

to one province or republic but with loss to the world or to Christendom, I think that that war would be unjust.' On these two texts Mr. Eppstein comments: the first was 'precisely the argument used by Mr. Chamberlain . . . "To accuse us of having destroyed the Czechoslovakian State is simply preposterous. What we did was to save her from annihilation"'; of the second, 'the almost boundless destruction of life and property, the orgy of hatred and barbarism inseparable from modern warfare seem to make this rule even more applicable to-day. The peoples of Europe, North and South America gave spontaneous expression to that conviction in those critical days of September, 1938.' The essay should be studied; for similar examples of grasp of principle and fact, and faithful application of the one to the other, are sufficiently rare.

This volume does not set out to cover the whole field of international ethics: that has been done in another C.S.G. handbook, the *Code of International Ethics*. What it does do is to summarize leading actual problems, and so provide an excellent actual introduction to the study of the *Code*. The need of an awakening to these problems, a grasp of sound principle, and the achievement of unity with regard to them, is urgent. One can but hope that this book, like its predecessor the *Code*, will be widely studied before it is too late. 'The nineteenth century,' writes Père Muller, 'has rightly been called the century of the social problem; the twentieth will in all probability be the century of the international problem. The Church's teaching offers for both of these a satisfactory solution. As Catholics, however, have ignored, or have not obtained a satisfactory grasp of the former problem, they have allowed themselves to be outdistanced in the social sphere by "architects whom God has not authorized to build." If Catholics do not take care they will run the grave risk of being once again outdistanced in international matters by upholders of a "false ideal of salvation" who will not succeed in bringing to the world that order and peace after which they so ardently long.'

GERALD VANN, O.P.

HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

THE UNITY OF PHILOSOPHICAL EXPERIENCE. By Etienne Gilson. (Sheed and Ward; 10s. 6d.)

'The history of philosophy is to the philosopher what his laboratory is to the scientist,' and Professor Gilson's book is arranged as a series of laboratory experiments. The word

seems to be used in two senses: the tentative procedure from which it is hoped a discovery will result, and the repetition of the same procedure for the benefit of pupils by a demonstrator who knows what the outcome is going to be. The experiments selected are attempts to solve philosophical problems on the lines of particular sciences, and on such foundations to erect complete philosophies. They range from Abelard experimenting with the method and outlook of logic to Comte with those of sociology. Professor Gilson repeats these experiments to show that every one of them results in scepticism.

There is a slight obscurity here, and perhaps it accounts for the division of the book into three experiments (medieval, Cartesian, modern) instead of having a separate experiment for each of the very large number of philosophers considered. It was not always obvious to the author of a philosophy that it contained sceptical implications, nor to his followers who developed them that these implications were untenable and sterile; but truth will out—and so will implications—and each experiment ends with the recognition of its sceptical nature and therefore of its unfruitfulness. It is then abandoned by philosophers and another line struck out.

Now even on M. Gilson's showing it is not always evident that the implication of scepticism is really there, at least if scepticism means giving up the attempt to construct a philosophy. It is still possible, for instance, to maintain that Continental Rationalism (the 'Cartesian Experiment') was generally abandoned because of the criticism of the English Empiricists, and not because it was recognized to have reached an *impasse* and to have refuted itself. In other words, non-Cartesian considerations are required in order to bring out the defects which M. Gilson is attributing to Cartesianism. What is much clearer is that the experiments set up on M. Gilson's demonstrating table are so contrived as to yield results not easily compatible with a Thomist metaphysic. But is this the same as resulting in scepticism?

