

Blackfriars

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

to the generality of modern readers in his own Middle English tongue, and had better not be submitted to them in the bastard tongue which results from a partial modernisation. So, taking his courage in both his hands and bidding defiance to all specialists and pedants, he has given us a translation of Rolle into modern English. We welcome the achievement quite cordially. We have often felt it odd that while the French—thanks to Dom Noetinger—can read our fourteenth century mystics in their own modern tongue, we English should have him only in what—to most of us—is an impossible medium. We are now satisfied. Here is a comprehensive selection of Rolle's works in an English which we can read without trouble, and even with pleasure.

J.M.

EUGENICS : AIMS AND METHOD. · By Henry Davis, S.J. Paper, pp. iv, 79. (Burns, Oates & Washbourne.)

The author of this work on Eugenics has so often made us his debtor by his outspokenness in the matter of eugenic sterilisation that we find it hard to speak quite truthfully about what impression the book has made on our minds.

Perhaps we can approach the difficult duty of criticism by quoting the first lines of the summary : 'The Science of Eugenics is welcomed by all Catholics. Some of the methods suggested for the improvement of the race are condemned by Catholics. We should not, however, confuse the science with the methods' (p. 71).

So far from *all* Catholics welcoming or even admitting Eugenics as a Science Mr. Belloc's book on 'Survivals and New Arrivals' is proof to the contrary. Mr. Chesterton, too, is responsible for the famous epigram, 'Eugenics is not a science; Eugenics is a stink.' Now it is undeniable that Mr. Belloc and Mr. Chesterton are Catholics. It is equally undeniable that they are important Catholics. What they say to-day, thousands will say to-morrow. On grounds of observed fact it cannot be said that 'The Science of Eugenics is welcomed by all Catholics.'

Even on logical grounds Eugenics, as proposed by the Eugenists, is not a Science, but an Art. Its avowed purpose is to do something to improve the human breed. Now just as medicine is an art, this eugenics, if it existed, would be an art.

Fr. Davis's attitude towards sterilisation is so sound that it has not prepared us for the unformed thinking behind his attitude towards segregation.