

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).

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## 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

not care to tackle a full-length commentary. The notes are very full and helpful, usually verse by verse, but at times developing into a short article on some point of special importance. The Introduction too is good, but an attempt to say too much in one sentence has resulted in the amusing slip that the writers of the Synoptic Gospels, 'each, very likely, read the other two but none the less pursued his own method of telling his story'!

A short *Life of St Paul*, by Mgr D. J. O'Herlihy (price 1s. 6d.) comes to us from Browne and Nolan, who have published it in association with the Society of St Paul. It is intended to inaugurate a series of Biblical publications to which we look forward with interest. The booklet itself is a reprint of the author's article in the *Catholic Commentary on Holy Scripture* and needs therefore no further recommendation.

Finally Messrs Burns Oates are to be congratulated on the excellent production of the new one-volume edition of the Knox Bible (cloth 30s.). It is well printed and bound in a dignified and handy volume making probably the best produced Bible at present available in English, and at a reasonable price. Would that some publisher would do as well for the Douay version. For, despite the assurance that Mgr Knox has 'taken careful account' of all the suggestions for verbal changes which have come from all over the world, this is still the Knox Bible that has divided opinion amongst Catholics for years and will continue to do so. Too often in the Old Testament he has succeeded in his aim of not writing the English of any particular period by simply not writing English at all. Instead we are given what would seem to be an imitation of the kind of language so often used at the end of the last century in translations of the classics; this sort of thing, 'A message from the Lord God of hosts; Up, to my house betake thee, and find Sobna, that has charge of the temple. This be thy word to him' (Isaias xxii, 15). The language of the Douay version is indeed dated, but it is sober and dignified in marked contrast to this pretentiousness. A further criticism that must be made, and one that is important now that the whole Bible in the Knox version is authorised for public use, is that it does not lend itself to reading aloud. This is not to say that the Knox New Testament may not often be the easiest form of Bible reading yet available to the modern Englishman, but we still need an 'official' translation that is both readable and accurate.