

prefers to call it, the parable of the Father's Love, one finds a clear presentation of the historical situation to which the parable was addressed. The Synoptic source involved is indicated, and the non-allegorical character of the parable is made evident. The fact that the parable ends without an application is shown to be significant, and the main purpose of the parable in the vindication of the proclamation of the Gospel to the despised and the outcast is demonstrated. That the parable is not to be understood allegorically may be seen in the statement of the Prodigal, 'I have sinned against heaven (i.e. God) and against thee'. The legal situation of the day which made it possible for the Prodigal to receive his inheritance is clearly explained on the basis of Rabbinic materials.

The statement that the Prodigal 'gathered all together' is shown to mean that he turned all the property into cash. The unexpected change of subject in verse 15 is explained as a Semitism. The problems raised by verse 16 are answered by the suggestion that the text should be translated, 'And he would have been only too glad to fill his belly with the carob-beans with which the swine were fed (but he was too disgusted to do so), and no one gave him (anything to eat)'.

That the Prodigal 'came back to himself' is shown to be a Semitic way of expressing his repentance, and 'rising, I will go' is the equivalent of 'I will go at once'. There are also significant details which help in understanding the actions of the father in welcoming the Prodigal home. Furthermore, the book points out the integral relationship between the two parts of the parable and shows how the action of the elder brother is to be interpreted in the historical setting. In addition to all of these and other details of exegesis, the author provides us with a clear over-all picture and helps to generate within us that sympathetic identification which is so necessary for good translation.

This book ought to be studied carefully and left in a handy place on the translator's desk. It will certainly be one of the first books for which he reaches when his task brings him to one of the parables.

HEBER F. PEACOCK

Invitation to the New Testament, A Guide to its Main Witnesses, by W. D. Davies, Darton, Longman and Todd, Ltd., 540 pages; 50s.

Professor Davies has written a non-technical guide to the Gospels and to Paul which has been stimulated by his teenage daughter's criticisms and questions. She must have a very acute mind, and a considerable amount of perseverance if she has read all the 540 pages.

The going, however, would have been far from heavy. The usual 'introduction' material is attractively and straightforwardly presented, from a good, middle-of-the-road point of view which this reviewer finds much to his mind. Quotations are helpfully given in full. References to the world of New Testament times are interesting and relevant. Modern parallels and poetical quotations are always illuminating. Striking phrases remain with one, such as 'Paul's theology . . . wrought . . . in the maelstrom of a missionary life' (pp. 233-4).

Translators would find the book stimulating background. Its treatment of key-words such as 'Son of Man', 'flesh', 'justification', would have been more accessible if there had been a subject index. The notes are at the end of the book, not at the bottom of the page. There is something to be said on both sides, but it is tantalising to see an interesting note and then have to search for its page reference without any help.

Granted time and money, however, any reader will find a great deal to reward him both in the scholarship of this book and in its truly Christian spirit.

HAROLD K. MOULTON

Gott Spricht viele Sprachen, Eugene A. Nida, (a translation into German of *God's Word in Man's Language* by Karl-Heinz Kemner). 1966. (Evang. Missionsverlag) 208 Seiten, 8 Bildseiten, Taschenbuch DM 5,80.

Der Evangelische Missionsverlag hat durch die Herausgabe dieses Buches —eine Übersetzung von 'God's Word in Man's Language'—eine Lücke geschlossen, die im deutschsprachigen Raum besonders fühlbar war. Bedingt durch eine starke Opposition gegen alle Missionsarbeit in der Hitlerzeit und die praktisch missionslosen Kriegs- und Nachkriegsjahre, hatte sich das allgemeine Interesse fast ausschliesslich innerdeutschen Fragen zugewandt. In den letzten zehn Jahren hat sich eine starke Missionsliteratur entwickelt, aber der ganze Sektor der Bibelübersetzung wird darin kaum angesprochen. Einen besseren Start als mit Dr Nida's Buch kann man sich bestimmt nicht wünschen. Denn hier spricht ein Mann aus langjähriger kompetenter Erfahrung im Umgang mit Übersetzern und Übersetzungen, mit glücklichen Lösungen schwieriger Probleme und erheiternden oder auch gefährlichen Fehlern. Der Text selbst ist gut übersetzt, so dass von der Spannung des Originals nichts verloren geht. Durch ein Bibelstellenverzeichnis, eine Liste der erwähnten Sprachen und ein Sachregister wird das Buch ausserdem zu einer zugänglichen Fundgrube für wertvolle Beispiele, auf die jeder angewiesen ist, der predigen oder unterrichten will. Einige Bilder runden das ganze ab.

Wie hoch die Bedeutung dieser Veröffentlichung eingeschätzt wird, mag daraus hervorgehen, dass der Ratsvorsitzende der Evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland, Bischof Scharf, das Buch mit einem Geleitwort versehen hat. Die deutschsprachigen Leser werden von der Erweiterung ihres Horizontes bis hin zu den entfernten Völkern und ihren Sprachen selbst den grössten Gewinn haben. Auf der anderen Seite würde der erweiterte Blick auch die Hände öffnen, durch Übersetzung und Druck der Bibel diesen Völkern entscheidende Entwicklungshilfe zu geben. Deshalb wünschen wir dem Buch allerweiteste Verbreitung und Eingang in viele Häuser und Herzen.

RUDOLF KASSÜHLKE

Leviticus and Numbers, edited by N. H. Snaith, The Century Bible, New Edition. London: Nelson, 1967, pp. 352; 50s. 0d.

This volume is the first in a new series of commentaries based on the R.S.V., the general editors of the series being H. H. Rowley (O.T.) and