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THE COMPLETE WORKS OF ST. THOMAS MORE, Vol. 8, *THE CONFUTATION OF TYNDALE'S ANSWER*. Edited by Louis A. Schuster, Richard C. Marius, James P. Lusardi, and Richard J. Schoeck. Part I, Books I - IV, xiv, 575 pp.; Part II, Books V - IX, Appendices A - D, pp. i-vii, 575 - 1134; Part III, Introduction, Bibliography, Commentary, Glossary, Index, pp. i-vii, 1135-1831. Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1973. \$60, £24.

As we have come to expect of the editors of the St. Thomas More Project of Yale University, here is everything that scholarship can do : an accurate text, learnedly introduced and commented upon, provided with an apparatus which for completeness and exactitude must be difficult to rival or even to approach. The three volumes are beautifully produced by the Yale University Press. The whole work is beyond praise, and a few reservations cannot detract from its value.

Full measure, pressed down, running over now might well be the motto of the St. Thomas More Project. The editors do not spare us. This is partly because the *Confutation* appears before the *Dialogue Concerning Heresies*, and thus Part I of the Introduction, by Louis A. Schuster, has to deal with "Thomas More's Polemical Career, 1523 - 1533", one third of which should rightly belong to that *Dialogue* against Tyndale ; - partly the length of the editorial matter is caused by an anxiety to provide all relevant information not easily available elsewhere. Thus Part III of the Introduction, by James P. Lusardi, is devoted to "The Career of Robert Barnes" right down to his death at Smithfield five years after the execution of Sir Thomas More. In Appendix A, moreover, we are given the relevant part, "On the Church", of Barnes's *Supplication*, 1531, as well as the "Reply to More", 1534. Nor is this all : a "Table of Variations between More's Citation of Barnes' Text and the *Supplication* of 1531" enables us to check More's slight inaccuracies in quotation and his deviations from the text. In Appendix C we are given a highly useful "Table of Corresponding Pages" between the signatures in the 1532 - 1533 edition of the *Confutation*, the page numbers in the 1557 folio and in the present edition. Appendix B, by Anthea Hume, contains an annotated bibliography of "English Protestant Books Printed Abroad, 1525 - 1535", which possesses a high value of its own. All this adds to the size of the three volumes, but,

compared with the length of More's own loquaciousness, the editors have imposed on themselves a remarkable restraint.

The *Confutation*, it is true, contains some of the most well known passages of More's entire output, such as his reservations concerning Erasmus' *Moria*, his own *Dialogue* – and, presumably, *Utopia* – as liable to be misinterpreted in an age of “fond fantasies” (pp. 177-9); and the vivid account of his vain attempts to convince Dame Alice of the spherical shape of the world (pp. 604-5). It samples the comprehensive capaciousness of his mind, his sense of language and feeling for right English (e.g. pp. 38-9, 660), amounting to the philological insight into semantics (e.g. pp. 167, 230-3) that enabled him to express himself with wit and vigour and biting sarcasm, and gave latitude to his broad sense of humour and gift of illustrative anecdote. Just as he anticipated the science of linguistics, More had also a clear idea of preventive medicine (p. 38). In nearly all instances his punch goes home. Notable on the other hand is his defence of the allegorical interpretation of the New Testament, so entirely against the precepts of Colet and of his own early notions (pp. 636 sqq.); yet not in any multiple sense. But, alas! in a work of more than a thousand pages in the present edition, points of special interest come few and far between.

The *Confutation* is wordy and repetitive. Its matter is uncongenial to most modern readers, as, indeed, it was to its author (pp. 36-8) who only took it on out of a sense of duty and, being a layman, in all modesty (p. 39), yet also out of conviction. (I see no signs of “misgivings” about his own position, such as one of the editors observes on p. 1143). The first three books were written under great stress while he was Lord Chancellor, and there is really no recovery until Book VI, after which he relapses again into the sort of lengthy lesson beloved by people in the preceding age. Already things were moving too fast even for the greatest genius of England, and the length of his book is self-defeating.

The points at issue were principally: Who constituted the true Church – the known Catholic Church or Tyndale's invisible congregation of “elects” who could not sin? the nature of the sacraments, which Tyndale wanted to reduce to three; the corruption which, according to Tyndale, had disqualified the Church for the last eight hundred years. Not least important is the question whether everything taught by Christ and his apostles is

actually to be found in Holy Scripture, as Tyndale maintained, or in part orally communicated to the Church and even inspired by His presence with it ever since.

