BOOK REVIEWS

great interest, as an absorbing work of social and cultural history, to younger
generations who cannot remember the publication of the series. It is a book
which will be a delight to many book collectors. The series as a series is highly
collectable. It poses, in common with stamp collecting, the lure of acquiring a
complete set. This is an aspect which is beautifully illustrated in pictures by the
colour plates in Carney's book. One of these shows the upper covers of sixteen
of the British People volumes arranged like a set of postage stamps, similar in
format and design, but differing in title and in colour.

It is a book with a general appeal which should find a place in any collection
or library which already includes any of the BIP volumes.

PETER BICKNELL

THE CONTEMPORARY PRINTED LITERATURE OF THE ENGLISH
COUNTER-REFORMATION BETWEEN 1558 AND 1640. An annotated
catalogue. Vol. II. By A. F. Allison and D. M. Rogers. (Scolar Press, 1994.)
pp. xxxv+250. £70.

It is characteristic of the editors of ARCR II that the last page of their book
already contains 'Addenda and Corrigenda' to it. This urge to perfectionism
has always been there, ever since, in the mid-1940s, the editors began work on
Catholic bibliography and history, till then an area virtually unexplored by
professional scholars. Some ten years later, in 1956, their Catalogue of Catholic
Books in English, 1558-1640, soon known as A&R, came out. Given the scarcity
of supporting publications, the 1956 edition was a remarkably thorough piece
of work. Between 1956 and now, enormous advances have been made in the
fields of bibliography, general and Catholic, and of the history of English
Catholicism, and it is the present editors who have been largely responsible for
the opening up of the world of English Catholicism in the period 1558-1640.

ARCR II is first of all an expanded and corrected version of A&R. The
expansion is not a question of a large number of new books. In fact, 'only'
twenty-five new items were discovered in the more than thirty-five years
between A&R and ARCR II. Yet the differences between the two editions are
vast, bibliographically and otherwise. As a bibliographical instrument the book
has been greatly refined. The, at times, very complicated composition-history
of the works has been unravelled; the varying ways and degrees of involvement
on the part of writers, editors and translators have been traced, and knotty
bibliographical tangles, such as the 1604 and 1611 editions of the compilation
Six spiritual bookes, have been unwound. The logistics of the book are intricate,
yet clear and effective. Though evidently a catalogue in its own right, it is also
a companion-volume to ARCR I, which was published in 1989. Twenty-three
A&R items have moved to ARCR I, and ARCR II contains numerous cross-
references to ARCR I.

However, the present volume is much more than a revised bibliography.
BOOK REVIEWS

The re-arrangement of the material when compared to A&R – necessitating a re-numbering of the A&R entries – has the great advantage of concentrating information that in A&R was dispersed, and in this way a far better insight is given into the circumstances and the literary activities of the English Catholic community, and its place in the international Catholic context. The most striking difference between A&R and ARCR II is the providing of a context, or rather contexts; whether the internal relations among English Catholics, the animosity between the small Catholic minority and the Protestant majority in England, or the way in which the English Catholics formed part of the wider Catholic communitas. This is mainly achieved in the extensive annotations, which, for some entries, are really brief articles, on the translator, on the controversy a book belonged to, or on subtle bibliographical distinctions. Allison and Rogers read and scrutinized practically every book in their catalogue, which made them experts on both the contents and all the material aspects. Much new information was gathered from dedicatory epistles, prefaces, imprimaturs and approbations. A thorough familiarity with various manuscript sources, in England and abroad, enabled the editors to supply new or corroborative evidence on writers, translators and the specific historical or religious background.

Allison and Rogers’ mastery of the subject, although unobtrusive, is evident throughout, and ARCR II is an impressive bibliography which is at the same time a valuable cultural-historical document about the early stages of post-Reformation English Catholicism.

FRANS KORSTEN


Several factors explain the past neglect of the Corvinus Press. Its productions were often privately circulated, or published in such small editions that their impact was slight. Although the Press continued to publish after the death of its founder, Viscount Carlow, in 1944, its later reputation was not always enhanced by the manner in which his incomplete plans were carried through.

An earlier death deprived the Corvinus Press of a far better known figure with a more developed typographical taste: Lawrence of Arabia and Carlow were friends from 1932 until Lawrence’s fatal motor-cycle accident in 1935. Nash & Flavell believe that if Lawrence had survived, the two might well have gone on to found a press together. Instead Carlow decided in 1935 to print ‘beautiful books by and about Lawrence . . . to fulfil the ambitions which they had shared, and to produce a tangible and appropriate memorial to his friend.’

Of the twenty-five Corvinus books produced between 1936 and 1937, seven had been written or translated by Lawrence. So Carlow lost no time in producing his memorial to Lawrence. Figures, however, can be misleading because the

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