

no surprise to learn that in 1956 the present Bishop of Münster ordered 'the diocesan process—the necessary preliminary to a beatification—to open in regard to the late Cardinal'.

KIERAN MULVEY, O.P.

THE DESERT AND THE GREEN. The Autobiography of the Earl of Lytton. (Macdonald; 25s.)

For anyone who has the good fortune to be able to sit down and enjoy a few evenings with a really good book, I could not recommend a better one than the one under review. But, I insist on the leisure to read it! For it is written spaciouly, in a way which defies description. As I read, I felt sometimes that the words and sentences had come together haphazardly, without real pattern or style; and then at other times it seemed that the very charm of style and pattern was the looseness of narrative and the unexpected diversions.

Lord Lytton was a soldier bred, but not a soldier born. His book is the product of the whole man, and in it there is striking proof of the fact that he was not an ordinary soldier. Indeed, he was a soldier who disliked fighting and enjoyed philosophy; he was a sportsman, but was basically more interested in human beings than animals, probably because he had to pursue his object logically. His pursuit took him even beyond man—to God.

Descended from Lord Byron, Bulwer Lytton and Wilfred Scawen Blunt, his character was many-sided, so that it does not seem odd that he should combine a rugged exterior, a keen sense of humour, a fine brain and childlike simplicity. Above all, and standing out clearly through his writing, is the deep and living faith which has made him such an excellent example of the true Catholic layman. He was much influenced by his background, and managed in going through life to gain from every situation. Whether it was in his youthful meeting with Wilfred Scawen Blunt or in his later admiration for the writings of the Swedish Baron von Otter, who served in Africa with the British Forces of World War I, he picked from them lessons which he made useful to the building of his own character. There can be few serving officers who decided in the middle of their foreign service to study theology. But Lord Lytton did this, sending for the *Summa*, and receiving it by post, in instalments . . . and reading it!

But, I suppose I find the happiest paragraph of all is the last in the whole book. After what was by all standards a long and distinguished career, the unpredictable author returned from being a member of the Four-Power Government in Vienna to Exmoor, where he decided to marry. And so he turns freshly and happily from the task of settling the affairs of four nations to the present settling of the affairs of his four children.

MICHAEL HOLLINGS