

of black and white, are, in their measure, a re-statement of spiritual truth as impressive, and as necessary for our time, as is the very different vision of Rouault.

ILLTUD EVANS, O.P.

THE LAST OF THE DRAGOMANS. By Sir Andrew Ryan, K.B.E., C.M.G. (Geoffrey Bles; 25s.)

The interaction of European and Asiatic civilisations is the major political problem of the world today. Sir Andrew Ryan, who, as Dragoman to the Embassy in Constantinople for many years, was in effect its Oriental Secretary, was able to see from nearby the beginnings of the Orient's great protestation against Europe's dominance and privileged position, and to witness, in Turkey, the divergence of Islam's religious energy to political nationalism.

This is an extraordinarily unpretentious narrative. The author never claims for himself any outstanding importance or prescience, and, when he takes part in great events like the Lausanne Conference, he really understates his part in them. At moments the book seems dull but, in fact, this objective modesty produces a quite powerful impression of what the author must have been like. Catholic, Irish, humorous in an old-fashioned way, definitely a diplomat of the old school, and a product of traditional classic education, Sir Andrew pursues his quiet way through violent events in Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Albania, never being wise after the event, clearly appreciative of a world that vanished utterly in 1914, and creating incidentally the picture of a most attractive family man and colleague. To all this Sir Reader Bullard's Foreword gives witness.

Curiously enough, it is after he had described his life in Turkey that Sir Andrew's narrative acquires real liveliness, and his description of life in a new-born Arab state is most enlightening. It is, though, as an autobiography, not as a diplomatic history, that this book must be judged and it is with sympathy and conviction that one follows the career of this unobtrusive and very intelligent man until, as the Foreword records, he is told of the imminence of death and replies: 'Well, I have been preparing for this all my life'. PAUL FOSTER, O.P.

THE DIARIES OF LADY CHARLOTTE GUEST, 1833-1852. Edited by the Earl of Bessborough. (Murray; 18s.)

The first thought that occurs after reading Lord Bessborough's admirable volume of extracts from the journal of his grandmother is that here is a book which will appeal to two sets of readers. To begin with, there are those who will enjoy a diary, pleasantly and easily written, which carries them away from the present and gives them, in Petrarch's phrase, that *iniqui temporis oblivio*, that opportunity to forget for a moment our own dreadful time, which the more rigorous regard