at the translation are not. In view of the fact that many general readers will be entirely dependent on it, greater care could have been taken to give it a sense of shape, rhythm, elegance, and, above all, idiom. As it stands, the translation often makes More appear naive, pedestrian, and insensitive to nuances. Here are a few instances, taken at random, including biblical quotations:

If you saw a thief you ran away with him. (p. 27)

But perhaps some meticulous fussy dissector of the divine plan. . . (p. 197)

. . .eagerly, O God, in the odor of your ointments, in the most sweet scent of your spirit. (p. 205)

. . .jumping with joy or clapping his hands out of happiness. (p. 241)

In all fairness, there are some excellent phrases, for example, "groping as we are in the darkness of our mortality" (p. 241), but they are all too few. The sentences also straggle, sometimes into incoherence, because of a mistaken notion that they reflect the flow of the original, and it is clear that the editor has sometimes misunderstood the significance of the virgule. Again, the odd misprint does not help (e.g., "as heart" for "at heart", p. 109). Fortunately, for those who desire a more imaginative, interpretative and rhythmic translation, Mary Basset's is available in an appendix. Though verbose in places, it is closer in spirit to the original More.

It would be churlish to conclude without a final note of praise for the editor's total execution of this worthy enterprise, keeping in mind the watchword for reviewers:

Survey the whole, nor seek slight faults to find
Where Nature moves, and rapture warms the mind.

ANTHONY G. PETTI, *University of Calgary*

M.L. Bush. *The Government Policy of Protector Somerset*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1975. Pp. v, 182. \$18.25.

Considerable reassessment of some of the major characters of Tudor history has been under way of recent years. Henry VII has been transformed from the most successful of the Tudor Kings into a monarch insecure and somewhat withdrawn from his nobility, into a monarch whose harsh treatment of the peerage and whose growing reputation for avarice had produced dangerous political tensions by the time of his death. Henry VIII may have been "the mighty lord who broke the bonds of Rome," but he left the realm of England weaker and more divided than he found it. Some historians feel that Mary's catholic reaction (given time) had greater prospects of success than former generations believed possible and that Elizabeth I, far from being the powerful Deborah, Judith, and Gloriana of propaganda, was forced, in order to keep the political nation loyal, to let the system of personal taxation decline into a condition of derisory inefficiency and preside over a patronage system which enriched, year in and year out, a very large proportion of English landed families of any significance.

Dr. Bush, with yet another significant revision, has now made one of the latest

contributions to this changing scene. The traditional view of Protector Somerset, as set out many years ago by A.F. Pollard and recently affirmed by W.K. Jordan, was that a pure and shining light as compared with the later corruption of the Duke of Northumberland, that of a convinced, but moderate protestant as shown in the first act of uniformity and the first Edwardian prayer book, and that of a radical anxious for a new type of social justice and sympathetic to the aims of Ket's rebellion.

Others have questioned this interpretation, but only in piecemeal fashion. Dr. Bush has launched a wholesale attack upon it. For him Somerset was as greedy for the lucrative pickings of government as any other sixteenth-century politician, as avid as the rest in accumulating estates, and as great a rack renter and conspicuous builder of sumptuous houses. Although he was anxious to project his image as that of "the good duke," his social policy was basically no more radical than that of his fellow councillors. Indeed, upon such matters they were all more or less in complete agreement. Somerset's concern for "the poor" was no more than a strong reassertion of traditional, medieval concern for the widow and the orphan and such unprotected unfortunates who could not defend themselves. His desire to appear virtuous did not spring from any new idealism, gentleness or magnanimity. It was not based upon any *radical* thought current amongst the rather disparate "Commonwealth" group whose radicalism anyway (it seems to the present writer) has been exaggerated. This group was always strong on moral exhortations and rather feeble on practical remedies for social ills.

