

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'?

15: 36 'Let me try something.'

It is not clear what this means. It is certainly not in the original.

16: 8 The story ends abruptly at this verse, as indeed Mark ended his narrative.

Some examples of gratuitous additions to the text:

8: 29 'Jesus pressed them, "*Well, everybody seems to have his own opinion. What do you, my intimate friends, think about me?*"'

8: 32 'All this he told them with a thrill of confidence and joy.'

12: 1 'A man planted a vineyard, *the costliest of farming ventures.*'

12: 7 'The father must have died.'

(Is this a necessary inference?)

12: 27 'Now all these patriarchs died hundreds of years before God spoke to Moses, but if God were interested in them while God was talking with Moses they must have been alive, for God does not care about dead people.'

(This does not sound very convincing. It is no improvement on the simple statement in the Greek.)

14: 36 'He said, "Dear Father, you love me, you can do anything. Make me sure that I know exactly how you wish me to finish my work. Ease the strain. Make tomorrow less dangerous and less trying for my friends. Keep me brave and keen. You know best, I might choose some other way, but I wish to follow your plans, not mine".'

(Is there not over much interpretation here?)

Examples of Vividness

The writer has succeeded in producing a narrative which is strikingly vivid. For example:

8: 34 'Jesus told the common people and disciples alike, "You cannot deserve a place in my company unless you are willing to stop trying to manage your own lives. Do what God tells you to do. Kill every selfish desire and purpose. You must become like me, if you would become my disciple. The old life must die just as inevitably as if you found that a squad of Roman soldiers was leading you out of the town with a cross on your back".'

14: 11 'Judas, therefore, kept looking for an opportunity to betray Jesus, but he was very cautious, for the priests had impressed on him the danger of a riot.'

14: 67 'She took a good look at him and said . . . '

(An effective rendering of *ἐμβλέψασα* in everyday English.)

Footnotes

These generally are helpful, as that on 'Gehenna' at 9: 43. At 1: 10, however, the note on *σχιζομένους* does not do justice to the Greek verb. It runs: 'In the ancient world the sky was thought to be a solid dome. Through this dome some unknown power, perhaps thought of as lightning, punched a hole, through which Jesus saw the Spirit descend. Mark's word suggests

the effect of a sheet of armor plate pierced by a shell.' The picture here is unfortunate, and 'hole' is hardly the idea contained in the Greek word. The verb means to tear or split.

In 13: 27, where the text says, 'All shall be gathered into one glorious band of comrades', there is a footnote: 'An intimation of what later became the Christian Church'. But the passage is apocalyptic and refers to the end of the world rather than to the present situation.

Corrigenda

1: 9 In footnote (2) insert fullstop after 'descend'.

3: 6 For 'henchman' read 'henchmen'.

8: 20 For 'four loaves' read 'seven loaves'.

8: 31 'He', 'he'. In this account the pronoun is not capitalized.

8: 34 For 'disciple' read 'disciples'.

In the Editor's Preface there is a misprint in the third paragraph. For 'work' read 'word'.

In the Introduction, third paragraph, for 'disclocates' read 'dislocates'.

Conclusion

We have in this volume a piece of imaginative writing, a very readable account of what Jesus said and did.

The writer does not state what purpose it is intended to serve, or what constituency he has in view. It is not, therefore, possible to assess its immediate value, but without doubt it will give a stimulus to those whose task it is to tell the story, based upon the details supplied by Mark. It brings out in a dramatic way the events recorded by the Evangelist, while at the same time completely obscuring his style.

G. D. REYNOLDS

The Cambridge History of the Bible: The West from the Reformation to the Present Day, edited by S. L. Greenslade, Cambridge University Press, 1963, pp. 590; 45s. 0d.

Cambridge has provided us with many standard multi-volume histories. Here is the first volume of another series, which will clearly play the same part in its own field that the *Ancient History*, *Modern History*, *History of English Literature* and others have in theirs.

Actually this volume, though the first to appear, will be volume two when *From Jerome to the Renaissance*, edited by G. H. W. Lampe and spoken of as 'nearly complete', is published. It is also hoped that 'further volumes may . . . cover other areas'. Much assistance from the Bible Societies will probably be required for those.

The Preface to this volume carefully defines its scope and its limits. It does not deal with the background, composition or content of the Bible itself, nor with Christian doctrine. It is concerned with the text and versions