

BOOK REVIEWS

Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, translated by R. B. Y. Scott. Volume 18 in The Anchor Bible. Doubleday and Company, Garden City, N.Y., 1965, \$6.00.

The Anchor Bible is a new series of commentaries which will be widely used and appreciated by translators. While the general editorship is provided by Professors W. F. Albright and D. N. Freedman, each author is given complete freedom in the way in which he approaches a given book and the theory of translation which he adopts. Furthermore, some three dozen translators are chosen for their competence, whether Protestant, Catholic, or Jewish. The entire series will cover the whole Bible and will include 38 volumes.

Professor Scott does an admirable job of relating these two books to the Wisdom literature of the Israelite world (e.g. Job, Sirach, Wisdom of Solomon, Tobit, 1 Esdras and Baruch), and to the non-Israelite Near Eastern world (e.g. ancient Egyptian collections such as the Instruction of Amenemope, Instruction for King Merikare, and the recently published Instruction of 'Onchsheshanqy, as well as other Sumerian and Babylonian literature). He also provides a good introduction to the book, including a neat classification of the various types of Proverbs which will be of interest to students and translators.

The format of the series is a bit different from such standard works as the Macmillan Commentaries or the International Critical Commentaries. The author provides a section-by-section translation of each book, and supplies textual footnotes in English transliteration to show where he has departed from the Masoretic Text of the Hebrew Bible. At the end of each section he provides extensive translational and exegetical 'Notes'.

Translators will find this volume of special value since the translator 'has attempted to convey to the reader the sense and feeling and movement of the original in a way that more formal and more literal renderings often fail to do'. In the translation, full use is made of the Septuagint, ancient Near Eastern parallels, and of course Biblical parallels.

Many of the notes give literal renderings so that the translator may realize the extent to which accommodation to English must be made from the Hebrew text. For example, Prov. 7: 9, 'In the dusk when evening was coming on' renders the Hebrew 'at the sleep of night and darkness'. 7: 23 has 'till an arrow pierces the heart', which of course is the equivalent of the Hebrew 'liver'. 'Sons of men' is translated as 'the human race', 8: 4; 'rainbow' is the rather forceful but idiomatic equivalent of 'empty things' in 12: 11. Ecc. 2: 8 'pleasure of the flesh' renders the literal 'delights of the sons of mankind', and 'during my lifetime' renders the literal 'under the sun'.

These samples will help the translator realize the freshness and vigor of the translation and though the notes are not exhaustive, the user will find them adequate and indispensable.

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