

WORDS AND MEANINGS: ESSAYS PRESENTED TO DAVID WINTON THOMAS, edited by Peter R. Ackroyd and Barnabas Lindars. *Cambridge University Press*, Cambridge, 1968. 240 pp. 45s.

A volume of essays, presented to one who has just retired from the Regius Chair of Hebrew at Cambridge, can hardly be reviewed in detail, and it might seem invidious to pick out one essay rather than another. In general, they give a good picture of the style of Old Testament philology which has been practised in England in these last decades; and of this style Winton Thomas has been one of the most sound and judicious exponents. In this sense the book is a fitting tribute to him, and it is furnished with an excellent photograph, a Foreword by the Archbishop of York, and a bibliography of Winton Thomas's writings which will be much appreciated.

While the essays represent a generally sound and fruitful approach, they do comparatively little to suggest anything very novel or inherently exciting. Most of them do not come near to the general semantic questions suggested by the title, and the one which does, that on 'Meaning and Exegesis' by Ackroyd, is somewhat vague and, though it poses many

real questions, seems not to argue any of them out very determinedly. One or two essays seem rather elementary, for example that of Fohrer on 'Twofold Aspects of Hebrew words' (which includes such obvious information as that *bayit* denotes 'house' and also the family living in it), also that on early Hebrew inscriptions (Diringer and Brock).

For the average theologically-interested reader, the most significant essay will probably be that by Albrektson on the 'I am that I am' (or whatever it means) of Exodus 3, 14. In a close grammatical argument Albrektson defends the more or less traditional understanding against recent suggestions of a sense roughly 'I am the one who is'. The chief criticism I should offer of this essay is that it, following the others whose suggestions it examines, seems to identify too closely the question of a right *translation* of a biblical passage and the question of a right *understanding* of its meaning.

JAMES BARR

THE MASS: Ancient liturgies and patristic texts, edited by André Hamman. English Editorial Supervisor, Thomas Halton. *Alba House*, New York, 1967. 256 pp. \$4.95.

BAPTISM: Ancient liturgies and patristic texts, edited by André Hamman. English Editorial Supervisor, Thomas Halton. *Alba House*, New York, 1967. 240 pp. \$4.95.

Both of these books first appeared in French, as part of the *Lettres Chrétiennes* series, which consists of selections from the Fathers' sermons and writings on such topics as baptism, the Eucharist, Christmas, and Easter. The two selections now translated form the first two volumes of the 'Alba Patristic Library'. That on baptism appeared in French in 1962, and the one on the Mass in 1964.

Each begins with an historical introduction surveying the evolution of the rite, and analysing the development of patristic teaching. The volume on the Mass includes the Mass liturgies from the 'Apostolic Tradition' of Hippolytus, the collection of prayers attributed to Serapion, and from the 'Apostolic Con-

stitutions', together with the liturgies of St Basil and St John Chrysostom.

The second part consists of commentaries on certain biblical texts relevant to the Eucharist. We are given a sermon by the Pseudo-Chrysostom on the Passover narrative, sermons by Ephraem and Chrysostom on the Institution narrative, by Chrysostom, Augustine and Cyril of Alexandria on the sixth chapter of St John, and finally a further sermon by Chrysostom on I Corinthians.

In the third part we have a selection of patristic sermons and letters on the Mass as such, ranging from Irenaeus to Caesarius of Arles, and including seven sermons from Augustine. The book ends with a bibliography,