

HYTHLODAY AND THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL

In the thirty-fifth chapter of the *Enchiridion militis Christiani* Erasmus tells us that apart from human error gold and silver are merely red and white earth. Now, he does not say that this red and white earth is pernicious. Nor does he call it useless. Rather, his argument begins with the premise that God created everything to serve man's purpose and concludes that there is no sin in having money. It is sinful to hoard money, to use money basely, to love money. He warns the reader against giving away all his property and then having to beg of another. In chapter fourteen Tantalus gazes at riches he will never use. In chapter thirteen wealth is seen as a precarious gift to be used for virtue or as a means toward unhappiness. Other gifts are equally dangerous in Erasmus's eyes. Even good health, which is a means to God, ought not to become an end, for anything worshipped in itself degrades the nature of the worshipper. Gold, a precious bane, a dangerous blessing, a precarious responsibility, is a golden ambiguity. Reason, as Erasmus tells us in the fifth chapter, wears a golden crown.

Humanists and Renaissance writers did condemn gold for its uselessness and its intrinsic perniciousness. Budé in his prefatory letter to the *Utopia* names contempt of gold and silver as one of three overthrowers of "all frauds, impostures, swindles, rogueries, and wicked deceptions."¹ There is ample evidence, on the other hand, that humanists and Renaissance men respected the uses of gold. Sir Guyon says that gold has been buried deep in the ground to hide it from man, but prior to this he has insisted that there is a right use of gold. Mammon, Sir Guyon points out, has hidden his rich heaps of gold from the world's eye, "and from her right usaunce" (2.7.7). In Mammon's cave Sir Guyon contemplates the plight of Tantalus, an example of the intemperate mind, who teaches men "how to use their present state" (2.7.60). Friar Laurence is one of many characters in Renaissance literature who views no part of the creation as intrinsically and totally pernicious. Even vile things, he has discovered, hold some special good. Montague uses gold to a virtuous end; he raises a statue of Juliet. Like the Friar, St. Augustine notes that even poison has medicinal value (*City of God*, XI. 22).

The beneficent nature of gold and its use join links from time to time in the argument of the *City of God*. In the hierarchy of nature the living stand above the insensate. But who, asks Augustine, would not prefer to have gold in his house rather than fleas (XI.16)? To be sure, there are dangers in judging by use, for no man knows the inscrutable will of God.

1. Edward Surtz, S. J. and J. H. Hexter, *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More* (New Haven, 1965), IV, 11. All references to the *Utopia* will be to this edition and cited by page number within my text.

The swarms which scourged the pride of Egypt served that will, though the swarms appeared to the afflicted as pernicious (XII.4). Everything natural, Augustine argues, is useful. The creation must be measured by the wisdom of the designer (XI.22). Man should enjoy God but use money (XI.25), for avarice is not inherent in gold, but in the man who loves gold above justice (XII.8). Erasmus and More reasoned similarly. Who, asks Erasmus, would not exchange gold for silver (*Enchiridion*, C.12)? Gold, wrongly prized, becomes a briar which chokes the seeds of God's word (C.15), but God has designed the whole universe with purpose and for man's use (C.35). In the *Dialogue concerning Heresies* More argues that our faith and works are of their own nature right little in value, though it has pleased God to set a value on them. Just so a ten pound weight of gold is not worth one ounce of wheat or one silly sheep, but men have established values so that one ounce of gold is worth many sheep and much bread. It is extreme to call a thing inferior because it is inferior by nature. Use may raise inferiors and may demote superiors as Augustine, Erasmus, and More show by the example of gold.

