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# Editorial

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## *One Volume Commentary*

THE WORK OF producing series of biblical commentaries has been a notable feature of the last few years, but many of the series are coming near to the end of their production. Parallel with this there have been a number of composite biblical commentaries, most of which have been contained within the covers of one volume. The American Abingdon Press, having given us *The Interpreter's Bible* in several volumes, and then *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, has followed up these by producing *The Interpreter's One-Volume Commentary on the Bible*. This was published in an American edition in 1971 and by Collins in a British edition at the end of last year. The price for its 1,386 pages is by today's standards the reasonable one of £5.75. Those who have found the two former works of considerable value will also appreciate this. The actual commentary on the text is rather too short to help those who want much more than a preliminary bird's eye view (or, like one of its illustrations, a space capsule's view), but there are suggestions for further reading which can be followed up. There are some 300 pages of general articles, ranging from 'The Fertile Crescent and Its Environment' to 'Teaching the Bible to Youth and Adults'. The standpoint is one of the moderate criticism of the modern biblical theology movement and most of the writers are well-known scholars, Protestant, Catholic and Jewish but almost all American. Comparison will inevitably be invited with the new 'Peake'. That is slightly longer and rather fuller in its comments, as it does not include the Apocrypha. It is also ten years old and costs at the moment £1 more. The appearance of IO-VCB (as it may come to be described) does at least make a possible alternative to 'Peake' which has been an essential for theological students for the last decade.

*More on Series 3*

THERE have been a number of publications (in addition to those mentioned in our last issue) which have come in the wake of Series 3 Holy Communion. *The Lessons for Holy Communion Series 3* CIO, 421 pp., £2.50 is the work of the Liturgical Commission. Following the newly authorised lectionary it provides readings for the Sundays and holy days of the year and for certain special occasions. A choice is made between the *New English Bible*, the *Jerusalem Bible* and the *Revised Standard Version*. A rough count suggests that NEB has been used for 391 lections (64%), JB for 132 (22%) and RSV for 84 (14%). NEB reigns supreme in the OT and the epistles but JB challenges strongly in the gospels. JB only comes three times for OT lections, all for special occasions and two of them being from the Apocrypha. The Whitsun OT lesson is from NEB, though this fact has been omitted. The preface by Canon Jasper does not mention that God is addressed as 'you' to fit in with Series 3 practice and that 'Yahweh' in JB is changed to 'the Lord'. It is a good idea to make such a selection but many will regret the virtual enthronement of NEB which is by no means the ideal translation. Some of its preciousness in the NT and its 'new meanings' in the OT can be very irritating to those who care for the accurate and clear translation of the Bible.

Michael Perry, Archdeacon of Durham, who has previously written two very readable popular works on liturgical subjects, has now given us *Sharing in One Bread*, SPCK, 79 pp., £0.40. This is intended both for study groups and for individuals though probably it would be best used with the former. The various sections of the service which are indicated by the headings in the text are each treated in turn and then some basic questions are given for further thought and discussion. The printing of the text of the service in full is a useful feature. In general the commentary is very helpful, containing both theological and pastoral comment. The author is an obvious enthusiast for the service and those who are critical of certain parts of Series 3 will also disagree with some of this commentary. It is doubtful whether everyone will be happy with the interpretation of remembrance as re-call however modestly it is expressed.

A much smaller guide is *In Remembrance of Me* by Paul Bradshaw, Mayhew-McCrimmon, 64 pp., £0.20. This is really a communicant's manual with short comments inserted into the text of the service. At the end there is an explanation of some of the points in 'A Short Guide to the Duties of Church Membership' issued by the Archbishops. Finally the new lectionary is set out with the titles of the theme for each Sunday. A similar booklet is J. J. Hamilton-Brown's *Series 3 for the Family*, Grove Books, 32 pp., £0.12. The text is printed on the left hand page and the comments with illustrations on the right hand.

Another but more technical booklet on liturgy is *Initiation and*

*Eucharist*, edited by Neville Clark and Ronald C. D. Jasper, SPCK, 31 pp., £0.40. This is the work of the interdenominational Joint Liturgical Group, which now includes Roman Catholic members, and which has acted as an influential clearing house for the exchange of liturgical ideas between the churches in recent years. It is an attempt to suggest that, in all the ferment of liturgical revision which is going on at the moment in almost all churches, it may be possible at least to find a common basic structure for Christian initiation on the one hand and Holy Communion on the other. Inevitably this amounts to a recommendation of the Series 2/3 shape of service and those who are not persuaded of their correctness will not find a great deal more to convince them here.

### *Ordination of Women*

THE resolution of the question of the ordination of women to the priesthood is becoming one of increasing urgency. It is most important that both sides of the argument should be considered and readers are reminded that the only substantial volume which has come out against it is *Why Not?* edited by Michael Bruce and G. E. Duffield, Marcham Books, 144 pp., £2. This consists of a collection of essays which have appeared in *The Churchman* over the last few years. It is hoped to have a review of this volume by an advocate of women's ordination in the Summer issue.

### *The Humanitarian Theory of Punishment*

WE are pleased to print Dr. Babbage's article which is one chapter in a forthcoming book. It shows how the debate has moved on since C. S. Lewis' article. It should however be pointed out that Lewis' article was published in *The Churchman* in June 1959 in order to rectify the ostracism to which it had been subjected.

R.E.N.