

Secondly, we are doubtful if the insertion of St. Jerome's letter to Eustochium is relevant, and whether it does not betray a bias. It is entitled 'The Ideal Nun.' This means that Dr. Coulton has introduced ideals and theories, and these are not his material. We do not, of course, deny the influence of St. Jerome's ascetical propaganda—does not St. Theresa in the sixteenth century tell us of the great effect of his letters upon her? But investigation of the social life of a period is not concerned with the spread of ideas. And further, if we admitted the insertion of this letter we should demand other accounts of theory as well. St. Jerome's language is rhetorical, and the exhortation to virginity made by contrasting it with the discomfords of marriage, fails to edify us. (It was doubtless actual enough in the corruption of that time.) But to have been fair, Dr. Coulton should have included some more balanced statements, let us say from Cassian or even the tranquil sanity of an article by St. Thomas Aquinas.

Æ.M.

MORE'S UTOPIA AND HIS SOCIAL TEACHING. By W. E. Campbell. Pp. 164. (Eyre & Spottiswoode; 7/6 net.)

This very thoughtful commentary on the religious and social philosophy of Sir Thomas More is bound to help to a better understanding of the *Utopia*. Haply it may persuade us to read again that famous book. (For the *Utopia* has been so long a classic that we are for the most part content to leave it at that; a work that demands our respect but no familiar acquaintance.) A 'fruitful and profitable book'—the *Utopia*—'a fruitful, pleasant and witty work,' according to Ralph Robinson, who translated it into English in the contracted days of Edward VI and was perplexed and grieved that its author remained a Catholic. It was lamentable to Robinson that Sir Thomas More 'could not or rather would not see the shining light of God's holy truth in certain principal points of Christian religion; but did rather choose to persevere and continue in his wilful and stubborn obstinacy even to the very death.' Good master Robinson, sometime fellow of Corpus Christi College, Oxford, seeing that he gave us the first English translation of the *Utopia*, may be forgiven these melancholy words; after all he was anxious to stand well with his old schoolfellow, Cecil.

The *Utopia* has been regarded as a Communist manifesto in some quarters. Yet Beer, the Austrian scholar and historian of British Socialism, could see Sir Thomas More as 'one of

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the greatest figures in the history of Communism' and still discern that the author of the *Utopia* 'is not a Communist but a social reformer.' Father Bridgett (whose life of More might well be reprinted) more than thirty years ago corrected the mistakes of Liberals who would identify the 'advanced opinions' of Raphael Hythloday with the convictions of Sir Thomas More. *Utopia* was written before the Lutheran heresy had broken the peace of the Church and before the anabaptists had experimented with Communism. In any case More 'certainly had no wish that it should be read by the people of England in the days of Henry VIII. Neither its serious wisdom nor its peculiar irony, nor its subtle mixture of philosophy and banter, were on the level of the half-educated men and women who could only read English.' Father Bridgett very properly observes 'every educated man should read *Utopia* for himself; but in doing so he must bear in mind the peculiarity of More's character and the circumstances in which the book was published.'

Mr. Campbell has pondered the character of More and the circumstance of his writings. He would have us note particularly that the *Utopia* was written in the form of a dialogue, and since of all More's works 'it is the best known and the most misunderstood, one further attempt to understand it may not be amiss.' The attempt is by no means amiss; contrariwise. For Mr. Campbell's sympathetic study reveals afresh the wisdom of Blessed Thomas More and of our need of his wise counsel. But seven shillings and sixpence is a very heavy charge for a book of 164 pages, even though it be published by the King's printers. However, the Catholic Social Guild will supply it at the more reasonable price of 5/4.

J.C.

SELECTED WORKS OF RICHARD ROLLE. Transcribed with an Introduction by G. C. Heseltine. (Longmans, Green & Co.; 1930; 8/6 net.)

Richard Rolle would appear, at long last, to be coming into his own. It is only a short time ago that we found ourselves reviewing two books concerned with him, and now comes another for our consideration. We are of opinion that this last volume, Mr. Heseltine's transcription of Rolle's principal treatises, may well prove to be, for Rolle's vogue and reputation, the most important edition of his writings that has yet appeared. For what has Mr. Heseltine done? He has frankly recognised the indubitable fact that Rolle cannot be submitted