More, it has been thought, found gold pernicious and useless in the *Treatise on the Passion*. "How proud be men of gold and silver, no part of ourself, but of the earth, and of nature no better than is the poor copper or tin, nor to man's use so profitable as is the poor metal that maketh us the ploughshare and horseshoon and horsenails." The subject of this reproof is pride, for it is silly to take pride in gold which we did not create, which is by nature not superior to copper or tin, nor for our use so profitable as iron. Man's pride, not gold and silver, is pernicious. There are a thousand ways for silly man to be proud; More illustrates one striking way. Pride in gold is a widespread failing, and the folly of such pride is obvious. Now gold, silver, copper, and tin are by nature equal and poor, as is the poor iron, for they are insensate. Judged by use, where use is restricted to what is profitable in daily life, iron wins the palm. The argument is not that gold is pernicious by nature. Nor is it useless in every way. Indeed, it is useful in this very passage as an example. In other contexts More has found gold useful as a measure of hierarchies and duties. He has written on I Corinthians 3.12, "Such good works as are so good and so pure that they be like fine gold, fine silver..."¹ A foundation of such good works will stand the refiner's fire in the day of our Lord. Here the goodness and purity of works find an analogue in gold; and gold, no doubt, serves too as a reminder that our works are in themselves naught. In answering Tyndale More uses St. Paul's argument from the vessels of gold and silver, wood, tree, and earth, some occupied in honorable business, some in dishonest and vile,² our service to God having its measure in gold. St. Peter's use of

1. Germain Marc'hadour, *The Bible in the Works of St. Thomas More*, (Nieuwkoop, 1970), III, 58. The judgment that gold is useless illustrates the danger in judging the creation by man's limited mind, for man has discovered myriad uses of gold, such as forming a link in a delicate instrument. What man, his throbbing tooth throbbed by a gold filling, would not prefer one ounce of gold to many silly sheep?

2. *Ibid.*, p. 135.

gold as a measure for the preciousness of man's faith, tried by fire, More has noted.¹ While these uses of gold are not uses profitable to man in his daily business, they are uses which benefit the understanding and serve, indeed, to curb one's pride. It should not be forgotten that silly man frequently takes pride in his skills, such as forging horseshoes, or in his foresight, such as having his barns stocked with an ample supply of horseshoes against the morrow so that his soul is at ease. While such pride is silly, the silliness is not as obvious as is pride in gold. Gold, like all things, has its dangers and uses.

Hythloday explains clearly his idea of the nature and use of gold. It is by nature useless: its value comes through man's agency and from man's use (p. 157). But Hythloday is cynical and despairing of man's character, of man's capacity to control his 'grand invention'; so, he would abolish money (p. 243). Hythloday's views on the nature and use of gold coincide, I think, with More's views. But it is difficult to prove that More shared Hythloday's abandonment of hope that men can make good use of riches.

If one accepts Hythloday's views as More's views, then More held that earth, our kind mother, hid gold out of kindness to her children. But More's attitude toward the Utopians and Hythloday is ambiguous. More's views may be identified with those of Hythloday. On the other hand, More may have admired the Utopians and not Hythloday, may have thought the Utopians and Hythloday both foolish, have admired some practices of the Utopians and not others, some traits in Hythloday's character and personality and not other traits.

There is a type of mind which gathers the world into one human head. Such a mind becomes its own place or every place, and the conduct of the world is reduced to problems which that mind solves. This mind holds court for counselors of every nation who debate there and plot courses for their countries. Hythloday has such a mind: he knows what the King of France proposes, what is happening in Venice, how the Swiss mercenaries are used. He has listened carefully and watched closely. His grasp of facts, one learns from Fr. Surtz's notes, is commanding. Yet Erasmus has observed with his shrewd eye that such a man is not wise, for he knows his environment but not himself. Erasmus challenges this man: You have analyzed the troubles of England; tell us about the troubles in your own heart—anger, envy, lust, ambition (*Enchiridion*, C.15). Here is a crux, for this mind views itself as stable, the world as shifting and intractable. Such impatience with the world is treacherous when joined to Christian opposition to the world, for Christian opposition to the world, Erasmus warns in the sixteenth chapter of the *Enchiridion*, can degenerate into a supercilious rejection of every mode of life. Hythloday's experience of the world and his rejection of the world outside Utopia are broad and cynical, a position which leads, Erasmus warns, to one's attacking and degrading the opinions of others, as Hythloday does.

