

particularly under each of the Commandments. The Virtues and Vices section, a miscellany of largely unrelated numbers, has disappeared, and its contents are adequately covered elsewhere.

Sins against the sixth and ninth commandments are dealt with very straightforwardly and sensibly. An important distinction is made between modesty and chastity; and it is gratifying to find that this Catechism favours the use of the word 'chastity' which is explained as a synonym of the much more widely preferred 'purity', a word of tiresome vagueness when you are dealing with children who often have no idea that it has anything to do with sex. One eleven-year old girl, asked what she understood by 'purity', answered 'Holy and good, like our Lady', a view shared by the whole class, who knew it had something to do with religion, except for the most backward child, who associated it with 'Sunlight Soap, Finest for Purity'!

So far we have been considering the New Catholic Catechism chiefly as a teacher's aid-book. But it is also intended to be a pupil's text-book; and it is an undeniable draw-back that the book is far too big and expensive for a pupil's book. This is a great pity, for it would be an excellent reference book in many ways for the school-leaver who had studied it and learned to love it at school.

The pictures have proved controversial. Some teachers find them most helpful; many of the drawings have stimulated the blackboard artist to surpass himself. Others dislike them, and so do some pupils on whom they have been tried out. Repository art still reigns over the taste of our schools. But the question of liking is perhaps beside the point. The illustrations are strong, theologically accurate, and stimulating to thought; they *teach* in fact, which is what the merely pretty, or regarded as pretty, does not.

To sum up, the book should prove invaluable to every teacher of Religious Knowledge, whether he uses it according to the plans laid down by its sponsors, or whether he adapts it to his own exposition of the English Catechism. As a pupil's book it is too big and expensive, and indeed its very appearance of massiveness may have a slightly forbidding aspect in the eyes of English children. Perhaps it does not have this effect on their more serious German counterparts. Indeed fortunate are those German children into whose schools the *Katholischer Katechismus* has been introduced as their official text-book.

S. M. MATTHEW, O.P.

LES INSTITUTIONS DE L'ANCIEN TESTAMENT, I. By R. de Vaux, O.P.
GÉOGRAPHIE DE LA TERRE SAINTE, I and II. By M. du Buit, O.P. (Les Editions du Cerf, Paris, 1958.)

In the period which extends from the publication of the encyclical *Divino Afflante* (1943), perhaps the greatest single contribution to the

Catholic renewal of biblical studies has been the appearance and immediate success of the *Bible de Jérusalem*. From the outset it was appreciated as an admirable rendering by competent scholars. The whole book is further graced by a literary finish which was assured by the collaboration of an equal number of distinguished writers and literary men. This is an important element, sometimes forgotten in this country. But if ever there is to be an English equivalent of the *Bible de Jérusalem*, then, to produce the same results we shall surely need to use the same methods. In addition, the *Bible de Jérusalem* both in the fascicule and the single-volume editions, has notes, introductions and cross-references which could hardly be bettered. The study of these provides an excellent introduction and insight to the various books and component parts of the Bible.

However, notes and references are necessarily brief both in the fascicule and in the one-volume edition, so we see the point of supplementary volumes, all of which fulfil the role of *excursus*, and all of which conduce to a better grasp of the text of the Word of God.

The *Institutions de L'Ancien Testament* of P. de Vaux will be recognized at once by all his former pupils, for they represent the subject matter of many years' lectures, and the work is very happily dedicated to the students of the *École Biblique* 'with whom I learnt whatever is in this book'. This present Volume I treats first of the tenacious survival of nomad customs, and of the formation of the tribes. We then pass to family institutions, and then the civil and political situations which obtained. A second volume, yet to come, will treat of military and religious institutions.

The whole is planned to help an intelligent reading of the Old Testament, more especially in its historical narratives. There are copious references to biblical texts, but also an avoidance of purely technical discussions and erudition. Bible in hand, and looking up the references given, we can get a much more realistic grasp of the narratives, especially in their first or literary and historical significance. We never stray very far from the realities of topography, social customs, evolution of religion, etc. Certain purely material elements, e.g. weights and measures, are included, as they would be in any manual of biblical archaeology, but somehow without a trace of arid unreality. Père de Vaux writes as a master in his subject, though for the purposes of this book more conclusions are given than arguments. But the references and bibliographies to each chapter make a more technical study possible for those who would wish further to pursue their study.

The *Géographie de la Terre Sainte* is in effect a more accessible and up-to-date abbreviation of P. Abel's *Géographie de la Palestine*. P. du Buit sometimes parts from P. Abel's interpretations, but for the most

part he is in the same line of thought, and follows a similar plan. A first section treats of physical features, a second of historical geography. This latter is interestingly arranged. Thus we have a chapter on identification of sites, then on routes or possible travel ways. The remainder of the book consists of a very condensed political and social history of the kings of Juda and Israel, and then of Judaea in the succeeding world empires. Last, but by no means least, we are provided with a list of place-names which serves to summarize the data of the book and adds a few new notes.

The second volume consists of a folder of some eighteen line maps and plans, with contours, routes, hill-ridges, etc. This section can teach us something, but very much needs to be supplemented by colourful maps and atlases.

The *Bible de Jérusalem* is enhanced and favoured by these excellent auxiliary studies. The editors of the series can feel confident that they are fully in the line of study advocated by the encyclical *Divino Afflante* . . . 'for it is absolutely necessary for the interpreter to go back in spirit to those remote centuries of the East, and make proper use of the aids afforded by history, archaeology, ethnology, and other sciences, in order to discover what literary forms the writers of that early age intended to use, and did in fact employ'.

ROLAND POTTER, O.P.

MAN IS YOUR BROTHER. By Abbé Pierre. (Geoffrey Chapman; 10s. 6d.)

This book is a collection of talks and sermons given on the French television service by the Abbé Pierre. Their impact on those who listened and watched must have been very great. Now we have the chance of reading them.

Abbé Pierre's intention was to wake people up, to make sure there would be fewer people ignorant of the world in which we live. Having learnt the startling facts of how about 65 per cent of the world's population exist, then we, in the security of our little Welfare State, 'have got either to love and to act . . . or to snap our fingers; to love or to hate, passively may be, but no less fiercely for all that'.

'A starving man is a starving man, whether you believe in heaven or not. What he needs is a bowl of soup and a bit of bread.' More than half the population of the world don't get enough to eat.

There are nine hundred million children in the world, but six hundred million of them will die before they grow up.

There is a disease called trachoma, which results in blindness and is caused by hunger. Eight out of ten Egyptians have it. In Africa whole villages go blind.