

« LIKE A FOUNTAIN STIRR'D »

My mind is troubled, like a fountain stirr'd ;
And I myself see not the bottom of it.

Troilus and Cressida. III.iii.311-312

Prefatory Note

The major monuments of Edward Surtz, S.J.'s work with Thomas More and the *Utopia* are well known : *The Praise of Pleasure : Philosophy, Education, and Communism in More's « Utopia »* (Cambridge, Mass. : Harvard Univ. Press, 1957) ; *The Praise of Wisdom : A Commentary on the Religious and Moral Problems and Backgrounds of St. Thomas More's « Utopia »* (Chicago : Loyola Univ. Press, 1957) ; his edition of *Utopia, Selected Works of St. Thomas More* (New Haven and London : Yale Univ. Press, 1964), and, edited with J.H. Hexter, *Utopia, The Complete Works of St. Thomas More*, 4 (New Haven and London : Yale Univ. Press, 1965). At the time of his death, in 1973, there was a fifth substantial work, a 1967 typescript called « A Guide Through *Utopia* : A Critique of Structure and Idea in *The Best State of a Commonwealth* by Thomas More. »¹ In a brief preface, Father Surtz characterized his « Guide » as a literary and intellectual anatomy of a living classic ; it would be « comprehensive » with respect to the « fundamental conception » of *Utopia*, but « selective » with respect to its structure (p. v). « For the author it was to be a re-reading, a re-study, a re-valuation of the *Utopia* which would be the harvest of years of research and meditation. For the reader it was to be a search, in company with the author, for the 'very pulse of the machine' »². It was also, in part, the fulfillment of a dream for Father Surtz. As he explained, he had long « wished to analyze More's masterpiece with only the text, English and Latin, lying open before him and with paper and pen in hand. . . . In writing down his thoughts, he wished to explain the text, with the whole background (religious, philosophical, scientific, political, social, economic, educational, and literary) in the back of his head, not in front of the reader » (pp. iv-v). Presupposing only a knowledge of the text of *Utopia* on the reader's part, he wanted to write a book which would be both « scholarly » and « popular » or readable.

There are four sections in the « Guide ». Part One provides an overview and considers the structure of *Utopia* under five headings : « A Great Book and Its Theme, » « Intellectual Skeleton, » « Emotional Element, » « Dramatic Aspect, » and « Unity of Execution. » The next two long parts constitute the actual guide, taking the reader through Books I and II of the *Utopia* in sequential order. The part included here, « 'Like a Fountain Stirr'd,' » was originally the conclusion. After reading over the manuscript at Abbé Germain Marc'hadour's request, I felt that this section could stand alone, as a final statement of the way that Father Surtz viewed *Utopia* after having worked with it for so many years. Readers will hear echoes of his prefaces to *Utopia*, both in *Selected Works*, and *Complete Works*, but in its present form the material has a coherence and integrity of its own. Interestingly, Father Surtz himself wrote in his preface to this « Guide » that « One of the startling experiences of the author was the feeling of quest, struggle, and suspense. In his anatomization he proceeded *pari passu* with More himself. He frequently did not know where More's words and his own analysis were going to lead him, especially when implicit ideas and emotions had to be defined » (p. vii). I think that part of his pleasure and his struggle comes through in this essay and explains the significance of Father Surtz's title -- encouraging us as readers to become engaged with both his text and More's. These pages also say something about Father Surtz's own values and beliefs, so that their appearance close to the tenth anniversary of his death seems singularly appropriate and allows him to speak to people who, like myself, never met him. We can almost see him lay down his pen after writing, « 'Amen I heard me cry,' » as we here commemorate the heroic endeavors of a scholar and critic who gave himself so unstintingly to the study of Thomas More.

