

the capital, where he stays during the years of the siege (588-586), until the big deportation of the latter year.

This arrangement involves in fact very few displacements of the text, though the principal one, of ch. 1. together with the migration-verses in ch. 3 being shifted to before ch. 34, attracts the reader's attention perhaps unduly.

The result is a very consistent impression of the prophet and his mission. It is good to know that P. Auvray has announced (on the last page of the present book) that he hopes to write a full-length commentary on Ezechiel, this being but a sketch of its contents. Such a commentary will fill an important lacuna in Catholic exegesis and one may hope that it will appear in the famous series *Etudes Bibliques* where it will rank with Condamin's Isaias and Jeremias and Van Hoonacker's Minor Prophets. It is also good to know that P. Auvray will be responsible for Ezechiel in the new French translation of the whole Bible which has just begun to appear.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH, O.P.

LE ROYAUME D'ISRAEL. By L. Cheminant (in the series *Témoins de Dieu*, No. 9). (Editions du Cerf; Blackfriars.)

The originality of this useful book lies in its presentation of the religious and political history of the Northern Kingdom (Israel or Samaria), from the schism of 933-2 until the deportation in 722, exclusively from the point of view of the Northern Kingdom itself. When we read the history of these 210 years in the Bible (from III Kings 12 to IV Kings 17—involving 28 chapters) we are all the time being given the parallel history of Juda at the same time. The kings are dated by the reigns in the other kingdom, and the fact that contemporary rulers in the two kingdoms on two occasions happen to have the same name (Joram in 847 and Joas in 805), that the name Ochozias occurs in both lists (though not contemporary), and that some other names are perilously similar, only adds to the confused knowledge of this history that exists in the minds of many of us. Furthermore, of the 28 chapters in question, no less than 10 are taken up with anecdotes from the lives of the prophets Elias and Eliseus, which are very familiar to us as anecdotes, but are rarely understood upon their historical background or viewed in the light of their political importance.

M. Cheminant, who is a seminary professor at Rennes, has in this book disentangled all this for us. The story is vividly and carefully told and makes fascinating reading. The character and ideals of the various rulers are studied and the forceful action of the two great prophets Elias and Eliseus receives due emphasis. It should further be remembered that the two earliest of the writing prophets, Amos and Osee also belonged to the Northern Kingdom, and that although Juda remained faithful all the time to the dynasty of David, no outstanding prophet appeared in her midst after the

schism until the advent of Isaias and Micheas during the last years of the Northern Kingdom, from the collapse of which they were able to draw such powerful lessons for their own people.

This book has already been found by the present writer to be most valuable for the preparation of classes on this period of Old Testament history.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH, O.P.

THE LITERATURE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. By G. F. Moore, revised by L. H. Brockington. (Cumberlege; Oxford University Press; 5s.)

This recent addition to the Home University series is a revision of a work first published in 1913. It treats the Old Testament writings from the point of view of their literary history and the development of their religious ideas rather than from that of the political history of Israel. Its aim is to present the results of the critical literary study of the Old Testament to the ordinary educated reader; and from the standpoint of the independent critic it has done so with great success. After introductory chapters on the Canon and on the Old Testament as a national literature, the Pentateuch is treated rather fully, as its importance deserves. Its main sources are dated from the ninth century (J) to the Persian period (P); the terms 'myth' and 'legend' are freely used of the older narratives; miracle is explained away. The other books or groups of books have each a chapter. To the Prophets there is a short general introduction. The whole of Daniel is assigned to the second century. (It is a pity the printers have misplaced a line on page 167). Jonah is put with Esther and Ruth among the 'Story Books'. The Wisdom Writers also have a special introduction by the reviser of this edition. There is a rather limited bibliography and a sufficient index. Since the book is clearly written and most readable, it is likely to be widely read by the ordinary public; and its conclusions and still more its assumptions, will probably be accepted as those of Biblical literary criticism in general. Although, in an early chapter, Church authority, the consent of tradition and the witness of the New Testament to the Old are mentioned as of weight with many Christians, yet in the body of the book these factors are ignored. To Catholics, therefore, many of its conclusions will be suspect, as neglecting essential elements in the Biblical problem. But this work is no doubt representative of the bulk of more or less popular writing on the Holy Scriptures in English. Catholic writers have still the task of capturing popular opinion in this as in other fields; there is no need for them to let the case for their own more traditional but equally critical presentation go by default.

DOM J. HIGGENS.

HOW TO READ THE BIBLE. By Edgar J. Goodspeed. (Cumberlege, Oxford University Press; 7s. 6d.)

This book was published in America in 1946 and the author is