

a relation to the Jewish and Christian doctrine of a righteous and holy God, especially, for Christians, as revealed in Jesus Christ. Conscience is not infallible; it may react wrongly, if the nature of the act is misunderstood. It is to be obeyed; but it is not man's only guide; rather it is a judge of particular past action than a director as to what is proposed to be done; in any case it needs to be quickened and informed by faith. The two interact; as faith enlightens conscience, so an outrage to conscience may lead to a weakening or loss of faith. The book should be valuable in face of the modern popular religion of Conscience and Common-sense; often no more than sentiment plus uninstructed opinion.

JOHN HIGGENS, O.S.B.

THE CROSS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. H. Wheeler Robinson. S.C.M. Press Ltd. 1955.

'In this sign conquer'—the conquest is one of faith, and this sign is the sign of the Cross. The Cross or Christ crucified is at the very heart of our religion as of our preaching. But that true core of our religion was prepared, and foreshadowed, and foretold over long centuries. It was a profound as well as a long history which reached its term and true fulfilment in the consummation of the Sacrifice of Calvary: *consummatum est*. Professor Wheeler Robinson's three monographs (the earliest, Job, appeared, significantly, in 1916) are now reprinted as one book and present something of the Mystery of the Cross in Job, in the Servant of the second part of Isaias, and in Jeremias.

His treatment of Job is as effective a presentation of the structure of the book and its essential problem as any we know. Very happily he links, as we must, the innocent suffering of Job to those words of our Lord: 'neither did this mans in nor his parents; but that the works of God should be made manifest in him'.

The Songs of the Suffering Servant are applied as the New Testament and the Church's tradition apply them. To the individual life and work of our Lord. At the same time 'the conception of the Servant of Yahweh prepares us for the corporate unity of the Church and its head', or, as a Catholic might put it, the doctrine of the Mystical Body has its antecedents in the Old Testament. God chose his people for a purpose; Israel was to become the New Israel of God.

'The Cross in Jeremias' is perhaps the best in this successful trilogy. We are shown Jeremias the man, his success through failure, the difficulties of the book as we now have it, the forms of Hebrew poetry, etc. All this and more are made very readable. A great store of biblical lore is 'got across' to the ordinarily or reasonably educated reader. Further we are shown something of the inner conflicts and

struggles of Jeremias. And we like to see the author's scholarship ranging wide (to the Catholic's canon) to include the famous text of Maccabees:—'This is a lover of his brethren and of the people of Israel; this is he that prayeth much for the people and for all the holy city, Jeremias the prophet of God' (II Macc. 15, 14).

ROLAND POTTER, O.P.



## NOTICES

READING THE SCRIPTURES with understanding has been made easier for Catholics by a number of publications appearing in recent months. Indeed, whatever stage our appreciation of the Bible may have reached, there is something to help us. For the beginner, who wants a guide in his first approach to the Bible as a whole, *How to Read the Bible*, by Abbé Roger Poelman (Longmans; 6s.) should prove helpful. It will take him on tour through both Old and New Testaments, with short introductions to the books and hints on their relations to one another. A special feature is the judicious selection of passages to be read, bearing in mind that this is very much a beginner's book. But above all it is a book which will lead the reader to the text of Scripture itself, and not serve as a distraction from it. It is translated from the French, apparently in the U.S.A., but there is little in the translation to jar on English ears.

A later stage is catered for by *The Key Concepts of the Old Testament*, by Albert Gelin (Sheed and Ward; 6s.), a book certainly much better produced at the same price. Here again is a translation from the French and one not always felicitous as may be seen in its title. Its purpose is to bring out, by ranging over the whole of the Old Testament, some of the leading themes of God's revelation to his Chosen People. It does not, however, isolate them from the New Testament but indicates briefly their fulfilment in it. This is a book that should help many to meditate the Scriptures.

More detailed and welcome indeed is the first of the Stonyhurst Scripture Manuals, *The Gospel According to St Mark*, by C. C. Martindale, S.J. (Longman's; 7s. 6d.). Designed primarily as a textbook for use in the upper forms of schools, it has been the fruit of collaboration between Fr Martindale and the teaching staff of Stonyhurst. But the author's insight into and love of the Scriptures have resulted in this book that will bring the Gospel to life for many an adult who would