In editing « 'Like a Fountain Stirr'd' » I have made only a few changes in the text. An occasional reference to material discussed elsewhere in the « Guide » has been deleted, a reference to Plato expanded, and some sentences have been tightened. I have also incorporated references to the *Utopia* (from *CW 4*) into the text. Because Father Surtz had an audience of « earnest » students and serious readers in mind, he cited *Utopia* from the *Selected Works*. Citations from *The Complete Works* seemed more useful at this point, however. The one footnote which did not appear in his original text has been identified with my initials in brackets.

I. Role of Hythlodæus.

The complexity of ideas and attitudes in the *Utopia* is reflected in its protean form. Inside the general narrative framework constructed by Thomas More, a lively series of debates on thievery, capital punishment, foreign affairs, and domestic policies is presented within a more comprehensive debate on royal councilorship. The reader is well aware of the dramatic nature of this conflict. But just when the chief protagonist, Raphael Hythlodæus, has been driven to the wall, the drama of Book I is transformed into the travel account of Book II. Description, in turn, is succeeded by a perfervid harangue, like the peroration of a speech, in Raphael's closing paragraphs, which serve also to resume briefly the dramatic struggle. The weary Raphael is left victor on the field. An adversary, Thomas More, fires three ineffectual parting shots before he brings his narrative to a close. In consequence, the form of the *Utopia* may be safely labelled unique.

Why does the masterpiece, in spite of its heterogeneous composition, give the reader a single and unified impression ? A principal reason is the concentration of attention and interest upon Hythlodæus. Whether the form of discourse is narrative, travel, drama, debate, or oration, the spotlight is focused upon him. The circle of light may be widened to include other characters, such as Giles and Morton in Book I. It may be narrowed to illuminate Hythlodæus only, as happens throughout Book II. But he always stands at the center -- from his appearance after morning mass in front of Antwerp's Notre Dame Cathedral to his disappearance into More's lodging to partake of supper. It is his wrinkled, sunburned, and long-bearded face that one sees. It is his eloquent voice which one hears while reading and which one remembers, « Long after it was heard no more. »³ The reader experiences Hythlodæus' emotions, remarkable less for change and variety than for intensity and vehemence, especially for indignation at all injustice and admiration of Utopianism. He considers Hythlodæus' uncompromising views on all important matters : philosophy, literature, education, science, religion, international relations, domestic policies, and especially communism and private property. Little wonder that as a character Raphael seems more real than even Thomas More or Peter Giles, for he is revealed inside and out -- from the « cloak hanging carelessly from his shoulder » (p. 49/21-22) to the flame in his heart and the pattern in his brain. As much an individual as either of his two interlocutors in the garden, Raphael is also a type, being representative of revolutionaries who

denounce abuse and corruption and who preach amendment and change, sometimes impractical and extreme.

What degree of sympathy or identification does the reader achieve with Hythlodæus? He hardly could see eye to eye with him on all points at all times. The author in Thomas More has made provision for that. The humanist reader of the sixteenth century would scarcely disagree with Raphael on his attitude toward thievery and capital punishment and the foreign and domestic policies of kings. Like Thomas More, however (p. 97/39-99/16), he might not agree with his wholesale condemnation of European institutions. On the crucial point of communism itself, More has been careful to condition the reader's response, first, by recalling the accepted Aristotelian arguments against communism (p. 107/5-16) and, secondly, by uttering the final word, and hence the most emphatic word, on communism (p. 245/21-26).

The most subtle device used by Thomas More to make the reader less well-disposed and more cautious is to depict Hythlodæus as an uncompromising character who overstates his case. The Utopians appear too good to be true, their institutions too efficient to be real. In fact, the author of *Utopia* finally maneuvers the reader into a moderate position, standing for moderate reform. The reader would reject the extreme views on property and its acquisition which are held in Book I by the enclosers of the common lands and by kings and advisers in their councils. At the same time, he could not subscribe to a system which requires universal wisdom, consummate virtue, and perfect obedience to detailed regulations on clothing, housing, food, work, etc. Such minute regimentation would destroy certain treasured values, such as freedom and individuality. What irony there is in the fact that Hythlodæus could never say in his lauded Utopia: « I now live as I please » [*nunc sic uiuo ut uolo*] (p. 57/2; p. 56/1).

