

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.