

Here, for instance, is the flavour of Mackay, an entry in his diary on the news of Hannington's murder: 'Oh, night of sorrow! What an unheard-of deed of blood!' Here is Mwangi: 'Go then! Hurry off to your Heavenly King. He has the fatted calf ready for you!'. The young Africans are a little more difficult and the young anglers of today are no help to tune in to them. We are here in a world of classic sanctity, not unknown to the spiritual reading, at least, of the 1880s. Here are a group of young men, palace attendants and so on, perhaps, rather than pages, who for a long time lived with the extremely probably prospect of having to choose between sodomy and death by fire. In sober Victorian fashion, they built up their defences in depth of piety, and it added up to classic sanctity. 'When have you learnt to pray?' the pagan Chancellor asked one of them. The Chancellor had grasped the salient point . . . Of course the martyrs' evident African gaiety and sobriety make solid the melodrama. The rather noble but perhaps irascible Scot, Mackay, the Lacordaire-like figure of Lourdel, that vicious lout, Mwangi, the sinister Arabs and the lurid executioners make up the rest of the cast. The *mise-en-scene* - rich, simple and fantastic - banana groves, a mud and wattle palace, Arab trade goods and Victoriana, may be washed in to taste and speculation . . .

It is proper to the piety, gravity and authority of the book that a perhaps belated honour is given to the Protestants in the story. This is a book which is also a deed.

Blessed Charles Lwanga - the one who died over a slow fire - is the patron who is invoked here in Africa at the meetings of the S.C.G. It must seem a long way from contemporary social studies back to the Mwangi melodrama. But the saints probably have telescopic sight, in two senses.

MARY JACKSON

AUTUMN AND ADVENT, WINTER AND CHRISTMAS, SPRING AND LENT, EARLY SUMMER: EASTER AND WHITSUN, all by Rosemary Haughton, Darton, Longman and Todd, 3s. 6d. each.

These four little illustrated books might at first sight seem a surprising subject for a review in *LIFE OF THE SPIRIT*, intended as they are 'for our Lord's very youngest disciples'. But they are very important as an indication of a method of teaching religion which parents and teachers must learn to use unless they are to fail totally in relating religion to reality. The alternate pages are large coloured pictures, either of incidents in Christ's life or of things we do now. A picture (in modern dress) of Mary and Joseph preparing for the coming baby, she sewing and he making wooden toys, follows one of a modern family wrapping up fragile garden plants to wait for the spring. A picture of Christ after his resurrection preparing breakfast on the lakeside for his disciples is followed by the suggestion that 'a picnic is a lovely way to celebrate Easter' and a picture of a family having one.

One especially likes the idea that cooking special Christmas food and eating it is a way of thanking God, and the reminder that if 'we go carol singing we should learn to do it really well so that people will enjoy listening to us'.

Obviously, every reader will find some of Mrs Haughton's themes less helpful than others, and will have his own idea as to what she has 'left out'. But I think no parent or teacher of small children could fail to find these books both useful and stimulating.

ROSEMARY SHEED

THE ROMAN MARTYROLOGY, an English Translation, edited by Canon J. B. O'Connell; Burns and Oates, 50s.

The Roman Martyrology is a liturgical book for choral recitation of the divine office, and is used each day for the public reading in choir of the names of the saints commemorated each day, before the office of Prime. As only a percentage of the names of saints can be mentioned, so great is their number, the daily recitation always closes with the words: *And elsewhere many other holy martyrs, confessors and virgins.* To which the choir responds: *Thanks be to God.*

The editor notes that only by the authority of the Sacred Congregation can a name be added to the Martyrology, and it must be the name of a saint, not a *Beatus*. He does not mention when this hard and fast rule came into being, but it may be noted that there are still a number of *Beati* retained, including Urban V and Eugene III inserted by Pius IX, and Urban II and Innocent V by Leo XIII, the last-named *Beatus* being entered as late as 1898.

The translation, excellently done, will prove a boon to many religious orders and institutes where the custom exists of reading it publicly in the vernacular. But surely many Catholic homes will also be eager to possess a copy. The printing and binding make the volume an exceedingly beautiful one.

WALTER GUMBLY, O.P.