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**English Psalmody: The Psalms in Rhythmic Prose**  
**translated by James A. Kleist, S.J. and Thomas J. Lynam, S.J.**

Review Author: Joseph J. Kavanagh

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painting for an effect. He is writing about *Savage Papua* and he has given the reader its *savagery* with a ruthlessness that is reminiscent of the country itself. Paul Claudel, dipping into this book, was carried irresistibly to the last page. Others will have the same experience.

LEO A. CULLUM

## ENGLISH PSALMODY

THE PSALMS IN RHYTHMIC PROSE. Translated by James A. Kleist, S.J. and Thomas J. Lynam, S.J. Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee. 1954. Pp. xii—236. \$4.00.

This is a translation in modern English of the "new" Latin version of the Psalms. Each Psalm is preceded by a short analysis of its contents, and brief explanatory notes are appended where necessary. Both the analysis and the notes, like the text itself, are translated from the authorized Latin version of the Pontifical Biblical Institute.

Father Lynam, who collaborated with Father Kleist in preparing the version and supervised its publication after the latter's death, insists in his Preface that the English translation is not intended to be poetry. Yet it looks like poetry and reads with the measured rhythm of poetry. The Psalms are printed not in the running line and paragraph form of prose, but in verses and strophes. This arrangement has been borrowed from the Biblical Institute's Latin version, and is an attempt to reproduce the balance and parallelism characteristic of the original Hebrew poems. The rhythmical movement is the result of consistent use by the English translators of the iambic stress throughout.

The merits of the Kleist-Lynam version are many. It is frequently both felicitous and forceful. The regularly recurring stress lends the language a flow and charm and elevated dignity well suited to the Psalms. But it could have been brought to still higher perfection. The English is not always of the same high quality. At times it is strained, unusual, and, though rarely, of questionable correctness. This may have resulted from excessive concern for rhythm. Or it may possibly be justified by an appeal to the poetic character of the Psalms. But the Psalms are also prayers and in prayer one prefers sincerity and directness rather than poetic inversions and conceits. Some examples of what this reviewer found less pleasing in the language of the new translation are the following:

Needless elisions ('mongst, 'stablished, 'neath, as 'twere, 'gainst, etc.); archaic forms ("list" for listen, "thralls" for slaves or servants); unusual, strained or doubtfully correct language ("*Enlight* my eyes" 12/5; "Count o'er I can my bones, *one after one*," 21/18; "betrample me" 35/12; "I jubilate " 56/8; "summer and winter *shifts*" i.e. seasons, 71/3; "gluttonness" 77/18; "may your *glance* appear" i.e. splendor or effulgence 79/2; "Now I will *lesson* you" 31/8; "Mercy *shrouds* a man" 31/10; "the lord has *veered* the fortunes of his race" 13/7; "The heavens he *declined*" i.e. caused to bend down 17/10; "The rivers *surge their voice*" 92/3; "without a blame" 17/24; "You ride upon *the* wings of wind" 103/3); too close an adherence to the Latin word or word order ("Splendent" 75/5; "My God you are!" 15/2; "O bless, my soul, the Lord" 102/1).

The correctness of Kleist-Lynam's translation of the Latin "propinat" in Psalm 74/9 may justly be questioned. As rendered into English the Psalm reads:

"For in the hand of the Lord there is a cup,  
which foams with wine, with spices drugged:  
from this *he drinks a toast*, and they shall gulp it down  
dregs and all;"

In itself the Latin "propinat" can mean "he drinks a toast"; but in the context of the Psalm it almost certainly does not mean that. God can hardly be said to drink the cup of his own wrath. The word should rather be translated "he gives (them) to drink."

But these are minor blemishes. The translation is a splendid achievement and can be recommended to all. The reviewer would like to see it eventually reprinted in prayer-book format.

JOSEPH J. KAVANAGH

## BLIND GUIDES

LOVE, COURTSHIP AND MARRIAGE. Compiled and edited by Juan M. Ruiz and Josefina D. Constantino. Manila. 1954. Pp. x-172.

During the past year quite a large number of books have appeared upon the local market, treating of the problems of married life, and counselling youth to take a more deliberate view of marital responsibilities. The great part of these are imported from abroad and, while they elucidate principles that are applicable to every marriage, irrespective of place, nevertheless the good they might achieve is limited by ignorance either of local problems or