1. *Ibid.*, p. 163, under I Peter 1.7.

He knows about the troubles in England, and he proposes remedies for those troubles. For instance, he calls for restoration of the cloth industry in England. But Fr. Surtz writes: "It is hard to understand how Hythlodæus could demand the restoration of an industry the expansion of which was going on rapidly" (p. 340). Now, Fr. Surtz explains brilliantly a possible cause for More's ignorance concerning England's cloth industry. But there is another explanation possible: Hythloday's error is not More's error. Rather, the error reveals a flaw common to those who would form the world to a diagram in their own heads. Such men gather facts rapidly and partially. Though they appear to know everything and to have experienced all things, they trip themselves on their credulity, for being zealous in regard for their own dreams they believe readily those things which confirm their dreams. Zealots bring their credibility into question by their manner, and Hythloday is, as More says, a zealot who bristles when his views are questioned. Who does not respect Hythloday's earnest rigidity; his zest for himself, for life, and for Utopia at an age when a man's dry bones tease him into self-hatred; his admiration for generosity; his approval of sensible customs and standards? But the singularity of Hythloday's theme brings his balance into question. He resembles Aristotle's communist who claims that all evils in the world arise from private property—suits, contracts, perjury, flatteries of rich men.¹ The fictional Thomas More of Book I tells Hythloday, as Aristotle told his communist, that the cause of evils in the world is wickedness in human nature. Just as zealots are likely to reduce the world to a diagram in their heads, so are they likely to reduce human character to abstractions. The zealot's report of the world and human character is usually earnest and fragmented.

Hythloday's report sometimes brings his credibility into doubt; indeed, at times his discrepancies are so apparent that one wonders whether More is not using them to cast doubt on Hythloday's word.

Hythloday tells us that the Utopians use their surplus to import what they do not produce, iron, gold, and silver, so that they have gathered by trade an abundance of all three metals. Their single use for gold and silver is to use it in waging war [... *aut quum bellum gerendum est, quam in rem unam totum illum thesaurum quem habent domi seruant, uti aut extremis in periculis, aut in subitis praesidio sit* (p. 148, lines 29-31)]. To serve this use the rulers have devised a way of cheapening gold, the end being that the citizens—common folk who have foolish imaginations—will not come to value it and so object to its being confiscated when it is needed for war. The uses to which the rulers assign gold in this subterfuge are chamber pots, humble vessels, chains and fetters for slaves, ornaments for disgrace. Hythloday recounts how the Utopians mistook the Anemolian ambassadors for slaves, because the ambassadors wore golden chains. The reason for this error is clear. The rulers have kept the common people ignorant of what the rest of the world values; otherwise, their ruse

1. *Politics*, 1263b.

would fail. The scheme is a clever one. But there is reason to question whether Hythloday has reported accurately what he saw and heard. Hythloday comments that the Utopians wonder why gold is so valued in the world. How could the common people know that it is valued in the world when they mistook those who valued gold for slaves? And how did the Utopians know about the foolish marriage customs in the rest of the world and not know that in other countries ambassadors wore golden chains? If the Anemolians betrayed to the Utopians the value which the world placed on gold, it seems odd that the Utopians should have continued in their old ways, curbed their foolish imaginations, and submitted to the deception of their rulers. Though Hythloday's report is confused, it is clear enough to reveal that the rulers do value gold and hoard it in a cunning manner for use in the world.

Hythloday, like Ovid, Horace, and Sir Guyon, praises nature for kindly concealing gold out of man's reach. Like a kind and indulgent mother, earth has hidden from us, he comments, "all vain and unprofitable things," while she has placed at hand air, water, and earth herself (p. 151). Once more a reader wonders whether More is distinguishing his view from Hythloday's, for Hythloday names hidden things as unprofitable just after he has said, "... without iron mortals cannot live any more than without fire and water" (p. 151).

