

This book will be valuable to students of Patristics and to all who realise with what incomparable sense of right measure the Fathers were able to combine their enthusiasm for Scripture and Liturgy with a lucid appreciation of a pastoral situation in no way better than our own.

PIERRE-MARIE GY, O.P.

PATROLOGY. Vol. I: The Beginnings of Christian Literature. By Johannes Quasten. (Spectrum Publishers, Utrecht, Brussels; n.p.)

The writing of a good introduction to any branch of study might almost be taken as a test of one who is competent to speak as a master. How delicately must he exercise his gifts of judgment and selection, how continuously bear in mind his capacity as guide, where the temptation to a *simpliste* finality must so often occur! Professor Quasten has these virtues in an eminent degree. His summaries are brief and clear, as only one very much at home with his matter could make them, yet he always indicates where the problems occur and, without refraining from offering his own solution, does so with courtesy. He contrives to give a real foretaste of the writers he is discussing by the use of ample quotations, but he does so in such a way that they form a true element in his economy. The section on Irenaeus is perhaps particularly successful in this respect. One may notice, too, that in a volume of roughly only three hundred pages he can find room for half-a-dozen on the Odes of Solomon, most of which are translations. It is this ability to retain an air of space and generosity that prevents his book from ever descending to the level of an indigestible potting and enables him to achieve so much in a very illuminating initial survey of Christian writing up to Irenaeus.

But these are not the only merits of his new patrology. His bibliographies are a storehouse of up-to-date information. He gives particulars of critical editions and translations, and then after each section, and frequently after each paragraph, lists of studies and articles. This makes his volume as valuable a work of reference to the initiated as it is a reliable guide to the beginner. Professor Quasten has already put us in his debt by starting the *Ancient Christian Writers* series of translations in 1946, and this new book increases that debt. It is a delight both to handle and to use.

A.S.

THE ART OF PREACHING: A Practical Guide by Ferdinand Valentine, O.P. (Burns Oates; 18s.)

TREATISE ON PREACHING. By Humbert of Romans, translated by the Dominican Students, Province of St Joseph. (The Newman Press; \$2.50.)

Fr Valentine anticipates an immediate criticism by his choice of a title. His book is about a technique, and he might argue that complaints that