

'To sacrifice our pleasure for the good
Of others, breeds an irritable mood'

and the limerick excursions.

May it be hoped that there are more to come? Family letters, perhaps; or letters to children; or to Father Vincent McNabb, of whom he wrote with reverence, but to whom there is only one unimportant note about a journey?

RENÉE HAYNES

THE LITTLE BREVIARY. (Burns and Oates; leather £5 5s., rexine £4 4s.)
A FORM OF COMPLINE FOR CONGREGATIONAL USE. Translations by
Sebastian Bullough, O.P., and music by Anthony Milner. (Novello;
8d.)

The Little Breviary is the English edition of a reduced version of the Roman Breviary, prepared by Father T. Stallaert, c.ss.r., and already available in several European languages. It is intended for religious Brothers and Sisters, not obliged to the recitation of the Divine Office, whose knowledge of Latin, as the Archbishop of Westminster remarks in a commendatory foreword, is 'scanty or lacking altogether'. It provides greater variety than the Little Office of our Lady, and its general fidelity to the structure of the Roman Breviary will unite the prayers of countless religious, hitherto largely cut off from the liturgical life of the Church, to those of the priests and cloistered religious whose apostolate they share.

The pattern is simple. The only important difference from the Divine Office is the reduction of Matins to three psalms and one nocturn (three lessons from Scripture, with the substitution of an abbreviated life of a saint or homily on a Sunday or a feast day). This means that the Psalter does not appear in full, and the choice of psalms (each one is preceded by a brief summary and a hint at its spiritual sense) is therefore able to eliminate the merely historical and deprecatory psalms.

The English edition has been entrusted to the Benedictine nuns of Stanbrook Abbey, who, at the request of the late Cardinal Griffin, have used the Knox version throughout for scriptural passages, and have sensibly used the Burns and Oates Missal translation of the collects. The choice of the Knox version was obviously right if the only alternative was the Douay, since there would be little virtue in providing a vernacular office if its meaning were often obscure. Yet one must be permitted to wonder whether the virtues of the Knox Bible (and especially of the Psalms) are those which will make a choral recitation smooth and united. There is unquestionably a lack of musical rhythm (which does not matter so much in private reading), a repetition of highly idiosyncratic tricks, a frequent inversion—all of which may be justified in a 'personal' version but seem almost assertive in communal

prayer. We instance the first verse of the Invitatory Psalm (which after all will be recited every single day):

‘Come, friends, rejoice we in the Lord’s honour: cry we merrily to God, our strength and deliverer; with praises court his presence, singing a joyful psalm.’

We can compare with this the American Confraternity version (used in the comparable *Short Breviary*, produced by the Benedictine monks of St John’s Abbey, Collegeville):

‘Come, let us sing joyfully to the Lord:
let us acclaim the Rock of our salvation.
Let us greet him with thanksgiving;
let us joyfully sing psalms to him.’

Later in the same (Knox) psalm there is the awkward moment when the community kneel as they say (or try to say):

‘Come in, then, fall we down in worship, bowing the knee before God’

where the American version has:

‘Come, let us bow down in worship;
let us kneel before the Lord who made us.’

The question at issue, we repeat, is not the accuracy or charm of the translation, but of its suitability for public recitation. If (as one might hope) a vernacular office were occasionally *sung*, the difficulties would be multiplied. (And here we may perhaps instance the brilliantly successful English version of Compline prepared by Father Sebastian Bullough, O.P., and Anthony Milner, in which the translation and the music are throughout regarded as a unity and create a harmony most rare in vernacular liturgical texts.)

But the *Little Breviary* will of course be largely used for private recitation, and many lay people will certainly want to use it too. For this purpose the felicities of the Knox translation will no doubt be a help to prayer. But the hope must be that many religious communities who use the Little Office (or have no Office at all) will now want to deepen their liturgical spirit through the recitation of an adapted Divine Office and so to place themselves in intimate contact with the scriptural and patristic wealth of the breviary. They must not be discouraged by initial difficulties, and it will be necessary for the psalter (in particular) to be carefully rehearsed if its vocal angularities are to be minimized. In any case the *Little Breviary* (as the above quotations show) has arranged the psalms rather awkwardly for pauses: the American broken line method is obviously better for choral purposes.

The hymns have for the most part been freshly translated. This (in view of the fact that many of the Office hymns were in fact translated afresh by Mgr Knox for the new edition of the *Westminster*

Hymnal) seems inconsistent, and simply means having yet further variants of texts. On the whole they are accurate and easy to recite, though perhaps too inclined to use archaic phrases of the 'dire loss' and 'fell apple' variety.

The book is printed in Belgium, and will reassure its users by looking every inch a breviary. (It would have been pleasant if it could have been given the typographical freshness of, for instance the *Bréviaire des Fidèles*, published by Labergerie in 1951, which on many counts must be regarded as the best of vernacular adaptations of the Breviary.) Printed in Belgium on the slightly yellow paper one associates with the liturgical printing of that country, it has rubrics in proper red and a good honest type-face. But the illustrations (from a ninth-century Vulgate Bible) are a mistake: they are photographic reproductions, too small and too dim for easy recognition, which, one suspects, will provide novices with some extra distractions.

Such criticisms as these do not, of course, reflect on the excellent intentions of the *Little Breviary's* editors nor on the immense value of such a book for the religious life of communities of 'active' religious. The liturgical revival of the last few years depends greatly for its strength on the enthusiasm and knowledge of the countless thousands of Brothers and Sisters who are engaged in teaching. For them, in particular, the *Little Breviary* will be more than an enrichment of their own spiritual lives: it will place them in daily contact with that 'authentic form of Christian piety' which it must be their vocation to foster.

ILLTUD EVANS, O.P.

CARDINAL VON GALEN. By Heinrich Portmann. (Jarrolds; 21s.)

For most English readers it will be a complete revelation to read the full story of the war-time Bishop of Münster, the daring, outspoken opponent of National Socialism, described by Field-Marshal Montgomery as 'a great Christian leader, whose fearless defence of true Christianity in difficult times earned the respect of all denominations throughout the world'. His uncompromising attitude to the Nazis earned him the nickname among the German people of 'the Lion of Münster'.

Clemens August von Galen was a huge man in stature, a courageous defender of traditional German Catholicism. His first Lenten Pastoral, in 1934, began the attacks against National Socialism, which, at peril to his life, he continued to make until its collapse and destruction in defeat. The political opposition was only one side of his character. He was a man of integrity, of simplicity, in every sense *sacerdos magnus*. After reading this biography written by his former chaplain, and admirably translated and adapted by Brigadier R. K. Sidgwick, it is