

and J. A. T. Robinson) have gone too far in the past in their attribution to Paul of a complete change in his thinking on this subject during the period covered by his Epistles. But this would hardly justify P. Amiot in treating all the Epistles on a single level in regard to eschatology. He tells us, quite rightly, that Paul allows himself the ancient prophetic practice of sliding mentally from the present aeon to the coming age, and back again, without worrying about the time scale. All the same, it is surely significant that the apostle's major concern in the earliest epistles is with the last days, which he then regarded as imminent; while in the later epistles his main preoccupation is rather with eschatology as now being realized in 'the saints'. It seems to me that his views at both these periods are hardly susceptible of being synthesized consistently.

A few points of less importance. The Epistle to the Hebrews is here treated as a part of Paul's own writing, because, P. Amiot explains, it follows Pauline teaching. It may perhaps be doubted if this practice is any longer justified. But it is certainly strange to read nowadays the assertion (not of course meant to be taken literally, but incongruous nonetheless) that 'St Paul boldly explains in the Epistle to the Hebrews . . .' (p. 96). This epistle is not as Pauline as all that! The translation is satisfactory. Biblical quotations vary between Douai, Knox and the translator's own. It is a pity that the translator did not (perhaps for reasons of censorship?) keep invariably to his own renderings. An example of the result is the quotation on p. 183 from 1 Cor. 6.15, given in the Knox paraphrase: 'Have you never been told that your bodies belong to the Body of Christ?' What Paul actually says here is: 'Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?', the literal sense of which is precisely the point P. Amiot is making here, but which has almost disappeared in Knox. An unusual proof-reading error has remained on the Contents page, where chapter 10 is given in the wrong part of the book. A more important criticism is that it will be difficult to use this book for reference, since there is no index of biblical references and the subject index is poor. Perhaps all these points can be rectified in future editions, together with several wrong references given in the course of the text. In any case, it is a pleasure to welcome a good Catholic introduction to the thought of St Paul as a whole, and especially one available in the English language.

ROBERT SHARP, O.P.

THE LITURGICAL BOOKS, by Lancelot Sheppard; Faith and Fact; Burns and Oates; 8s. 6d.

It is not easy to treat a complicated subject like this at a popular level: the choice of what to include and what to omit is delicate, but Mr Sheppard has put the fruit of much erudition within easy reach of the casual inquirer. As there are already two books on the mass in this series the chapter on the missal is short, but it is regrettable that he has not given the *Ordines Romani* the same careful

treatment as the sacramentaries since they have had such great influence in shaping the liturgy. The chapter on the breviary is an excellent summary—though it is not true that the Gallican breviaries were promulgated ‘in defiance of the liturgical law existing at the time’ (p. 50)—and so is that on the martyrology. The treatment of the pontifical and ritual, so important for the study of theology, is less successful. The *Ordines Romani* are again neglected, the formation of the Romano-Germanic pontifical and its introduction into Rome are hurriedly passed over, while Durandus and the later editions are treated at a length unproportionate to their importance. One is surprised to find no mention of the great work of Andrieu on this subject. A last chapter gives a useful summary of twentieth century reforms. Despite its shortcomings this is a helpful introduction, however.

PAULINUS MILNER, O.P.

Notice

THE LIVING BIBLE is a series of 12 inch Long Playing Records, twelve in number, issued by His Master's Voice, read by Sir Laurence Olivier and interspersed with special music played by several symphony orchestras, the Royal Philharmonic and the London Philharmonic among them.

It can only be described as embarrassing to hear an actor as admired and distinguished as Sir Laurence in other spheres, reading this most magnificent of all prose with so little sense of fitness or propriety. The intention of those responsible for the series is probably laudable enough but it is difficult to believe that the same could be said of the reader with his mannered theatrical tricks of emphasis and pitch, the utterly meaningless and distracting pauses dragging out this, one would have thought, almost fool-proof rhythm till it suggests a piece of worn-out elastic.

Such immodest egotism is all too often heard in the faithless rendering of verse with which the professional actor betrays the poet's intention; yet little did one think it would be possible so to ‘interpret’ the Old Testament that its majesty would be reduced to ham dramatics. The operative word there is ‘interpret’ and is the root of the evil. If ever words ‘spoke for themselves’ these do, when allowed, and when not rendered by every artifice the voice can muster from breathless self-conscious coyness to ranting hysteria, by when it becomes time to call a halt and lodge a bitter protest at the desecration. The music, otherwise pleasing, is wasted in this desert of histrionics.

LEIGH LESTER