

THE HOLY BIBLE, REVISED STANDARD VERSION, CATHOLIC EDITION, *Catholic Truth Society, London, 1967. Paperback 8s. 6d.*

At the end of April 1967 there was published what the advertisements have called 'The cheapest complete [= including the Apocrypha] Bible in the world'. This is a just claim for 'The CTS Paperback Bible', and the CTS are to be congratulated. Inside the stout paper covers, apart from the CTS imprint on the title page, publishing details on its reverse, an initial fly-leaf and a reset fly-leaf to the OT, the printing of the text is exactly identical with that of the cloth-bound RSV Catholic Edition published by Nelson on 17 May 1966 at 25s. In fact the print here seems rather firmer than in (my copy of) the cloth-bound issue. The paperback is stated to be 'published by Thomas Nelson . . . for the Incorporated Catholic Truth Society . . . printed . . . by Cox & Wyman . . .'. The CTS Douay Bible of 1956 is completely sold out, and this edition has taken its place. It will be remembered that the Catholic RSV has a handful of authorized alterations from the standard (Protestant) text

of the NT, but none at all in the OT. This means that it provides in practice a 'common Bible' for all Christians, and the Catholic edition has the advantage (useful also for non-Catholics) of the inclusion of the apocryphal books in their 'deutero-canonical places', with for instance the insertion of the 'Additions to Esther' in their logical places as in the Septuagint, distinguished from the Hebrew sections by the use of italic type, and not gathered illogically at the end of the book as in the Vulgate. The Catholic RSV was the first Bible in English to adopt this plan. The RSV is on the whole a reliable translation and provides a useful working text; it has also been approved for use in the liturgy. The CTS have therefore performed a great service to the English-speaking world by issuing this text at so modest a price, and it is good to know that the initial sales exceeded 40,000 copies.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH, O.P.

A GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING THE BIBLE: VOL. I—FROM GENESIS TO I SAMUEL, by Eleonore Beck and Gabriele Miller. *Geoffrey Chapman. 50s.*

For many years we have been accustomed to look to Germany for the more epoch-making works of Old Testament scholarship, while works of *haute vulgarisation* came mainly from France and Belgium. In 1964 Germany, too, entered the field of popularization with, typically perhaps, a full-scale multi-volume work covering the entire Bible. This was the *Handbuch zur Auswahlbibel Reich Gottes*, a companion to an abbreviated and simplified Bible for schools which is also appearing (in the RSV text) from the same publishers. The first volume, *Biblische Unterweisung*, is now available in an English translation by Michael Barry.

The professed aim of the series is to make all the fruits of modern philology, archeology, exegesis and historical studies on the Bible available to the general reader (and particularly the teacher) in an easily digestible form.

Considering the complexity of modern Pentateuchal studies, this is indeed a formidable task, but the two authoresses have set about their labour with commendable thoroughness and precision, while disarmingly pointing out the tentative nature of the result.

Five chapters, covering Genesis I to the establishment of the monarchy, are subdivided into sixty-four episodes, each consisting of short sections on (1) theological content, (2) background and vocabulary of the biblical text, (3) catechetical suggestions for work in class, (4) a simplified and schematic theology, leading to (5) prayer and ending with (6) suggestions for exercises and further reading. Additional notes interspersed through the book deal with various cultic matters and provide useful excerpts, not easily available elsewhere, from non-biblical literature. For the latter, the translator has