

and 'Tribal Languages in Assam, North East India and East Pakistan'. These are far from being the most important languages in the book, but they include the languages of many of the most vigorous and growing churches, especially in the hills of Assam and Nagaland, and a great deal of translation work has gone on in many of them since the war. They have compelled the added treatment that Mr Culshaw has rightly given them. He has a similar chapter on 'Tribal Languages of the Central Belt', and, in passing, one notes his restraint in retaining Hooper's Santali section unaltered and simply brought up to date—a tribute to both men!

Useful appendices giving lists of languages and the dates of their first publication complete the book, together with a satisfactory index and an excellent language map. We shall long be grateful to Mr Culshaw for this careful, thorough and interesting work. When, like its predecessor, it becomes out of date, its new reviser will have similarly firm foundations on which to build.

H. K. MOULTON

Four Prophets, by J. B. Phillips. London: Bles, 1963, pp. 161; 15s.

Those who have used J. B. Phillips's translation of the New Testament—a description which must apply to most readers of *The Bible Translator*—will welcome this, his latest achievement in the field of translation.

The four prophets whom he has chosen as what one hopes will be but the first instalment of his translation of the Old Testament, are Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Micah. Of all but Isaiah, the text is complete, but since Mr Phillips seeks to present the message of the eighth century prophets, he has translated the first 35 chapters only of Isaiah. The division of the book at this point seems somewhat arbitrary, since it involves the omission of some passages which reflect Isaiah's characteristic emphasis on faith, for no better reason than that the omitted section is duplicated in 2 Kings. If these chapters are to be omitted, what of chapters 34 and 35?

The result of Mr Phillips's new experiment is a very readable translation, clearly set out in poetic form where the parallelism demands such treatment. While verse numbering is retained in the margin for easy reference, the text is set out in sections divided from one another according to the sense, and provided with appropriate headings. Where there are problems to be faced arising from a faulty text, Mr Phillips does his utmost to ensure intelligibility. This often involves taking liberties with the received text, and there is seldom any indication when emendations have been made. Very occasionally a footnote comments on textual problems, but the insertion of a note at Isa. 28: 13, and almost nowhere else, saying, 'The manuscript evidence for this part of the verse is uncertain', seems very arbitrary. The translation is intended to be read, not to be used as a literal rendering of the underlying Hebrew. In fact, the whole book is an excellent example of what can be done when a translator is at liberty to depart from the traditional text whenever he is convinced that the original writer produced a different text from what we now have.

Thus it will be seen that although this book gives translators the 'feel' of the message of Amos or Hosea more effectively than the R.S.V., let alone its predecessors, it cannot be relied upon as a guide to the meaning of the Hebrew of the Old Testament as it now stands. Sometimes several successive words are omitted without any indication being given, e.g. the conclusion to Isa. 1: 7. On the other hand, insertions are sometimes made in order to amplify and so to clarify the bare outline of the Hebrew (for example in Mic. 1: 10-15, where, incidentally, 'Acco' seems a long way from the other towns mentioned).

In spite of the many points at which, inevitably, one would fail to see eye to eye with the translator, the blemishes are far outweighed by the many felicities of expression, for example 'Gilgal shall know the gall of exile' in Amos 5: 5; 'Spent Whirlwind' in Isa. 30: 7 for 'Rahab who sits still'; and 'prophesying a future of "wines and spirits"' in Mic. 2: 11. The 'ditty' in Isa. 23: 16 is admirably set out in rhyming lines which go with a suitable swing, reminiscent of Moffatt's rendering.

As an example of the vigour with which this translation has been made, here is Mr Phillips's translation of Isa. 5: 26-30:

- 26 Then he will signal for a nation afar off
And whistle for it from the other end of the earth.
And suddenly it comes, swiftly, quickly.
- 27 None fainting, none stumbling,
None slumbering nor sleeping;
Not a belt is loose,
Not a shoe-string broken,
- 28 Arrows all sharp,
Bows all bent,
Horses' hoofs as hard as flint,
Wheels like whirlwinds,
- 29 With the roar of a lioness
And the roar of young lions
It will seize its victim with a snarl
And carry it off, with none to rescue!
- 30 His roaring on that day
Will be like the roaring of the sea.
The land shows nothing but darkness and misery,
The light blotted out by clouds of dust.

There are one or two points at which misprints appear to have crept in, for example the date of the fall of Samaria as 732 on p. xxvi, and the misspelling of Jotham as Jothan on p. 144. The endpaper maps show clearly almost all the places mentioned in the four books, though two different cities called Achzib are marked, to the exclusion of Acco, and room might have been found for the inclusion of Ephraim, Gilead, Ammon and perhaps even Nineveh though it is not mentioned by name in the portions translated.

In his preface, Mr Phillips says, 'I have done my best to translate, not for the scholar but for the ordinary intelligent layman. I have tried, wherever

possible, without distorting the Hebrew, to convey the Prophets' message as clearly as I can'. In this task the translator has succeeded admirably—may he be encouraged to continue with further books from the Old Testament!

B. F. PRICE

Mark, A Translation with Notes, by John W. Beardslee, Jr. New Brunswick, New Jersey: The Theological Seminary, 1962, pp. 61; \$1.25.

This account of Jesus Christ is not a translation. It is a rewriting of the story, and is based on the narrative given by Mark. It follows the sequence of Mark closely, but considerably expands the original. It is an amplified Gospel, expressing freely and expansively the sense of the Greek.

The title, *The Beautiful Story of Jesus Christ*, is presumably a rendering of the opening verse. It is at once apparent that we have not before us a translation in the true sense of the word. The story is indeed 'beautiful' but that is not what Mark says.

In order to bring out the sense more clearly, Beardslee makes very many additions. This too is apparent at the outset. In v. 3 of the first chapter, he adds 'Jehovah is coming', while v. 4 reads, 'He insisted that all men, even Jews, needed to repent of their sins because God would approve no one whose sins were not forgiven, and would forgive no one who did not repent'. Similar expanded material is found throughout. Mark, who has a flair for terseness, is often unrecognizable. "Ὅς ἔχει ὦτα ἀκούειν ἀκουέτω becomes: 'It is worth your while to listen to these sayings of mine, and to try to understand them. You can understand them if you try. You had better try. Your life depends upon your understanding them. They explain God's new kingdom.' (4. 9).

The following are a few comments on particular verses:

- 2: 9 'Is it safer for me to say to the paralytic . . . ?'
Is anything gained by changing the word meaning 'easier' to 'safer'?
- 3: 11 It seems a pity to avoid the title 'Son of God', and to read 'You have come from God'. (See also 5: 7—'Messiah, sent by God'.)
- 5: 7 There is something unrealistic about the exclamation of the madman among the tombs: 'Our interests are diametrically opposed'.
- 7: 1 'Old Testament students' for 'scribes' is odd. The Jewish Scriptures were not known as the Old Testament in those days (see also 9: 13).
- 7: 22 'reckless' is not Mark.
- 10: 20 'The man replied, "O sir, that's elementary. I didn't come to you to be told that. I have known all that and done it ever since I was a child".'
Is this freedom run riot?
- 11: 10 'God bless the rule of old King David' sounds rather familiar and disrespectful!
- 12: 38 'Look out for these learned teachers of the Bible.'
Why not avoid anachronism and say 'Scriptures'?