What must be criticized is the handling of the texts. Lacking a prefatory statement on textual matters, one must assume a reasonable editorial policy for undergraduate students: this is not intended for scholars, of course, and one therefore expects modernized spelling, But in spot-checking I find that individual words have been silently dropped, or added. What is troubling is such practice as the setting of a salutation into the body of the letter, and the supplying of ‘Sir’ to the heading of all Thomas More’s letters (when no student can realize that all of these letters here given were written before More’s knighting). One letter has no ellipsis to indicate that a page and a half have been omitted before the point where the selection begins.

Undergraduate texts should have their own standards of excellence, certainly, which will not be congruent with those for scholarly texts; but these standards must be met.

R. J. SCHOECK, Folger Shakespeare Library


These two volumes complete the series begun by the same editors in 1964. Volume III includes a glossary, bibliography and three indexes – of statutes, names and subjects – for the whole series; the numbering of documents is continuous and there has been no change in editorial policy. The last volume also includes a few documents omitted from the first. Thus scholars who are already familiar with the first volume will know what value to put on all three. It is a very useful collection to have. The Tudor age saw a great increase in the governmental use of propaganda and in the centralized control of local officers; it was an age with higher expectations than before for loyalty, efficiency and the smooth implementation of new law or new state policy. New expectations of government were matched by the new device of the printing press, and the Tudor royal proclamation is, archivally speaking, the main result. The editors were disposed, in their preface to Volume I, to exaggerate the constitutional importance of this development. A more lavish use of proclamations than had been possible or wanted before is not the same thing as legislation by decree or the advance of Renaissance despotism. But proclamations were a great practical help to the Tudors and this collection will be a great practical help to Tudor historians. We may even have been offered a little more help than we need. As before, the editors modernize the spelling, and this is such standard contemporary practice there is no point in criticizing; once again they do not always modernize place-names, and le Havre appears as ‘Newhaven’ (document 510) even in the index. I really wonder whether any scholar sufficiently dug in to the Tudor period to use these big heavy books is going to need the glossary, and if he does he may be disappointed. You will still need your big dictionary. Not to niggle about words that might have been left out (furlong, Huguenot, Justice of Assize, notoriously ...), some definitions (demean, Dauphin, sacramentary) are definitely wrong or misleading and cast doubts on the reliability of the rest. With this reservation, which is marginal, the collection which these volumes complete is a valuable addition to the printed primary sources for the history of Tudor England.

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