upon the assumption that man has two different ends which cannot be subordinated one to the other: that man's beatitude here on this earth stands, as a genuine Christian goal, side by side with his eternal beatitude in the world hereafter.

HERBERT MARCUSE (Los Angeles).

Clapham, John H., and Eileen Power, ed., *The Cambridge Economic History of Europe*. I. The Agrarian Life of the Middle Ages. The Macmillan Company. New York 1941. (667 pp.; $7.50)

"The Agrarian Life of the Middle Ages" is the product of a truly international division of labor. From its very beginning the work was beset with severe difficulties. Eileen Power, its learned co-editor, died suddenly. Many of the contributors originally scheduled lived in countries invaded by Hitler and could not finish their assignments. The present fate of many of them remains unknown so that last minute replacements were necessary.

Despite these unusual difficulties, the work as finally published will serve for a long time as a reliable and informative account of agrarian conditions in the middle ages. It may seem astonishing that the labors of fifteen scholars with the most varied outlook and background have produced results that are more often than not in harmony with one another. This becomes understandable, however, when we realize that the majority of the contributions lean toward description of ways of life rather than to interpretation of institutional factors.

One significant point that comes out very clearly in the volume is the almost universal failure of the most varied measures designed to check the squeezing out of the small independent landowning classes. Professor Ostrogorsky's chapter on the Byzantine Empire is especially instructive on this point. Also noteworthy is Marc Bloch's study of the transition from late Roman to medieval society.

Some of the chapters describing the state of affairs in the different countries at the height of medieval society suffer from the rigid separation between agricultural and urban society inherent in the plan of the series. The reader must wait until he reaches Nabholz' final chapter on medieval society in transition to find clues for some of the preceding narrative. But that was perhaps an unavoidable feature of such a carefully planned work. We earnestly hope that the succeeding volumes have been only temporarily deferred, not abandoned.

OTTO KIRCHHEIMER (New York).

Trinkaus, Charles Edward, *Adversity's Noblemen*. The Italian Humanists on Happiness. Columbia University Press. New York 1940. (172 pp.; $2.00)

Trinkaus has hit upon one of the most fundamental problems in the history of the ideological origins of modern society, namely, the part played by the Renaissance in the so-called emancipation of the individual. The humanistic doctrines of happiness are appropriate instruments for under-

standing this process of emancipation, for they reflect the attitude the individual was expected to take towards the new social order.—Moreover, in the tradition of Western philosophy, the quest for happiness has always been a decisive outlet for the protest against the prevailing system of oppression and injustice, constituting a segment of militant, critical materialism.[1] The humanist position on happiness may thus yield a clue as to whether the Renaissance philosophy actually championed the right and freedom of the individual.

Trinkaus did not have to give an express refutation of the notion that the Renaissance was "the discovery of man and the world," because that notion has long been obsolete. Insofar as it has implied that there was a release of hitherto suppressed impulses and energies for the exploitation and enjoyment of this world, it may have been partly correct with respect to the exploitation, but it has certainly been misleading as regards the enjoyment. Trinkaus collects excellent material from the writings of the Humanists, especially from the numerous treatises on Nobility and on the Dignity of Man, all of which demonstrate the predominance of a new form of asceticism and escapism. The period, of course, contained a strong accenting of man's earthly goods and his right to enjoy them, but this was almost lost amid the general pessimism and other-worldliness. Trinkaus shows the manifold shadings of the transcendental attitude, the glorification of poverty, and of withdrawal from all every-day activity, the elevation of "knowledge in and for itself" to the rank of the highest virtue, the formation of a snobbish élite of intellectuals who despised the large mass of the "uneducated," the scorn of reason, and so on, and he summarizes humanistic philosophy in the felicitous phrase: "The new ideal is the medieval ideal of the world-flight made this-worldly."

The humanist doctrines consequently emerge as the first phase of the lengthy process of "introversion" whereby the rebellious drives and desires of the emancipated individuals were suppressed and diverted into the "inward" realm of Christian virtues. The Humanists thus essentially connect up with the work of the Reformation, as well as with Montaigne's rather conformist scepticism: they did their part in teaching men to submit to or comply with the forces which governed the rising order of capitalism.

Trinkaus does not dwell upon the far-reaching social implications of the "introversion." A shortcoming of his important study, therefore, is that he derives the attitude of the Humanists from the insecurity and competition of their personal existence.

HERBERT MARCUSE (Los Angeles).

Thorndike, Lynn, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science.* Vols. V and VI. The sixteenth Century. Columbia University Press. New York 1941. (695 and 766 pp.: $10.00)

With the appearance of these two volumes on the 16th century, a monumental series that began in 1923 comes to a conclusion. To give an idea of the prodigious research involved, the author's own compilation shows that in these last two volumes more than 3,000 names are cited—writers and men

[1]See *Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung,* ed. by the Institute of Social Research, VII (1938), p. 55.