Speaking in his own voice in explication of a biblical text, More calls into question the confusion of the Creator and the created which viewing the earth as a kindly mother arouses. He had read Augustine's argument that we trample on the Creator if the earth be His body (*City of God*, IV.12), Augustine's description of the rites of the effeminate who had been consecrated to the Great Mother (VII.26), and Augustine's assertion that these rites rise from the failure to distinguish creature from the Creator (VII.30). More himself makes the very point in a comment on Romans 1. 24-27: "... the old philosophers, for their wilful idolatry against God, were given by God into the sin against the nature of man."¹ It is difficult to think in the face of such an explicit passage that More would have sympathized with the view that men tear the womb of their kind mother when they take metals from the earth. Whatever we make of tearing earth's womb, the idea scarcely applies to the Utopians, for they do not share Hythloday's views on metals: they use iron, gold, and silver which have been torn from the earth.

Ovid's use of gold recalls a biblical use, the preciousness of gold to the gods. Man has delved into the bowels of the earth for baneful iron and baneful gold, as we find in the first book of the *Metamorphoses*. But the gods use gold. Cupid's arrow of gold kindles the flame of love. Diana's bow is gold. Gold shines from the palace of the sun. In *Odes* 3.3.49-52, Horace sets the word *humanos* against *sacrum*. We may detect premises here which lead to a difference between Ovid, Horace, and More. Ovid

1. Marc'hadour, p. 36. Am I fastidious in finding the connotations of *parens* disquieting in the following passages of the *Utopia*: "*uelut parens indulgentissima optima quaeque in propatulo posuerit*" (p. 150); "*hunc parentem uocant*" (p. 216)?

calls gold noxious, a view which Augustine and More do not hold. Horace calls gold sacred, a view which Augustine and More reject.

If Ovid and Horace condemn all human uses of gold, their views are to be distinguished from the views of such Renaissance writers as Erasmus and Spenser. Sir Guyon, in the passage which Professor Doyle quotes (see above p.48-49), follows the Ovidian tradition. Like Friar Laurence, he sees the womb of earth as a tomb where treasures are hid. Man, Sir Guyon asserts, has compounded from gold and silver monstrous pride which Mammon's cave exhibits. Arachne, whose pride had been in art, has spun a web over the gold, so that her pride is exhibited in relation to gold. Gold, as Sir Guyon has said, has a right use. Mammon and Arachne exhibit the wrong use of gold as do all the other inhabitants of Mammon's cave. When Sir Guyon speaks against gold and mining, he has been overcome at the moment by the sight of Mammon who has inordinate love of gold. It would indeed be better never to have seen gold than to be like him. Sir Guyon learns by his journey through the cave that the ramifications of the loss of the golden age are myriad, for gold becomes there a symbol for every kind of avarice. The weary man who sits on the silver stool in the cave has succumbed to various intemperances. Hythloday, in distinction, sees gold literally as the sole source of avarice which comes from fear of want or pride in superfluity (p. 139). But as Chaucer's Parson said in his shrewd explication of *Ad Timotheum Sexto*, "And understood that Avarice ne stant nat oonly in lond ne catel, but somtyme in science and in glorie, and in every manere of outrageous thyng is Avarice and Coveitise."

To identify Sir Guyon's dramatic exclamation with Spenser's views on gold is wrong. While Sir Guyon lies exhausted from his journey through the cave, Spenser assures his reader that the gods come from their silver bowers on golden wings to succour men. To cite a few cases in the *Fairie Queene* where gold and silver are put to good use, there are in the House of Holiness Fidelia's cup of gold, Speranzo's silver anchor, and Charissa's tyre of gold adorned with gems. In the House of Temperance Alma wears a golden train. Sir Guyon does not exclaim there over the treachery of digging gold from earth's womb. Una's father at her betrothal to the Red Cross Knight gives St. George gifts of ivory and gold. It is doubtful that Spenser thought gold useless and pernicious.