More found no difficulty in demolishing Tyndale's arguments. The only question he passes over in silence is the sale of indulgences (p. 1589; cf. p. 374), of which we may take it that More did not approve. On the other hand, denial of spiritual authority implied to him subversion of worldly authority as well, sedition and internecine warfare, as exemplified in Germany. But, as the editors observe, More needs 150 pages to answer seven of Tyndale's, whose “2,000 words” evoked “More's 70,000” (p. 1548). More was of course conscious of overdoing it, but he was making fun of his opponent: “in good fayth Tyndals wordes well wayed, haue so many mery folyes in them, that I can not yet holde my fyngers from them” (p. 660). In a sense he seems to have taken Barnes more seriously. Neither is, however, allowed to forget that heresy comes from the devil and that friars should not break their vows and wed nuns. True as this must be – and it was certainly very real to More – repeated ad infinitum it becomes not a little tedious. More's attempt to summarize his arguments in Book IX was never completed and was first published in 1557.

The text is reproduced with admirable accuracy, the reasons for preferring the 1532-1533 version being lucidly explained in the Introduction, Part IV, by James P. Lusardi. The variant readings are given at the bottom of the pages down to the slightest error of spelling and punctuation. The only printer's errors I have noted in the text are at 98/15 where *Yale* reads “wolee” for 1532 “wolde” (Bodleian copy) and 760/34 “coldde” for 1533 “coulde”. Personally I think printer's errors in 1532-1533 might have been corrected to a greater extent than the editors have thought fit. Thus on p. 99 we have “infunde” (line 24), “infunde” (line 28); and on p. 166 two “circumstances” (lines 8 and 13) against two “circumstances” (lines 28 and 31). Such inconsistencies may have been caused by Morian haste, but can hardly be explained as authorial intention. Similarly “posyn” (179/6) should have been corrected to “poysen”, which is the spelling elsewhere (e.g. 38/14, 15 and 16). “Tyndole” (222/13) should be “Tyndale” as in the next line following. At 239/26 “an high” might well have been corrected. At 240/1 “yeth” should read “yet”, or possibly “yett”. At 324/27 “thydges” should have been corrected to “thynges” and in line 36 “hte” should not have been left as it stands. At 398/17

“forcheth” should be “forceth”. At 413/5 we have “roche” but in lines 7 and 10 “rocke”. At 418/18 “astoynd” might have been altered to “astonyed” which is the 1557 reading, though not recorded in the apparatus. (Similarly at 160/25 “thee” 1557 should have been preferred to 1532 “the”, and at 557/9 the 1557 “particularly” to the erroneous 1533 “particalarly”.) At 485/6 “are” should be “err.” And what is the sense of printing “gothe” and “goeth” in two successive lines (576/2-3)? At 649/5 “coverte” should be “converte”. On p. 669/1, on the contrary, “to gyther” of 1533 has inconsistently been given as one word. At 861/25 “well” should have been substituted for “will” in accordance with 1557. At 940/30 “synne” 1533 should read “synce” (“since” 1557).

Several more radical emendations have been made by the editors. Thus at 217/27 “dyflowred” is undoubtedly correct against 1532 “dysuowred” and 1557 “disuowred”. At 415/6 and 8 the confusion of “then” and “that” has been put right. The substitution of “selfe” for “false” at 859/4 against both 1533 and 1557 is undoubtedly correct (cf. Commentary, p. 1680); also the insertion of “he” at 985/17. More doubtful is an intrusive “are” at 927/30 against both 1533 and 1557. Nor am I absolutely convinced that More might not have written “a little also before” at 982/29, corrected in *Yale* to “also a little before”. The word “ner” is retained at 295/17 and 318/20, but at 857/32 1557 “nor” is inconsistently substituted for it; “ner” is not in the Glossary either. I have no other quarrel with corrections or emendations in the text. Recurring differences between 1533 and 1557, such as the *-yd*, *-ed* endings and the 1557 parentheses round “sayth Tyndall” [*sic*] are rightly ignored in the textual notes. But it is an inconvenience to have Press-Variants of Sheet E (outer forme) and Sheet K (inner forme) in Appendix D (referred to simply as “Appendix” on p. 256 n.) instead of at the bottom of the page, apparently for aesthetic reasons. There is a printer’s error in the textual notes to 454/2 and 610/33 where 1533 appears as 1553; and in the Commentary on p. 1546 where in the note to 220/32-37 “devilry” has acquired an intrusive *t*.

