Ὁμολογουμένως must have been read, not as one word, but as two words; so that the words following were part of a liturgy or creed recited by the worshipping congregation.

Another instance of this reading in 1 Tim. iii 16 is cited by Tischendorf in D. gr. I shall be glad to know if it has been observed elsewhere.

AGNES SMITH LEWIS.

REVISION OF THE LECTIONARY.

Report of Joint Committee, Convocation of Canterbury (S.P.C.K., 1917).

THE present Report was agreed to by resolution of the Upper House on May 2, 1917, and of the Lower House of the Canterbury Convocation on the following day. The Joint Committee of Canterbury had also, during their sessions, the counsel and co-operation of a similar joint committee appointed by the Convocation of York. It may, therefore, be assumed that the proposed Lectionary is likely to come into use, perhaps even independently of the general revision of the Book of Common Prayer, as in the case of the last revision of the Lectionary, in 1871. Or again, in accordance with a resolution of the Lower House in 1914 with reference to the proposals of a committee of their own House for revising the Lectionary, the new Table of Lessons may be authorized for experimental use for two years before its final adoption or incorporation in the Prayer Book. In view of the importance of the scriptural lections in Anglican worship, there is much to be said for this experimental stage.

The first Reformed Prayer Book (1549) provided lessons for every day of the civil year in a mechanical way by appointing a chapter a day, beginning in January with Genesis and St Matthew and Romans. Proper lessons were provided, more or less completely, for the greater festivals and holy days, but no special provision was made for Sunday readings. Queen Elizabeth's Prayer Book provided a full table of Old Testament lessons for Sundays, but left the New Testament lessons to the accident of the ferial course. The last revision of the Prayer Book (1662) left this Sunday provision almost unchanged, though it recognized the impropriety of continuing the recital of Noah's drunkenness, Lot's incest, and the unswaddled infant lying in its blood (Ezek. xvi). The revisers of the Lectionary in 1871, while making many reasonable alterations in the ferial course, missed their opportunity so far as the Sunday lessons were concerned. They did, indeed, reject a few more

of the 'chapters which be least edifying, and might best be spared' (Preface of 1549): such as the ravishing of Dinah, the vengeance of Phinehas on the man and woman taken in adultery, and the stoning for idolatry. But they retained or even introduced many passages that offend against truth or morality: e.g. the mythological account of the sons of God espousing the daughters of men, the story of Abraham passing Sarah off as his sister, the plagues of Egypt, the destruction of Korah and his company, the dispossession and extermination of the Amorites, Solomon's ivory, apes, and peacocks, and his harem, and the chapters that describe Jehu wading through blood to a throne. The modern conscience is increasingly aware of the distress caused to many hearers by these narratives. The revisers of 1871 shewed themselves little concerned in this matter; nor did they appreciate how the centre of gravity was shifting from the historical books to the prophetical writings. There was, therefore, much leeway for the revisers of 1917 to make up; their proposals, if they come into force, will give much relief, and will bring Church worship into nearer agreement with what has been taught in the universities for a generation or longer. But they might well have been a little bolder, and dispensed with the command to smite Amalek and spare not, the speaking ass, the dishonest 'borrowings' from the Egyptians, Jael's assassination of Sisera as he lay 'fast asleep and weary', and the miraculous destruction of 185,000 Assyrians. Their new readings bring a needlessly large crop of difficulties: the birth of a son to Abraham when he was a hundred years old, the enchantments of Moses, and a terrible example of the fierce anger of Jehovah ('Let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against this stiff-necked people, and that I may consume them', Exod. xxxii). The deliberate sanction by the church to-day of such passages incurs more responsibility than the continuance of an old order, to which we are indulgent because it is old. We may be grateful for many of the additions, such as the story of the friendship of David and Jonathan, Jeremiah's promise of the New Covenant (so essential to the understanding of the New Testament), and selections from the Books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus. Especially welcome, and representative of the modern estimate of the older scriptures, is the variety of lessons from the Prophets, as alternatives to the lessons from the historical books. The only bar to the effectiveness of such prophetic readings is that they require a few words of introduction to explain their historical setting and their drift, and the revisers suggest that an authorized book of such prefaces should be issued. They have also seen the wisdom of keeping the prophetical lessons shorter than the narrative lessons, and of bringing them to a fine close; too often, in our present reading of whole chapters, the interest flags

after the climax is reached, and the great moment is not recaptured. The revisers have done this part of their work with great skill, e. g. in the endings Isa. vi 8, xi 9, and Amos v 24.

The provision of proper lessons from the New Testament for every Sunday has also been long needed and is here supplied. The Festival lessons have been revised with care, and some of the more fanciful selections (e. g. the three visitors of Genesis xviii for Trinity Sunday, and the two olive trees of Zech. iv for St Philip and St James) have been abandoned.

In providing for the ferial course the revisers have shewn more originality, and made more use of scholarship. Instead of following the calendar months, lessons are provided for the ecclesiastical weeks, and greater harmony is thus established between the Sunday and the ferial lessons. The prophets are read from Advent to Septuagesima, when the Pentateuch is begun, to be followed by the historical books. Ezra and Nehemiah are read in close connexion with Haggai and Zechariah. St Paul's Epistles are read in the generally accepted order of their composition, and Titus is read between 1st and 2nd Timothy. St Mark's Gospel is read from Advent to Christmas Eve, ending, not with the Passion and Resurrection, but appropriately with the Little Apocalypse. Acts is selected for Eastertide, and Hebrews for Ascensiontide. For the week-day evenings between Trinity Sunday and the eleventh Sunday after Trinity, readings are arranged from the Synoptic Gospels with a view to providing a consecutive story without much overlapping.

Enough perhaps has been said to shew that the revisers' proposals have been worked out with much ingenuity and success, but that further changes are still needed.

F. E. HUTCHINSON.