

THE HOLY BIBLE, REVISED STANDARD VERSION, CATHOLIC EDITION, *Catholic Truth Society, London, 1967. Paperback 8s. 6d.*

At the end of April 1967 there was published what the advertisements have called 'The cheapest complete [= including the Apocrypha] Bible in the world'. This is a just claim for 'The CTS Paperback Bible', and the CTS are to be congratulated. Inside the stout paper covers, apart from the CTS imprint on the title page, publishing details on its reverse, an initial fly-leaf and a reset fly-leaf to the OT, the printing of the text is exactly identical with that of the cloth-bound RSV Catholic Edition published by Nelson on 17 May 1966 at 25s. In fact the print here seems rather firmer than in (my copy of) the cloth-bound issue. The paperback is stated to be 'published by Thomas Nelson . . . for the Incorporated Catholic Truth Society . . . printed . . . by Cox & Wyman . . .'. The CTS Douay Bible of 1956 is completely sold out, and this edition has taken its place. It will be remembered that the Catholic RSV has a handful of authorized alterations from the standard (Protestant) text

of the NT, but none at all in the OT. This means that it provides in practice a 'common Bible' for all Christians, and the Catholic edition has the advantage (useful also for non-Catholics) of the inclusion of the apocryphal books in their 'deutero-canonical places', with for instance the insertion of the 'Additions to Esther' in their logical places as in the Septuagint, distinguished from the Hebrew sections by the use of italic type, and not gathered illogically at the end of the book as in the Vulgate. The Catholic RSV was the first Bible in English to adopt this plan. The RSV is on the whole a reliable translation and provides a useful working text; it has also been approved for use in the liturgy. The CTS have therefore performed a great service to the English-speaking world by issuing this text at so modest a price, and it is good to know that the initial sales exceeded 40,000 copies.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH, O.P.

A GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE: VOL. I—FROM GENESIS TO I SAMUEL, by Eleonore Beck and Gabriele Miller. *Geoffrey Chapman. 50s.*

For many years we have been accustomed to look to Germany for the more epoch-making works of Old Testament scholarship, while works of *haute vulgarisation* came mainly from France and Belgium. In 1964 Germany, too, entered the field of popularization with, typically perhaps, a full-scale multi-volume work covering the entire Bible. This was the *Handbuch zur Auswahlbibel Reich Gottes*, a companion to an abbreviated and simplified Bible for schools which is also appearing (in the RSV text) from the same publishers. The first volume, *Biblische Unterweisung*, is now available in an English translation by Michael Barry.

The professed aim of the series is to make all the fruits of modern philology, archeology, exegesis and historical studies on the Bible available to the general reader (and particularly the teacher) in an easily digestible form.

Considering the complexity of modern Pentateuchal studies, this is indeed a formidable task, but the two authoresses have set about their labour with commendable thoroughness and precision, while disarmingly pointing out the tentative nature of the result.

Five chapters, covering Genesis I to the establishment of the monarchy, are subdivided into sixty-four episodes, each consisting of short sections on (1) theological content, (2) background and vocabulary of the biblical text, (3) catechetical suggestions for work in class, (4) a simplified and schematic theology, leading to (5) prayer and ending with (6) suggestions for exercises and further reading. Additional notes interspersed through the book deal with various cultic matters and provide useful excerpts, not easily available elsewhere, from non-biblical literature. For the latter, the translator has

relied on the German, rather than using J. B. Pritchard's ANET; this is sometimes, but not always, clearer.

The authoresses are firmly committed to the Graf-Wellhausen theory of Pentateuchal sources, but strangely omit all reference to the Elohist source. In view of recent trends towards a more sympathetic hearing for the Traditio-Historical School, this may make the work prematurely dated within a few years. Some discrepancies in spelling of ancient Near Eastern proper names are only to be expected, but 'Ashor' and 'Ascala' in the maps on pages 99 and 223 are surely better known in England as 'Asshur' and 'Ashkelon'. On pages 103 and 160f, Abraham's slave is identified with Eliezer of Damascus on the slender and dubious evidence of Gen. 15, 2. It has been pointed out by W. F. Albright that in fifteenth-century Nuzi, credit was frequently secured by the

adoption as heir of a wealthy money-lender, and that Abraham may well have done this in order to obtain donkeys and supplies from the important caravan centre at Damascus. The derivation of the Tetragrammaton from *hayah* on page 234 is so simplified as to be confusing.

As already mentioned, the book is designed for use with 'The Coming of the Kingdom', a short school Bible. This is referred to throughout by the letter 'K' (e.g. Joshua 23 = 'K.44')—a usage confusing for Mozart-lovers and infuriating for anyone without a copy of 'K'.

For fifty shillings, teachers are equipped with a handy and reliable guide to Hebrew origins and the foundations of salvation history. To invest in the entire series may well strain resources confined by the Burnham scale, but it is a work which one can only hope will find its way into every convent and staff-room library.

LAMBERT GRESHAM, O.P.

**GOD'S REVELATION**, by Ulrich Wilckens, trans. by William Glen-Doepel. *Sheed & Ward Stagbooks*, London, 1967. 112 pp. 8s. 6d.

Ulrich Wilckens, now professor of New Testament at the *Kirchliche Hochschule* in Berlin, is one of the leading members of the circle of young Lutheran scholars who for seven years met regularly in Heidelberg with Wolfhart Pannenberg (now professor of systematic theology at the University of Mainz). The Pannenberg group forms the first Protestant theological school to appear in Germany within recent years that is not in one way or another a development from the dialectical theology of the 'twenties. Wilckens contributed the important essay on 'The Understanding of Revelation in the History of Primitive Christianity' to the group's symposium *Revelation as History* (Göttingen, 1961) which is due to appear soon in English translation.

In *God's Revelation* Wilckens reflects some of the chief concerns of the group, viz. the relevance for faith of historical investigation of the scripture, a strongly objective view of Christ's resurrection, the importance of apocalyptic for understanding the resurrection, a theological conception of universal history, an attitude to revelation which unites positively both Testaments and a preference for St Luke's scheme of history. The content of the book is indicated more clearly by its sub-title, 'A Way through the New Testament', as it deals with the formation of the New Testament by discussing the preaching of Jesus, his resurrection, the foundation of the Church, Paul's mission to the gentiles, the origin of the

gospels, etc. It is a useful book, although—in view of Wilckens' very fine studies on I Corinthians and the missionary speeches in Acts—I expected a better one. Perhaps its best feature lies in the way he brings out the diversities and tensions in the New Testament, e.g. the differing temporal emphases—the Epistle to the Hebrews with its future of the final entry into heaven, John's gospel with its present of the Christian's experience of the Spirit, and Luke with his past of the story of Jesus' (103). This was a theme which Wilckens developed well in his contribution to *Revelation as History*. As regards the problem of Peter's relationship to James, Wilckens presents his solution as if it were an assured finding, when he writes of 'that somewhat later time, when James had assumed the chief position in the Jewish Christian community, so that he was held to be the chief of "all the apostles", as formerly Peter was of the "twelve" (I Cor. 15, 5)' (50).

The translation is good but not quite fair. Without any warning to the reader, words, phrases and even whole clauses of the original German are omitted. Occasionally substitution occurs: for example, Ortega y Gasset becomes Jean-Paul Sartre (4). Page one has been largely re-written. Wilckens begins: 'Since Martin Luther's translation provided a German bible, this book has become the book in Protestant homes. In most families it can still be found today—somewhere or other at least a copy of