

We quite concur with this view, and we may add a suggestion that the literature of the Early Church might well receive more attention than it has received hitherto. The present series of Early Church classics is evidence that scholars are already bestirring themselves in this direction. A number of volumes have already been issued, of convenient size and at reasonable prices. Two of these books lie before us.

The Lives of the Saints have long been a barren and neglected field, but recently scholars have begun to realize that there is a great deal of valuable matter contained in the bulky volumes in which their history is recorded. The surprising development of mythological studies has been one influence at work. The revived interest in Pagan religion and mythology has led to discoveries which throw a new, almost startling, light on many pages of the Lives of the Saints. In St. Pelagia, for example, we recognize the Greek Aphrodite; and the life of St. Agatha has obvious points of contact both with the worship of the Bona Dea and the story of Penelope. Another group of Lives can be made, when critically treated, to yield valuable matter to the student of ancient history. The present narrative, however, belongs to neither of these classes. The life of St. Macrina is like the life of our own Thomas à Becket, a genuine biography. The biographer was her brother, the celebrated theologian Gregory of Nyssa. The record of her quiet and benevolent activities in the comparatively peaceful period of the fourth century cannot fail to interest us in these days when social service has become a watchword.

The second book, the treatise of Irenaeus, is of a different type. Mr. Hitchcock has made selections from this celebrated work and supplied explanatory notes. There are still probably some people to whom it will be news that theology has recently entered upon a fresh lease of life. Many publications in England and America furnish evidence of this; the authors mostly follow meekly in the footsteps of the German theologians Pfleiderer and Harnack, who are mentioned by name on page 113 of the first volume of this work. There has thus arisen a sort of cult of Irenaeus, who is called by Dr. Carpenter, in the lectures which we endeavoured to review lately, the profoundest theologian of his age. We cannot join in this chorus of admiration. We cannot forget that he tells us (I, 39) that the Emperor Claudius honoured Simon Magus with a statue at Rome; a mistake due to a confusion with the Sabine deity, Semo Sancus. Again, when Irenaeus says that the three spies entertained by Rahab prefigured the Trinity, we should feel rather dubious about accepting this view, even if there had really been three spies; as a matter of fact, there were only two. Nor is he more reliable in his scholarship; the Hebrew *abi-ad* (Is. ix, 6), which our revised version incorrectly translates "everlasting father," he renders by "comely of person"; how he arrives at this we cannot even conjecture. Nor do we know what authority he has for