

mind) differs widely. The best place to begin the book is at the end, for in his study of Hopkins Rupp invites us to re-read *The Wreck of the Deutschland* as displaying the ultimate unity of evangelical and Catholic Christianity in language which is "from a theological point of view a miracle of communication, for it puts the whole view of salvation in Paul, Augustine and Luther into a poem which entirely avoids the vocabulary of theology". Hopkins' anguished celebration of the God who is mastery and mercy can set up for Rupp filaments of contact with the stress on self-surrender rather than self-conquest in the *Rule* of Benedict which is, he insists, not a Christian Torah: if it is a highway code it is set to music, its statutes have become songs". Mind you, even Rupp's catholicity of temperament must balk at some of his Reformation subjects, and if it is right to see him as primarily concerned with an analysis of holiness this may indicate why the embarrassed brevity of the essay on Knox closes with a line about the trumpets sounding as he passed over which would not be out of place among those obituary verses which the editors of local evening papers preserve for their more imaginative clients. By contrast, the superb evocation of Francis of Assisi succeeds by interpreting the early Franciscans quite apart from the sentimental exaltation of gospel over

DE TRISTITIA CHRISTI by St. Thomas More, Vol 14; Part I, pp. 1-691; Part II, pp. 695-1192. Yale University Press, 1976 £43.20

Libraries that subscribe to this superb edition of the complete works of St. Thomas More will not wait for reviews. Librarians will already have received this latest volume and will have satisfied themselves that the high standards of scholarship and production have been sustained. This review is offered to those devoted to our great saint, who cannot afford an edition of such magnitude but would like to have just one volume as a great treasure and luxury. Without a shadow of hesitation it is this volume that I would recommend. This is by far the most intimate book on St. Thomas that has ever appeared. First, it is the only work of the saint of which we have the original text in his own hand. The editors have reproduced the whole of it in facsimile and we can watch the writer at work. He writes at

law which ruins so many well-meaning Protestant enquiries into the forms of Catholic holiness. If the Spirit is removed, he well says, what has begun as Gospel may end as Law (thus the embittered 'zelanti', the 'Spirituals'); and what might seem to be the Law may become the Gospel if it is the vehicle of the Spirit (hence the apparent accommodators could be fruitful for the church in Anthony of Padua and Bonaventure).

Professor Rupp believes that he is an individualist in a strong sense. What excites him about the historical study of great men, he says, is the 'X' in their equation, the point where they cease to be explained by heredity and environment and the thought world of their contemporaries, and this he identifies with Matthew Arnold's metaphor for genius, the mountain open to the skies. His practice is better, perhaps, than his ontology of personhood, for he sees his giants not just straddling the hills but stepping forward mightily to thrust back the limits of their world for the sake of the christian ecclesia at large. These studies offer us his insight into the historical process as open to a dimension of transcendence which is not just that of the individual genius over his society, but the presence in the midst of time of the glory of the ever greater God.

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high speed with many abbreviations and corrections. The corrections are not part of a leisurely revision but were made before the ink was dry and reveal a mind working even faster than his pen. Hardly has he written a word before he thinks of a better one and makes a hasty alteration. St. Thomas' Latin works, for all their homely examples, often have indications of fastidious polish; but here we see him at work and are convinced that the polish was not a revision of a first draft but part of his normal technique. Secondly, this is a commentary on Our Lord's agony in the Garden, when he was bracing Himself for his passion and death. St. Thomas too was preparing for his passion, for this work was written during those long, lonely months in the Tower while he awaited execution. It is an intimate revelation of

his own preparation for death and of the comfort he derived from meditating *de tristitia Christi*. This work is thus unique in two respects and brings us closer to the heart of a martyr than any of his other works.

It has been necessary to expand this volume into two parts, each a large book, and this accounts for the high cost. The first volume gives the whole text in facsimile (with other photographs of the Ms) and opposite a transcript of the Latin (with elaborate apparatus) and an English translation page by page. This method inevitably involves some empty spaces on the right-hand pages but there was no other worthy solution. Part II contains a lengthy Introduction describing the Ms and how it found its way to Valencia, probably in the hands of Pedro de Soto, the Spanish Dominican theologian that Queen Mary imported in an effort to restore sound doctrine at Oxford. In Valencia it slept in peace and was not definitely recognised as the holograph of St. Thomas till about 1963. By June 1535 More had been deprived of books and paper and pen and this commentary was thereby left unfinished. His deeply moving last letters to his daughter Meg were written with a burnt stick and alas the originals have not survived. This commentary was translated by Mary Basset (daughter of the said Meg) and printed in More's *English Works* in 1557. An edition in modern spelling appeared in 1941 and here in an appendix it is reprinted in the original spelling. There is a minute description of the Ms and its probable route to Spain via Louvain that will interest chiefly the expert and the

same must be said of most of the explanatory notes that follow. They are of course the product of enormous labour and scholarship.

But what delights me most is the translation. Clarence H. Miller, the chief editor and translator was faced with a difficult task. There was already the translation of Mary Basset which is no mean achievement; there was her version in modern spelling that lacks something of the charm of the original; and there was the risk of succumbing to the spell of More's own distinguished English prose. Professor Miller has cleared all these hurdles and has given us a version in contemporary English that is accurate, clear and in every way worthy. Some of his more audacious renderings sent me to the Latin. The pharisee 'snoring away' is an inspired rendering of *stertebat*, the imperfect tense expressing continuous action: *eruedum*, 'to be ferreted out'; Basset's 'sharpe biting skorne' is softened to 'a serious and weighty kind of irony' which is surely a more faithful rendering of *ironis seria gravique*. There are literally dozens of such felicitous phrases. Reading this distinguished prose I could not but regret that Professor Miller had not been invited to do the English version of the *Missa Normativa*. I have reviewed this book as a work of scholarship, for such it is, but we must not forget that *Tristitia Christi* is eminently suitable reading for Holy Week and it is to be hoped that some day this admirable translation will be released in a form to reach a much larger public.

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