

widely-known series of editions produced by Nestle and now continued by Aland, and finally the 1958 edition produced by the B.F.B.S. and jointly edited by Erwin Nestle and Professor Kilpatrick.

Part Three deals in four chapters with 'The Application of Textual Criticism to the Text of the New Testament', with first a brief historical account of the origins of textual criticism as a scholarly discipline; then a fuller account of the main phases of the development of textual criticism as a science, with their bearing on the production of so-called 'scientific' texts. It is in the final two chapters, however, that the translator will find himself most at home with the subject matter. For here, with admirable clarity and adequate illustration, are set forth those manifold causes of error in the transmission of the New Testament text which, to this day, continue to be the bugbear of all who toil long hours with Bible manuscript or type-script. They are succinctly classified as errors arising from faulty eyesight and from faulty hearing, errors of the mind, and errors of judgement. There follows another section which deals with changes involving spelling and grammar, harmonistic corruptions, conflation of readings, doctrinal considerations, etc. All of these are matters which keep the manuscript examiners of the Bible Societies endlessly busy in their tireless task of correction, in all the innumerable languages in which modern versions are being prepared.

The final chapter sets forth the basic criteria for the evaluation of variant readings, and the book concludes with a selection of illustrative analyses of certain passages to show how these criteria are applied in the quest for the most probable readings.

The book is furnished with an Appendix in which the papyri of the New Testament are fully listed, with information about their source, origin, date and present location. This is followed by a useful bibliography, a general index, an index of New Testament passages, and an admirable series of plates.

Published by the Oxford University Press, the print and format are all that could be desired. It would perhaps seem churlish to draw attention to an odd printer's error on p. 103, where the author's word 'eclectic' appears mysteriously as 'electric'. But even this is not out of place in a book dealing so competently with variant readings!

This is not only an important book for those who have a professional interest in the subject; it is a book which will give pleasure to all who take an intelligent interest in the text of the Greek New Testament. Translators may find themselves in both these groups—and all of them will agree that Dr Metzger has enriched their libraries in no small way.

WILFRED J. BRADNOCK

The Pelican Gospel Commentaries: St Matthew, by J. C. Fenton, pp. 487, 7s. 6d.; **St Mark**, by D. E. Nineham, pp. 477, 7s. 6d.; **St Luke**, by G. B. Caird, pp. 271, 6s. 0d. (Penguin Books, London, 1964.)

Penguin Books are doing an excellent piece of Christian propaganda by publishing this series, based on the text of the Revised Standard Version. Many people, on grounds of price, habit and general availability, will buy

a paperback whereas they would not look at the usual type of commentary. Moreover, the volumes are intended for the 'ordinary' reader (if there is such a person). They are written by recognized scholars, with academic treatment throughout, and need close attention in reading—they are Pelicans, not Penguins—but there is nothing too technical for the untrained reader to follow. This review, however, will look at them primarily from the viewpoint of the New Testament translator.

Unquestionably he or she will get most out of Dr Nineham's *Mark*. As the number of pages shows, the treatment is full, and in sampling both general exposition and detailed comment I have not found any place where Dr Nineham fails to give the reader the kind of material he wants. That is not to say that one always agrees with him, but the facts and explanations are always there, adequately presented. The translator will get considerable help by keeping it beside him, along with major commentaries such as Vincent Taylor's, on which Dr Nineham repeatedly draws.

Dr Caird's *Luke* is much more breezy and brief. The scholarship is equally evident, but you get it in passing. It is the liveliest and easiest of the three to read, and should be enjoyed by all those who want the spirit of the Gospel without too much detail. It is therefore probably not such a useful translator's companion, but it is a very refreshing piece of intelligent Christian writing.

By comparison, Mr Fenton's *Matthew* is a disappointment. Somehow it seems to be exceedingly hard to write a good commentary on Matthew. Probably in order to save space, the writer has referred his readers in many places to Nineham's *Mark*. One sympathizes, but cannot assume that every reader will have the other book, and the result is that, for this reason and perhaps others, there are a great many things which the reader will look for and fail to find. Mr Fenton is better on detail than on the weightier matters. His indices are perhaps the clearest indication of this. He has thirty pages of them, as compared with Nineham's seventeen (about right) and Caird's seven (of which five are references—too few). But whereas Nineham subdivides his major words into themes, in Fenton there are simply lists of numbers with no further guide. For example, the word 'Church' has sixty references, but most of them refer to passing uses of the word in quite a general sense. The two uses of the word in the Gospel are not picked out, and even when one finds them, they are only briefly treated. The same applies to major themes such as 'Kingdom of Heaven', 'Son of Man', 'Parable' and 'Temptation'. Nor have I found adequate explanation of terms such as 'Pharisee' or 'Sadducee'. I doubt if they are there, but if they are, the index has not helped me. The translator will, of course, find useful information in many places, but I wish I could recommend something better.

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