Hythloday describes the Utopian use of gold and war as noble, for the end of Utopian action is to maintain an Eden on this earth. As Hooker noted, the Puritans resembled Hythloday's Utopians. Now, the Puritans worked to bring Eden to this earth and often said as much. Cotton Mather asserted that to return to the golden age would make a man a Puritan.¹ His notion of Eden included many of the improvements which were to be found in Utopia, such as water rendered serviceable to man. Puritanism is scientific, intellectual, progressive; it makes its principal business knowledge of man's environment rather than man.²

1. Harry Levin, *The Myth of the Golden Age in the Renaissance*, (Bloomington, 1969), p. 67.

2. John Lukacs, *The Passing of the Modern Age*, (New York, 1970), pp. 139-140.

Those who try to make an Eden of earth by way of a planned program which finds its principles in a secret wisdom known to an elite are gnostics, Eric Voegelin argues. The gnostic sees matter as intrinsically pernicious and in need of proper arrangement and control. Professor Voegelin has pointed to the *Utopia* as an example of gnostic construction in which "a thinker suppresses an essential element of reality in order to be able to construct an image of man, or society, or history to suit his desires."¹ More has named Ur-Utopia after Abraxas, a gnostic god. Are we to conclude that the Utopians are gnostics who have risen above gnosticism by way of philosophy, or that they are gnostics who have fallen into false philosophy? It will be recalled that More criticizes false philosophy on the grounds that it destroys place by taking all places to be one and the same place [*quae quiduis putet ubiuis conuenire* (p. 98)], and that Hythloday argues immediately after More's criticism that the views which he has just expounded are applicable to every place, *ubiuis* (p. 100). But are they? Idle retainers come to mind. Were Goneril and Regan right, after all? Should we applaud their depriving their father of his retinue? Utopia, no-place, which in a sense is what an *ubiuis* is, follows in spirit Basilides's assertion that God can be described only by negatives, in that Utopia defines the good society by describing a society which cannot exist and applying the rules of this society to all places.

More was not a gnostic and not a Puritan. He wore a golden chain. Can we turn the world back to the golden age? More argued that we cannot wrench to a golden age even the little world, the church. When Luther attempted to strip the church of its patina, More accused him of trying to build a church in the minds of a few persons in a corner, perhaps in Utopia.² This comes from following a hidden wisdom [*gnosis?*] which reduces the church to an invisible one, an internal one, to a church not in this world [*gnostic rejection of the external world?*].³ Such a church becomes imperceptible and mathematical like Platonic ideas;⁴ it apparently includes only good men.⁵ That church, then, would be a Utopian society. But, as More had said to Hythloday, we cannot predicate social institutions by relying on universal goodness.

The church militant, More knew, embraces the fallen. In the fallen world a man has to do as well as he can with God's creatures. St. John Chrysostom in preaching on Acts 2.44-45—the locus of Christian communism which, oddly, More passes unnoticed in his voluminous use of the Bible—warns that "universally the devil has made it his endeavour to disparage the creatures of God, as if it were impossible to make good use of riches."⁶

In holding possessions to be the sole source of avarice, Hythloday has denied a part of human nature, that part in which lurks avarice of knowledge. That the source of evil is in money and not in man's heart is

1. Eric Voegelin, *Science, Politics and Gnosticism*, (Chicago, 1968), p. 106.

2. John M. Headley, "Murner, More, and More's Ecclesiology," *Studies in the Renaissance*, XIV (1967), 83. See also, John M. Headley, *The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, (New Haven, 1969), V, Part II, 760-3.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 84. 4. *Ibid.* 5. *Ibid.*, p. 85.

