Robinson). Daniell writes movingly of Tyndale the translator of Hebrew: "When we think officially of the triumphs of the Tudor age we remember some glories of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I as monarchs, we honour the playwrights and poets, we treasure the painters, musicians and architects. We have until now completely failed to register the achievement that is Tyndale’s little volume of the Pentateuch" (p. 315). Daniell’s panegyric and resuscitation of Tyndale’s work sometimes encourage him to disparage modern translations. Here one senses that he swings the pendulum a bit too far in favour of the admittedly striking prose of the 16th century. But Tyndale is not living at this hour, and if he were, might not his originality and modernity elicit the sort of criticisms, generated by ears tuned to comfortable cadences, which he had to contend with in his own day? This said there can be no doubt that Daniell has revealed the brilliance and originality of a man whose translations (under the guise of the Authorized Version) have sunk deep into the consciousness of generations of English readers. Monuments have been erected to Tyndale at Vilvorde, the Thames Embankment, and Nibley Knoll; but his abiding monument is the English Bible.

University of St Andrews

PETER W. COXON


The title of this book given above is as it stands on the title page, but the dust jacket adds: "based on M.R. James." This accurately states its relationship to The Apocryphal New Testament by Montague Rhodes James, which first appeared in 1924 and was the single-handed work of the scholar who probably knew more about apocryphal literature than anyone else has ever known. As a collection of English translations of the so-called New Testament Apocrypha (a term which is hardly really appropriate and can be justified only by convention, as Elliott acknowledges), James’s work was rather overshadowed by the two volumes of the German collection, the work of a large team of scholars, edited (first) by E. Hennecke and (in later editions) by W. Schneemelcher, when its third edition appeared in English translation (edited by R.McL. Wilson) in 1963 and 1965. The latter was not only more up-to-date in its scholarship, but also rather more comprehensive in the texts it included. Moreover, whereas James confined his work largely to the translations, adding only brief introductory remarks where they seemed most needed, Hennecke – Schneemelcher offered much fuller introductions, as well as bibliographical guides to scholarship on each
text. However, James's work never ceased to be useful. Since the concept of the New Testament Apocrypha is very flexible (the hypothetical complete corpus is vast and quite undetermined, and while there are many works everyone would agree should be included in any collection, judgments as to which others to include inevitably vary), James's collection, though smaller than Hennecke–Schneemelcher, includes translations of some texts not translated in Hennecke–Schneemelcher. Moreover, James adopted a useful practice (continued by Elliott) of providing rather full summaries of the contents of very long works (such as the later apocryphal Acts of apostles) which were not sufficiently important to merit complete translation.

The latest (sixth) German edition of Hennecke–Schneemelcher (1989, 1990) has recently appeared in English translation (1991, 1992; reviewed in Biblical Interpretation 3 [1995], pp. 118–119). Hard on its heels comes Elliott's replacement for James. It is, as he says, "a complete reworking of the original" (p. ix). But he has not, as he claims (pp. ix–x), preserved the length of the original: the new volume is significantly longer, though still much shorter than Hennecke–Schneemelcher. On the other hand, he correctly claims to have preserved the scope of James. The range of texts translated and summarized corresponds fairly closely to that in James. Elliott has included a few major texts which were not known in James's time (notably the Gospel of Thomas and the Letter or Apocryphon of James, the only two Nag Hammadi texts which he includes), and a few extracts to represent the Pseudo-Clementine literature, which James had decided not to include, and he has omitted from James's selection the Book of John the Evangelist (a Bogomil apocryphon) and a few minor extracts. In other cases, such as several of the apocryphal Acts, differences from or additions to James are due to better or more extensive texts than James was able to use for these works. Like James, Elliott's collection gives more space than Hennecke–Schneemelcher does to relatively late works, especially those which were influential in the mediaeval period.

If one compares the range of texts translated by Elliott with that in the new English Hennecke–Schneemelcher, a significant difference is that Elliott has evidently decided not to include works which are clearly and fully Gnostic, whereas Hennecke–Schneemelcher includes a considerable number of the Nag Hammadi texts (as well as extracts from and discussions of other Gnostic works). Other major works translated in Hennecke–Schneemelcher, but not in Elliott, are the Epistle of Titus, the Ascension of Isaiah, 5 and 6 Ezra, the Christian Sibylline Oracles. But the reader will find in Elliott more extensive collections of material from the infancy Gospels and from the Pilate cycle, a better collection of the textual evidence for the Acts of Andrew, the longer as well as the shorter version of the Apocalypse of Thomas, and even two apocryphal Gospel fragments on papyrus which Hennecke–Schneemelcher wholly neglected. In addition,