

then one wonders if the artist was always familiar with the words he illustrated as opposed to its traditional representation. The earliest printed illustrations were obviously of the same nature, which accounts for so much hack-work, but which reflects also on the printer who was prepared to incorporate so much indifferent work and frequently to misplace it. One might have hoped the new knowledge and enthusiasm for the Scriptures might have provided a new inspiration. The nearest to this are the *Icones* of Holbein, his Old Testament illustrations, to which he added some of the Apocalypse. They are skilfully designed woodcuts but curiously lacking in spiritual vision; as the author comments, the New Jerusalem is a delightful sketch of the city of Lucerne. It is perhaps a pity that the inspired biblical illustrations of the period, Dürer's superb Apocalypse woodcuts, fall outside the scope of this book.

The numerous illustrations give a good idea of the range of the material. As always seems to be the case with line blocks, they lose much of the clarity of the original. The Holbein title-page is misleading as the hand-colouring comes out black, and no. 48 is surely Pharoah and the Hebrew midwives, not Esther.

NICOLETE GRAY

A POPULAR HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION. By Philip Hughes. (Hollis and Carter; 21s.)

Popular this book certainly is in the best sense of the word. It is written with clarity, lightness and humour in that nervous, staccato style that Mgr Hughes has made his own. It explains in simple language such words as 'vow' and 'justification by faith' that Catholics, and especially priests, all too often assume are self-evident. Popular also it is, in that it does not give references to the vast array of learned books that have gone to the making of it. But it is not popular in the sense of being superficial or sensational. It is a book for ordinary people, but for people who want to learn and above all are prepared to think. For most English people, bred in an insular tradition, the Reformation is a matter of Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn. Such readers will find it refreshing and illuminating to study this survey of religious thought and practice in most parts of Europe—Germany, Switzerland, Holland, and in Rome itself—at one of the great turning-points of history. Mgr Hughes is the first English historian to treat this momentous revolt as primarily a religious upheaval and to give full weight to its theological foundations, and here we have the quintessence of his conclusions, with many still unanswered questions, after years of close and profound research.

In such a wide survey—wide in time and place—it is inevitable

that there should be generalizations with which all will not agree. Surviving records can be used to support quite contrary conclusions. Thus the bishops' visitation books certainly bear witness to the prevalence of clerical incontinency, but they are also evidence that up to the very end it was frowned upon, and when discovered was punished. St Thomas More is cited as a witness to the widespread immorality of the clergy, but, in a famous passage, he claimed that the English secular clergy 'is, in learning and honest living, well able to match, and . . . far able to overmatch, number for number, the spirituality of any nation christian'. Again Mgr Hughes argues that the rank and file of the parish clergy were markedly ignorant, because so few ever went to a university, and outside the universities there was nothing that could be called education. This seems to underestimate the value of the many schools and colleges of every grade, usually presided over by university men, that were a common feature of most countries. Were they hopelessly inefficient? They seem at all events to have reached a high standard in Latin. How else can one account for the phenomenal popularity of such Latin works as More's *Utopia*, that went through four editions in its first two years? Or the eagerly-read works of Erasmus? Was it only the higher clergy, with their university training, who read these books? The provincial chapter of the Dominicans of Lower Germany (the Netherlands), held in 1531, found it necessary to forbid all but masters of theology and inquisitors to possess or read the works of Erasmus. 'If an elegant style (*ornata dictio*) delights the young, let them read Cicero, Quintilian and our own blessed Jerome, Lactantius, Cyprian, Augustine and the rest.' Evidently these young Dominicans knew enough to appreciate Erasmus as a stylist; were they exceptional? Is there any evidence that the theological studies were any less efficient? Again, because the layfolk were largely illiterate, does it follow that they must have been ignorant of the great truths of faith? The walls and windows of their churches were filled with pictures that were far more educative than the printed word. These are some of the multitude of questions that come to mind under the stimulus of these fascinating pages. Here is a book that every thinking Catholic should read, and if it arouses a desire for further knowledge there are the same author's three great volumes on the *Reformation in England*, with a bibliography that will keep any ordinary person busy for a lifetime.

GODFREY ANSTRUTHER, O.P.

WILLIAM HARVEY: HIS LIFE AND TIMES; HIS DISCOVERIES; HIS METHODS.

By Louis Chauvois. (Hutchinson's Medical Publications; 25s.)

DE MOTU CORDIS. By William Harvey. Translated by Kenneth J. Franklin. (Blackwell Scientific Publications; 17s. 6d.)