6. St. John Chrysostom, *A Library of Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church, The Homilies of S. John Chrysostom, Archbishop of Constantinople, on the Acts of the Apostles* (Oxford, 1851), Part I, 99.

an old and prevailing superstition. Fr. Surtz cites expressions of it in Sallust's exhortation to Caesar, in Lucian, and in a refinement of the idea where Ficino is careful to speak of the "luxury, pride, and sloth arising from riches" (pp. 563-4). Hythloday, in describing how allies draw rulers from Utopia, asserts that the rulers cannot be bribed, for after one to five years they will return to Utopia where money is worthless (p. 197). This neglects a part of human nature. Is not one of the strangest parts of experience our forgetting that death will take us home, so that business welds us to the moment despite our knowledge that the moment is fleeting and that we are but pilgrims on earth? If money be the sole source of avarice, then the abolition of money will eradicate avarice. And so it has been eradicated in Utopia. To judge that money is the sole source of avarice Hythloday must, as Fr. Surtz notes, modify and transfer "from the economic to the moral sphere Aristotle's statements: 'money... is a measure of all things' (*Eth. Nic.* 5.5.10, 1133a), and: 'money is a standard to which all things are referred and by which they are measured' (ibid. 9.1.2, 1164a). Cf. Aquinas, *Reg. prin.* 2.13" (p. 378). Here lies a difficulty of Hythloday's position. In measuring evil by riches Hythloday makes money the sole measure in the moral sphere. Hence, Hythloday can boast that by eradicating money the Utopians have "extirpated the roots of ambition and factionalism along with all the other vices" (p. 245).

In his introductory letter to the *Utopia* Budé adopts Hythloday's analysis of the cause of pride and avarice. Three divine principles, he writes, have rooted out vice in Utopia: the equality of goods, the love of peace, and the contempt of gold and silver (p. 11). He goes on to say that if avarice would depart "the golden age of Saturn would return" (p. 11). But how serious is Budé? Before his letter is done he has pointed to another source of pride in revealing why More has ascribed his whole account to Hythloday. Otherwise Hythloday could rightly claim that "More had left him a prematurely plucked and deflowered glory" (p. 13). This is emphasized, for the Latin statement, *gloriam... praecertam, praefloratamque*, is repeated in the curious little passage in Greek which follows it, *προαπνηθισμένον τὸ κλέος*. Budé encourages the reader to suspect that he intends to be ambiguous about Utopia and Hythloday when at the outset of his letter he describes his almost neglecting the management of his household affairs through the insights he has had from discovering Utopia. We are left to wonder whether Budé accepts Hythloday's analysis or whether he is undercutting Hythloday by revealing that his principle of extirpating pride by abolishing money is defective. For Budé suspects that Hythloday is subject to pride, and Hythloday, it will be recalled, has dispersed all of his money.

More confronts the reader with like ambiguities. After Hythloday has finished his account, More questions the abolition of the exchange of money, for this "alone utterly overthrows all the nobility, magnificence, splendor, and majesty which are, in the estimation of the common people, the true glories and ornaments of the commonwealth" (p. 245). There are many ways to take this passage. Prof. Hexter, for instance, reads it as a weak refutation placed deliberately to show that More's argument has

collapsed.¹ Another way to read the argument is that nobility, magnificence, splendor, and majesty are good things and that it is well to provide those of weak imaginations with a way of perceiving these things. Or, one may argue that the common people who can see nobility by way of money only are analogous to Hythloday who can see evil in terms of money only. In both cases the intricate moral sphere has been reduced to the economic sphere.

More created Hythloday, a man who despised money but who still coveted personal glory. Is not the example of Hythloday in itself a criticism of the view which reduces morality to the measure of the economic sphere? In translating I Timothy 6.10, More did not translate *φιλαργυρία* by "love of money." He chose a larger reference. "The root of all evils is covetise, which while some folk coveted, they walked out of the way from the faith."²

1. J. H. Hexter, *More's UTOPIA*, (New York, 1965), p. 39.
2. Marc'hadour, p. 132.

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Ward ALLEN

Along with his article in this issue reacting to Prof. Doyle's, Ward Allen's letter of June 14, 1971 contained a few remarks which I cannot refrain from quoting:

