

is endless discussion of eroticism, but little of love in the sense of a gradual, reverent, gay and painful discovery of another personality and fusion with it.

One senses also a sort of hatred of maternity: and here we come closer to the book's essential weakness. The differences between man and woman, in the author's view, are due to their different 'situations': change that, give women the same education as men, the same social, economic, political status, and they will be wholly equal. But, since human beings are psycho-physical beings, it is not unreasonable to suppose *a priori* that to the undeniable physiological differentiations there must correspond equally marked psychological differentiations; while *a posteriori* we are entitled to argue from the fact (and if the author had been more fully acquainted with the Anglo-Saxon countries she might have weighed it more carefully) of the emergence of the twentieth-century virago—not of course the woman whose individual vocation it is, because of her psychological predispositions, to adopt a 'male' career and be successful and happy in it, but the new matriarch-type, strident, domineering, hard as nails, repellent to men and women alike, unhappy because *dénaturée*. Marriage should be free, a meeting of equals, yes of course; but of equals in stature and dignity, not of indistinguishables. Girls should have, not the same education as boys, but as good an education as boys. Women and men have the same right to 'transcendence', to creative work, yes; but if teaching is a creative work, by what right does the author deny the same value to motherhood, which includes teaching among its many glories and responsibilities?

But the harmfulness of the book goes deeper than that; for in Mme de Beauvoir's view, to achieve something means always to be *doing* something, making fresh conquests; whereas the primary achievement is on the contrary to *become* something, to be contemplative. And, as she points out, women tend to find this easier than men. It is particularly tragic that, at a moment in history when activism and its fruits are bidding fair to destroy us altogether, and when therefore we need the wisdom of woman and its influence as never before, a book such as this should try to lead woman away from her own destiny—for the achieving of which in its fullness there is still so much to be done—and to urge her instead to assume a travesty of the qualities, and therefore no doubt the follies, of men.

GERALD VANN, O.P.

LES PSAUMES. Traduits par R. Tournay, O.P., avec la collaboration de R. Schwab. Bible de Jérusalem. (Editions du Cerf.)

Anyone who reads or prays the psalms as much as the Catholic should will find this neat little translation and introduction most useful. As in preceding volumes of this series, the translation is from the original, and is of a high order of scholarship and style. The introduction is fuller than

in most previous volumes. This is not surprising in view of the many problems of criticism and interpretation which have been raised by the study of the psalter. Though inevitably some of these questions are specialised, there remain plenty which must concern every educated Catholic who wishes to pray the Church's liturgy with understanding and appreciation.

A few of these questions, in non-technical language, would be the following. How did the psalms come to be the official liturgical prayers of the Jews, and why were they so enthusiastically adopted by the Christian Church? Were they written in the first place for use in worship, or afterwards adapted for this purpose? Are they all one literary type, or does the word 'psalm' conceal a variety of literary forms?

To my mind, one of the most valuable features of the helps provided is the appendix list of psalms, classified according to type. Thus, *hymns* differ from *prayers*, *doctrinal poetry* and *prophetic eschatology*. *Hymns* again are of a number of different types; *prayers* may be *collective* or *individual*, or *prayers of supplication*, *confidence* or *thanksgiving*. The reader will realise the rich variety when he sees that there are nearly fifty subdivisions of this list.

Not less interesting to the modern Catholic are the questions of the messianic and theological meaning of the psalms. How many psalms are directly messianic? What is the justification for regarding others as indirectly messianic? Did the psalmist succeed in transcending the theological limitations of his time? How is it that the psalmists often betray an appreciation of the supreme value of spiritual union with God, if their view of divine rewards and punishments is confined to the usual Old Testament notion of purely this-worldly sanctions? How did they succeed in combining a pure and elevated view of God's almighty wisdom and holiness with a warm trust in his loving and faithful fatherliness towards man?

Such are the questions adequately and critically discussed in the seventy-page introduction, with exact references to chapter and verse of the psalter and other appropriate books of the Scriptures.

The French translation, together with the very brief select footnotes, will, I venture to think, be of great value even to English readers, in helping them to understand the true meaning of the Latin, especially the new, psalter. Like other volumes of the series, it is excellently produced on good paper.

H. FRANCIS DAVIS

A NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY FOR ENGLISH READERS. By R. A. KNOX. (Burns Oates; 18s.)

In the preface to this book, the author's aim is stated in the following terms: 'The object of this commentary is to examine briefly and candidly such difficulties as present themselves to the mind of the ordinary reader.'