

Who then is this author whose identity has so baffled scholars all down the ages, that he remains as mysterious as Melchisedech 'without father, without mother, without genealogy'? His language, his ideas, his whole mentality prove him to have derived from that milieu of Hellenistic Judaism which was dominated by the influence of the great Philo, the greatest of Hellenistic Jews after St Paul. Is it St Paul himself? The Christology of the epistle, the Soteriology are clearly Pauline, and so is the method of exegesis. There is much in common between him and St Paul in the matter of language. But granted all this, it cannot be said that Hebrews is the literary work of St Paul; from the theological point of view its author is as Johannine as he is Pauline.

Leaving aside the names suggested from the earliest times down to our own day (Clement of Rome, Luke, Barnabas, Stephen, Philip, Peter the apostle, Silas, etc.), Père Spicq opts for Apollo (Acts 18; 1 Cor. 1, 12; 3, 4; 16, 12), first proposed by Luther, as best fulfilling the intrinsic evidence of the epistle.

REGINALD GINNS, O.P.

ST IRENAEUS: PROOF OF THE APOSTOLIC PREACHING. Translated and annotated by Joseph P. Smith, S.J. (Longmans; 25s.)

ROMAN GAUL. By Olwen Brogan. (Bell; 21s.)

The effort to penetrate the mind of St Irenaeus is well worth making and the advantage of the *Proof* is that it affords an easy introduction to the longer and more discursive *Adversus Haereses*. Fr Smith's translation is the sixteenth volume in the now well-established *Ancient Christian Writers* series, intended for the intelligent general reader as well as the scholar. This volume is perhaps over-weighted in the direction of the scholar; the general reader may become a little impatient with the many transliterations from the Armenian in the notes, but he will find there excellently full references to parallel passages in the *Adversus Haereses* and in other early Fathers. The dependence of these on a common source, whether a Testimony book or a tradition, is well brought out; it is perhaps too much to ask that the enrichment which one suspects this received in the mind of St Irenaeus should be made plain. It would be more easily observed in the *Adversus Haereses*, but examples are also to be found in the *Proof*, for instance in the latter part of chapter 57 where St Irenaeus adds interestingly to the parallels, referred to in the notes, from St Justin. But both the introduction and the clarity of the translation will be of great help to those seeking to know St Irenaeus and the teaching of the early Church.

Roman Gaul was, though he seems to have been antipathetic to the Celt, the background of most of St Irenaeus's life. Mrs Brogan presents in a comparatively small compass a mass of information concerning the history, commerce, architecture, art and religion of the province. The compression this necessitates makes the history a little difficult to follow; it would have

been easier if the territories of the tribes to which reference is made had been marked on the end-map. The excellent plans and illustrations help the reader to visualise life in the towns and on the country estates, though one misses the re-creation of atmosphere possible in a more leisurely book such as Dill's *Roman Society in the Last Century of the Roman Empire*. His appreciation of the circles of Ausonius and Sidonius Apollinaris is a useful complement to Mrs Brogan's fuller treatment of the more mundane side of Gallo-Roman life. In the chapter on religion, which includes a sober sketch of the development of Christianity in Gaul, mention might have been made of the Gnostic sects in the Greek trading communities. These, however, are only minor omissions in an otherwise most informative and interesting book.

BENET WEATHERHEAD, O.P.

ST AUGUSTINE: ENCHIRIDION. Translated by Ernest Evans (S.P.C.K.; 15s.)

ST AUGUSTINE: LETTERS 83-130. Translated by Sister W. Parsons, S.N.D.
(Fathers of the Church, Inc.; n.p.)

St Augustine never, so far as I know, put a line of Greek or any other language into Latin. Yet in his fashion he was a very great translator. He took hold of the Catholic faith, which is at once something timeless and revealed in time, and translated it whole into contemporary Latin Africa. He had a keen sense both of eternity and time, especially his own time, and it is thanks to his understanding of the tension between the two, his holding on to both of them together without pretending they could ever fit, that he is never out of date and always in need of retranslation.

This need is not really met, one feels, by such translations as these. The English seems unreal and lifeless—deader than the dead language it is translated from. It is marred by unnecessary archaisms and pedantry. Sister Parsons, for example, allows one of Augustine's correspondents to address him as 'your venerable Unanimity'. That is just transliteration, not translation. As a result we really get no echo of that modern ring which, as she rightly says, many of these letters have about them.

Canon Evans provides his translation with notes which on the whole are very helpful. But he permits himself at times to condescend to St Augustine from the height of his modern certainties in the matter of exegesis and biblical criticism. He implies that Augustine's whole conception of the Scriptures and their inspiration is outmoded, and corrects his interpretation of one or two passages with more assurance than the matter warrants.

No one indeed expects a modern commentator simply to surrender his judgment to St Augustine or any other human authority, and swallow him whole. Many of his opinions are as untenable as the faulty text and the antique science they were based upon. But he usually expresses them with great caution and reserve, and in any case they are not what we read him