There is a howler in the otherwise useful and necessary Glossary where “fore harde” is explained as “heard beforehand 653/27”. As plainly appears from the context, this is the rare strong form of the past tense of “to fare”: “Saynt Johan lyued in the deserte, and fasted and fore harde and laye harde... These

folke lyue in greeete townes, and fare well and faste not.” More refers elsewhere to the “hard fare” or austere life chosen by the Baptist.

The Commentary is full of theological learning for which I can only express my admiration, but of which I am unqualified to judge. All I can say is that quotations are accurately transcribed, including Luther’s difficult old German spelling, and this is in itself no mean feat. When, however, More speaks of “ye chyldren of vippara” who “wold now gnaw out theyr mothers bely” (6/33-34; and more at length at 672/5-14), the reference is to Pliny, *Hist. nat.* X, lxxxii, 170. Spenser’s dragon in the *Faerie Queene* is entirely out of the picture (p. 1465). Gower would have been more to the point, and, if Elizabethan examples were at all desirable, *Pericles*, I, i, 64. A reference to Lyly’s *Euphues* (p. 1612) is irrelevant. And I cannot help noting a couple of trifling errors. St. Bridget was never “Queen” of Sweden (p. 1520), although at one time she behaved rather as if she were. Cranmer was not burned “in London” (p. 1583) but in Oxford. Ernardus, Abbot of Bonvallis, is better known as Arnaud de Bonneval (p. 1587). One further reservation seems called for. While references to other works of More are legitimate and even necessary in interpreting *Utopia*, this does not hold good the other way round and hence should be avoided (spec. pp. 1606 and 1632). A reference to his *Apology* a propos of 198/1-3 (p. 1538) would have been a different matter. And, finally, the “daye of dome” hardly seems to require explanation (p. 1619).

The first part of the Introduction on More’s “Polemical Career” is highly informative, giving us an almost day to day account of the Reformation in England. The presentation is clear and lively, and there is fine characterization of More’s method (pp. 1160-63) and of the quality of his public (pp. 1264-67). On the other hand I cannot help taking exception to the “shocking photography” and “televised pictures” attributed to More (p. 1187): he must indeed have been in advance of the time in which he lived.

The second part of the Introduction is no less admirable for clarifying “More’s View of the Church”, General Councils and the Papacy, than for the justice, sympathy even, with which Tyndale is treated. Such objectivity is always rare and, in matters of theological controversy, exceptional.

The other parts of the Introduction I have alluded to above. The section on the text in Part IV deserves special praise for giving us so much more than it promises. What in fact it amounts to is the whole history of the composition of More’s *Confutation of*

Tyndale's Answer as well as purely textual problems. Full justice is done to Rastell's printing (pp. 1434 sq. and 1446), and variations between 1532-1533 and 1557 are accounted for. The statistics given on pp. 1444-6 are enough to floor any computerless critic.

A small point for editors to note is that abbreviated titles, such as Migne, "P.L." etc. do not appear in the index.

Altogether the St. Thomas More Project and the Yale Press may well take pride in a superb scholarly achievement so handsomely presented.

Ursula

H.W.DONNER

JOHN MILTON ET L'UTOPIE

En attendant l'article sur "Thomas More et John Milton", qu'on peut espérer d'ici 1974 (centenaire de la mort du grand poète), voici un "grain d'ellébore" emprunté à l'*Areopagitica* de 1644. Nous prenons la phrase dans l'édition bilingue qu'Olivier Lutaud a publiée en 1969 en bilingue (Aubier-Flammarion) :

To sequester out of the world into *Atlantick* and *Eutopian* polities, which never can be drawn into use, will not mend our condition ; but to ordain wisely as in this world of evill, in the midd'st whereof God hath plac't us unavoidably.

(*For the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing*), pp. 170-2

Se retirer loin du monde, sous des régimes d'*Atlantide* et d'*Utopie*, qui jamais ne seront applicables, n'arrangera pas notre condition ; mais il nous faut des mesures de sagesse pour ce monde mauvais, au coeur duquel Dieu nous a placés inéluctablement. (*Pour la Liberté de la Presse sans Autorisation ni Censure*), p. 173.

