

*Phèdre's* rhythms and metaphors, so we are aware of the severe *chaconne-rondeau* form damming the flood of Couperin's chromaticism and dissonance.'

Occasionally the author's enthusiasms run away with him, and one may disagree with his judgments on particular works. It is a pity, too, that in a book for English readers the long quotations in French were not translated: they lose nothing in translation. Those who have nightmare memories of the author's earlier literary style will be relieved to hear that this has now been considerably lightened, although such phrases as 'fugued dance' still jar. The appendices are thorough and valuable, revealing something of the industry, devotion and learning which have made this one of the most important of recent contributions to musical studies. The publishers deserve credit for the format of the book itself, for the excellence of the numerous illustrations, and for the abundance of musical quotations which add point to the author's remarks.

E.R.T.

JOURNEY THROUGH UTOPIA. By Marie Louise Berneri. (Routledge and Kegan Paul; 16s.)

This is a survey of ideal commonwealths from Plato to H. G. Wells; it is descriptive in treatment, containing ample illustrations from the works chosen, but there is some attempt at criticism of the general tendency of utopian thought in particular epochs. The author has drawn her net wide, and includes Plutarch's account of Lycurgus' reforms in Sparta, and Gerrard Winstanley's *The Law of Freedom*. She also glances at some recent satirical utopias like Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*; apparently George Orwell's '1984', the most devastating essay in this genre, appeared too late to be included.

'Progress is the realisation of utopias'. Wilde's epigram has not worn well. The standardisation of social life in the modern omnipotent state has turned the orderly dreams of the utopian planners into cold and ugly facts. Reading these programmes of benevolent interference, these schemes for symmetrical dwelling houses and carefully organised working days, we realise why we are living in the age of anti-utopias. Modern utopian thought is associated with the rise of the national state; the author takes pains to underline the authoritarian character of most of these blue-prints. Personal freedom is sacrificed to efficiency or eugenics. But utopianism has been most harmful in its effect on political practice: it has turned men aside from the attempt to sanctify and make workable the given forms of society to an abstract formula not grounded in human needs.

The author, who did not live to see her book in print, handles an intrinsically interesting subject with persuasive charm. She seems unaware of R. W. Chambers' work on St Thomas More, and her

treatment of Winstanley is too dependent on his modern Marxist interpreters; but these would be captious criticisms of a book which is, after all, aimed at the general reader, and which is informed by a generous enthusiasm for human liberty.

ROGER SHARROCK.

ON PRODUCING SHAKESPEARE. By Ronald Watkins. (Michael Joseph; 21s.)

Much of our understanding and interpretation of Shakespeare depends upon whether we accept the Protestant myth of the Renaissance. This was the belief that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries there took place an unprecedented revival of scientific and literary learning which brought in its wake a great outpouring of artistic creation. To Catholics of course it comes as no new discovery to learn that the Reformation was no reformation, but perhaps it is not equally well understood that the great works of art of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were in fact for the most part the fine flower of medieval culture. Dr Tillyard has shown that Shakespearian drama was in spirit medieval; Mr S. L. Bethell carried on this good work by linking up Shakespeare with popular dramatic tradition; and now Mr Watkins has brought the matter down literally to the 'footlights'. His work spans the gap that all too frequently yawns between cloistered scholarship and practical play production. He describes in accurate detail the Elizabethan theatre (the illustrations are remarkably helpful) and by using the Quarto and Folio texts, and the repertory account books shows what the plays were really about and how they were performed in the reconstructed Globe theatre. This method of research draws every ounce of meaning from the text and at the same time indirectly tells us some important things about the nature of drama. Mr Watkins briefly demolishes the view that the King's Men were a set of crude barnstormers; only the best actors would be able to give the full meaning to words, rhythm, mime and gesture and be ready to sink their own personalities in their rôles. For those who have not been dazzled by the modern Shakespearean 'star' this book will be stimulating. Play producers and students of literature will find much to instruct them, and the student of religion and drama will welcome yet another clear piece of evidence of the very real 'partnership' of actors and audience in true drama. The only flaw in the book is a slight excess of high seriousness and a tendency (though *only* a tendency) to make Shakespeare's art faultless, but this is to be expected in what is still something of pioneer work and is a small price to pay for such an outstanding piece of scholarship.