

BOOKS, 1913-5.

Jean Astruc (continued).

"and that is the reason why they have become so rare at present." Altogether, I feel that we should accept the charitable opinion of our President on the distinguished author of the Conjectures.

(Dr. Numan Moore)

Then followed this letter from Sir Alexander Simpson:-

52, Queen Street,
Edinburgh.

June 15, 1915.

CUS417/35.64

Dear Osler,

Here is Jean Astruc for you in complete form.

Without your impulse he would have remained so far as I knew him in the dark.

Can you kindly send me on a p.c. the name and address of the young clerical Don who was at the meeting? Not Dr. Buchanan Gray.

Yours very faithfully,

A. R. SIMPSON.

Professor
From/A.R.S. Kennedy.to W.O.

CUS417/35.65
33, Fountainhall Road,
Edinburgh.

Dear Sir William,

I have hunted through all my repositories of ancient "stuff" but have failed to find single copies of the two articles on Jean Astruc, which I wrote for "The Expository Times" twenty years ago. (Oct. 1896 - your letter states).

I have only the bound volume for the year 1896-1897, which I lent to Sir Alexander Simpson. No doubt he would send it you, if you still care to see my handiwork.

of
As a Professor/Hebrew, it was of course his epoch-making "Conjectures" that I was interested in and to which my second article is entirely devoted. But I was interested in the man of whom I could, at the time, find nothing very informing. So I delved around in the British Museum, and even

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ventured so far ultra crepidam meam as to read - say rather, glance through - some of his medical works!! My first article is entirely biographical, and I fear contains nothing that is not well known to one, like yourself, acquainted with the history of medicine.

His case is one of the best illustrations I know of history's little ironies. Jean Astruc wrote his Conjectures to defend the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch against the freethinkers of his day, but in reality he drove the first nail into the coffin of Jewish tradition!

I am,

Yours sincerely,

A. S. Kennedy