Moreover, the portrayal of the class struggle not as human tragedy but as melodrama both strengthens and weakens Hythlodæus' case. Throughout *Utopia* the emphasis is on the best and ideal aspects of communism and the worst and realistic defects of private ownership. At least in retrospect, when no longer under the influence of Hythlodæus' personality and rhetoric, the reader open-mindedly and fair-mindedly will attempt to assess the justice and the advantage of both systems -- precisely what the author of *Utopia* wishes him to do.

Examining the characters in this melodramatic class-conflict, the reader will perceive that all the lovable and attractive persons with a just and equitable cause are either the disciples or the beneficiaries of com-

munist. These good people are not only the inhabitants of Utopia but also English farmers who have been evicted: « Though they most eagerly offer their labor, there is no one to hire them » (p. 67/31-32). They are « the common laborer, the carter, the carpenter, and the farmer, » whose work is « so essential that no commonwealth could last even one year without it » (p. 239/34-35 and 36-37). These poor workers are melodramatically and sentimentally depicted as « well-behaved, simple, and by their daily industry more beneficial to the commonwealth than to themselves » (p. 105/16-18). One should note too that only absolutely necessary crafts are exercised in Utopia. On the other hand, the satellites or henchmen of private property, that is, Mammon, are the unpleasant and nasty persons denounced in Book I: noblemen and retainers, enclosers and monopolizers, kings and councilors, and « preachers, crafty men that they are » (p. 101/30-31). These « so-called gentlefolk and banking goldsmiths and the rest of that kind, who are either idle or mere parasites and purveyors of empty pleasures » (p. 241/9-11), unite to form « a kind of conspiracy of the rich, who are aiming at their own interests under the name and title of the commonwealth » (p. 241/27-29). There is little need to wonder at the partisan assertion that « the rich are greedy, unscrupulous, and useless » (p. 105/15-16). The gold which makes the wealthy such despicable characters is used by the Utopians as its « true nature deserves » -- for chamber pots, slaves' fetters, and badges of infamy (p. 151/20). Thus the virtue of the poor and the wickedness of the wealthy constitute a leitmotif in the development of *Utopia*: « Blessed are you poor. . . . But woe to you that are rich » (Luke 6:20, 24).

This division between virtue and vice and poor and rich prevails in a moneyed, propertied society, but not in Utopia. As Hythlodæus says, « with equality of distribution, all men have abundance of all things » (p. 103/35). The abundance is expressly attributed to the fact that every Utopian works and that there are only necessary trades (p. 129/30-135/24). For the maintenance of the communistic system, the young are trained in « morals and virtue » (p. 229/10) and in « good opinions which are also useful for the preservation of their commonwealth » (p. 229/13-14). Priests are entrusted with the task, probably because « a religious fear towards the gods [is] the greatest and almost the only stimulus to the practice of virtues » (p. 235/7-8). Consequently, contrary to all expectation, the Utopians fulfill the seemingly impossible condition set by Thomas More: « It is impossible that all should be well unless all men were good » (p. 101/2-3). In Utopia practically all men

are good, « having had an excellent rearing to a virtuous life » (p. 185/29).

Three conditions are implicit in Hythlodæus' discourse and necessary for the success of communism : (1) universal virtue, (2) lasting prosperity, and (3) careful education. The reader will remember that the Utopians had been attracted to Christianity because of Christ's counsel of a common life and because of its survival « among the truest societies of Christians » (p. 219/8), namely, the religious houses. Yet fallen human nature had made the latter a scapegoat of reformers even before the Reformation. For the realist, human beings, no matter how adaptable, will ever be touched by « the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life » (1 John 2:16). How can the serpent of pride, which manifests itself not only in pomp and imperiousness but in the tenacity of one's own opinions, be plucked out (p. 57/36-38 ; pp. 243/33-245/2) ? Hythlodæus himself concedes the difficulty of eradication [*pressius hominibus infixæ est, quam ut facile possit euelli*] (p. 244/2-3). The humanistic reader finds the clue to Thomas More's own mind in his written words. That it is impossible to realize the Utopians' ideal is deducible from the names used by Thomas More : their capital is Amaurotum or Phantom-Town, their river Anydrus or Waterless, their governor Ademus or Peopleless. For the sensitive reader, More seems to sound the very appellation Utopia or Nowhere as a knell :

till his songs one burden bore --
Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore
Of « Never -- nevermore. »⁴

