

that he felt the danger to France's reputation of even the most cordially disposed version of the story he had to tell. By and large the modern history of the governing of France is bound to be a miserable tale, under king or republic; but by telling it against the background of social and artistic development Professor Brogan emphasizes that to know the French *nation* we must look at something other than changes of ministries. My first thought on finishing this book was, Surely we do not need to be told this any more? Surely we do not need to be reminded that Cézanne and Pasteur are phenomena as interesting and significant as Thiers and the scandal of Panama? But in view of what is happening to the arts of government in France at the moment, the reminder is perhaps not so otiose after all.

LOUIS ALLEN

BAUDELAIRE. By Enid Starkie. (Faber and Faber; 50s.)

Dr Starkie's *Baudelaire* could serve as a model of what biography should be: it is both scholarly and readable, a combination not always achieved. So thoroughly acquainted is Dr Starkie with Baudelaire's writings—the less-known prose as well as the poetry—that we regret the brevity of the purely literary analysis; however, a detailed critical study would have demanded another volume, which we hope she may, one day, give us.

She has succeeded admirably in her aim: to study Baudelaire's writings in conjunction with his life and his psychological evolution. With an astonishing vividness, quite free from all sentimentality, she depicts that tragic existence: the endless financial difficulties; the ever-increasing solitude; the acute spiritual conflict between good and evil and that pitiless lucidity which excluded any hope of self-deception. The insight with which Dr Starkie tells the pitiful story of Jeanne Duval is unforgettable; unforgettable, too, the pathetic description of the catastrophic Belgian episode.

Moreover, Dr Starkie is scrupulously just towards Baudelaire's family connections: the much-maligned Aupick, Baudelaire's stepfather, a stern, rather intolerant but essentially upright man; his mother, who loved without always understanding him (and what mother would have rejoiced at the life and worldly prospects of such a son?); Ancelle, the lawyer, fussy, punctilious, tactless, but tirelessly fond of his extremely difficult ward. All these people live, not as monsters of incomprehension and selfishness, but as individuals who acted, like most individuals, often clumsily, stupidly, but with the best intentions.

It is impossible to speak too highly of the delicacy and commonsense which mark Dr Starkie's treatment of Baudelaire's death-bed conversion. The difficulty of dealing with such a subject is obvious: the essential facts are psychological and, clearly, are not available to the literary

critic. Dr Starkie goes as far as it seems to us possible to venture when she says: 'Such behaviour would not lack verisimilitude if the development and curve of his life are taken into account. Baudelaire had at last found his resting place.' (p. 521.) She stresses the influence which the religion of his childhood—for so many years completely neglected—never ceased to exercise on his thought: 'He remained a psychologist formed by Catholicism, and his manner of considering moral problems was Catholic.' (p. 543.)

All those who love Baudelaire's poetry will feel a debt of gratitude to Dr Starkie for this admirably sane, sympathetic and intuitive study.

KATHLEEN O'FLAHERTY

THE OXFORD HISTORY OF ENGLISH ART, VOL. IV. 1216-1307. By Peter Brieger. (Clarendon Press: Oxford University Press; 50s.)

THE PELICAN HISTORY OF ART: ARCHITECTURE IN BRITAIN IN THE MIDDLE AGES. By Geoffrey Webb. (Penguin Books; 52s. 6d.)

These two books, each of them the latest volume in a well-known series, offer interesting contrasts. The first covers a wide subject over a short period, while the second deals with a slightly more limited subject over a very much longer period of time.

In the *Oxford History* Peter Brieger, who is head of the Department of Art and Archaeology in the University of Toronto, describes that exciting period which saw the emergence of a native style of architecture which had its roots in the troubled times of King John.

He traces the artistic development of the period in three phases. The first, which he calls the 'Episcopal', produced such great secular cathedrals as Salisbury, Lincoln and Wells under the guiding influence of a group of enlightened bishops. This is 'the stage of classical perfection in English Gothic art'.

In the second phase royal patronage replaced the influence of the bishops. The court schools of Henry III and Edward I attracted and encouraged sculptors, metal-workers, painters and illuminators whose work and influence were widespread. But the freshness and purity of the earlier phase disappeared in a climate of 'self-consciousness and emotional aestheticism'.

When patronage passed from the court to gentry and merchants, the author sees growing evidence of the seeds of decay which were sown in the 'regal' or 'court' period, with emotional insecurity and anxiety underlying a gradual elaboration of forms in all the arts.

Throughout the book outstanding examples in architecture and the allied arts are described and illustrated in considerable detail against the ever-changing background of one of the most interesting centuries in our history.