

theology. . . . As a general rule, the teaching given in seminaries so puts off theological students that very few priests, even among the young intellectuals, ever again open a book on theology.' For the layman, this helps explain the reason why most priests seem so uninterested in one aspect of their vocation; smallness of the sales of *THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT* amongst the clergy of Britain show that this lack of interest in theology is not confined to France.

The anonymous translator has done his or her work skilfully and the book is well produced; I hope Sheed and Ward will soon bring out a cheap edition. The timid will be reassured to know that *From Karl Marx to Jesus Christ* has the *imprimatur*.

E. M. G. BELFIELD

NEW TESTAMENT INTRODUCTION. By Alfred Wikenhauser. Translated by Joseph Cunningham. (Thomas Nelson and Sons; 50s.)

Since its first appearance in 1953, Dr Wikenhauser's *Einleitung in das Neue Testament* has been generally acknowledged as far the best Catholic introduction to the new testament available in any language. This English version is based on the second revised and enlarged edition which was published in 1956. The author conceives of new testament introduction as comprising the following topics:

1. The circumstances in which each book was composed (author, destination, time and place of composition, occasion and purpose, literary form, sources, integrity), that is, the questions which conventionally are dealt with in literary history.

2. How these books came to be collected, i.e. history of the canon (strictly speaking a part of history of dogma).

3. The transmission of the text of these books both in the original texts and in versions, i.e. history of the text.' (p. 2).

The history of the canon is traced most carefully and fully from the earliest sources of revelation in Christianity to the final fixing of the canon in the Latin Church c. A.D. 400. The author treats of the history of the text at particular length because, as he explains, ' . . . the finds of papyri and modern textual studies have led to great advances in recent years' (p. xviii). He gives due weight to the contention urged by Fr Boismard to the effect that ' . . . in addition to the textual tradition of our mss. there is, or to be more accurate there was another tradition before it, namely the text tradition of the Fathers; this tradition is found over the whole of the ancient Church, but is seldom or never attested by the mss. or versions' (p. 140-141).

In the special introductions the author has been at pains to provide first a penetrating and concise analysis of the content and literary structure of each book. He then records the tradition of the ancient Church concerning it, and assesses its literary and theological charac-

teristics, its purpose, the readers to whom it was addressed, the place and time of composition, and any special problems connected with it. The author provides a characteristically lucid discussion of the synoptic problem, but refuses to adopt the position widely held by contemporary Catholic scholars, by which the relevant material is classified under the respective headings of 'triple tradition' (all three synoptics deriving from a fourth and earlier gospel tradition not only the content common to all three, but also the common 'five-booklet' structure, traces of which have survived even in Mark), and 'double tradition', accounting for the material common to Matthew and Luke. Instead the author adheres to the more conservative position associated with Lagrange. Greek Matthew and Luke have both *independently* drawn upon Mark, while for the material which they hold in common, they have used a Greek translation of an Aramaic *Logia*-source, which could well be the Aramaic Matthew spoken of by Papias, and which probably should be identified with 'Q' of the classical 'two-source' theory. While disagreeing with Dr Wikenhauser's conclusions on this point (particularly in his rejection of Vaganay), the reviewer can at the same time admire the competence and clarity with which the arguments are marshalled.

In the case of the Pauline epistles, the problems of authenticity are fully and candidly discussed, and none of the difficulties are shirked. Here perhaps the author does not always advert sufficiently to the possibility that uncharacteristic elements (in Thessalonians and Ephesians for example) may be due to the influence of earlier kerygmic and catechetical traditions on the mind of St Paul himself, rather than to later redactional activity on the part of his disciples. On the authenticity of II Thessalonians he concludes that '... if we accept the authenticity of II Thessalonians unsolved difficulties remain, but these cannot rule out Pauline authorship' (p. 372). In comparing Ephesians with Colossians he remarks that 'The language, style and theology of the two epistles show many divergencies, so we cannot rule out the possibility that he commissioned a disciple to write Ephesians according to his instructions and ideas' (p. 430). He sums up a masterly survey of the problems raised by the pastoral epistles by affirming that 'If the pastoral epistles are authentic, they can only have been written ... after the two-year imprisonment in Rome, Acts xxviii, 30' (p. 452), but this he regards as perfectly possible.

Among many other excellent features of this book, we may notice in particular three outstanding characteristics. The first is an absolute mastery of the whole subject in all its complex ramifications. A supreme example of this is the section dealing with the text and versions (pp. 62-149). It would be difficult to imagine a finer treatment of this complicated branch of new testament study. The second characteristic

is the scrupulous fairness with which the author presents all the arguments on a given problem, even those with which he himself disagrees. Only after he has stated fully and lucidly all the aspects of the problem, and all the important opinions, will he permit himself to indicate what seems to him the likeliest solution. Even then he often seems to be inviting the reader to judge for himself. The description of Bultmann's theory of the Gnostic 'saviour-myth' (pp. 312-313) as an influence on John is a notable instance of this absolute fairness. The third characteristic is the author's consistently positive and constructive approach to contemporary non-Catholic new testament study, which contrasts most favourably with the excessively cautious and traditionalist attitude of too many of the earlier Catholic manuals. Dr Wikenhauser never fails to accord due weight to the value of tradition, but he does show at the same time how much of positive value is to be derived from contemporary non-Catholic sources. Here we would select as an example the treatment of form-criticism (pp. 254-277), widely regarded even by non-Catholic opinion, as one of the finest short presentations of the subject ever given.

The translation gives the impression of being generally competent and careful, though the English is often somewhat clumsy.

Representing as it does the wisdom of one of the very greatest of contemporary new testament scholars, distilled from many years of teaching experience, this volume deserves, as a matter of bare justice, to be recognized as a work of monumental importance. Its translation into English must accordingly rank as a major event in the history of Catholic new testament study in English-speaking countries.

JOSEPH BOURKE, O.P.

**CHILDREN'S BIBLE.** Text by W. Hillmann, O.F.M.; illustrations by Johannes Gruger; translation by Lawrence Atkinson. (Printed in Germany for Helicon Press, Baltimore; in the U.K., Burns Oates; 10s. 6d.)

**CHILDREN AND PRIEST AT MASS.** By Hubert McEvoy, S.J.; photographs by Anthony Powell, S.J. (Oliver and Boyd; 5s.)

Parents who wish to encourage their children's leisure reading are often faced with a problem: where are they to find really good religious books, intelligently written, aesthetically pleasing, free from sentimentality, and inexpensive? Here are two which can be warmly recommended for children between seven and ten.

*Children's Bible* has at least one picture on each of its ninety pages, and most of them are in colour. It would be difficult to praise them too highly: the artist has a clear and vigorous style, and his delightful pictures show a genuine religious imagination at work. The events