*You have no doubt seen "Utopia and Geneva" by Prof. Hexter. * The appeal of Utopia as a literal thing to be built on this earth has been strong amongst the Protestants, especially the Puritans. Of course, that may come from their mistaken reading of it, not from any intention of More's. It seemed to me that the young persons who objected to our buying the gold cup were of that strain. How many Protestants have I heard charging that the Catholics waste money on decorations of gold. And all the while those who were deploring the waste attended church in air-conditioned buildings where the cost of running the machine to cool the building was itself more than the cost of golden vessels. Doesn't Puritanism have a way of ending up by recommending comforts to man? P. G. Stanwood remarks in his preface to John Cosin's Devotions that Primers and Books of Hours of various kinds had a way of giving in during Elizabethan times in England to devotions which concentrated on man's needs.*

* *Editor's note.*

Yes, I saw that essay, "a particularly interesting piece", says Marius B. Jansen reviewing the volume in which it appeared in 1969 (*Moreana*, no. 27 p. 112). Answering my request about copies of it, Jack Hexter writes (August 18, 1971):

"Sometime this year, Basic Books is publishing a collection of mine, to be called The Vision of Politics on the Eve of the Reformation. It will include the entire introductory essay to the Yale edition of Utopia. I have re-incorporated in that essay, from which Professor Sylvester excised it, my piece on Utopia and Geneva."

Jack Hexter

I think that my views on the Utopia - I hope - come near to yours and Fr. Surtz's, but by a different route. I think that it furnishes a model of what the Church knows to be man's proper place in this world. But I think that I see the model by way of seeing how empty even a perfect world is without the Church. Hythloday seems to me to be more Puritan than Catholic. I'm probably wrong, for you and Fr. Surtz know far better than I the marks by which a man is recognized as a Catholic. For instance, where Fr. Surtz sees Hythloday as concerned about the proper ordination for the priesthood, I find him indifferent.

And isn't this a point where one has to rely on literary interpretation, on the reading of character? My answer to the point that More's contemporaries agreed as to the meaning of the Utopia starts with the proposition that the Utopia is a literary work. And when one agrees to a meaning of a literary work, one is agreeing to the meaning of a paraphrase of the work. It is generally thought now, I believe, that contemporary critics were all mistaken in their interpretation of Eliot's *Wasteland*. Of course, Eliot's poem is more highly symbolic than More's Utopia, more highly allusive. Or, is it? My, think of the allusions which Fr. Surtz points out in his brilliant notes!

This letter is getting out of hand. All good wishes.

Yours faithfully,

Lord Allen

You have no doubt seen *The Year's Work 1967*,* p. 121.

"But More's economic theory is unscientific through his failure to understand the value of money, which, like Lycurgus, Plato, and many early Christian writers, he denounced on ethical grounds. Regarding money and bullion solely as a source of unhappiness and social problems, he made the same mistake as the Luddites, blind to the fact that the development of a market economy leads to great productivity and provides effective incentives inducing people to increase their skills and to work harder." Summary of Marion Frackowiak's *Pogledy Ekonomiczne Tomasa More*.

I think that this thesis requires a misreading of More.

* Editor's note.

The Year's Work means, of course, *The Year's Work in English Studies*, published for the English Association by John Murray, London, and usually reviewed in *Moreana* soon after it reaches Angers. The Jubilee volume (no. 50), due out this November, will be a twin of our *Festschrift*. B.E.C. Davis, who tackles the Renaissance section with fairness and competence, has proved himself a fine appraiser of literature on More. The Association news-letter of September 1971, among its obiter dicta has a saying of Samuel Butler's which deserves re-quoting here, as it seems to echo the letter to Giles in which More qualmfully inquires about the length of the river that spans the Anydrus, after making (Yale ed. p. 40) his famous distinction between *mentiri* & *mendacium dicere*. Now, Butler says: "I don't mind lying but I hate inaccuracy."