

and readable translations of the Fathers and ecclesiastical writers to the French public. Anything which spreads the knowledge of Christian texts is welcome as serving to deepen our appreciation of the riches of the tradition of the Church. Nonetheless these source-texts are difficult and require, at least for the non-specialist reader, much more interpretative commentary than they have been given. They are fragments of a living tradition and they need to be presented as parts of that tradition. Each has its individuality, and often its peculiar bias; each is a fragmentary witness. The first centuries of the life of the Church are magnificent, but the Church lives on; in returning to these centuries we must not lose sight of the valid teachings of other generations which serve to clarify many points. There is no going back on the guidance of the Holy Spirit as expressed in any age, and while we must feed on the Fathers, we must not use them as an escape from the scholastics.

IAN HISLOP, O.P.

**PRIMITIVE MAN AND HIS WORLD PICTURE.** By W. Koppers. (Sheed and Ward; 16s.)

Dr Koppers is an associate of Father Schmit, and his ethnological theories derive in a large measure from him. His present work is at once interesting and irritating. It is interesting in that it contains a good deal of the findings of field workers. The chapter on the religion of the Bhils is a case in point and even more rewarding is the section on the Yamana of Tierra del Fuego. The latter, on the authority of Darwin, were long regarded as 'godless', but in 1922 Koppers and Gusinde were put on the track of evidence which led to the discovery that the Yamana believed in a Supreme God. Dr Koppers makes it clear that this belief was not derived from their contacts with Europeans. In parenthesis, it is an unpleasant thought that these people would not speak to missionaries of their deepest convictions since they were made to feel that their religious ideas would be regarded as mere nonsense.

The book is irritating in that it introduces a great deal of irrelevant academic controversy and because of its 'either-or' method of demonstration which frequently overlooks 'third' possibilities—particularly those arising from psychological considerations. In spite of these defects the book does serve a purpose in that it presents evidence often ignored in books on the origin of religion—though it may well be doubted whether anthropology is in a position to pronounce on this subject.

IAN HISLOP, O.P.

**SAINT FRANCIS XAVIER.** By James Brodrick, S.J. (Burns Oates; 30s.)

It cannot be said that we in England, whether Catholics or Protestants, are lacking in appreciation of that very great man and missionary, St Francis Xavier; yet there has been a lack of a really satisfactory biography