Dr. Bush now presents us with the image of a soldier-politician whose mind was always dominated by a really colossal obsession — the prosecution and success of the war against Scotland. His policy of planting garrisons in Scotland, originally intended to save money, in the end turned out to be even more expensive than the Henrician policy of the 1540's, that of sending an army annually into the lowlands during the campaigning season. In any case French assistance and French landings in Scotland had made this policy completely futile as early as the middle of 1548. This expensive obsession dominated every other aspect of English policy during the brief period of Somerset's protectorship.

The Duke was something of a radical protestant and the moderation of the first Edwardian prayer book was due not to his supposed conservative, Henrician convictions but to the need to hoodwink Charles V and to secure at least the Emperor's neutrality towards England. Somerset's religious policy was a policy of sustained diplomatic deceit. Even his leniency towards the Norfolk rebels was due less to sympathy than to the fact that his troops, both English forces and foreign mercenaries, were badly needed in Scotland. Somerset, like all his kind, abhorred any hint of social disturbance; and where troops were available, as in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire, they were used without compunction. However, in Norfolk the aristocracy did not appreciate his original (and unsuccessful) tactics and, therefore, branded him as a radical: a reputation which he had not enjoyed before the risings.

Above all the worst results of Somerset's obsession came out of his economic and fiscal policies. To avoid a recurrence of the extremely heavy war taxation which had marked Henry VIII's last years the Protector's government began to sell off the chantry lands which, it may be, they had originally intended to employ for socially useful purposes. Even so, more taxation had to be imposed. The 1540's were years when sixteenth-century inflation touched one of its worst peaks and for these

years at least the prime cause was the debasement of the coinage. Somerset depended upon debasement to pay the troops needed in the Scottish war. His obsession thus led him into wishful thinking about the causes of inflation. It led him to regard enclosures, sheep farming and men's greed as the major causes of rocketing prices and thus by carrying on with debasement to make an already horrific economic situation even worse.

Dr. Bush's general theory carries conviction, except at one point. He contends that Somerset's fellow councillors agreed with him in principle, disapproving only of his timing and tactics. However, Professor D.E. Hoak's book, *The King's Council in the Reign of Edward VI*, published a few months after Dr. Bush's work appeared, throws very serious doubts upon this contention. Professor Hoak shows quite clearly that Somerset, as far as he could, tried to ignore the council and, as far as he could, governed alone.

With this one exception Dr. Bush's book is to be highly recommended. It is clearly written, without a trace of jargon, interesting to read and makes a major contribution to current reinterpretations of the history of Tudor England.

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Moshe Barasch. *Gestures of Despair in Medieval and Early Renaissance Art*. New York: New York University Press, 1976. Pp. x, 162. \$35.00

Cognizant of the fact that art historical studies of gestures have remained restricted to the highly conventionalized ones, performed as part of religious or political rituals, Professor Barasch has "concentrated on some more emotional, spontaneous gestures" (introduction). He wisely limits himself to those which are expressive of despair and stays mainly in Italy with his choice of examples. To trace their appearance and transformation from classical sources (sarcophagi and illuminated manuscripts) through the fourteenth century, when they become fully articulated, to the fifteenth, is a task for which the author is eminently suited. Well-known for his studies in eastern medieval sculpture and also iconography, he is especially sensitive to the language of body movements and their meaning.

Using the focal medieval theme of the *Last Judgment*, he identifies despairing gestures of sinners, principally performed by arms raised to the face and denoting fear, at times anger. His catalogue consists of throwing hands up and backwards, holding them to the mouth or covering the eyes, biting of the hand or tongue, rending of the mouth, tearing and lacerating of the face, pressing cheeks, and tearing of hair or beard. Acts of self-injury, apparently, were not explicitly depicted before the end of the thirteenth century and reached a climax in the fourteenth, while still persisting in the emotionalized *Last Judgments* of Fra Angelico. Professor Barasch suggests that this situation is largely explainable with the contempt of early medieval churchmen for ostentatious gestures of despair. He contends that Dante's *Inferno* is most influential for their subsequent pictorial form, although descriptions of such gestures are found in hell literature from the apocryphal *Apocalypses* of Peter and Paul to the widely distributed *Saint Patrick's Purgatory* and the *Vision of Tundale*. The latter works are not even considered by the author.