The intellectual conflict therefore resolves itself into a pull between Nowhere and Somewhere, between theory and practice. Does the solution lie in the middle ? Should the man of principles and ideals consent to play his role in the world's councils : « What you cannot turn to good you must take as little bad as you can » (p. 101/1-2) ? Should he return from the upper world to the underground den, by analogy with the situation in Plato's Republic (Book VII) ? Should he remember the communism which he has seen in the ideal world of Utopia but accommodate it to men as they are and adapt it to conditions as they exist in Europe ? If so, where would the procedure of adaptation and accommodation end ?

Hythlodæus seems to force his hearers (or readers) into a necessary choice between communism as hero-to-the-rescue and private

ownership as villain-and-blackguard. The thoughtful reader knows that a third alternative exists. The possessor should view his private goods, including gold, not as his own but as common to all, at least to the extent of sharing superfluous possessions with the indigent. Man's nature and history reveal that private property is necessary for orderly and permanent provision for the individual and his family. But abuses which have arisen must be eliminated -- or at least mitigated. More's advice is common sense : « If you cannot pluck up wrongheaded opinions by the root, . . . what you cannot turn to good you must make as little bad as you can » (p. 99/31-32 ; p. 101/1-2). Gold, too, must be treated as its « true nature deserves » (p. 151/19-20). It is too precious for chamber pots and too base to be esteemed above man himself ; its rightful place is as a medium of exchange, « a grand invention to ease access » (p. 243/19), enabling man to get his food and other necessities. In brief, gold and goods should be private in title, according to the demands of justice, but common in use, according to the claims of love and charity.

Blame must be laid, not upon a system which is approved by human nature and experience, but upon the knaves and fools whose morals and practices have impaired the system. Failure to distinguish between the system and the abuses foisted upon the system leads to rebellion and chaos. The positive approach is to inculcate the right doctrine with regard to private property, its rights and its obligations. The open secret of Utopian success is education : the priests « take the greatest pains from the very first to instill into children's minds, while still tender and pliable, good opinions which are also useful for the preservation of their commonwealth » (p. 229/11-14). The ruin of a state is « vices which arise from wrong attitudes » (p. 229/17-18). In Europe, by contrast, all from commoner to king are badly educated. Hythlodæus charges that Englishmen, like other contemporary Christians, suffer their « youths to be badly brought up and their characters, even from early years, to become more and more corrupt » (p. 71/11-13). Kings « have been from their youth saturated and infected with wrong ideas » (p. 87/21-22). Parents and teachers, churchmen and statesmen, should foster in children and citizens the Christian attitude : a distrust of riches, a predilection for poverty, the gospel of brotherly love, and the generous sharing of material goods.

The Christian humanist is accustomed to adapting pagan ideals and examples to Christian circumstances : his frame of mind is that, if

pagans do good, Christians should do better.³ Consequently, although Utopian communism is not the solution for the Christian commonwealth, Utopia does furnish principles and patterns for the proper treatment of all citizens. The most obvious, of course, are the humane treatment of convicts, the respect for manual labor, the esteem for learning, the hatred of war, and the spirit of piety. Europeans must purge themselves of their unchristian cruelty, sloth, ignorance, belligerence, avarice, superstition, luxury, and pleasure-pandering. If they insist upon seeing pleasure as the end-all and be-all of life, let them at least observe the Utopian hierarchy of pleasures, at the head of which are intellectual pursuits, consciousness of a virtuous soul, and union with God in heaven. Moreover, if Utopian philosophy, properly understood, is unobjectionable, Utopian religion too can serve felicitously as a vestibule to Christian faith and sacraments.

