

individual owners and artisans, tracing the provenance of their inspiration. Holbein, anti-clerical and Protestant, was the great moving force, and the great batch of the Reformation drove away the Italian artists who had built the Chapel of Henry VII and the screen of King's College Chapel. In their place came a host of Flemish and Germanic artists with the gross, lavish, tortuous designs that make hideous so much Tudor art. It is true, as Mr Lees-Milne points out, that some moderation of their extravagances took place under the tranquil skies of England and we are warned against despising this outbreak of Protestant insobriety. The troubled times in which we live cause us to long for the restraint of more classic forms, whether of the Italian Renaissance or the England of Inigo Jones and Wren. The time may come when we are unharried enough to relish once more the architectural monstrosities that are lavishly illustrated in this admirable Batsford book.

PAUL FOSTER, O.P.

GIOTTO FRESCOES, with an Introduction by Walter Ueberwasser. (Batsford; 25s. 6d.)

GIOTTO: PICASSO. *The World's Masters—New Series*, edited by Anthony Bertram. (The Studio; 3s. each.)

The latest volume in Messrs Batsford's admirable *Iris Colour Books* is devoted to seventeen large colour plates of the Giotto frescoes in the Arena Chapel, Padua (twelve plates), Santa Croce (one plate) and the Upper Church at Assisi (four plates). Giotto's genius as a master of the picture cycle demands a scale in reproduction which is scarcely practicable, but the fidelity of colour and proportion in this Batsford selection does all that can be done short of a prolonged study of the frescoes themselves. Giotto's greatness is not simply that of 'the father of modern art'; he is not a Melchisedech, without origin, a sudden invader. As Mr Anthony Bertram shows, in an excellent introduction to his selection of Giotto's paintings in the 'Studio' series, Giotto was 'not an isolated phenomenon. He was simply the greatest of those who fused Western plastic and humanistic art with the still vital Byzantine tradition.' In Giotto the suspended rapture of the Byzantines begins, as it were, to move. He is supremely the artist of the Incarnation and of its effect in giving new meaning to human nature and its needs. So it is that passion, grave and controlled though it be, enters into his conception of those that mourn over the dead Christ; and his St Francis is at one with a patterned landscape which reflects the goodness of created beauty.

It may seem a long journey from Giotto to Picasso, but Mr Bertram is equal to it, and his introduction to the modern master reveals a very welcome discrimination and absence of pomposity. His selection from

Picasso's work over fifty years is sufficient evidence of the skill and fertility in invention of an artist who, however violently he may assault an accepted taste, is never other than alive—and aware of the fact.

BRITISH AND AMERICAN ENGLISH SINCE 1900. By Eric Partridge and John W. Clark. (Andrew Dakers; 18s.)

It was an excellent idea to include a study of the English language in a series of 'Twentieth Century Histories', for language is a principal instrument of any culture and its changes are a faithful reflection of the ideas it exists to serve. Mr Partridge is well known as a chronicler of words, but his contribution to this volume cannot be called successful. He attempts too much, and achieves too little. His introductory summary of recent English literature is largely a mosaic of the opinions of Messrs Spender, Speaight and Reed, and he devotes too much space to generalised statements, 'tendencies of the time', which, although interesting enough, leave too little room for the exact analysis of linguistic change which such a study demands. He calls in expert witnesses to write of Dialect, the varieties of Dominions English and the teaching of English in schools. His own use of the language, with its prodigality of parenthesis (one sentence is a page and three quarters long), can scarcely be called a fair copy of readable English.

Mr Clark, an American professor of English, deals with the development of the English spoken and written in the United States, and his half of the book is in every respect admirable. His chapters on Vocabulary, Idiom and Syntax, Pronunciation and Spelling, are lively and erudite, fortified with a wealth of example and astute comment. His systematic survey of the English Americans use will be of the greatest interest to British readers, and his mastery of his material is itself a good example of a humane understanding of the use of words and of the writer's responsibility.

I.E.

THE MAKING OF A NATIONAL THEATRE. By Geoffrey Whitworth. (Faber and Faber; 25s.)

On July 13th His Majesty the King is due to lay the foundation stone of the National Theatre on the South Bank—surely the most significant moment in the Festival of Britain. In this great circumstance it is fitting that there now appears a book setting forth the history of the struggle which has brought about this consummation. Its author, Geoffrey Whitworth, has done more than any other living person to turn a splendid dream into an imminent reality, and by his close identification with the movement over many exciting and laborious years—with