

**UTOPIAN PAPERS: BEING
ADDRESSES TO "THE
UTOPIANS"; PP. 1-206**

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Utopian Papers: Being Addresses to "The Utopians"; pp. 1-206 by Patrick Geddes & S. H. Swinny & Dr. J. W. Slaughter

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UTOPIAN PAPERS



SIR THOMAS MORE.

(After Holbein.)

UTOPIAN PAPERS

BEING ADDRESSES TO "THE UTOPIANS"

BY

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EDITED BY

DOROTHEA HOLLINS

AUTHOR OF "THE SEVEN WAYFARERS," "THE HERBS OF MEDRA," ETC

"Serve God and be merry"
(Motto of "The Utopians")

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PREFACE

IN the early morning, when dreams and visions throng into the mind, a small Commonwealth of Art, Learning, and Friendship, realisable in a London flat, and having as its material basis a fairly representative library, some good pictures, and a sympathetic group of literary and musical friends, took form in the mind of the writer as a possible step towards a solution of the problem of the inequality of possessions—a problem so inadequately solved by “organised philanthropy.”

Later on, by that Chance which should rather be named one of the three Spinning Sisters, the London flat proved to be situated on the same piece of earth whereon the feet of our great English Dreamer used to stray—the wise, witty, tender Sir Thomas More—and its windows to look on the same great river with its endless symbolism of crowded bridge and gliding craft upon which his keen, meditative eye had often rested while wandering with his beloved daughter Meg or Erasmus in his Chelsea garden, or dreaming of Utopia in his book-lined gallery, or seeing, in trances of the spirit, the Heavenly Utopia in the dim chancel of Old Chelsea Church.

9-5-39

Preface

And so the vision of early morning found itself growing into the clearer light of noonday shed by the luminous countenance of him whose "pleasant house at Chelsea" was the chosen home of Art, Learning, and Friendship. And the small band of those who wished to share in these benefits, yet, by the benumbing isolation of social conditions in our modern Crapulia¹ (as we might too well name London) found them too often excluded from their busy lives, grew naturally into an informal society, meeting at frequent and stated intervals, and called, by an almost inevitable sequence of thought, "The Utopians."

For four years past, the autumn, winter, and spring evenings have seen this small band of disciples chatting round the fire, conning Philosophy, Poetry, Art, or Fiction round a table presided over by the kindly, humorous countenance of their tutelary genius, so well limned for us by Master Holbein, or gathered round a piano where what was perhaps Sir Thomas's favourite art was practised; and, at less frequent intervals—when flowers, candleshine, prisoned lightning, music, and additional guests lent an air of increased festivity to the scene—listening to the words of twentieth-century Dreamers, Utopists of keen brains and warm hearts to whom More would assuredly stretch a brotherly hand across the centuries.

To preserve some of these words among our own fellowship, and to spread them among those who are like-minded, is the justification of the present volume. The approaching re-erection of Crosby Hall in Chelsea,

¹ See "Mundus Alter et Idem," by Joseph Hall.

Preface

chiefly due to our friends at University Hall, has yet found the soil prepared for it by our existence as the nucleus of the lately-formed Chelsea Association, which seeks to extend Utopia to a civic and public sphere. If this volume can find a place in the library of Utopist literature which it is hoped to establish within the ancient building, it will, whatever other welcome it may find, be able to count at least on a ghostly greeting from the cheerful shade of him who may have penned some part of his fruitful and lasting Vision within those venerable walls.

May it also prove a link with the Future—with unborn generations of Utopians who may assemble within the stately Hall new-risen from temporary death; Utopians by whose efforts Crapulia may be transformed into the City of the Sun, the sky once more bending clear and blue above our River, as in the days of the original Utopist, and the Sun of Brotherhood, of Justice, and of Love making clear weather in the soul of man!

DOROTHEA HOLLINS.

7, MORRIS GARDEN, CHELSEA,
1908.

