

REVIEWS

interpret Father James' *Religious Experience*—is the end, is God approached and enjoyed by the Christian as a person, who as such brooks no medium between himself and his first and final cause. Man must worship as a member of his own redeemed race and as a created being uniting the whole of God's outpoured goodness of creation and leading it back to glorify its origin. But when, by means of this worship, he has reached his end, there is nothing to stand between his soul and the object of its joy. It is a direct contact. Let us not however be misled. St. Thomas shows us that Christ as man exercises an eternal priesthood because through the efficacy of that priesthood the saints are preserved in eternal happiness. Liturgy and priesthood play their part in beatitude, but they remain means just as now upon earth they are the necessary means to that union with God. The individual must be balanced by the person, worship by charity, and liturgy by the union of the soul with God.

There are many other good things in both these books, but this one point has been selected because in *Le Sacerdoce* we may find the elements with which to correct Father James' otherwise excellent essays on the liturgy. CONRAD PEPLER, O.P.

THE ROMAN BREVIARY. An English Version: compiled by the Benedictine Nuns of the Abbey of Our Lady of Consolation, at Stanbrook in Worcestershire; revised and edited by Charles Francis Brown, with an Introduction by the Right Rev. Fernand Cabrol, O.S.B. Part IV: Autumn. (Burns Oates; 15/-)

This new pocket-size English edition of the Breviary is startling in its inferiority to the classical, but unhappily out-of-date, translation by John, Marquess of Bute, with whose high standards it inevitably challenges comparison. It may or may not have been preferable to use the familiar Douay translation of the Bible for the Psalms and Lessons in an edition which is clearly intended for devotional use; but it is inexplicable that the Bute translation is not so much as referred to, still less utilized. The respective merits of the two translations may be illustrated by a random comparison taken from the Second Nocturn of the Matins of St. Teresa:

NEW

She was adorned with angelic virtues; and her love made her solicitous not for her own salvation alone, but for that of all. Wherefore, inspired by God, and with the approbation of Pius IV, she put forward the sterner rule of the ancient Carmelites, first to

OLD

Strengthened in the graces of an angel, the wideness of her love embraced in its tender care the salvation of other souls as well as of her own. To this end, under the blessing of God, and the appropriation of Pius IV, she set, first before women and then

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be observed by the women, and thereafter by the men. The all-powerful blessing of the merciful Lord was very evident in this design; for, though destitute of all human aid, and moreover opposed by many of the great ones of the world, the virgin was able, in her poverty, to build thirty-two monasteries. She bewailed with continual tears the darkness of infidels and heretics, and dedicated to God the voluntary torturing of her own body for them, to appease the wrath of the divine vengeance. And her heart burned with so great a conflagration of divine love, that she most deservedly saw an angel piercing her bosom with a fiery dart, and heard Christ say to her, taking her hand in his, Henceforward, as my true spouse, thou shalt be zealous for my honour.

before men, the observance of the stern rule of the Old Carmelites. The blessing of the Almighty and merciful Lord did indeed rest most evidently upon this design. This penniless virgin, helped by no man, and in the teeth of many that were great in this world, was enabled to build two-and-thirty houses. The darkness of unbelievers and misbelievers drew from her unceasing tears, and she willingly gave up her own body to be tortured, to soften the fury of His indignation against them. His own love so blazed in her heart that she attained to see an Angel run her through with a fiery spear, and Christ Himself take her by the hand, and to hear Him say: "Henceforth thou shalt love my honour as a wife indeed."

It needs no proof that the old is better, and it is strange that it seems to have been disregarded. Even if some copyright has intervened to forbid the reproduction of the Marquess's translations, his methods might well have been studied and users of this new version spared the stereotyped *clichés* and weak renderings with which it unfortunately abounds.

The editor has further restricted himself by the principle that "None but Catholic translations have been used for the Hymns," which has meant, very often, that the reader has been denied the best and more accurate renderings. We may ask, "What is a Catholic translation?"—a question akin to "What is Catholic algebra?" In a compilation of this sort the quality of the *opus* would seem to be of greater importance than the religious professions of the *operans*.

"Every constructive criticism that will enable future editions to be made as well-nigh perfect as a human production may be, will be cordially welcome," says the Editor's Preface. We would venture to recommend the translators to acquaint themselves thoroughly with the best models of liturgical English, beginning with Cranmer's Collects, before issuing another volume. By this we would not imply that this translation is uniformly bad; it is sometimes very good and is generally efficient. But in a work of this importance, whose object should be to make the liturgy *live* in familiar and vigorous vernacular, we cannot be content with less than the best.

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