The humanist reader therefore concludes that a thorough-going reformation can be achieved without the adoption of communism. This reformation provides for human weakness and for human strength. Human indolence and improvidence are countered by the retention of private property, which acts as an incentive to work and as a pledge of liberty and initiative. Inspiration for the human spirit stems from the ideals of Christian love and communion. The practical finds expression in private ownership; the idealistic, in the charity of Christ. The result will be « a chosen race, . . . a holy nation, God's own people » (1 Pet. 2:9).

One thing, however, is clear: *Utopia* argues that the English people and European nations cannot go along as usual. Conditions as revealed in the cardinal's court and in the two royal councils are intolerable. The least one can do is to reexamine and to rethink existing institutions. Just as the Utopians' « chief debate is in what thing or things . . . happiness consists » (p. 161/23-25), so in Europe every mind and heart should be asking in what thing the temporal felicity of the state consists. The obvious, ready, and true answer can only be: peace and prosperity. The government must maintain the rights of all citizens inviolate against all aggression from within and without the state. It must provide all citizens with means for physical, intellectual, and moral well-being -- as the Utopians would say: « the good: of the soul and of the body and of external gifts » (p. 161/19-21).

To attain peace and prosperity, rulers and subjects must be prepared to find and to adopt « those wise and prudent provisions » which

Hythlodæus « noticed anywhere among nations living together in a civilized way » (p. 53/33-34). He had not hesitated to pinpoint « the chief reason » for Utopian wisdom and prosperity: « They immediately at one meeting appropriated to themselves every good discovery of ours » (p. 109/14-16). Conversely, the blight on the European spirit is that « it will be long before we adopt anything that is better arranged with them than with us » (p. 109/16-17). The chief obstacle to justice and equity is a closed mind. This closed mind is the result of three causes: blind conservatism, manifest especially in courtiers and councilors; bad education, foisted upon commoner and king; and false ideals, revealed in the immoderate quest for wealth, glory, and pleasure. The remedy is an open mind toward innovation. More's advice is like Paul's: « Test everything, hold fast what is good, abstain from every form of evil » (1 Thess. 5:21-22).

Thomas More definitely has a message: a curse upon greed and oppression, a blessing upon truth and love. But a sermon or a lecture would be an ineffective vehicle because conservatives and diehards would read neither. Critical and radical words are put instead into the mouth of an amazing individual who holds his auditors spellbound with personal anecdote and fascinating travelogue. This individual is marked by idiosyncracies, impractical idealism, and uncompromising opinions. He is less a mask for More himself than a lifelike character who strongly defends views contrary to current opinion in order to make people inquire and think. This maneuver results in one of More's greatest triumphs. In Book I, he and Giles serve as interlocutors and adversaries of Hythlodæus. In Book II, the reader himself, if at all active, must assume the role: he must ask the questions, put the objections, defend his own beliefs and practices. In Book I, the reader enjoys the spectacle of debate between Hythlodæus and Giles and More. In Book II, More and Giles would be amused at the reader: sweating, hard pressed, back to the wall.

2. Symbol of the Council.

It is not by accident that the principal symbol in the *Utopia* is the council, interpreted in its most generic sense. The first disagreement between More and Giles and Hythlodæus coincides with deliberation on the effectiveness of a royal councilorship. The debate before Cardinal Morton is really a discussion of robbery, enclosure, and penal code. The

privy councils are concerned with royal finances and international relations. The constituents, powers, and duties of the state senates and national congress in Utopia are subsequently revealed in Book II. Further, the great liturgical prayer could be thought of as a colloquy with God on the avoidance of error and the pursuit of the best in religion and government. And, to conclude, the whole *Utopia* is a conference of More, Giles, and Hythlodæus on « well and wisely trained citizens » (p. 53/38-39). The reader joins the conference because his own money, house, land, food, clothing, labor, philosophy, and piety are under attack and counterattack.

