

UTOPIA AND A DIALOGUE OF COMFORT. By Sir Thomas More. (Everyman Library, No. 461, Dent; 3s. 6d.)

It is good to see that Everyman's have reissued More's *Utopia* and the *Dialogue of Comfort*. I have always been struck by the fact that this edition, published in 1910, was classified under Theology and Philosophy. Were the editors really informed or were they acting wiser than they knew?

*Utopia* is indeed a difficult book. With few exceptions it has been the subject of commentaries by scholars who knew little of More's theological background or of his life of sanctity. All such attempts to interpret *Utopia* are fore-doomed to failure. But people with little knowledge of St Thomas's other writings will continue to read *Utopia*. To include the *Dialogue*, More's greatest work perhaps, within the same cover provides the student with some sort of opportunity to get a balanced view of the writings of this greatest of Englishmen.

The spelling has been modernised in this edition and it contains a new introduction by Mr John Warrington which is a very brilliant little study. My sole criticism is of the bibliography. Dorner's *Meaning of Utopia* should surely be included under the critical studies while the omission of the E.E.T.S. edition of Harpfield's *Life of More* is even more surprising.

BERNARD FISHER

THE GLORIOUS ASSUMPTION OF THE MOTHER OF GOD. By Joseph Duhr, S.J. (Burns Oates; 8s. 6d.)

In 1946 Fr Joseph Duhr, S.J. wrote *La Glorieuse Assomption de la Mère de Dieu*, mainly to answer Dr Ernst and to show that the Assumption could be proclaimed as a dogma of faith. It was, inevitably, the sort of essay that presupposed not only a French, Catholic background in the reader but also a certain familiarity with theological thought and, above all, with the manner in which the French conduct their controversies. That this should have been translated and offered to English readers as 'A history and explanation of the Dogma from the earliest times to its proclamation as an Article of Faith' seems to be particularly unfortunate.

Fr Duhr no doubt intended the book as something rather better than an *oeuvre de vulgarisation*, yet not as a complete treatise on the subject. In English, with its 382 footnotes, it gives a misleading impression of definitive authority.

For students (who will not be misled by the words 'First published in 1951') it will be sufficient to note that nothing later than 1947 is quoted. The presentation is unexpectedly below standard. It is admittedly difficult to English this kind of book, but this translation hardly

attains the minimum of English idiom; and even the rules of grammar have not always been respected.

Two things among many seem to invite protest: the idea that the Church of Rome *annexes* a devotion and proceeds to make it universal and the notion that the last stage in the progress of a doctrine is repression by the Church of all opposition. No doubt the author would disclaim both these things, as expressed in these English words; but the translator, alas, does not seem to have hesitated on that account.

G. M. CORR, O.S.M.

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY GHOST. By John of St Thomas. Translated from the Latin by Dominic Hughes, O.P. With a Foreword by Walter Farrell, O.P. (Sheed and Ward; 16s.)

It was a venture of faith to publish this treatise in English and at a reasonable price. For in spite of the widespread and increasing interest in thomism, it is still difficult to bring readers back to the texts of the Angelic Doctor himself, and even then many are put off by the form in which his thought is expressed. At first sight, John of St Thomas seems wholly concerned to distinguish and speculate without more than a passing reference to the sources of revelation and to defend the doctrine of the master mainly by philosophical arguments against long forgotten critics. At the end of a long and critical survey of the history of the theology of the gifts, Père Jacques de Blic was recently constrained to ask, 'When shall we refrain from putting on the same level in our systems that which is a vital development of revealed truth and that which is a purely human, cultural or philosophical addition?' (*Revue d'Ascétique et de Mystique*, January-June, 1946, p. 179.) There is some justification for this outburst, but a patient application to the work of this very great and devout theologian, faithful exponent of St Thomas and even more a penetrating student of the divine word, can only increase our appreciation of the riches of the deposit of faith and our understanding of the structure of the human soul intent upon the divine and elevated to move Godwards under the impulse of the Spirit of God.

When God speaks, every word counts. And if he considered human nature a fit instrument to be transformed by grace, all the resources of philosophy must be pressed into service to give some kind of intelligible account both of that nature as *elevabilis* and of the wonderful adaptation by the Holy Ghost of its powers and dispositions. That is why John of St Thomas makes much of an occasional text of Scripture and carefully distinguishes between the varied acts of the soul, the possibilities of perfection which remain even after the infusion of the virtues and the definite types of response which must be given to the breath of the Spirit. The distinction, for instance, between the simple