

GOD, UNITY AND TRINITY. By F. J. Sheed. (Sheed & Ward; 2s. 6d.)

In handy form Dr Sheed gives us the first nine chapters of *Theology and Sanity* which was published ten years ago and has established itself as an excellent theological exposition of the idea of God necessary for believers and unbelievers alike.

SHANE LESLIE'S GHOST BOOK. (Hollis & Carter; 12s. 6d.)

What is the theological answer to the question about the existence of ghosts? St Thomas says it turns upon the possibility of the departed soul leaving its abode in heaven, hell or purgatory. There is no permanent exit from hell or heaven; but God may permit souls to leave their abode for a time, for a reason: the damned may be allowed to appear for man's instruction; or the souls in purgatory may come to seek our suffrages; and he cites St Augustine who relates how Felix the Martyr appeared visibly to the people of Nola when they were besieged by the barbarians. And was it really Samuel's ghost which appeared to Saul (I Kings 28), or was it a diabolical impersonation? The wise and learned are not agreed. It is quite clear that necromancy is forbidden and the Church has given guidance and warnings on the practices of the Spiritualists. We are not allowed to attempt by the craft of magic to raise the dead or seek communication with them. But there is nothing we can do to prevent them if God so permits from communicating with us; and Sir Shane Leslie is dealing simply with such types of manifestation. His really thrilling collection differs from the well-known book of the late Lord Halifax in this that he excludes the invented ghost story. Some of Lord Halifax's stories were fiction, just as were some of those of the late Montagu James. Wherever possible Sir Shane has taken pains to corroborate his facts. Often enough they are horrible facts, though sometimes they are consoling and delightful. The fact that there are ghosts seems beyond all denial, though the meaning or moral of their appearances often eludes us. As Montagu James said to Sir Shane: 'Depend upon it! Some of these things are so, but we do not know the *rules!*'

BERNARD DELANY, O.P.

SECOURS DE LA GRÂCE ET SECOURS DE LA MÉDECINE. By Jean-Pierre Schaller. (Desclee de Brouwer; n.p.)

A well-read priest, reflecting on the medical information available to the average educated reader, applying his Thomist philosophy to its interpretation, viewing the result in the light of revelation and the theology of the sacraments, here gives us a series of wise helpful *causeries* on the ways in which body and soul interact in the normal life of the spirit.

The key theme is the unity rather than union of soul and body. Grace is for the whole man, not for the soul only. Medicine too, in its way, is for the whole man. These principles guide us through a consideration, brief but very helpful, of psychiatry, psycho-analysis, Yoga, endocrinology, psycho-surgery. These modern fields of science are barely sketched, in some cases only hinted at. It is the principles that matter. The seven sacraments are then considered separately. The general conclusion is that doctors and priests not only can but should help one another in the great work of saving human souls.

G.M.C.



NOTICES

LES EDITIONS DU CERF

THE enterprising French Dominican publishing house continues to send forth its flow of interesting and constructive literature, and we from the other side of the channel inevitably look with envious eyes at their achievements. Among the recent liturgical works are two, in the series *L'Esprit Liturgique* (Nos. 11, 12) by Dom Flicoteaux, the first dealing with the spirit of Lent (*Le Sens du Carême*) in which he includes a study on Ember Days. The meaning of Lent is preparation for the Pasch—here the author deals with the history and purpose of the forty days penance—and its observance is divided into the three main activities of prayer, fasting and good works. Despite the flood of literature about Lent and Easter it is to be hoped that this volume will be translated in time for the Lent of next year as it contains one of the best presentations of the subject in 150 pages. The second work of the French Benedictine is a book for May, on the feasts of our Lady (*Mystères et Fêtes de la Vierge Marie*), in which he discusses the place of our Lady in the Christmas and Advent liturgy, and in all the main Lady days throughout the year, as well as devoting special chapters to the *Magnificat*, the *Salve Regina* and the Mass and Office of our Lady. As he says, the purpose of the liturgical cycle is to help us to re-live the work of our redemption, and our Lady is therein presented to us as the 'indispensable complement' of that work. The publishers have also produced a translation of a series of lectures by the most eminent of liturgists, Fr J. A. Jungman, S.J., delivered as long ago as 1938 but only now capable of being appreciated by the general public. He studies