

remotely connected with the Qumran discoveries is presented here in clear and well-chosen photographs: the country with its monuments and shrines, the archeological sites and objects, the scrolls themselves, and above all the personalities involved in the discovery. Dr Allegro has taken full advantage of his unique opportunities, and his choice of material is shrewdly geared to the popular taste. A very brief description of the sect is provided, in a somewhat dramatic style, together with well-rendered extracts from the Thanksgiving scroll. Dr Allegro's assessment of the relationship between Qumran and Christianity is far more acceptable than in his earlier writings on the subject, but it still seems misleading to suggest that 'Jesus affirmed that he was the object of their (the Sectarrians') search' (p. 50). The book is beautifully produced.

J.B.

LES PSAUMES COMMENTÉS PAR LA BIBLE I-II. By Pierre Guichou. (Editions du Cerf.)

REFLECTIONS ON THE PSALMS. By C. S. Lewis. (Bles; 12s. 6d.)

Most of us have heard of the zealous seminarian who strove to deepen his learning on the psalms in order to nourish his piety. He wrestled long and hard with abstruse commentaries, only to find at the end of his studies that he was unable to regard the psalms as prayers at all; they had become for him mere objects of scientific investigation. Here, if anywhere, is a work designed to give the lie to this mischievous moral tale, for Père Guichou achieves exactly that harmonious synthesis between technical competence and spirituality for which anyone seriously engaged in praying the psalter longs. The small size and cheapness of the two volumes has been achieved by omitting the actual text of the psalms, a procedure which the reviewer warmly commends, since it places the volumes within the scope of the private buyer's purse. The competence and uniformly good quality of the notes has been achieved by adequate consultation of recent commentaries, but far more by prolonged and penetrating study of the text of scripture.

'This commentary', the author explains, 'seeks only to determine the value of each psalm as a prayer, first in the mouth of the psalmist and of the Jewish people, then on the lips of Christ and of ourselves. . . .' In the notes, therefore, each psalm of the hundred treated of is given two, three or four successive applications. First the literal sense is briefly explained, and then it is shown how the given psalm becomes, what its divine author meant it to be from the first, the most perfect possible expression of Christ's filial devotion on earth, of the Church's after him, and of the individual Christian's in him, the most perfect possible response, therefore, to the loving fatherhood of God. The

author has too much reverence to rely merely on his own words in explaining the basic attitudes of this filial reverence, and as far as possible uses the words of scripture. Thus a considerable portion of the commentary consists, as the title suggests, of judiciously selected quotations chiefly from the New Testament, showing the Christological application of the individual psalm.

There is space, perhaps, for just one example of Père Guichou's method. Ps. xxvi, 2, runs:

'Examine me, Yahweh, probe into me,
Put my kidneys and my heart to the test of fire.'

The comment in the literal section is: 'God from whom nothing is hidden can examine him, test his conscience (his kidneys and his heart) by fire. He will see that the psalmist meditates ceaselessly on the love of God, always acts the truth, always observes the true rule of life laid down by God.' In the Christological section Père Guichou comments: 'It is because the Father finds his Son holy, innocent and immaculate (Heb. vii, 26) that he takes perfect pleasure in him. "Thou art my beloved Son in whom I am well-pleased" (Luke iii, 22). Christ never ceases to think of the love of his Father, or to act the truth.' And in the 'ecclesiological' section: 'Having put off sinful man, and being clad in the New Man, Christ who becomes all in us (Col. iii, 9-11) we participate in his holiness and his irreproachable innocence before God, being purified from all injustice.' 'There is no more condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus' (Rom. viii, 1; i Jn., i, 9).

Thus a sort of Christian 'midrash' on each psalm is woven, chiefly out of New Testament texts.

If one might venture a suggestion it would be that the author might have taken more advantage of recent work done on the 'categories' of the psalms, notably by Gunkel and Mowinckel. Even if their approach has here and there to be modified, it is of the utmost importance for our understanding of the literal sense, that we should strive to recapture the *Sitz-im-Leben* of the psalms, and determine the underlying attitude of the Laments, Hymns, 'Enthronement psalms', etc. This work would have been improved if the author had included in his introduction a brief explanation of the attitudes of Hebrew prayer underlying these types of psalm.

Dr C. S. Lewis's approach is quite different. On the grounds that 'the fellow-pupil can help more than the master because he knows less' (p. 1) and is aware of difficulties which the expert has long since forgotten, Dr Lewis explains: 'In this book I write as one amateur to another, talking about difficulties I have met, or lights I have gained, when reading the Psalms, with the hope that this might at any rate interest, and sometimes even help, other inexpert readers' (p. 2). The

author indicates many enlightening applications of the Psalms to contemporary society, and has a number of wise and helpful solutions to suggest to the sort of difficulties that occur to all of us (cursing in the Psalms, 'self-righteousness', avoiding the evil-doer, etc.). He is perhaps at his most rewarding when he explains what the psalms have meant to him in terms of contemplation and reference to Christ ('second meanings', p. 99 ff).

It must be said, however, that in this book Dr Lewis sits very loose to his subject, and for whole pages at a time one feels that what he is saying, though always said beautifully and worth hearing, has only the most tenuous connection with the psalms. Thus on pp. 14-15 he enlarges eloquently on dishonest tax-collectors and other petty officials of the modern state. It is all sound trenchant stuff that does one's heart good, but does it really deepen our knowledge of the psalms, or increase our ability to pray them? Moreover, the distinction between expert and amateur need not really, one feels, be quite so sharply defined. No one wants the Psalms, or the Bible generally, to be a preserve for 'experts', but even non-experts can acquire, with relatively little trouble nowadays, an adequate working knowledge of the Semite's world and the Semite's thought-processes. In default of this Dr Lewis's treatment is occasionally misleading. For example he seems insufficiently aware that 'Judgment' for an Israelite meant an act of God far vaster in its scope, far more elemental in its effect, than a mere process at law, while the term 'righteous' in our English versions really amounts to a translator's apology for failing utterly to render what is, in fact, one of the richest of semitic concepts. A little more technical equipment could have been engaged, one feels, without impairing the refreshing sympathy of the author's approach.

JOSEPH BOURKE, O.P.

PROPHET AND WITNESS IN JERUSALEM. A STUDY OF THE TEACHING OF SAINT LUKE. By Adrian Hastings. (Longmans, 16s. od.)

After reading this book, one is left with a somewhat confused impression. It is intended for all those who are seriously interested in the New Testament' (preface), but the material offered seems to be too much for the non-professional reader, and to skip over many subjects which interest the scholar. The 'refutation' of F. Benoit's article on the first chapters of St Luke's Gospel (pp. 21-22) is strikingly superficial. By touching upon innumerable topics of theology and exegesis of the Old and New Testament—such as the synoptic problem (p. 18 f.), Jerusalem in the Bible (p. 177), prophetism (p. 51), and many others—the author hardly finds time for a painstaking investigation of the handling of traditional material by Luke, so as to set forth Luke's particular contribution to the Gospel-preaching.