

quite fearlessly in the light of it; among the more delightful of his 'personal observations' is that on the writer in the country: 'The southern counties of England are dotted with the "country cottages" of cultivated and literary persons. The man writes or paints and drinks manful pints with silent labourers in bar parlours or, worse, seeks to jolly them into an unnatural animation. The wife with inadequate and reluctant help toils distressfully at the oil stove to give the husband the kind of meals to which he and she have been accustomed in town. . . . Having thus surrounded himself with a social and intellectual vacuum, the man proceeds to write.' A minor point, perhaps, but illustrative of the author's lightness of touch and penetrating judgment which are applied to more urgent problems.

EDWARD QUINN

RELIGION IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY. Edited by Vergilius Ferm.
(New York Philosophical Library; 5 dollars.)

Twenty-eight religions, each expounded by a recognised representative, for a little over a guinea! It may even be more expensive by the time these lines appear. It is not the purpose of the book to set a choice before the reader or to invite him to weld the various religions into one comprehensive whole—under such conditions the Catholic contributor could not have participated—but having got his team into print, the editor expresses the hope of a 'coming religion that will cut across the streams of religious tradition and merge the values of all the faiths'.

E. Q.

THE APPROACH TO METAPHYSICS. By E. W. F. Tomlin. (Kegan Paul; 12s. 6d.)

The author's title and claims are so modest as rather to disarm criticism from the start. We will therefore state a few simple facts with little comment. At the head of the book there stands a text from Collingwood defining metaphysics as 'no futile attempt at knowing what lies beyond the limits of experience, but primarily at any given time an attempt to discover what the people of that time believe about the world's general nature. . . . Secondly it is the attempt to discover the corresponding presuppositions of other peoples and other times, and to follow the historical process by which one set of presuppositions has turned into another'. If this be metaphysics, a mixture of history and sociology, we are bound to admit that the author has more or less justified his title. Sparks of hope are now and again kindled in the reader that some truths about knowledge are going to be stated and defended, but he is disappointed. Thought is not, it would seem, destined to discover truth; it is only an endless adventure in which it is important that