

with more detail, on the main features dealt with in *Poets' Grammar*, but as it is his work shows great promise, though he still has much to learn from other scholars in this field.

FRANCIS SCARFE

THE STORY OF THE HOSPITALLERS OF ST JOHN OF GOD. By Norbert McMahon. (Gill; 16s.)

This is a story indeed, and well told by Brother Norbert McMahon. It is so full of incidents, as well as names, that it seems a pity the work was not crowned with an index.

What a history it has had, this Order of Hospitallers, with its saints and blessed, its heroes and martyrs, in early times and in modern (ninety-eight were massacred during the civil war in Spain), but also its setbacks.

Spain was its birthplace, Italy its first field of labour across the frontier, and now it is world-wide. Thirty years after its foundation, the Order was split in two, a rupture that was to last almost three hundred years; and for a while it was even deprived of its right to be called an Order. Nevertheless, under the providence of God it prospered.

'This is the flower that was lacking in the garden of the Church', said St Pius V of these Hospitallers. And this is the book that was lacking in the English-speaking world, and now provides us with all we want to know about St John of God and his Brothers.

R.P.D.

JOHN WESLEY AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH. By John M. Todd. (Hodder and Stoughton; 15s.)

This is primarily an attempt to analyse the exact relationship between early Wesleyanism and Catholicism, and to estimate not only the character of its founder but the character of his spirituality. Mr Todd emphasizes the heroic self-sacrifice of John Wesley's life and the fundamental orthodoxy of his Christian message. It is possible to disagree with some of Mr Todd's interpretations. It is impossible not to admire the spirit of Christian charity that informs them all.

G.M.

CHRISTIANITY AMONG THE RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD. By Arnold Toynbee. (Oxford University Press; 8s. 6d.)

Dr Toynbee delivered the Hewett Lectures in 1955 and chose as subjects the criteria for comparisons between religions, the characteristics of the contemporary world, the relation of Christianity to present Western civilization, and the ideal Christian approach to contemporary non-Christian faiths. These have now been revised and

published. Few of Dr Toynbee's contributions have been more important, none so stimulating. Essentially his position seems that of Symmachus: 'Not by one road alone does man go to so great a mystery'. But Symmachus had more in common with St Ambrose than perhaps either realized. Dr Toynbee's standpoint is so often very close to that of Catholicism, at times possibly closer than he realizes.

G.M.

MARTYRS: FROM ST STEPHEN TO JOHN TUNG. By Donald Attwater. (Sheed and Ward; 16s.)

Catholicism in England and Wales owes a debt to Donald Attwater which is still, I think, inadequately recognized. This has been increased by his *Martyrs*, an account of sixty-seven martyrdoms from the first to the twentieth century, recorded as far as possible in the words of the original sources; so many of them have the stark beauty of the Gospels. They are in the old true sense *Spiritual Reading*, a *Sacra Lectio*. Only those familiar with the conditions of refectory reading in English religious communities today can realize how much such a book is needed.

G.M.

LITERARY DISTRACTIONS. By Ronald Knox. (Sheed and Ward; 15s.)

This book consists of seventeen lectures, broadcasts and prefaces. Eight of them have already been published. The great majority were ephemeral by purpose. They contain many *obiter dicta* which will exasperate (and were perhaps intended to exasperate) specialists—on Pseudo-Dionysius, on John Donne, on classical Greek ships. But they include three masterpieces, 'On English Translation', 'French with Tears' and 'The Man Who Tried to Convert the Pope'; each one of them so perfect, so different and so characteristic.

G.M.

N.R.F.: ESSAYS FROM THE NOUVELLE REVUE FRANÇAISE 1919-1950.

Edited, selected and introduced by Justin O'Brien. (Eyre and Spottiswoode; 25s.)

This collection includes aesthetic, social, religious and philosophical essays. All the famous names—Mauriac, Valéry, Claudel, Malraux, Maritain—are here, and many less familiar. The quality of the translations varies from mediocre to first-rate, and there is a valuable introduction outlining the history and fortunes of *Nouvelle Revue Française*. An excellent book for 'dipping into', a bedside book.

G.A.M.