

perhaps the least interesting and important of them: it is found in only two manuscripts, and it is significant that it alone is omitted from the Carthusian codex owned and annotated by the famous James Grenhalgh, whose considerable library of mystical theology included a Latin text of *Mystica Theologia* which has also been preserved. Similarly, although twelve medieval copies survive of the next treatise, *Beniamin Minor*, a translation of Richard of St Victor's work, only four of these are found together with *The Cloud*. It is in the more original works, *An Epistle of Prayer*, *An Epistle of Discretion of Stirrings* and *A Treatise of Discretion of Spirits*, that we must look for traces of the interests and preoccupations and experience of the author of *The Cloud*; and we shall find that Dom Sitwell's stricture applies as much to them as to it. The psychology of prayer and contemplation is of deep interest to the writer: though he has learned much from Dionysius, it was not what Aquinas and Ruysbroek learned. When one compares him with Ruysbroek—and the comparison is inevitable—the impression remains that in the Englishman we see separated the elements which in the Dutchman were perfectly fused in a divine fire. Even so, these minor treatises make an interesting contribution to our knowledge of medieval English spiritual thought and teaching; and Professor Hodgson has produced a second work which adds distinction to what no less a critic than Fr Paul Grosjean has recently called 'la perfection d'une collection comme celle de l'Early English Text Society'.

ERIC COLLEDGE

SPIRITUAL HEALING. By D. Caradog Jones, with a 'Doctor's Comment' by J. Burnett Rae, M.B., CH.B. (Longmans; 10s. 6d.)

There cannot be any doubt that this book suggests very strongly the efficacy of prayer for healing—and if of prayer, of intercessory prayer too, as some of the patients included among the cases were too young to understand what was happening. None of the cases, however, appears to have undergone anything like the stringent scrutiny applied at Lourdes. Indeed, they do not go beyond what has been claimed before for other lay healers, who did not consider their healings to be spiritual.

It seems relevant to ask, to whom the book is addressed. In the Foreword Canon Craven states that it 'does not profess to answer the sort of questions the sceptical enquirer will raise'. Any believer will necessarily agree with the argument of C. S. Lewis in his book on that subject, that if we admit God we must admit miracles; for him this collection of interesting but non-conclusive cases will bring no additional evidence or special message. On the contrary one should always be careful not to support a claim for something to be out of the ordinary if any

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