25s.

The river of Lewisiana just keeps on rolling along. Now that almost all the fugitive pieces have been reprinted comes the anthology tributary, and Mr Kilby does for C.S.L. on a large scale what C.S.L. did for George Macdonald on a small one. He has ranged through the whole of a daunting bibliography, from *Arthurian Torso* and the *Bristol Diocesan Gazette* to *Sobornost* and *World Dominion*. He orders his selections sensibly and progressively under such heads as 'The Nature of Man', 'The Bible', 'Love and Sex', and 'The Post-Christian world'. Inevitably there is a certain amount of repetition; but most devotees will find something new (excluding the implicit attribution to *The Pilgrim's Regress* of a *sententia* found in fact in *Macbeth*: p. 164), and the most

hardened sceptic must admit that many of the apophthegms still strike home.

Filleted in this fashion, Lewis's prose, like his theology, looks more Chestertonian than ever: 'We have had enough of Hedonism! the gloomy philosophy which says that Pleasure is the only good'; 'Some people when they say that a thing is meant metaphorically conclude from this that it is hardly meant at all. . . . They reasonably think that hell "fire" is a metaphor—and unwisely conclude that it means nothing more serious than remorse'; 'To study the past does indeed liberate us from the present . . . but it liberates us from the past too'. Even the planetary and other fictions perhaps owe something to the author of *The Napoleon of Notting Hill* and *The Man who was*

Thursday. Mr Kilby's success in showing that these fictions, like the *Narnia* books, are all of a piece with the apologetics may seem to some a measure of the failure of the fictions as such: their *morality* should not be so easily detachable. Yet C.S.L. himself believed that 'the imaginative man in me is more basic than the religious writer or critic'; and the style and stance of the *Narnia* stories are essentially those of the man who detested the use of *adult* as a term of approval: 'We shall of course be very muddy and tattered children by the time we reach home. But the bathrooms are all ready, the towels put out . . .'—that is the kind of figure which comes naturally to his pen.

In these days of enthusiasm for the lay apostolate we should do well to remember that writers like Chesterton and Lewis were in their day lay apostles of the first quality. Whether they will continue to appeal is another matter. In these utterances of the Last of the *Dinosaurs*, there is no breath of Bultmann or of Tillich. His characteristic appeals, on one level to a sense of decency, on another to a Wordsworthian sense of inconsolable longing, may fall flat in the age of Edmund Leach and Cohn-Bendit; the Christian in him—as distinct from the Ulsterman—could hardly have approved of the application, in a recent letter to *The Times*, of his suggestion that certain sorts of politicians

ought to be roughly handled, to the sanctioning of student violence, 1968 style. And it is hard to see where he would have found footing for debate with our contemporary humanists—unless it were with Miss Murdoch, whose memorable Leslie Stephen Lecture on the Supremacy of the Good might well have been read to his Socratic Society.

In short, there is nothing new or modish in Lewis's philosophy. He positively revelled in orthodoxy and order. 'I do not believe that God created an egalitarian world. I believe the authority of parent over child, husband over wife, learned over simple, to have been as much part of the original plan as the authority of man over beast.' The limitations of some of his arguments Austin Farrer has sympathetically but acutely demonstrated. But they do not detract from the lively appositeness of his images and analogies. He insisted always that 'abstractions' no less than literal images are concessions to our weakness. Appropriately enough, Mr Kilby's excerpts on this theme (from Letters to Malcolm) lie opposite a typical Lewis fable: that of the mystical limpet who has to build up for his fellow-limpets the mainly negative picture of Man as a shell-less jelly existing nowhere in particular. Readers of Bishop Robinson, take note.

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