

that this word has not the same signification for the man of science and for the theologian. For the one it means descent from a single stock; for the other descent from a single pair. The second kind of unity may not have been formally defined as an article of faith but it remains inseparably bound up with Christianity. Its definition was under consideration at the time of the Vatican Council. The attempt to make of original sin a collective one the writer finds not free from ethical objections, and he has no use for preadamites who create more difficulties than they solve. We must await the acquisition of fuller knowledge before everything becomes clear. In view of the irritating way in which theologians have in the past neglected these questions, this book is by way of contrast refreshing to read.

HUMPHREY J. T. JOHNSON

L'ÉPÎTRE AUX HÉBREUX. Vol. I. Introduction. Par Père Spicq, O.P.
(Gabalda, Paris)

So large a volume devoted merely to introduction, with a similar volume for exegesis, seems to be a lack of proportion—until we remember that we are dealing with Hebrews, a work which has given endless trouble to biblical scholars ever since it was written. Who wrote it, and where, and when, and to whom? Its writer, contrary to the usual custom of St Paul to whom it is traditionally attributed, gives no clear indication on these points. In fact, what is the precise relationship of St Paul to the Epistle to the Hebrews? No solution of these problems during the past two thousand years has ever found general acceptance. And even if it had, there still would remain the formidable difficulties of interpretation. From the literary point of view alone, declares Père Spicq, no book of the Bible with the exception of the Apocalypse is so foreign to modern western mentality. That in itself is a good reason for so long an introduction, for we are more anxious to know what the book means than who wrote it, and when and where and to whom. But these things help to probe its meaning. If you want to get at the mind of the author you must study the *quis, quid, ubi, quibus auxiliis, cur, quomodo* and *quando*. And you must study hard. There is no exegesis without tears any more than there is any philosophy without tears. It is of no use waiting for that easy translation of the Bible which will save you from all toil.

The labours and tears of Père Spicq, extended over many years, lead him to these conclusions: the author of Hebrews (the ascription is not original) is a converted Hellenistic Jew writing to encourage converted Jews, perhaps priests of the Mosaic dispensation, who through trials and weariness of spirit are in danger of apostasy. It is easy to sympathise with such men in the difficulties they find in exchanging their inborn religious and national traditions for the mustard-seed of Christian beginnings. But he reminds them that they are exchanging the splendid trappings of the Mosaic priesthood for the priesthood of Christ which is older and better.

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