

edition of *Art and the Reformation* to the list of its publications is primarily of interest as evidence that Dr Coulton's influence still survives. For the study of medieval art history has been transformed since 1928 when *Art and the Reformation* was first published, and it had been written in 1923: even then it was a singularly old-fashioned book. Its central purpose would seem to have been to flog the already long-dead horse of Montalembert. The Syndics of the Press describe Dr Coulton in their blurb as 'great as a medieval scholar and writer of history'. Surely he was neither. He was an *érudit* and not a *savant*. He failed as a medievalist because he saw the Middle Ages as a unit and failed to perceive changing, twisting emphases that altered with each generation and the complexity of national patterns within the international framework. He failed as a writer of history because he could never attain the necessary objectivity and because he let his conclusions follow along the path of his preconceptions. Both these flaws are perhaps more apparent in *Art and the Reformation* than even in *Five Centuries of Religion*. And yet he had one great counterbalancing merit as a teacher and as a writer; he was so vividly interested in all that he taught and wrote that he could convey that interest to others. It is this that made him one of the most successful teachers of his generation. The loyalty that he inspired in his Cambridge pupils is perhaps the key to the re-publication of his long-dead study now. But it was a loyalty that was due not only to his great qualities as a tutor but to his own complete sincerity of purpose and his essentially attractive idiosyncrasies.

G.M.

ST THOMAS MORE. By E. E. Reynolds. (Burns Oates; 25s.)

Fr Bridgett's classic *Life of Blessed Thomas More* first appeared in 1891, and the last edition was in 1898. So thoroughly did he do his work that later writers have been able to add nothing of importance to his findings. Many of the sources that he used are now more accessible, but scarcely any new material has come to light. The Protestant picture of More as a 'merciless bigot' was completely shattered by recourse to contemporary records, and no later writers with any honesty or self-respect have dared to re-echo the old cry. Modern extremists, unable to discredit him, now claim him as a 'half-Protestant'. Mr Trevor-Roper (in the *New Statesman* for December 5, 1953) has settled to his own satisfaction, without a shred of evidence, that More's canonization was so long deferred because he was suspect at Rome. The present biography gives us all the relevant texts, but without the detailed defence of More against charges that were still believed in Bridgett's day, but could not survive his scholarly refuta-

tion. The last chapter quietly disposes, by implication, of the quaint fancies of those who imagine that More was ever suspected of Protestantism, but this chapter might well have been expanded. Scattered up and down our literature are references to More, which, if gathered together would show the continuity of his *cultus* and reputation. Thus the sturdy old recusant, William Blundell, wrote in his notebook about 1660:

A Colonel of Parliament told me that beyond the seas it is reported of England that it produced but one wise man in an age, and that the people gaze on him awhile as a monster, then cut off his head. 'So', said he, 'did they do by Sir Thomas More and the earl of Strafford.'

No greater praise can be given to this book than to say that it must now replace Fr Bridgett's as the standard life of More.

GODFREY ANSTRUTHER, O.P.

IN SARA'S TENTS. By Walter Starkie. (John Murray; 25s.)

One of the most puzzling things in the history of pilgrimages is the devotion of the Gipsies to St Sara, the black servant of the Maries Salome and Jacobi, who is venerated by them in the crypt of the saint's church at Les Saintes Maries de la Mer. The cult of these saints had been established for several centuries when the first Gipsies appeared in Western Europe, though the spurt given to it by the discovery of the holy women's relics in 1448 coincides roughly with their entrance into France. Sara can therefore hardly be an Oriental figure imported into the West by the newcomers. Yet she has little place in the Christian tradition and the Gipsies have made her their own, to such an extent that the homages paid her are suspect in the eyes of ecclesiastical authority and, it would seem, tolerated only because it is impossible to prevent them.

Professor Starkie goes as near explaining the mystery of her cult as is possible. His book is placed under the patronage of the swarthy virgin and the latter part of it contains a vivid account of the pilgrimage as he saw it in 1951, mingled with memories of earlier visits. But Sara's tents are not pitched only in the Camargue. The author finds them in the past and the present, in Spain and Hungary as well as Provence, and they are inhabited, not by types and anonyms, but by flesh-and-blood friends and acquaintances, with whom he is on terms of 'thee and thou' and whom he has known for many years and met, lost and met afresh in sundry lands. At least half the book is laid in Spain, and many pages are devoted to unravelling the perplexing relationship between native Spanish folklore and Gipsy importations, though even he confesses