

One wonders whether the second volume of the Old Testament, containing the prophetic and poetical books of the Old Testament, will not perhaps call forth some interesting criticisms and so perhaps in return some equally interesting rejoinders. In that case the present volume has been issued too soon, but at the same time its appearance now is welcome.

Unless one happens to know the course of the history of the production of the Knox Bible, as outlined at the beginning of this review, or happens to have read these articles when they first came out, one is perhaps a little lost in this collection where the essays are undated and the immediate circumstances of writing not always instantly obvious from internal evidence. There is one personal detail that comes through almost every page and that is Mgr Knox's great love of the Holy Word of God and his joy in his task of translating it. This very impression for its own sake gives a special value to the book. On the first page he speaks of 'the ideas which have been simmering in my brain continuously these last three years; the ideas which, unless I am carefully controlled, I pour out freely in conversation. There is a great deal to be said about translating the Bible . . . and I am furiously interested in it'.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH, O.P.

INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT. Vol. 1. By Aage Bentzen. (G. E. C. Gads, Copenhagen, 1948: Geoffrey Cumberlege, O.U.P.: 25s.)

The author is Professor of Theology at the University of Copenhagen and published his book in Danish in 1941. He himself translated it into English and it has been printed and published in Denmark. The style is somewhat germanic, occasionally peculiar but always intelligible, and the general material, treatment, lay-out and typography are reminiscent of the older German 'Einleitungen'. The book is written with elaborate apparatus of scholarship and footnote documentation and is a mine of useful information. The thesis emerges at the outset in the course of an interesting study of the history of Old Testament criticism: the author is going to continue the line of 'Formgeschichte' inaugurated in 1906 by Hermann Gunkel, whose method is 'not analytical-critical "Introduction" but synthetical-creative "literary history"' (p. 14). This history of the literary forms, with its discernment of 'Gattungen' or categories of literature, together with an examination of their connection with life and worship among the various peoples of the ancient East, succeeded with Gunkel to the older scheme of the 'critical introduction', which reached its highest point in the work of Wellhausen (1878) and S. R. Driver (1891). The second part of Professor Bentzen's book consists of a methodical examination of the various forms. It is these pages that are the working out of the main thesis.

The first hundred pages, after the introductory 20-page history of criticism, are occupied with an orderly tabulation of the facts concerned with the determination of the Canon of the Old Testament, the Hebrew text, and the early versions, including in the latter section a noteworthy account of the recent (1941) theories about the LXX version propounded by Prof. Kahle. All these sections are packed with useful facts, dates, etc. Reference is however difficult since there is no index and the Danish printer uses no running heads to the pages. The contents-page, at the back, is however very analytical.

Of course the author is not a Catholic, and there seems to be a consistent exclusion of reference to Catholic work. The absence of an index makes it impossible to check this entirely, but the fact that 'RB' does not come into the list of abbreviations supports the impression received while reading and glancing at the footnotes. The aforementioned introduction obviously intends to arrive quickly at the point in history where the older criticism gives way to the new literary history, and the patristic and medieval periods are dismissed in half a page. But when we come to the contemporary scene we find this amusing paragraph: 'The whole world is working together now. Even Roman Catholic theology, which from the beginning of the twentieth century is so severely tied up through the institution of the Papal Bible Commission, is sharing in the discussion in spite of all restrictions and reservations.' These words bear out the impression that the professor has not troubled to consult Catholic authors, or even to see what Pius XII said in *Divino afflante Spiritu* (par. 39-40, C.T.S. ed.) in 1943 about the special importance of the line of study which in this book he is advocating. Sometimes the footnotes are to secondary sources, and the bibliographies are not all they might be. The section on the Vulgate, apart from the oddity of referring to St Jerome as 'the learned, and not very amiable, Father', has a weak passage on the history of the printed text, it being stated that the Clementine text of 1592 superseded the Sixtine of 1590 because of 'the Jesuits and their influence'—which hardly represents the scholarly labours of Cardinal Toletus.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH, O.P.

DRAW NEAR TO GOD. By D. H. Southgate. (Oxford University Press; 6s.)

The meditations set out in this book are suitable for all who wish to draw near to God by prayer. They are chosen with great taste and reflect the author's experience as a missionary. Thoughts are given for the greater feasts of the year and for all the needs and circumstances of the Christian life. The method suggested for the use of the meditations may at first sight appear elaborate but will be found in practice to be quite simple. The idea of joining with others, either in spirit or in actual fact, is very praiseworthy.

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