

L'ENSEIGNEMENT DE SAINT PIERRE. By G. Thils. (Gabalda, Paris.)

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This is a second edition: the imprimatur is of 1942. It is the latest of the famous series of *Etudes Bibliques* (though of smaller format than the great commentaries) and is a companion volume to M. Amiot's *L'Enseignement de S. Paul*. It does not claim to be a study of the theology of St Peter, but only an outline of his teaching. For this reason, perhaps, the treatment of certain points, e.g., Christ's 'preaching' to the spirits in prison (I Peter 3-19, pp. 47-59), seems a little sketchy and does not rise to the stature of the 'Essays' in Dr Selwyn's Commentary (reviewed elsewhere in this issue), but that learned scholar would, I feel, have been glad had he had the opportunity of seeing this little book. St Peter's teaching on the 'brotherhood', on the organization of the early Church, on the apostolate, and on his own leadership receives, as is to be expected from a Catholic writer, a greater emphasis (pp. 97-122) than in the aforesaid Commentary.

M. Thils begins with a brief study of St Peter in the Gospels and goes on to discuss rapidly the sources of St Peter's teaching (pp. 10-19). None, of course, are completely first-hand—we have the speeches reported by Luke and I Peter written for him by Sylvanus—but the material is undoubtedly petrine. The authenticity of II Peter is left an open question (p. 15), and its evidence is in fact only used in the body of the book as corroborative of teaching found elsewhere. Certain conclusions are given (p. 12) about the connexion of I Peter with other Epistles: that the closest bond is with Romans, while the evidence of connexion with the Pastorals, Ephesians, Hebrews, is inconclusive.

The teaching of St Peter is then given under the following heads: God (the Father, the judge, who in his mercy sent the Saviour), Jesus Lord and Saviour, the Holy Spirit, the Trinity (esp. Acts 2, 32-33 p. 63), the spiritual rebirth of the Christian (I Peter 2, 23), the Christian brotherhood, the Christian virtues, angelology and demonology, and finally the Parousia. There is indeed no important point of St Peter's teaching that is left aside.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH, O.P.

ISAAE. Par G. Billet (*Témoins de Dieu*, 6, Editions du Cerf: 85 frs.)

After the Gospels and Paul one naturally turns to Isaias as the next principal 'witness of God', and this is the design of the valuable series, *Témoins de Dieu*, coming from the French Dominican centre. Père Brillett, the Superior General of the Oratory, only hesitates to call Isaias the greatest of the witnesses in Israel in view of what the Scriptures themselves say of Moses and Elias—and indeed those were the two who spoke with the Witness, at his transfiguration. But Isaias holds his own among the prophets for the sustained height of his message and for his Christology, unique in the Old Testament. This eminence has often been lost to sight in cloudy discussions about

whether he was one or two writers, and historical details of little import have killed the spirit of his witness. This little book, intended as an introduction principally for senior schools, restores the balance and follows the prophet and his message from the word of God in Scripture. The author hopes that it will reach those who seek to deepen their own personal lives with Christian doctrine, going back to the sources in order to encompass a wider and deeper sphere of life. The book will take the reader back to the Scriptures with a greater appreciation of their worth to himself and to the world. If the prophet's history occupies two-thirds of the book, it is all based on the text and leads on to analysis of the rhythm and style of his work and so to the doctrine, leaving the reader equipped and anxious to sink once again into the pages of Isaias himself.

P. C.

THE NEW TESTAMENT, newly translated into English by Ronald A. Knox. (Burns Oates, 6s. and 10s. 6d.)

Mgr Knox's translation of the New Testament has now received official authorisation, so that a reviewer is not concerned with any question of accuracy as a rendering of the original text. But more than faithfulness to the original is required if the present version is to take its place among the very small number of translations which have achieved lasting popularity; and it may be supposed that this will be determined, in the last resort, by literary considerations.

The whole atmosphere and context of the use of the Bible demand that the translation satisfy an informed judgment of the use of the English language: if it will not endure the scrutiny of literary criticism, it is hardly likely that it will ever pass into such common use as to become a formative influence upon the language and thought of the community in which it is current. The Authorised Version at once springs to the mind: it is well known that English Catholicism has suffered deeply from having no version of the Bible comparable with that noble book. The question here is not one of accuracy of rendering; it is simply that English culture has been shaped and English religious life influenced by the Authorised Version as by few other books, if any at all. And it was deeply to be hoped that the new version would give us something which might, in time, exert a similar influence upon Catholic life and culture.

It does not seem that this hope will be realised. The version is new; and it would be astonishing indeed if a scholar of the distinction of Mgr Knox did not stimulate new interest in the text, and, by the interpretative side of his translation, provide much help in its understanding. In particular, in the Epistles we now have a rendering which is consistently intelligible. Whether or not the meaning which emerges is on a deeper or more superficial level of exegesis is a matter for the biblical expert; as are allied questions such as the use of imagery, and consistency or inconsistency in the rendering of the