The rock-bottom nature of the deliberation is clear from such key words as *commonwealth (respublica)*, *public or common (publicum seu commune)*, *private or personal (priuatum seu proprium)*, *happiness (felicitas)*, *pleasure (uoluptas)*, *commodities (commoda)*, *justice (iustitia)*, *equity (aequitas)*, *prudence (prudencia)*, *institutions (instituta)*, and *laws (leges)*. These words, of course, must be taken not only in their nominal, but also in their verbal, adjectival, and adverbial forms. The word *communism (communismus)* naturally does not appear. Ordinarily circumlocution is employed, e.g., « that legislation which gave to all an equal share in all goods » [*leges . . . quibus ex aequo omnes omnia partirentur commoda*] (p. 105/6-7 ; p. 104/5-6), or « where everything belongs to everybody » [*hic, ubi omnia omnium sunt*] (p. 239/10-11 ; p. 238/7). The imagery of the *Utopia* is predominantly auditory as well. Even in the description of Utopian cities, where one expects strong visual images, one is as much aware of the sound of Hythlodæus' voice as of the sight of hall and home.

A most important conclusion is to be drawn from the symbol of the council. On the one hand, the intellectual spirit of the *Utopia* manifests itself naturally in the form of the council : inquiry, deliberation, advice, debate, argument, refutation, and persuasion. Hence arises Hythlodæus' use of concrete details, historical examples, resemblance and contrast, imperatives and exclamations, questions and answers, clear pictures of the evil to be destroyed and the good to be attained. On the other hand, the figure of the council modifies the ideational content of the *Utopia*. What usually occurs at councils ? Adjustment, accommodation, concession, compromise, and finally a *via media*.

Hythlodæus pulls the reader present at the council toward communism. Giles and More draw him in the direction of private ownership. The reader himself sees that both parties, each having right on his

side, must be satisfied. He decides that property must be at once private and common : private as far as ownership is concerned, common as far as use is involved. Thus, he would oblige the wealthy, as a duty of Christian charity, to distribute superfluous goods to the poor or indigent. He would declare that farmers evicted by enclosure, unable to find work and in extreme need, have the right to take from the wealthy as many material goods as are necessary to save their lives. In this way he would effect a necessary and reasonable compromise between total communism and economic individualism.

Thomas More sufficiently indicates at the end of the *Utopia* that such is his view of the matter. His rejection of Utopian rites and Utopian war policies is readily explained by his espousal of natural ethics and revealed Christianity. His criticism of Utopia's moneyless communism, however, is strangely conditioned. On the one hand, he implies that complete communism of the Utopian type does not make sufficient provision for man as he actually exists : his acquisitiveness, his love of independence, his need of incentives. To achieve the latter, private property must exist. On the other hand, he ironically criticizes the role of money in modern civilization : money as the measure of all things (p. 103/26) and money as the only source of « all the nobility, magnificence, splendor, and majesty » (p. 245/24-25). In a propertied society, money is « a grand invention » so that by it all men may the more easily « get the necessities of life, » i.e., their livelihood and means of livelihood (p. 243/18-19). This is the true nature and function of money. It is designated for use, not an end in itself. Men, therefore, should generously share the benefits of property and money. Their ownership should be personal and private : their use common and public. With Paul, More would say about the rich : « They are to do good, to be rich in good deeds, liberal and generous » (1 Tim. 6:18). In a word, the ideal for Christian states would seem to get as close as possible to Utopian communism without actually adopting communism. The watchword is not communism, but community.

