Nicene letter to the Egyptians the unique text from cod. Veron. LX (58); perhaps C. H. Turner's text would have served better than that of Opitz printed here. The Quinisext canons are not included, as the collection excludes councils lacking Roman recognition. The printing of so much matter in so compact a volume is a typographical marvel.

H. CHADWICK

La Chaîne palestinnennne sur le psvme 118. Introduction, text, and translation by MARQUERITE HARL with the collaboration of GILLES DORIVAL. Two volumes, pp. 476, 400. (Sources chrétien-nnes, 189–90.) Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 1972. F. 120,100.

An early catena on the second half of the Psalter survives in Ambrosianus F 126 sup (s. xiii) and Patmiacus 215 (s. xii–xiii), with supporting evidence in derived catenae in other manuscripts. It stands out among Psalter catenae by its early date and by the value of its excerpts, especially from Origen. The hypothesis seems plausible that it was put together in Palestine in the sixth century. For Ps. 118 (119) the seven authors used are Origen, Eusebius, Didymus, Apollinaris, Athanasius, Theodoret, and for one verse Hesychius of Jerusalem (on whom R. Devreesse recently contributed a learned note in Studi e Testi 264 (1970), in a volume which substantially overlaps with this). Origen and Eusebius formed the core, to which Didymus and Apollinaris were then added.

In 1935 Cadiou published pieces from Origen on Ps. 118 in Vindob. th.gr. 8. Comparison with the Palestinian catena suggests that the catenist suppressed some Origenisms and that Cadiou's distrust of the longer items in the Vienna codex was unjustified. Indirect testimony to Origen's original can be found in Ambrose whose commentary often corresponds with the catena.

In this distinguished volume Mme Harl reports on the manuscripts, traces the history of the Psalm's interpretation (including its use for the canonical hours and the lasting influence of Origen's ascetic spirituality), and finally appends a detailed commentary, giving full scope to her masterly knowledge of Origen's exegesis. The catena includes pieces from Origen on reserve in communicating religious knowledge, vs. 11 (with a citation from the Sentences of Sextus, 352); on Encratites and Judaizing women, vs. 38; on God as light for the just, consuming fire for sinners, vs. 58; on God's hands 'making and fashioning' body and soul, vs. 73; and many other familiar themes. The description of the topaz is already
well known (vs. 126–7). Two new fragments of Musonius appear at vs. 161. Dorival contributes an excursus on the language of the texts, and the indexes include a remarkable vocabulary.

H. CHADWICK

Das Vermächtnis des Ursprungs: Studien zum frühen Mönchtum I.

Dr. Bacht offers us here the Liber Orsiesii, by the disciple of Pachomius, in Jerome's Latin translation (more or less as edited by Boon in 1932), with a German translation, and substantial comment in the form of notes. There is a fifty-page introduction, four appendices, and an extensive bibliography; and the book ends with an index and a chronological table.

Why Das Vermächtnis des Ursprungs? The work (like others in this series) is intended as a contribution to the modern renewal of the monastic life (it is dedicated to the community at Taizé), and to the search by contemporary religious for the roots of their spirituality and way of life. Heinrich Bacht would be hard to better as a guide in this endeavour. His writings reveal an eye for continuity and for the influence of the past, often where one least expects it; and yet he shows great respect for individuals, never presenting them as mere examples of development. He is undoubtedly correct to underline, when discussing the roots of the religious life, the importance of Coptic monks of the fourth century. So much that is basic to monasticism was developed during this period, and under their influence: a regular and communal life, the study of scripture, the practice of poverty, and reverence for the founder and his relationship with those who came after him.

On the other hand, is the Liber the best source to start with, when seeking for the spirit and practice of monastic pioneers? Even the biography of Orsiesius, as Dr. Bacht's introduction reveals, has to be drawn from a variety of Greek and Coptic Pachomian sources. Not only are these very hard to date, but they also present conflicting views—of Orsiesius himself, and (more important) of what the genuine Pachomian tradition might be. Pachomius appears to have foreseen this. He was consistently pessimistic about the likelihood of his communities surviving his own death, or at least of their maintaining their unity. Orsiesius, significantly enough, was a victim of this tendency to fragmentation; and Dr. Bacht gives a valuable account of his relationship with Theodore, who shared with him the task of succeeding Pachomius.