

in the subjective sense tradition is simply the Spirit living in the Church, the frame of reference, as it were, having been constituted by the teaching of the Word made flesh. In this sense there is only one source of faith, Christ speaking in and through the Church. Within this context we can distinguish two modes of transmission, the second of which is tradition in the narrow sense by which unwritten truths are handed over in the life of the Church, in which the sense of revelation is maintained and by which, through the divinely appointed organs, this sense can be defined.

Tradition in the active sense is the handing over by an authorised teaching agent. This does not mean the handing down of a parcel of conclusions, but the being brought in immediate contact with Christ's own teaching through an authentic teacher. Tradition, in short, is the proclamation of the Church of which the Bible is the principle part, but not the only part, since apostolic tradition provides both the context and the interpretation of the Bible. It simply states that it was the Church that was sent by Christ.

When the Council of Trent refers to truths contained *in sine scripto traditionibus*, its words are to be understood as referring to tradition in the narrow sense and in the light of the fact that the Council is condemning the view that 'we allow of no other judge in matters of faith . . . than God himself speaking through the Scriptures'.

Mr Jenkins has written an interesting and stimulating book, but one which needs to be used with care.

IAN HISLOP, O.P.

SOLOVJEV UND DER PROTESTANTISMUS. Von Ludolf Müller. Nachwort von Wl. Szykarski. (Herder, Freiburg; 6.50 DM.)

There is already a considerable literature on Vladimir Soloviev from the Catholic and Orthodox points of view, but as yet little or nothing from the Protestant angle. Dr Müller's book seeks to fill this gap, and sketches the development of Soloviev's thought in relation to all three confessions. As is well known, Soloviev distinguished three main principles of 'Christian theocracy'—Tradition (represented especially by the Eastern Church), Authority (represented especially by the Roman Church), and Spiritual Freedom (represented especially by Protestantism)—and for long he looked to a reunion of Christendom to re-combine them in their authentic *Spannungseinheit* after their unhappy historical divergence. When this dream proved illusory, he submitted to the Roman obedience as the only safeguard of the unity which he felt to be all-important.

Dr Müller traces clearly enough the two phases of Soloviev's thought which correspond to his Orthodox and Catholic periods, but claims to

distinguish, on the evidence of certain private letters and *obiter dicta*, a third period, 'the religion of the Holy Ghost', which would make Soloviev end up more of a Protestant than a Catholic. A further chapter examines what Dr Müller believes to be the paramount influence of Schelling on Soloviev; and there is a short appendix on the latter's relation to Judaism.

The remainder of the book is an important *Nachwort* by the Catholic Professor Wladimir Szykarski, of Bonn, who argues against Dr Müller's assumption of a Protestant period at the end of Soloviev's life and finds the evidence insufficient to support it. Soloviev indeed held that the Protestant revolt was partly justified by abuses of spiritual authority on the Catholic side, but he remained firmly attached, and his last work shows him firmly attached, to the Rock of Peter.

B.W.

THE PHYSICAL BASIS OF LIFE. By J. D. Bernal. (Routledge and Kegan Paul; 6s.)

This reprint of Professor Bernal's Guthrie lectures for 1947 is an account, in terms of physics and chemistry, of how life may first have appeared on the earth from non-living matter. Spontaneous generation of the simpler forms of life is an old guess (accepted by the medieval theologians easily enough) which is now being made respectable again by the physical scientists. Professor Bernal's is a most able essay in co-ordination that will certainly stimulate specialists in the subjects joining physics and biology; perhaps readers of a non-scientific journal should be warned that this is by no means 'popular science'. But Thomists, too, should be interested in the growing concern of scientists with problems of origin: it raises in an acute form the question of the meaning of the abstract notions used. Since scientists believe they are talking about reality they will use metaphysics of some sort to interpret results and direct research: and it will be Marx or Whitehead that provide it if we are content to dismiss science as 'without metaphysical foundations or implications'. It is to be hoped that books like this will be read by those whose philosophy claims to order the whole of reality.

L.B.

VENTURE WITH IDEAS. By Kenneth Walker. (Jonathan Cape; 10s. 6d.)

The stimulating book by Dr Walker is the history of his first meeting in 1923 with the late P. D. Ouspensky, and of the momentous results of that meeting in the author's own life. Ouspensky, a disciple of Gurdjieff, had been lecturing on the esoteric philosophy of Gurdjieff in London from 1923 until 1947. This book is an account of how these