

natural explanation is at all possible, lest faith might be shaken. The book's apparent aim is the fostering of co-operation between clergy and doctors and of a synthesis of religion and science. The importance of this was known in the old days and was re-discovered in more modern times first by psychiatrists and then in other branches of medicine until it is now becoming widely accepted that 'even in medicine it is not really absurd to suggest that drugs without prayer may be almost as foolish as prayer without drugs'. I should therefore have liked to see the case histories, anyway some of them, with the comments by the author and by Dr Burnett Rae in a publication for clergy and doctors.

In the book, as it is, the author's restraint and care in introducing his cases is admirable. In spite of his own clear judgment, however, some cases will impress lay people with the suggestion that faith-healing by non-medical men is a more successful alternative to the usual medical methods. To them the case histories, as they are told, will speak so much more intensely than the sober introductory and concluding comments that some, particularly the more emotional ones who may read the book, will be likely to be misled into attempting a healing of symptoms without diagnosis or adequate treatment of the underlying cause. This indeed was often done by lay-healers, anyway such as had no spiritual principles, and it has led to disasters.

It is for this reason that, in spite of the author's good intention and of all that is good in the book, its publication for the general public does not appear as a service to the good cause for which it was obviously intended.

K. F. M. POLE

PATRISTIC HOMILIES ON THE GOSPEL: Volume One. Translated and edited by M. F. Toal. (Mercier Press; 30s.)

ST BASIL: LETTERS 186-368. Translated by Sister Agnes Clare Way, C.D.P.;

EUSEBIUS: ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY, BOOKS 6-10. Translated by Roy J. Deferrari. (Fathers of the Church, Inc.)

OEUVRES DE SAINT AUGUSTIN 16: LA TRINITÉ (Livres VIII-XV). Translated by P. Agaësse, S.J. (Desclée de Brouwer; 270 fr. B.)

BASILE LE GRAND. By Jean-Marie Ronnat. Collection, *Église d'hier et d'aujourd'hui*. (Les Éditions ouvrières; 330fr.)

This handful of books, an outcome of the patristic revival of our times, exemplifies three methods of popularizing the Fathers.

The first volume is a patristic anthology, but an anthology of that superior type which has a very clearly-defined connecting link. The link in this case is the Sunday gospels from Advent to Quinquagesima (subsequent volumes will deal with the remainder of the liturgical

year), on each of which there is here provided a choice of translated homilies from various Fathers together with the relevant passage from St Thomas' *Catena aurea*. The compiler derived this happy scheme and much of the present selection of homilies from the *Bibliotheca Patrum Concionatoria* of the seventeenth-century French Dominican François Combefis to which his attention was drawn by the present Master-General of the Dominican Order who also encouraged him in this work. Dr Toal rightly remarks in his preface that in a day when 'we must return to the preaching of the Gospel in its own simplicity' the Fathers have much to teach us. This, then, is an invaluable aid to the preacher, provided, of course, he uses it to feed his contemplation and not directly as a source-book for his own sermons. The book is clearly printed and finely produced, but subsequent volumes would be improved by an author-index of the homilies.

The next three books belong to series which seek to make complete works of the Fathers available to modern readers in their own tongues. The *Fathers of the Church* series is here represented by volumes which complete the translation of St Basil's *Letters* and Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*. The latter is the work of this series' tireless Editor-in-chief, Mr Roy J. Deferrari, who also provides the notes to the volume of St Basil. The *Bibliothèque augustiniennne*, here represented by the concluding volume of the *De Trinitate*, adds to the American series the advantage of the original text printed side-by-side with the modern translation. This, together with the excellent *notes complémentaires*, scripture- and subject-indices, gives these companionable pocket-size volumes an appeal wider than the French-reading public, and similar to that of the *Revue des Jeunes* edition of the *Summa Theologica* of St Thomas which it so much resembles.

A general patristic anthology, complete works of individual Fathers—and the last book on our list belongs to a third type of presentation, which, to some extent, partakes of both the preceding. The Abbé Ronnat's little book initiates a French series which aims at making the Fathers more widely known by presenting an anthology of passages, but from an individual author, preceded by a biographical introduction. This book is much more elementary than the others reviewed here, and is very clearly written for a special public as is revealed by some of the chapter-headings in the biographical section: 'Son grand-père prit le maquis', 'Il ouvrit le grenier des riches . . .', 'Il résolut la crise du logement'. Such an all-out attempt to make the Fathers topical perhaps over-reaches itself. Nevertheless this method of presentation would seem to be a sound and suggestive one. With the necessary modifications it might profitably be attempted in English.

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