3. Art of Drama.

The stress upon idea does not mean that the *Utopia* is primarily and solely a vehicle of communication. On the contrary, it is a work of art, designed and created by Thomas More for his readers' contemplation and delectation. His art is not plastic, as in sculpture or architec-

ture, but temporal, as in music or fiction. It might be best to view the *Utopia*, in spite of its heterogeneous and mixed nature, as being closest to drama, in fact, to a problem play. The main character is Hythlodæus : the subordinate characters are Giles and More -- and the reader. The principal medium of *Utopia*, as befitting its resemblance to drama, is dialogue. Even though Book II can be criticized for becoming a monologue, the answers to supposed objections, the antagonism of the invisible rich, the imperatives and exclamations, the consciousness of an audience -- all help to give Hythlodæus' discourse on Utopia the effect of one-sided dialogue. The action, finally, is a conflict or collision of opposing minds and wills : those who represent the old, villainous order and those who represent a new, heroic order. The struggle therefore is not external but internal, not physical but intellectual. As in the problem play, the resolution or dénouement is not determinate and decisive. The antagonist is not completely denigrated and discomfited, nor is the protagonist entirely victorious and vindicated. Private property, which distinguishes the old, deformed order, has a solid core of good which must be made to manifest itself in the sloughing off of abuses and vices and in the assumption of generosity and charity. By contrast, Utopian communism, which constitutes the new order, has a tragic flaw : it fails to recognize man for what he is according to nature and history. In the tragedy of human life, it is bound to go down in glorious defeat.

Finally, in spite of the fact that the Utopians are a pagan people, the *Utopia* is a Christian drama. Christ Himself is mentioned prominently only three times (p. 101/23-36 ; pp. 217/36-219/10 ; p. 243/25-32). But Utopian communism need only be compared with Marxian communism to note the difference. Unlike doctrines connected with modern communism, the Utopians affirm the existence and providence of God, the immortality of the soul, and fixed and immutable morality or truth. Religion and ethics are an essential part of the Utopian constitution.

At the end of the drama of Utopia, the reaction and the feeling of the reader should be that of the Utopians in their great public prayer (p. 237/12-32). The Christian, of course, must believe his religion « the truest » and consequently need not pray for « anything better, » but he can beg God for greater devotion to His will and greater knowledge and love of Christ. Even though his own country seems to him « that commonwealth which is the happiest, » the Christian citizen should keep looking for a « better and more approved by God. » He should petition

the giver of every good gift « that He will, of His goodness, bring him to the knowledge of it, for he is ready to follow in whatever path He may lead him. »

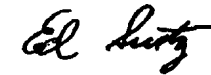
If the reader closes the *Utopia* in this mood and frame of mind, Thomas More has achieved his main purpose : the insemination of humility, open-mindedness, zeal for justice, and « a still more excellent way, » to wit, the way of love or charity (1 Cor. 12:31). Having looked upon the ideal of Utopia, the reader can say, after reservation, with Raphael Hythlodæus : « This form of a commonwealth . . . I should gladly desire for all » (p. 245/4-5). He can repeat Thomas More's closing words : « Meanwhile . . . I cannot agree with all that he said. But I readily admit that there are very many features in the Utopian commonwealth which it is easier for me to wish for in our countries than to have any hope of seeing realized (pp. 245/37-247/3).

« Amen I heard me cry ! »⁶

Loyola University of Chicago

Edward SURTZ, S.J.

Feast of St. Thomas More, 1967.



1. Edward Surtz Collection. Loyola University of Chicago Archives.

2. William Wordsworth, « She was a phantom of delight . . . » line 22.

3. Wordsworth, « The Solitary Reaper, » line 32.

4. Poe, « The Raven, » lines 64-66.

5. Here Father Surtz seems to be fundamentally rethinking R.W. Chambers' point that, « The underlying thought of *Utopia* always is, *With nothing save Reason to guide them, the Utopians do this ; and yet we Christian Englishmen, we Christian Europeans . . . !* » Cited from *Thomas More* (1935 ; rpt. Ann Arbor, Michigan : Univ. of Michigan Press, 1958), p. 128 ; cf. Surtz's preface in *Utopia, Selected Works*, p. xxvii. [E. McC.].

6. Ralph Hodgson, « The Song of Honor. »