

apart from its other shortcomings, so irritating. We make occasional use of modern versions, particularly partial ones like Bishop Wand's *Epistles*, and most of the clergy use the R.V. for study and read their New Testament in Greek; but the A.V. is our mainstay.

A tailpiece: for me, the most striking thing about *The Sign of Jonas*, though I have seen it mentioned by no reviewer, was Merton's discovery of the riches of Scripture.

RICHARD RUTT



THE OBSTACLES OF A SCRIPTURE SCHOLAR

CONRAD PEPLER, O.P.

YOUNG Harry Pope, we are informed by the author of this lively and fascinating study of the man,¹ did not shine at the Oratory school in athletics, 'though midway through his school career he came first in the obstacle race'. The shadow of coming events was then already cast; for this man, who as Father Hugh Pope, O.P., became the leading Scripture scholar in England for many years, did in fact in the middle of his career win the obstacle race set by the modernist attack on the Word of God. Fr Mulvey shows how this race was won first interiorly by bringing Father Hugh to the placid yet pungent holiness which all could recognize in the charming fatherly Dominican from the 1920's onwards. It was surely a clear case of divine purification, call it a 'dark night' if you will, leading to a peaceful unity and wholeness of life in God. And that race was won, inevitably, before the victory was recognized by the world outside.

It happened, of course, that Fr Hugh, studying for the highest Scriptural degree and teaching at the same time in Rome during the modernist scare from 1910 onwards, should meet all sorts of obstacles. Those having a care for the purity of doctrine were on edge and nervous, and men of the most shining and unimpeachable orthodoxy like Fr Hugh Pope were liable to sharpen that edginess by the mere fact of teaching Scripture. It all came to a head when Fr Hugh published an article whose very title shows how much we owe to him today and how much we are now entering into his inheritance—'Why divorce our teaching of Theology from our teaching of the Bible?' (*Irish Theological Quarterly*, January 1913).

¹ *Hugh Pope of the Order of Preachers*. By Kieran Mulvey, O.P. (Blackfriars Publications; 12s. 6d.)

This article was attacked by an unpleasantly sarcastic and anonymous author in a French review—and then the trouble began which led to Fr Hugh's departure from Rome and even for a few months to the curtailment of his immense apostolic activities in England. It was some time before Fr Hugh was completely vindicated and the Holy Father himself 'was anxious to do something to proclaim Fr Hugh's innocence'. Meanwhile the trial had deepened profoundly the spirit of the great Scripture scholar, and it remains an example of a rather strange way in which the study of Holy Writ may lead to the outpouring of the gifts of the Holy Ghost. But it was at this time that Fr Hugh began that most useful series of volumes for the student, *Aids to the Bible*, which was heralded by 'authority' and student alike as a 'book we wanted'. It was later that he produced his invaluable *Layman's New Testament*—a handy volume that is surely worth reprinting. And altogether he paved the way for the renewed interest in the Bible among clergy and laity alike in English-speaking countries, an interest which is still in the ascendancy.

Fr Hugh Pope was many other things besides the Doctor of Sacred Scripture. He was a pioneer in the Catholic Evidence Guild—the present Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, who contributes a charming and personal foreword to this biography, succeeded him as chaplain to the Birmingham Guild. He set the philosophical and theological studies of the English Dominicans on a sound footing: 'It would be scarcely possible to over-estimate the greatness of his service to his Province in securing the establishment of the studies upon the very highest level', said the present Father Provincial in his panegyric printed at the end of this volume. He was a leading authority on St Augustine, an enthusiast for the life and vocation of the lay brother, a real father to his community as Prior, a valiant controversialist, a devoted and most human friend and companion—and a confirmed fisherman and lover of nature. In all these capacities, so happily and devotedly described by Fr Mulvey, he had his obstacles to surmount before winning the race. But perhaps it was his knowledge and love of the Scriptures which inspired all this unceasing and almost incredible zeal, the foundation upon which the large and varied building of great accomplishments was built.

Father Hugh Pope was one of the sons of St Dominic most worthy to bear the title of Preacher, a Preacher indeed of the Word. He has found, too, a worthy biographer to whom all the readers—and they will surely be many—will be grateful for the inspiration he conveys in this book. The innumerable and delightful anecdotes that surround great figures such as Fr Pope might easily have led a less competent biographer astray. We are given a sufficiency to add salt to the story and to make us realize that his friends could yarn endlessly about this grand old man who was reared in the culture of Victoria, examined as a boy by Cardinal Newman, but retained to the end a youthful and agile spirit.