The last chapter is concerned with the conclusions to be drawn. It is maintained that the three experiments have pointed to the same conclusion, have provided us with one experience—hence the title of the book. Attempts to philosophize are bound to fail when they suffer from a defect that incapacitates them for the task of philosophy; to approach philosophy with the outlook or method of some particular science would be such a defect, since philosophy aims at giving the ultimate explanation of all knowledge and all reality, and such an attempt could only

yield an explanation in terms of a particular kind of knowledge and a particular kind of reality. M. Gilson thinks that historically such attempts have always failed in the end, that in the process it has been clearly brought out that their governing principles were bound to lead to failure, and that failure has been followed by an abandonment of the task of philosophy; illogically enough, as he points out, because the failure was due to bad philosophizing and not to the nature of philosophy itself. Philosophers have usually begun by attempting a metaphysic, trying to unify their knowledge by transcending its variety; and when they have despaired of the attempt there have always arisen others to make it again. M. Gilson sees this as historical evidence that it is the nature of philosophy to be metaphysical, and infers that the human mind possesses the means of philosophizing rightly, of unifying its knowledge in a metaphysic. He suggests that this means must be recognized in the notion of Being, as preserved in the tradition of Plato, Aristotle and Aquinas.

The argument would seem to be contestable at almost every point. It is not always clear, for instance, that the principles whose implications are studied really belong to the particular science to which M. Gilson ascribes them. It is plausible to argue that failure to construct a metaphysic does not justify denying the possibility of metaphysics, but less plausible to infer that philosophy is essentially metaphysics because most philosophers have made the attempt before pronouncing it hopeless. And I think scarcely plausible to represent ideas and principles as involving scepticism, when they actually belonged to metaphysical systems—unless it can be shown that they really implied the rejection of the very systems in which they occurred. Yet it is essential to M. Gilson's thesis that his experiments should reveal the scepticism of the ideas and principles concerned.

I should add that he admits philosophical ideas and propositions to be nuanced by the context of the system in which they occur; their implications may only become evident when the context is changed. He suggests that the value of studying the history of philosophy consists in the fact that changes of context reveal the necessary implications latent before. If this is so, the sceptical implications drawn out by M. Gilson may well depend on the context of his exposition; some of the philosophers from whom he derives them were certainly not sceptics, and, if their followers were, the sceptical nuance may have been derived from elsewhere. Considerable historical study should

be required before it is evident to a reader that the ideas and propositions in question are non-philosophically conceived, imply scepticism in their context, or imply scepticism in themselves.

I would maintain that I have not intended to disparage a book which contains valuable suggestions for valuable arguments, but only to point out that they are suggestions which need verification. The criticisms I have indicated would be part of that verification.

QUENTIN JOHNSTON, O.P.

HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY

CATHEDRA PETRI. By Pierre Batiffol. (Collection 'Unam Sanctam.') (Editions du Cerf; 40 frs.)

Mgr. Batiffol made himself the defender of the Petrine primacy as shown by the history of the first centuries. His first paper at the Malines Conversations (not printed in this volume) defended the primacy against the limitations suggested by Dr. Kidd, and his second paper was a reply to Bishop Gore on interpretations of St. Cyprian and St. Augustine. It is significant that Batiffol should have entitled the volume of his Church history that deals with the time of Leo—*Le Siècle Apostolique*. The present volume is a collection of essays, some already published in reviews, which either repeat or form appendices to the material published in the four volumes of Batiffol's history that bears the general title: *Le Catholicisme des origines à S. Léon*.

There is an introduction on the origins of Catholicism, which is in reality a reply to Harnack's suggestion that Catholicism was the Church's reply to Marcion's heretical organisation. Then follow three essays on the *Potestas* of the Roman See, perhaps the most interesting in the book, showing that Rome in the early centuries exercised her *Sollicitudo* and *Potestas* diversely in three zones of influence, namely, in her Metropolitan area in Italy, in the countries of the West, and more remotely in the countries of the East. Nowadays it is customary to distinguish among the Pope's prerogatives those held as Bishop of Rome, or as Primate of Italy, from those held as Patriarch of the West and as chief Bishop of the Universal Church.

Seven studies are devoted to the more technical and punctilious task of examining the use of certain characteristic titles given to the Roman See: *Principatus*, *Prima Cathedra*, *Ecclesia Principalis*, *Sedes Apostolica*, etc. These chapters will be too detailed and too limited in scope to appeal to many readers.