

spirituality. The jubilee of Blessed Pius X's *motu proprio* on the liturgy coincides most happily with the publication of these books, and their very diversity reflects the infinite wealth of the central act and fact of Catholic life.

I.E.

ENGLISH ART (1100-1216). By T. S. R. Boase. (Oxford University Press; 37s. 6d.)

This is the third volume to be published of the *Oxford History of English Art* and it is the one of the whole series that has been most eagerly waited for. It is well known that our knowledge of twelfth-century art in England is being revolutionized by recent research, yet so little of that research has been published. Dr Zarnecki's book on twelfth-century English sculpture and Dr Pächt's study on twelfth-century illumination are both still to appear, and so far there have been only rumours of their contents and it is a primary merit of this volume that it summarizes the results of such research and makes them permanently accessible. 1100-1216 is a far less satisfactory division than 1150-1216 would have been.

It would be so easy and so cheap to criticize Mr Boase's achievement, handicapped by the limits he had set himself. His details are inevitably crowded and many of his conclusions have to be stated with provocatively little evidence, like his suggested dating of the sculptured slabs at Chichester and his passing reference to the Romsey rood; inevitably also there are many problems like that of the Hardham wall paintings where his treatment is too cursory to suggest a first-hand knowledge of so vast a field. Mr Boase has synthesized the work of specialists—especially of those continental art-historians who came to England in the later 1930's and who were to owe so much to him when he was Director of the Courtauld Institute. Behind his references to Sicily and to Byzantium surely lies Dr Demus, behind those to the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem lies Dr Buchta, behind many of his comments on illuminated MSS Dr Pächt, behind many of the judgments on sculpture Dr Zarnecki. The section on architecture seems marked by the influence of M. Jean Bony. But the power to synthesize and to discriminate, the lucidity of style and the impeccable taste, are those of Mr Boase, and through them he has achieved a volume which has been an ample justification of the whole series.

GERVASE MATHEW, O.P.

ART AND THE REFORMATION. By C. G. Coulton. (Cambridge University Press; 50s.)

The fact that the Cambridge University Press should add a new

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-