

Book Chronicle

Although barely six months have passed since my last Book Chronicle containing a brief notice of the latest Catholic biblical translations and commentaries (Mel. Theol. I, 4, Nov. 1948, pp. 62-65), I am glad to be able to record many additions to the publications that were, at that time, in progress or in preparation.

The *Westminster Version*, interrupted since the beginning of the war, has now resumed its publication with the *Book of Daniel*—translation and commentary by Fr. C. Lattey S.J. This work differs from the others both in its external form as well as in its contents. The commentary is separated from, and placed after, the translation. Both the Introduction (pp. xv-1ii) and the commentary (pp. 57-119) are more extensive than in the other parts of the same series. The author is fully conscious of the difficulty of his task; he does not underestimate the objections to the authorship of the book and its particular character, but, on the whole, he follows the traditional line of interpretation. The prophecy of the seventy weeks is taken to be a chronological prediction of the coming of the Messiah and the establishment of his kingdom upon earth. Antiochus IV is the type of Antichrist. He upholds the traditional view of authorship, but he is fully aware 'that this interpretation need not be considered to possess compelling authority' (p. xxxvii).

A new translation of the Old and New Testaments from the original languages with critical use of all the ancient sources has been undertaken by the Catholic Biblical Association of America. So far only the *Book of Genesis* has appeared (St Anthony Guild Press, Paterson, New Jersey, 1948, pp. 130). The principles underlying the translation have been outlined by Prof. E. P. Arbez of the Catholic University of America, Chairman of the Editorial Board for Genesis, in an article 'Translating the Old Testament out of the Original Languages' published in the *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 7 (1945) 48-75. Fidelity to the original, perspicuity of expression and fluency of style are the outstanding merits of this translation. The general arrangement adopted is the same as that already made familiar in other translations. After a Letter of the Episcopal Committee of the Con-

fraternity of Christian Doctrine, which is sponsoring the translation (p. iii), and a Preface explaining the scope and method of this new translation (pp. iv, v), comes a short introduction to Genesis (p. 1) and the translation accompanied with brief foot-notes and references to parallel passages. The text is divided into 4 major parts, and is further broken up into paragraphs with their respective marginal headings. A list of textual notes closes up the whole book.

The French Commentary **La Sainte Bible** published under the general editorship of A. Clamer has been enriched by another volume containing the commentary on the Epistles to the Romans (by Fr A. Viard O.P.), to the Corinthians (by Fr C. Spicq O.P.), to the Galatians (by Fr D. Buzy S.C.J.). Soundness of judgement, solidity of doctrine, a fair exposition and discussion of divergent views are the chief characteristics of this volume which maintains the same standard of the other volumes.

The new French translation, which has been planned by, or with the co-operation of, the Dominican Fathers of Jerusalem, is now out with four of the projected forty parts, namely *Maccabees* by Fr M. Abei O.P., *Aggeus*, *Zacharias* and *Malachias* by A. Gelin, *St Mark* by Fr J. Huby S.J., and *St Luke* by E. Osty. Each part is preceded by a short introduction and accompanied by very brief foot-notes. The chief merit of this work lies in the combination of an accurate rendering of the original text with an elegant way of expression according to the particular genius of the French language. In order to attain the highest literary standard the editing board have entrusted the several books to well-known biblical experts, and the several translations were afterwards submitted to a revising committee made up of French writers of recognized authority. It is earnestly hoped that other parts will follow at short intervals.

The 2nd part of the historical books comprising the books of Paralipomenon, Esdras and Nehemias, Tobias, Judith, Esther and Maccabees, in the Italian translation of the Pontifical Biblical Institute of Rome has been published before the end of the year 1948. The other parts have been noticed in Mel. Theol. I, No. 2, Nov. 1947, pp. 65f. Leaving aside the literary merits of the translation, I wish to call attention to a few critical and exegetical points which serve to illustrate both the general standard of the work and the critical tendencies of the several con-

tributors. The writer of Paralipomenon does not depend directly on Samuel-Kings, but on common sources. The Law-book found in the Temple (II, 34, 14) was the book of Deuteronomy. The traditional chronological sequence Esdras-Nehemias is maintained, and the missions of the two leaders are made to fall in the reign of Artaxerxes I (465-424 B.C.). The historical character of Tobias is upheld and defined thus: "nulla ci vieta di ritenere la stretta storicità di *Tobia*, o almeno, con alcuni scrittori cattolici, ammettere un largo fondo storico con abbellimenti accessori." The translation has been made from the Greek text of the Codex Sinaiticus. The deuterocanonical sections of Esther are given as integral parts of the book as in the LXX, not as an appendix as in the Vulgate Latin. The historicity is proposed with the same limitations as that of Tobias. The historical and geographical difficulties of Judith are explained away by the assumption that the author has, for some unknown reason, given a symbolical dress to historical events.

The Italian commentary published under the direction of Mgr S. Garofalo is proceeding apace. Besides a *General Introduction* by G. Perrella, a commentary on the book of *Ezekiel* by F. Spadafora has been published during the last six months. The introduction (pp. 1-25) covers these points: Historical and religious background, life and ministry of the prophet, doctrine, structure and analysis of the book. Ezekiel's prophetic ministry is placed entirely in Babylon among the Jewish exiles contrary to the opinion of certain Catholic interpreters who divide the prophet's ministry between Jerusalem and Babylon (P. Auvray, *Ezechiel*, 1946).

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