

The language of the Catechism is exclusively theological: it is made up of definitions, formulas, lists, explanations, arguments and scriptural and philosophical proofs. . . .

We must no longer separate what is learned in 'Catechism' from the living truth to be found in the Bible stories.

The Bible is not meant to be read systematically from cover to cover. The Church never treats it in this way when it presents the Word of God to us in the Liturgy. St Paul says that all these things happened in 'figure' for our enlightenment. Every truth, every actual need has its 'figure' or foreshadowing here or there in the history of the people of God. To explore the Bible in this way with children (and adults), following up the different themes to be met with there, is to educate them to tackle the sacred books in a way that is religious and liturgical. It is also the way to enable them to realize how constant is the connection between the Old and New Testaments and the convergence of both in Christ.

As to the Liturgy, which is the Church's catechesis, it holds, as a rule, a negligible place in our teaching. The future solution of our problem seems to be here. Everywhere in the Church, in connection with the biblical and liturgical revival there is emerging a catechetical revival in which the Liturgy will take the foremost place. It will not then be Doctrine + Bible + Liturgy, but a liturgical way, vital because shared by the praying community, of approaching the Bible and drawing from it in thought and still more in prayer doctrine which will become the actual expression of our response, within the Church, to the appeal of the Bible's words and actions.

A work of this kind, which centres the teaching of religion upon the great Christian truths: Creation, Revelation, Incarnation, Redemption, Church and Sacraments, vitally expressed in the celebration of the Liturgy, will perhaps prove to be the first stage of a religious revival in our time. For biblical teaching expressed in Liturgy is nothing less than the teaching of the Church.



REVIEWS

THE SCROLLS AND THE NEW TESTAMENT. Edited by Krister Stendahl.
(S.C.M. Press; 3 ss.)

The English publishers of this book claim for it that 'these fourteen authoritative papers by a distinguished international team of Catholic, Protestant and Jewish scholars provide a well-grounded interim verdict on the significance of the Dead Sea Scrolls for the main departments of

New Testament studies'. This seems to me a very just description. It is a compilation of articles drawn from various learned periodicals, and here translated (where necessary), revised, expanded, and brought up to date by their original authors. Its contents may be classified according to the 'main departments of New Testament studies' to which the publishers refer.

Messianism. Dr K. Stendahl compares the Messianic ideas of Qumrân with those of the New Testament and concludes that the difference is a 'difference in degree of anticipation'. Christians and Covenanters alike believed that their respective leaders were to return as Messias at the end of the world. (Dr Stendahl is on rather questionable ground here with regard to the Teacher of Righteousness.) But the Christians, unlike the Covenanters, believed also that their leader was already risen and enthroned in heaven as Messias in *anticipation* of that final consummation. In fact Dr Stendahl considerably underestimates the new and unexpected modifications which the Messianic ideal underwent in the teaching of Christ, but this is to some extent corrected in a subsequent essay by Dr Cullmann. In a study entitled 'The Two Messiahs' Dr K. G. Kuhn decides that 'The New Testament presupposes the messianic expectation of the average Jew, not the special two-Messiah concept of the Essenes'.

St Paul. Taking as his starting point the ideas of sin and flesh in St Paul and in the Essene writings, Dr Kuhn investigates the further idea, common to both literatures, of the eschatological war, and shows how this in turn deepens our understanding of the New Testament concept of temptation. Dr W. D. Davies arrives at the more cautious conclusion that the antithesis of flesh and spirit in St Paul 'is more in the main stream of the Old Testament and Rabbinic Judaism than in that of the sect'.

The Synoptic Gospels. Dr K. Schubert finds ideas and phrases in the Sermon on the Mount which are redolent of Essenism. He argues forcibly that our Lord may well have intended to define his position here towards the Essene sect and its doctrines, which he appears sometimes to accept, sometimes radically to oppose, and often to modify. Fr E. Vogt shows how Essene terminology confirms us in reading 'Peace among men of God's good pleasure' in the difficult verse of Luke 2, 14.

The Johannine Writings. Father R. E. Brown finds five main points of contact between the Qumrân Scrolls and St John's Gospel and Epistles, and shows that 'the basic difference between the two theologies is Christ' who leads the 'Sons of Light' precisely as the Divine and uncreated Word.

Communal Organization and Way of Life. Dr S. Johnson and Dr B.

Reicke compare the constitution and organization of the Essene community with that of the early Church as we find it in Acts. One is also particularly grateful to find Dr Kuhn's famous comparison between the Qumrân ritual meal and the Christian Last Supper included in this collection.

Connecting Links Between Qumrân and the Early Church. Dr W. H. Brownlee is especially helpful on John the Baptist here, and Dr Cullmann lucidly explains his well-known suggestion that the Hellenists whom we meet in Acts provide a further link with the Essene Sect.

Peripheral Questions. Fr J. A. Fitzmyer provides a clear and valuable comparison between the Covenanters and the heretical Christian sect of the Ebionites, and finally Dr N. N. Glatzer shows that the teaching of Rabbi Hillel may have been consciously formulated as a corrective to the extreme exclusivism of the Essenes.

Most of these articles are addressed to the initiated. They are intended to be read critically, and presuppose a certain familiarity with the subject. Some over-lapping in subject-matter, and some omissions (notably Hebrews and Apocalypse) are perhaps inevitable. The inconvenient arrangement of the notes at the back of the book tends to cause irritation and waste of time. But these are minor defects. Dr Stendahl has chosen most wisely. He has done New Testament scholars an immense service in assembling here some of the soundest and most fruitful suggestions which have been made during the ten years since the Scrolls were first discovered.

JOSEPH BOURKE, O.P.

THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE PHILOSOPHICAL WORKS OF ST THOMAS AQUINAS. By David Knowles. (Aquinas Paper No. 30. Blackfriars; 1s. 6d.)

Leaving aside the Thomists of the old school who go to their master's works as though to a universal provider of chapter and verse to meet any occasion, and noticing the newer schools of literary criticism which narrow them to the circumstances of their composition, this lecture by a distinguished historian, addressing himself to their historical significance, asks what they owed to the past and what, if anything, was original in them. His personal testimony may be cited. 'The more and the longer the history of the thirteenth century is studied, the more does the thought of St Thomas, even considered merely as a historical phenomenon, appear as something more than just one tree, even the biggest, in a row. Others, indeed, cannot be despised; they may even touch upon points that he omits and supplement or even correct him. But if one is looking for a complete system of thought in the Middle Ages, it is St Thomas or nothing.'