

three pages are conceded to A. M. Hunter to outline what is meant by *kerygma* (the editor should note that AV does not stand for 'Authentic Vulgate'), and H. H. Rowley, dealing with the Dead Sea literature, disposes of the various paperback pundits who may have come the young student's way (Edmund Wilson, J. M. Allegro). Form criticism is introduced by R. W. Catterall in an essay reprinted from *The Clergy Review* and the work of Rudolf Bultmann is examined at greater length by David Stanley, s.J. (who, incidentally, thinks a great deal more highly of Bultmann than many Protestant scholars do, including Dr Hunter). There are also contributions by Hugo Rahner, s.J., Floyd Filson, and Karl Adam. The last essay in this group is a 'digest' of a survey by B. Rigaux which originally appeared in *Révue Biblique* of the present state of scholarly opinion about the historical value of the gospels. The last section of the book contains two fine articles, one by Vincent O'Keefe, s.J., on the literary *genre* of the gospels, and the other by Fr Stanley, on the Gospel as 'salvation history'. There are then some excerpts from Jean Mouroux, which might well mystify more than they enlighten, and the book closes with an appendix on miracles by F. Taymans, s.J.

One has to be fairly athletic to cope with the leaps in approach and tone from one author to the next, but a book like this could be very useful as a basis for discussion of the credentials of faith by a group of undergraduates. One hopes that the publishers will bring out several more collections of the same kind.

FERGUS KERR, O.P.

LE PSAUTIER DE LA BIBLE DE JERUSALEM; Cerf, 3.20 NF.

The psalms have always had an important place in the worship of the Church, but are not much used nowadays by the laity. The importance and effectiveness of the psalms as prayer is just beginning to be appreciated through the new insight derived from the liturgical and biblical revival, and the publication for the French laity of this moderately priced psalter is most welcome. The translations are those of the Bible de Jerusalem but the explanatory footnotes are replaced by an invitational prayer which indicates the spiritual meaning of each psalm and is followed by a concluding prayer which recalls some aspect of the mystery of salvation, asks God's help and puts the theme of the psalm into its eschatological perspective. These prayers are excellent and help one to understand and pray each psalm.

This is primarily a book of prayer so that the commentary of the Jerusalem Bible itself is not missed, especially as there is an interesting introduction which draws attention to the main ideas of the psalms. Père Gelineau points out that the psalms are as relevant to us today as they were when they were composed, since they deal with eternal themes such as suffering, death, fear, hope, trust, anger and peace. Even the curses of the maledictory psalms are not so much a regrettable heritage from a savage age as an expression of the still continuing struggle between Christ and Satan and of the division between salvation and

damnation. The importance of key themes and images such as covenant, love, peace and justice are only touched upon and it would have been more profitable if this section had been developed further. It is also made clear that those who use the psalter for prayer should have a rudimentary knowledge of the principal stages through which the People of God were led; the patriarchal period, the exodus, the kingdom, the exile and the return. Those who feel daunted by this should reflect that without this knowledge one cannot understand properly the New Testament which fulfills the Old. The ideas and events of the pre-Messianic era are constantly alluded to by the New Testament writers and are found throughout the liturgy.

This French version of the psalms sets out not only to convey the meaning of the Hebrew but also to preserve its rhythmic pattern. This is very important as the impact of the psalms depends to a considerable extent on the original rhythm, which is similar to the sprung rhythm used by Gerard Manley Hopkins. Each line has a fixed number of stresses but the number of syllables between them is variable. The new psalm tones worked out by Père Gelineau to fit these are modal in style and based on ancient liturgical models. These are very melodic and for the unprofessional choir or family much easier and more attractive to sing than the Gregorian tones which many find monotonous. Another advantage of these settings is that the musical stresses fall upon the more important words and emphasize them, whereas in other methods of psalmody the chant is based on musical formulae which treat all words with impartiality.

Although the psalms in this translation into French are effective when read as private prayer their impact is greatest when sung. It is unfortunate therefore that it is not at all easy in this edition to understand the technical information about the music or to fit each psalm to its appropriate melody, which is printed at the back and on a separate leaflet. The translations made by the Grail from the Hebrew into sprung rhythm in English using the Gelineau psalmody (*Twenty-four Psalms and a Canticle* and *Thirty Psalms and Two Canticles*) are more useful from the musical point of view to the uninitiated as the psalm tones are set out clearly under each psalm. The effort of learning the melodies is well worth-while, for a verse or two of a psalm which fits in with the liturgical season can form a valuable part of family prayers, and one can also raise one's heart and mind to God through singing them while occupied with chores in house and garden. It is to be hoped that the singing of the Gelineau psalms will come in time to form a regular part of the worship of the ordinary parish. For instance the *De Profundis* sung by the whole congregation on All Souls Day would bring the liturgy to life and the use of 'My Shepherd is the Lord' at baptism (as advocated in the new baptismal handbook by Fr Charles Davis produced by Pastoral Publications at Ware) is most impressive.

This psalter meets a real need of the laity and therefore an English version would be valuable, especially if the musical presentation were improved so as to be easily understood by those with only limited knowledge of music.

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